

State of Maryland
Executive Department
Annapolis June 30. 1862.

Wm. Price Esq.

Dear Sir:

I have received yours of 26th Inst. requesting me to send you an order directing Lieut. Col. Coover late of the 3rd Regt. of Vols. to report to Genl. Wool for duty as he considers himself entitled to be assigned to duty as such officer from the fact that he was commissioned to that office by Gov. Hicks on the 5th November last.

In stating why I do not feel at liberty to issue any such order to Col. Coover, it is necessary that I should state the circumstances, as I understand them, establishing his Military relations to the Government.

I have repeatedly attempted to make this explanation to Col. Coover himself, but apparently without success, and I now avail myself of the opportunity of making it to you, and beg that you will make it known to him, and if you concur in the view I take of his case that you will say so to him, and relieve me of the necessity of a further consideration of it.

It is true that Coover was commissioned by Gov. Hicks as Lieut. Col. of the 3rd Md. Vols. in November last. The Regt. was the one raised by Jno. C. Mc. Connell, who was commissioned as its Colonel, and whose proceedings in that matter were as you know, a subject of such complaint as to lead to his summary dismissal from that Command, and to subject the other officers to a stricter scrutiny than they would perhaps otherwise have encountered. That there was great irregularity in the issue of the Commissions of that Regiment would seem to be manifest from the fact apparent on our records that fifteen Captains were commissioned for the Regt. between the 29th Oct. and the 24th Dec. last.

I mention the circumstances of irregularity under which this Regt. was organized, not that I consider Mr. Coover's right to be ordered on duty as controlled at all by these circumstances, but independently of them he has been superseded by the War Department under an authority which they claim and exercise in such cases.

Now this 3rd Regt. as originally organized was never in fact more than half a Regiment so far as numbers were concerned. There were several other unfinished Regiments in the same predicament; these were the 4th and another organization called the "Dix or Baltimore Light Infantry." And this being their situation, I received from the War Department some three months ago a communication proposing to reorganize these partly formed Regiments and unite them in one full one.

In the propriety of this I entirely concurred, and the Regiment to which Col. Coover now claims to be attached is this new Regiment thus formed out of these three old organizations. — The Regt. it is true, is still called the Third, only however,