

Letter Bk. III enabled & took such Steps to confute a Report which was entirely groundless & might have been very prejudicial to my Interest: The inclosed Copy of my Letter to Governor Dinwiddie on my Return from Fort Cumberland will support what I writ to you about the same time & will shew I presume that Colonel Dunbar never consulted any of us on the propriety of marching the Regiments to Phil^a immediately after the Action & leaving the Frontiers of these provinces exposed, had he asked my Opinion thereon He would not I assure you have obtained my Consent for I thought then as I do now that there was a wide Difference between marching such an Army as his was then to attack Fort Du Quesne without Artillery or other Stores, & remaining on the Defensive at Fort Cumberland or any other advanced post between that & the Ohio; The last in my Opinion would have been proper & a very prudent Step but the first the Height of Quixotism. As the Assembly of Pensilvania did not grant any Supplies upon the General's Defeat, I never met our Assembly on that Event but contented myself with laying out the little money that was in my hands in the best manner to secure our back Inhabitants from the Barbarities which have been severely felt by those of the Neighbouring Colonies & declined calling the Assembly till I could lay some Scheme or Plan of Operations before them, & till I should see their Neighbours set them a laudable Example. When they met the 23^d of Feb^y I recommended it to them to contribute to the Execution of the Plan that was concerted at N York which they have now had under Consideration 6 Weeks without being able to frame or perfect a Bill which the Committee was ordered to prepare upon their passing a Vote for £40000. It will make its Appearance I am told next week but by what I can find in such a Dress as will lay the Upper House or Myself under a Necessity of refusing it: Should this be it's Fate & the Virg^a Assembly break up as that of Pensilvania has done without granting any Supplies as I have some reason to fear it will, I leave you to judge whether I have not a very fair Prospect of being able to reduce Fort Du Quesne this Summer as I am directed by General Shirley to do with the Forces that these Colonies shall raise for that purpose. I inclose you a Copy of the General's Letter which I received with the Commission & Instructions & also my Answer thereto since the writing of which my Hopes have daily diminished & I begin to think that I ought not to be sorry at His Excellency's having ordered all the Field Pieces that were in these parts round from Virg^a to N York; May he use them with greater Success than I could hope to do here tho I dare not be very sanguine even in such hopes so much is the Face of Affairs in America altered within this twelve month—