

In Council Annapolis 23<sup>d</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> 1780

Sir  
We think it will be proper to remove the Grain you have procured, to  
George Town and store it there because it may with greater ease and at  
less Expence be transported by Water from thence to the Head of Elk  
Col<sup>o</sup> Solomon Sympson. We are &c

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Sir  
We had the Honor to receive your Excellency's Letter of the 30<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>. The  
Necessity which constrained our Assembly to enact a Law, the extensive  
Operation of which has interfered with the Purchases made by your Agent,  
for the Subsistence of the Military of your State, we must deplore, and can  
assure you that an anxious Sollicitude for the Welfare of the United States  
and an Opinion that no thing short of the most vigorous and sudden  
Exertions, could procure an immediate and full Supply for our distressed  
Army, were the only Motives which prompted them to make it so general.  
We are satisfied it is not the Intention of the Act, to provide Supplies for  
State Troops, because, when it was made, it was not known that the  
Military of any particular State was in Distress. The Object of the Assembly  
being an immediate and full Supply for the Army, we cannot admit your  
Exposition of the Law, because it would in some Degree, counteract the Purpose  
of it and because we think the Word "Others" was inserted with a View of  
including every Person in whose Possession any Flour or Wheat was found  
and may well comprehend the Agent of Virginia, and that, unless such Con-  
struction is made, as there is no other Person except the Agent of the  
Marine of France (whose Flour is also deemed Seizable) to whom it can  
relate, that Word would be ~~void~~ deprived of its Effect, and a well known  
Principle in expounding Act of the Legislature, would be infringed, that a  
Law ought to be so construed that no Word should be rendered void or insignificant  
if it can be prevented. We must further observe that the Intention of the  
Assembly ought to prevail which is to be collected from the Cause or Necessity  
which induced them to make the Law. We cannot esteem it necessary  
to enter into a minute Discussion of the present Question or to resort to  
nice and subtil Reasoning, to justify an Exertion which was requisite  
to prevent the numerous Calamities which must result from the  
Dissolution of the Continental Army. We are sensible it is the mutual  
Interest of both States to preserve the Harmony that subsists between them  
which, added to our Desire to contribute all we possibly can to the Relief of  
your Distress, make us wish to receive Information from Congress or your  
Excellency, General Washington, that the Army is supplied, that we may  
have it in our Power to restore your Flour, before you feel any Incon-  
venience from the Seizure of it. Our Assembly will meet the first Day  
of March when your Excellency's Letter will be laid before them for  
their Consideration.

We are &c

Y<sup>r</sup> Excellency

Governor Jefferson of  
Virginia