

separate and collective capacity, are answerable, not only for all expences incurred by this state in consequence of the war, but for any injury or damage sustained by any of the subjects of this state since the commencement of the war.

4. This state, compelled by the tyranny of the king of Great-Britain, and the open hostilities committed by his armies and fleet, to wage war in defence of its dearest rights and liberties, was finally obliged to separate from the British empire, and to become a sovereign and independent state, whereby the subjects of Great-Britain became aliens, and by prosecution of the war enemies to this state, and as such incapable of holding any property within it, and the same thereby became veited in the state.

5. In the declaration of independence by congress, it was declared, that thereafter the subjects of Great-Britain should be considered by the United States, enemies in war, in peace friends.

6. It is not in the power of this state to raise the money required by congress to carry on the present just and necessary war, without compelling many of its subjects to sell their property to raise the taxes, and justice, policy and necessity, dictate the propriety of first selling and applying the property of our enemies towards defraying the expences of the war.

These reasons convinced our judgment, they determined our action, and we doubt not the impartial world will agree with us in sentiment.

We wish your honours to examine the reasons assigned, to point out your objections to them, and to inform us whether you think that all or none of them will justify and support the measure:

We proposed to raise five million two hundred and twenty thousand dollars from the sale of British property, and to make our first payment, on the 1st of February next, out of part of the money arising from the sale. We determined to raise by taxes nine million of dollars, at four assessments, at such times, and in such proportions, as would suit the circumstances of our constituents; we intended that any deficiencies should be made up by British property, and resolved to pay our quota monthly into the continental treasury.

The debt due from this state is above one million of pounds currency. Our treasury is exhausted; our quota of troops require a considerable reinforcement, and a large sum will be necessary to defray the expence of the recruiting service. We are inclined to think our proportion of the continental debt may exceed twenty-five million of dollars.

If, after contemplating the information we have taken the liberty to give you of our circumstances, you are still inflexibly determined not to seize and appropriate British property, in our power, to enable us to carry on the war, (and we again declare it is not in our power to collect the necessary sums by taxes, without greatly distressing our people, and compelling them to sell their property to pay the assessment) we shall return to our constituents with the consolation, that we have endeavoured to do all in our power, and the consequences which may happen, be they ever so great, will not be justly imputable to us.

It now remains for us to express our acknowledgments so justly due to your honours, for the particular instance of your attention and regard to the gentlemen of the eastern shore; but notwithstanding the inclemency of the season and the severity of the weather renders an attendance on the public business, at this time, exceedingly distressing and inconvenient to this house in general, and to the gentlemen of the eastern shore in particular, yet the duty which we owe to our country, the welfare of the public, and a relief to our people from the very heavy taxes which are demanded of them for the prosecution of the war, supersede the obligations of private interest. Governed by these motives, we can assure your honours, that we shall wait with patience the result of your determinations on the very important bill now sent back for your consideration.

We lament, with your honours, that the senate is at this critical period so thin, and regret that measures, calculated to compel the attendance of the members of the general assembly on the public business, have not met with your approbation, notwithstanding the repeated experience both houses must have had the of necessity of adopting some mode to enforce the observation of duties, to which public virtue and a patriotic spirit have not been competent.

By order,

J. DUCKETT, cl. ho. del.

Was sent to the senate, with the bill for the seizure and confiscation of British property, by Mr. J. Hall and 15 more.

Mr. Jordan brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker a bill, entitled, An act to regulate the toll taken by millers; which was read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

Upton Sheredine, Esq; from the senate, delivers to Mr. Speaker the following message:

BY THE SENATE, DECEMBER 21, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

WE assent to the propositions contained in your message of this day by Messieurs Keene and Reed, and have appointed Joseph Sim and Upton Sheredine, Esquires, to join the members named by your house in the examination of the ballot boxes.

By order,

H. RIDGELY, cl. sen.

Which was read and ordered to lie on the table.