

rily fall on the people; we shall not contribute to lengthen the present by more messages on this subject, which we fear will not convince either house, but only serve to protract time and accumulate expence.—We must therefore again call your attention to the essential business now necessary to be done, among which the most important is the recruiting our quota of continental troops; this essential service cannot or ought not to be delayed one moment; when the proper arrangements for this purpose are adopted by the legislature, the assessment bill passed, and our civil officers provided for, we would wish to adjourn to some time in the month of March next, and we think in a few days the above material business may be completed. The reasons we have now given in support of our conduct on this bill, in consequence of the information and reasoning you have offered to induce a reconsideration, will evince the propriety of sending it to you again, in the same manner we at first returned it.

By order,

H. RIDGELY, cl. sen.

By the HOUSE of DELEGATES, December 30, 1779.

May it please your HONOURS,

THE length and multiplicity of matter contained in your message of the 23d, by Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Esq; has required more time to consider it, than if your honours had confined your observations and reasoning to the true points in controversy. The remark is very common, and often founded in truth, that in the discussion of almost every question, the parties mix and blend with it many collateral matters, and raise up subjects foreign to the question, with intent to perplex, and draw the attention of the reader from the true point in dispute. This observation, we conceive, applies strongly to your message, but politeness forbids the suggestion, that you had any design, but to answer our arguments in favour of the bill, and to shew the reasons and motives of your conduct.

We conceive the only and true questions between us, are, 1<sup>st</sup>. Whether the seizure and confiscation of all property (debts only excepted) in this state belonging to British subjects, is supported and justified by the law of nature and nations. 2<sup>dly</sup>. Whether policy requires or forbids the exercise of the right of seizure at this time. We apprehend the description in the bill of British subjects, the line drawn to ascertain them; whether persons are included who ought not, and the mode of obtaining or of disposing of the property, are foreign to and ought not to be blended with the questions; those matters can only obscure, but not elucidate the subject, on which we differ so widely from you in opinion.

D

Yours