

enlarging or lessening the Sum if there should be Occasion, or your insisting on *Three Pence* only for Nine Years, or for Three and to the end of a Session, bespeaks the greatest Care for this Part of his Majesty's Dominions, or the most impartial Views towards the Safety of the Province at a Time of impending Danger; and whether our readiness to raise a Supply for the encouragement of Freemen to enlist in his Majesty's Service abroad, or your entire refusal of it, unless at the same time you could obtain the before mentioned Bill for Arms, &c. with your beloved termination of Nine Years or a Session of Assembly, argues the greatest Zeal for the Success of the *British* Arms.

We pass by your Charge of having implicitly asserted the Bill for Arms, &c. to have no relation to his Majesty's Service, and shall let the Messages speak for themselves, with this short Observation, that it is hardly possible to write or say any thing, but what by such strained Constructions may be wrested into what the Authors never intended, and we wish something of the kind may not be imputed to your Honours in this and some other of our Debates.

You might have spared the trouble of giving the long detail of Statutes, to show there are Duties in *Great Britain* laid for a number of Years and to the end of a Session; it is sufficient for our Purpose, that, that Duty which is the most essential for the Defence and Support of the Government, and without which it could not Subsist, is, and we presume has been ever since *Britain* could call themselves a free People, given from Year to Year only; They have always looked on annual Sessions of Parliament to be necessary, and we (whatever may be your Honours Sentiments) have the same way of thinking about our Assemblies; and therefore in our present Situation, when his Lordship takes the Money for support of Government under colour of a Perpetual Law, and settles Officers Fees by Ordinance or Proclamation, what has the People left them but this one Bill to procure them frequent Assemblies? Our Duty requires us to act with a View as well to our Posterity as ourselves, and allowing his present Lordship's, his Governor's and Minister's Dispositions to be as good and candid as you shall please to call them, yet can any of them answer for their Successors? And should ever the Province be so unhappy as to be ruled by a Proprietary or Governor, who should aim at arbitrary Power, and oppress the People, what Remedy could they have when no means are left them of procuring Assemblies? How could Aggrievances be enquired into, Oppressions and Extortions suppressed, new Laws made or old ones revived? would not such a Proprietary or Governor, as he had nothing to ask of an Assembly, keep the People always without one?

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