

They have gotten the prices of...[everything] so high that it is enough to discourage the most sanguine Patriots...."

Calling out the militia to march northward did indeed prove to be one of the most difficult problems faced by Maryland officials during the month. On October 16, the Council expressed its apprehension to Aquilla Hall, Lieutenant of the Harford County Militia, of the importance of replacing Maryland militiamen whose terms had expired with additional troops:

Convinced that it is absolutely necessary to strengthen Gen. Washington all we possibly can, and that it may produce the most unhappy Consequences, if the Army should be weakened, by the militia who are now in Service, coming away on the Expiration of their Time without being replaced. We request that you will give the necessary Orders for the March of the two first Classes of your County [militia].

Ordering the militia to march was a simple administrative task; getting them to do so proved quite difficult.

On October 2, for example, Gov. Thomas Johnson received a letter late in the day explaining that an insurrection had occurred in Baltimore County because the sheriff, pursuant to the militia law of the state, had advertised the confiscation and forthcoming sale of the goods of several people who refused either to march with the militia or to pay for substitutes. The letter, written by Gen. Andrew Buchanan, indicated that the three companies of Col. Isaac Hammond's militia battalion ordered out to suppress the dissidents resulted in the actual assembling of only about 60 men. The insurrectionists, led by Thomas French--the husband of the Henrietta French freed from prison, although suspected of being in sympathy with the enemy [see September 1777 Bicentennial Bulletin]--numbered 200, Buchanan continued, and they were well armed. As William Lux of Baltimore sardonically noted, his neighbors who often used the excuse that they did not possess guns, so it would be impossible for them to march off with the militia to defend their country "can arm themselves Completely on a mob."

The governor and Council moved quickly to squelch the alleged insurrection in Baltimore County. On October 3 they addressed a letter to General Buchanan:

We this Morning received yours of Yesterday