

in the surrender of claims, which our forefathers asserted and maintained; I will now show that ^{message} instead of surrendering those claims, I asserted and maintained them in my message, on the ground and for the purposes set forth by the General Assembly at different times during the Revolution.

The convention of 1775 resolved, "that it is the opinion of the convention that the very extensive claim of Virginia to the back lands hath no foundation in justice, and that if the same, or any like claim is admitted, the freedom of the smaller states, and the liberties of America may be thereby greatly endangered; this convention being firmly persuaded that if the dominion over those lands should be established by the blood and treasure of the United States, such lands ought to be considered a common stock, to be parcelled out at proper times into convenient, free and independent governments."

In December 1778 the following Declaration was concurred in by the General Assembly: "We will accede to the confederation, provided an Article be added, giving full power to the United States in Congress assembled, to ascertain and fix the western limits of the States claiming to extend to the Missipi or South Sea, and expressly securing to the United States a right in common to all the lands lying to the Westward of the frontier as aforesaid, in such manner that the said lands be sold out or otherwise disposed of, for the common benefit of all the States, and that the money arising from the sale of those lands may be deemed and taken as part of the monies belonging to the United States, and as such be appropriated by Congress towards defraying the expenses of the war, and the payment of interest on monies borrowed or to be borrowed, on the credit of the United States, or for any other joint benefit of the United States." In December 1779, the General Assembly, in their instructions to the Delegates in Congress declare that "the great injustice of burdening this State for the sole and exclusive advantage of others; induce as to be of opinion that congress will interfere, and not suffer that immense tract of Country to be appropriated to the emolument of particular States."

The Journal of the two Houses furnish numerous proofs, in those contained in the foregoing extracts, that Maryland protested against the claims of Virginia and other large states, and not against the claims of the United States. Restricted to narrow limits herself she earnestly urged upon Congress the necessity of resisting "the very extensive claim of Virginia to the back lands" under the apprehension, that "if the same were admitted, the freedom of the smaller states, and the liberties of America might be thereby greatly endangered," the convention therefore contended that "such lands ought to be considered a common stock, to be parcelled out at proper times into convenient, free and independent governments."

The General Assembly refused to accede to the confederation unless full powers were given to the United States, in Congress assembled to fix the Western limits of those States which claimed to the Missisippi or the South Sea; and objected especially to that article of the confederation which provided, that "no State should be deprived of territory for the benefit of the United States," because it might be construed into an admission of the claims which Maryland had constantly resisted. This State insisted upon a division of the Western Territory into convenient free and independent States to secure something like an equality of power among the different members of the Union; and, regarding next in a pecuniary point of view, contended that the revenue arising from it should be deemed and taken as part of the monies belonging to the United States, and, as such, be appropriated by Congress towards defraying the expenses