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Wilmington April 17th 1778

Sir,

I wrote you the 8th inst. per express (whose return I've impatiently expected for several days) concerning the conduct of the legislature of this state and the chief Justice in detaining the prisoners White & Gordon, who I had, pursuant to an act of Congress of the 20th March expressly ordered col.o Hall to apprehend & forward immediately to this post; since which the chief Justice has discharged them, & col.o Hall's acquiescence therein has discovered his want of decision & conduct becoming an officer of his rank & character - to remedy which & comply with the act, I have exerted every effort, & have secured White, but Gordon took that opportunity & immediately escaped to the enemy's shipping. Therefore by the legislature, chief Justice, & unofficer like conduct of col.o Hall I am completely baffled — "The inclosed letters rec.d yes-
-terday will inform you of an insurrection in this state below, which would appear to be powerful & increasing, but I imagine there is more smoke than fire, as is too common on these occasions. I cannot believe there is half the number of men reported, or that there are any British officers or soldiers among them; however it is not im-
-probable but that they may be joined by both, unless some steps
-speedily taken to suppress it. - The present situation of this
garrison & my particular instructions limit me in such a manner as to prevent my yielding a sufficient force for their reduction - I have therefore addressed the matter to general Washington & as my influence with the legislature here is very slender, have desired him to press their drawing out a body of militia, which, in con=
-junction with a small detachment of continental troops from this post, might immediately quell and disperse the insurgents; perhaps it may be necessary for Congress also to press this mea-
-sure; for abstracted from the dangerous tendency of such a com-
-motion, a great quantity of our stores are critically situated, at Charles Town, & within their scope & power of intercepting, unless the earliest opportunity is taken to cover their removal and dis-
perse the insurgents" — I have inclosed you draughts of two bills said to be in Parliament & transmitted by administration to gen.l Howe in the packet which arrived three days ago; the first

for

ARCHIVES OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND