

and that the men you can furnish may join our People as early as possible in March, at a place called *Will Creek*, on the head of *Delaware*, which I have chosen for the Rendezvous, believing it to be the most convenient to all the colonies of any that is near the scene of Action. The French have fortified themselves on *Lake Erie* and on a Branch of the *Ohio* & have 220 Cannon ready made and a great many more blocked out, and every thing in readiness to execute their designs of falling down the River when the Waters serve in the Spring, and building Forts at every Place of consequence, The Fort my Mesonger was at mounted eight Pieces of Cannon six pounders and was garrisoned with 150 Men and they have already engaged the *Chippoways*, *Attoways* and *Orondacks* to take up the Hatchet against the English, and themselves have seized the Effects of his Majesty's Subjects who were settled there & made Prisoners of their Persons. How they justify this Conduct your Excellency will see by the Inclosed Letter from their Commandant to me.

I think it would very much conduce to the Success of the Service that the Command should be undivided and therefore I should be very glad of your concurrence with my Sentiments and that the men you furnish might be put under the Command of my General Officer, I expect to meet our Assembly the 14th of next Month when I hope to be enabled to enter on more vigorous Measures; at Present I have ordered out a Detachment from the Militia to cover the works that are carrying on at our Fort on the *Ohio* and shall with all dispatch furnish them with the Stores and other necessaries for its Completion. But as the French intend to be up on the *Ohio* early in the Spring with a greater Force than they had in the fall which then consisted of 1500 Men it will be of the last consequence to have a sufficient Strength there early to oppose them and the present Temper of the Indians increases the necessity as they seem to defer coming to Action till they see us at their backs to support 'em and I am persuaded that they then will act honestly and effectually. Otherwise it is apparent to me that they will be lost to the British Interest as their Situation & the Genius of that People will lead them to join with the Strongest Side.

Sir Since writing the above I received yours of the 26th December and am mighty glad of the Hopes you have that your Assembly will enable you to raise men for the Support of his Majesty's undoubted right to the Land on the *Ohio* and at the same Time to Protect these Colonies from the Involence of those that want to disturb our Peace. An answer to this by the bearer will greatly oblige Your Excellency

Most Obedt. Hum. Servt.
Robt. Dinwiddie

On Reading the above Letter it is Ordered that the present General Assembly of this Province appointed to be held on the first day of May