

discovered near Fort Cumberland within this Province; there is a Gentleman in your House who must acknowledge, that, in a Letter which he was pleased to write from the Mouth of *Conococheague* the 15th of December, and which I received the 19th of that Month, he referred me to the Bearer, and told me that "he could inform me of the French that appeared the Saturday before at Fort Cumberland." Some Letters from another of your Members (which, agreeable to his own Desire, I laid before you in a former Session) convinced you, I believe, that Alarms have been frequently given, and that Parties of the Enemy have been said to be committing Murders almost in the Heart of *Frederick County*, when, in all Probability, there were none within the Distance of a Hundred Miles of the Province; but the Action or Skirmish that happened in December last, between a Detachment of our Forces and the French abovementioned, leaves us no Room to doubt but a considerable Party of the Enemy was in this Province at that Time; one of them who was taken Prisoner in that Skirmish, and brought immediately to Annapolis by Lieutenant *Riley*, declared, on his Examination before Col. *Haldiman*, Sir *John St. Clair*, and Myself, that the Party consisted of Two Officers, Six Cadets, Twenty Soldiers, and Eight Indians, and that their Intention, when they came from Fort *Duquesne* the 27th of November, was, to make a Descent on this Province.

There is one Remark more that I shall take the Liberty to make before I quit this Part of your Address, and it is this, that while you would persuade your Constituents, that by the Troops on our Frontiers not being compelled to do their Duty, the Inhabitants are neither protected nor made quiet and easy, you endeavour to shew that those Inhabitants were entirely satisfied, and that scarce a Person could be found, who could truly say, he was apprehensive of any Danger at all. Had I founded my Power, or Right, to order any of the Militia of *Kent*, *Queen-Anne's*, or *Calvert*, Counties to the Frontiers, on the Address that was presented to me the 30th of September 1756, by the late Lower House of Assembly, or if I had taken any Step, upon a Supposition that I was by that Address vested with any Authority which I before wanted, your Intimations about the Danger of affording Precedents, and your Observation, that we ought to guard against every bad Consequence which may possibly flow from a Stretch of Power beyond its due Bounds, might perhaps have been more aptly introduced than they seem to be at present; but I assure you, Gentlemen, that although it will always give me great Pleasure to know that the Members you allude to, approve my Conduct, yet, I shall not think that the Unanimity, or more than Unanimity, of any Part of your House, in approving or disapproving, will make a Step Wrong that is in its Nature Justifiable and Right, or an Act Lawful or Commendable, that is in itself Illegal and Oppressive; however, if those Gentlemen were of Opinion the 11th of October, when you answered my Message, that they had been in an Error, and had by their Address led me to think higher of my Power and Authority over the Militia than I ought, they would have dealt ingenuously in acknowledging their Error, and endeavouring to undeceive me at that Time, but as they did neither, I can hardly think that by saying they thought it "would be wrong for the present" to order a Company of Militia to the Frontiers, they meant, that, in their Opinion, it would be wrong or illegal for me to order any to march for the future, especially when I remember the particular Reason you gave for not advising me to order out a Company at that Time, to wit, that there were then Soldiers enough on the Frontiers to protect the Inhabitants; which indeed was the Case; but though the Soldiers could, and did, effectually protect them, yet it was not in their Power, we find, to make them quiet and easy.

What Reason you have, or think you have, to presume, that if your House had approved of my sending out any of the Militia on that Occasion, I should not have ordered them from *Queen-Anne's*, *Kent*, or *Calvert* Counties, I know not; I cannot positively say that I should, but, in all probability, if you had desired me to comply with the Request that Captains *Delashmut* and *Chapline* had then made, in Behalf of the Frontier Inhabitants, a Company would have been ordered from one of these Counties, lest the Inhabitants of those, from which Companies had been ordered to march on former Occasions, should have complained of my compelling them to do more Duty than might properly be deemed their Share; and I hope none of you are of Opinion, that a Person's residing on the Eastern Side of the Bay, ought to excuse him from contributing to the Security of those who live on this Side of it.

Had the Present you speak of been given to the Party of *Cherokees*, even before Captain *Brome* received Orders to march, that Circumstance might, perhaps, have had some Weight with such as imagine *Indians* will be restrained, or do the Duty of Soldiers; but surely you will not pretend to say, that your framing a Bill for their Encouragement, on the 30th of March, was a Reason why I ought to have taken, or to have declined taking, any particular Step on the 9th of that Month, which was the Day the Orders to Captain *Brome* were issued.

In my Message of the 23d of February, I told you, that as I had good Reason to apprehend, that the Soldiers which had been raised for the more immediate Defence of our Frontier Inhabitants, would disband themselves