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CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN REGARD TO RAISING FORCE FOR LOCAL DEFENCE

ON THE POTOMAC RIVER.

RICHARD KING
STATE OF MARYLAND,

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Annapolis, July 21st, 1864.

HIS EXCELLENCY, A. LINCOLN,

President of United States :

The repeated raids across the Potomac River made by portions of the Rebel Army, and the extent of the damage they have succeeded so frequently in inflicting, have most injuriously afflicted the people of Maryland and Pennsylvania in the neighborhood of that River, and many of them it is believed, as the only security against such losses in the future, are seriously considering the propriety of abandoning their present homes, and seeking safety at the North.

It seems to us that not merely in this sectional aspect of the case, but in its National relations, the security of this border line between the loyal and rebellious States, is an object justifying and requiring a disposition of a portion of the National force, with an especial view to its defence.

The Potomac River can only be crossed in its ordinary state of water at some five or six fords, and we propose to enlist from our respective States, a volunteer force that shall be sufficient, with the aid of the fortifications which the force itself can speedily construct, to effectually guard them. All we ask of the Government is that the recruits so raised shall be credited to the quotas of our several States on the call last made, and be armed, equipped and supplied as other volunteers in the service.

We are aware, that as a general rule, well founded objections exist to the enlistment of a force to be exclusively used for home or local defence, but we regard such a service as we now suggest, as an exceptional case, and the complete protection of this part of our frontier as of admitted importance.