

State of Maryland
Executive Chamber
Frederick City, May 10th 1861

Brig Genl B. F. Butler:

Dear Sir,

I received a letter this day from one of the most prominent citizens of Annapolis informing me that several free negroes have gone to Annapolis with your troops, either as servants or camp followers; that they are armed and insolent; that they seek the company of, and are corrupting our slaves. Also, that, on the 7th instant two of the negroes grossly insulted a storekeeper in Annapolis, and drew their pistols with threats to shoot him.

I respectfully suggest to you that the mere presence of these negroes in our state is a violation of our statutes; and even if they should comport themselves in an orderly manner, the General Government ought not to tolerate a violation of our laws by permitting them to accompany its troops.

You can readily see that their presence here will be provocative of disorder and ill feeling, I am sure you desire nothing of the kind. And I must urge you to send them back, and to permit no more to come here.

Under all the circumstances, I have deemed it my duty to inform you of this matter, in the hope that you will redress it without necessitating me to order the civil authorities to enforce the law in the regard I have mentioned. I should regret to have to do this, inasmuch as the feelings of our people in reference to the presence among us of your troops has materially softened; and as an effort on my part to preserve the dignity of our laws in this regard might tend to provoke an asperity of feeling which I particularly desire to avoid.

Yours to oblige

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To the Hon. the Secretary of War,
And General B. F. Butler,

At my request the Hon. Mr Cooper, the Hon. Grayson Pickelberger, Secretary of State, and Major George R Dennis, visit you; and will communicate with you in regard to matters touching the crisis upon which we are thrown.

Full credence may be given to all they say; as I will endorse such representations as they shall make.

With great respect
I am, Gentlemen
your obt. servt

Yours to oblige