

I was made aware by your communication, that the gravest questions affecting the Constitutional rights of her citizens arise under these proceedings, and that the object of my appointment is to defend the rights and interests of the State & her citizens therein. I have now the honour to inform you that I accept the appointment & and shall endeavour to discharge the duties it enjoins to the best of my professional ability.

I am Sir
With great respect
Your obedt. Servant
J. Meredith

State of Maryland. Annapolis October 27th 1859.
Executive Department.
To the Sheriff of Washington County. Sir.

Information has reached me from sources which entitle it to consideration, that efforts are now being made by certain misguided and fanatical persons in the neighboring State of Pennsylvania to make an incursion through this State into Virginia for the purpose of attempting to rescue from the custody of the Law the parties concerned in the late treasonable outrage at Harper's Ferry; and I am further informed that these same parties threaten to carry off with them the slaves belonging to citizens of the State and to burn and destroy property. While I do not attach much importance to vain threats of this sort, yet I am admonished by the suddenness of the attack at Harper's Ferry to take all precautions which prudence may suggest, so as to preserve the citizens of this State without exciting undue alarm or seem to magnify a mere domestic riot into a threatened civil war.

I therefore think it proper to advise and direct you to name a sufficient number of deputies residing along and near the boundary line between this State and Pennsylvania, and also others residing along the Potomac River in your County, who may be empowered to act with authority in case of any unlawful or unusual assemblage of persons whose purpose is not known, and to arrest and detain for sufficient cause any persons travelling in part as armed, or otherwise acting and proceeding in such manner as to give reasonable cause to believe that their intention is to incite riot or rebellion against the laws.

I do not doubt that you will cheerfully and promptly do every thing in your power to sustain public order, and protect the lives and property of citizens in your