

For Council, 15th Aug. 1781.

Sir,
 A Boat the *Dolphin* belonging to this State commended by
 Mr William Middleton, was in the Month of March last, taken by one
 of the British Squadron then ⁱⁿ the Coast, soon afterwards the Capt. of
 a French armed Vessel brought in here Capt. Penny and part of
 the Company of a British Vessel the *Endeavour* which he had taken
 on his Passage. Capt. Penny represented himself to be related to Gen-
 tlemen of the Rank in the British Army, and requested that
 his Parole might be taken to return Middleton in his Stead. A
 Copy of his Parole we have the Honor to enclose; but we have not
 heard since. From Capt. Penny neither has Middleton returned.
 We request Sir, that Enquiry may be made, and that Middleton may
 be released, or Penny returned according to the Terms of his Parole. We
 have also to inform you that about the 1st July past one of the British
 Barges captured in the Mouth of Patuxent a small Bay Schooner
 laden with Tobacco, on Board of which was a young Gentleman
 Mr James Thomas Owner of the Vessel and Tobacco. His Parents, who
 are People of Credit have heard that he is very ill in Jail at Ports-
 mouth, and since he was a Prisoner, badly wounded, and that he suffers
 for the Conveniency of Life. Under these Circumstances common Humanity
 induces us to comply with the request of the Parents and Relations of Mr
 Thomas in giving the Bearer hereof Lieutenant Col. John Thomas of the
 St. Mary's Militia, permission to go with a Flag to endeavour to obtain
 the Release of his Brother, either on Parole or on Exchange; at the
 same Time to carry him some Money and Medicines for his Support
 and Recovery. He will be attended by Doct. Mudd and four Hands
 to navigate the Boat. There are in Maryland several Persons who
 have been taken by the Inhabitants plundering on the Shores. If
 you think proper to release Mr. Thomas, we will immediately release
 in his Stead any British Citizen who is a Prisoner here in like
 Circumstances. As we have truly stated, the only Motives for this
 Address, we have to request that the Bearer, who will comply with
 the Formalities required, may be received with Indulgence and
 Respect shown to Flags of Peace.

The commanding Officer of the British Army
 or Land Forces at or near Portsmouth.