

1741: This Alteration, if proper at any time, cannot be so now, when it is uncertain how long our War with *Spain* may continue, or how soon another with *France* may begin, if not already Proclaimed: The Money now in Hand from that Fund perhaps is not more than sufficient to provide such necessary Arms and Ammunition, as a prudent Caution in times of Peace (even against such like Conspiracies as have lately happened amongst our Negroes) might require, and therefore not to lay any thing of the Motive of Self-Preservation, we cannot think this Bill corresponds with our often boasted Loyalty: Should a *French* War break out, and our Country be attacked, many Accidents in such times of Confusion might prevent the Meeting of an Assembly, and if even it should meet, any future Concurrence to a Bill of this kind cannot from present appearances be certainly depended on, since it must be looked on as very remarkable and extraordinary, that an Act for Arms and Ammunition for the Defence of this Province was never so much opposed, as since our Alarms and Apprehensions of a dangerous War, and if we are the least backward in consulting our own Safety and Defence, as well as we can, against all possible Accidents, would not our offer of furnishing Money to encourage Levies for his Majesty's Service Abroad, be rather thought to proceed from a pretended Zeal, than any true Principle of Duty to his Majesty? Since it might be interpreted, we did not think our Preservation, or Happiness, consisted in any Defence against the *French*, and that the more Money and Men we spared for one Service, the less we might have for the other, and consequently this Province might be the easier Prey to an invading Enemy; in such Circumstances, however fortunate and safe the Roman Catholicks or Persons nearly attached to them or their Interests might imagine themselves, yet we are persuaded, every Friend to our present happy Establishment must think on such a Situation with Horror.

These, Gentlemen, are our real Thoughts and Apprehensions, and these have determined us in a fixt Resolution, not in the least to weaken the Provision now subsisting by Law, for the Security and Defence of the Province, which we think, as Affairs now stand, much too small, and ought to be increased; and therefore we rather chuse to return that Bill for Arms and Ammunition with a Negative, than by passing it, or any other at this Juncture, to forward the making a Session, which must put an End to an Act of the like kind, that otherwise will continue till a Session happens, for we think it less dangerous to this Part of his Majesty's Dominions, and more consistent with our unfeigned Loyalty, and the true Interest and Safety of this Province, to be without a Session, than without