Sir

Dorchester 19th July 1779

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I had ordered a meeting of the respectable Battalion of this County on the seventeenth instant in Order to form the Class of the several Companys that Composed it, When it seems one James Short and some Others Entered into a combination to cause a mutiny in Order to Prevent their being Classed,

For this Purpose, While I was busey in Classing the Officers and settling the details of the several Companys, a number of them had provided themselves with Clubs, and immediately after the Battalion was formed, and I had begun Classing the first Company; the ringleaders of this Mob set up a huzza and marched out of the line followed by upwards of a hundred more ready provided with clubs to defend themselves; As soon as I had finished Class the Company I had begun with. I went after them myself and Ordered them back, When several of them attempted to knock me down.

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This is a matter which I think my Oath as well duty Obleges me to disclose and make known to your Excellency. As there were but very few Arms among the Officers & remainder of the men, and not knowing what influence the Conduct of those fellows might have among the lower Class of people who composed a very great Majority I thought it most prudent to desist from any forceable means and let the civil Law take its course with them, I have therefore issued warrants to the Constables to bring before me the leading men of this Mobb, to find Sufficient Security for their good behaviour & appearance at the General Court where I find by the Law those Crimes are only Punishable.

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If they refuse the civil power, I have some thoughts of Aiding it with the Military, but this is a measure I should be glad to have your Excell. direction in before I proceed thereon.

Those disorders are in a great Measure occasioned by the sale of Liquor in and about the Muster fields, this is a practice I have endeavoured as far as lay in my power to put a stop to. But there can be but very little Obedience Expected to the Orders of a Sergeant Lieut., from people who rather seem to take a pride in Evading & violating, than Executing the Laws of their Country. There is not a stop put by Law, to the sale of Liquor in or near Muster fields, on the days of Muster, I fear the calling the people together for that purpose, will be attended with more Evil consequences, than any real benefit to the community. More especially, as the internal Enemy of America seems to be daily increasing, though cloaked with an Outward shew of friendship to the United States. I am with the Sincerest well Wishes to the rights & Liberties of America &c &c

Your Excellcy

Most Humble and Obedient Servant

Jos: Beall
Lieut. Dels Cty

His Excellcy Thomas Johnson Esqr.
Governor of Maryland