

Annapolis May the 8. 1802

Sir,

Fully impressed that nothing can possibly prove more injurious than false alarms, particularly at the present time, I cannot but regret extremely the circumstances that took place last night.

I have considered it so important to the quiet of the citizens, and indeed their security, which a few false alarms could not fail to endanger, by producing a total inattention to and disregard of prudent precautions, that I have thought proper to address the following Instructions to you to be communicated to the Officers and Privates of your Company and those of the Volunteer Association of Annapolis.

You will cause any person that may be found creating an alarm to be secured under guard, until you shall be satisfied that he had reasonable ground therefor... in order that if it has been wanton and trivial he may be dealt with accordingly, and if real that it may be more readily traced.

No person must attempt to assemble the citizens, or spread an alarm without the order and direction of the proper Officer or Officers. Any persons therefore who may have information that they deem important, shall communicate the same either to the Governor, any Member of the Council, Colonel John Gaspaway - the Officers of the Militia Company, the Mayor or any of the Aldermen... on this subject I have cited a clause of the act of Assembly passed in 1798 Chapter 100. Section 10.

All Officers who shall receive such information shall communicate the same to the Governor or Colonel Gaspaway, or in their absence to the next commanding Officer in Town - but no one but the Officers and persons above enumerated shall presume to order an alarm to be given.

The Alarm shall be, either by ringing the Church Bell quick and hard - firing one of the Field Pieces or by the Drum beating to arms on the State House Hill or near it - or by all those modes as may be found convenient.

In case of real alarm which God forbid... and which can never happen if the people are prepared... The Magistrates vigilant and the Militia in good order, have submitted, a set of private Instructions