

U. H. J. The Speaker and the Lower House attend and his Excellency is pleased to make the following Speech

Gentlemen of the Upper and Lower Houses of Assembly

I should have gladly met you some Months sooner, but the daily Expectation of receiving an Answer from his Lordship to your Address relating to his Quit Rents, made me defer this Session so long, that the Winter was too far advanced to think of calling you together in so bad a Season

Gentlemen of the Lower House

Their Excellencies the Lords Justices, upon considering the uncertain State of Affairs in Europe, and the more than Probability of Great Britains being engaged in a French War sent me some Months since repeated Orders to put the Militia of this Province into the best Condition possible, and to be upon our Guard against any Surprize that might be attempted upon Us by the French and by those Orders it is Expected, that our Forces should not only be able to Act defensively but even Attack Our Enemies, if it be thought necessary

The Advices We have very lately received from England, of his Majestys British Dominions being threatned with an Invasion confirm the Prudence of those Orders, and call upon us for the strongest Testimonies of Our Duty and Affection to his Majestys Person and Government, I must therefore In the most earnest manner recommend to You two Measures absolutely necessary for Purposes so necessary to Our own Preservation, and the security of this Part of his Majestys Dominions One is that a proper Law be thought of for making the Militia more serviceable, the present Acts being extremely defective, and the Other, that a Provision for Arms and Ammunition be made in the usual manner, and agreeable to the late
 p. 2 Act for that Purpose which expired some [Years] since, the Money raised by that Fund being very near if not entirely exhausted These are necessary Measures even in peaceable times and if not taken at this Juncture, it will be impossible to answer the Expectations conceived of you, or give Proofs of that Duty to your Sovereign and Affection to Your Country, which Every good Subject must think himself [bound] to, by the most sacred Ties

As for my own Part, my zeal for his Majestys Service and sincere Wishes for the Welfare and Quiet of this Province, oblige me to declare that unless A Law, for Supply of Arms and Ammunition, be made in the manner I have mentioned, it cannot be expected this Province should be put into a Condition capable of defending it self, or that We can possibly avoid falling again into those unhappy Misunderstandings, which so long subsisted before my Arrival I need not tell you such a situation of Affairs, whereby a Stop will be put to all Publick Business, must be extremely dishonourable as well as dangerous to this County but from the Motives I have urged to you,