

In Congress Decr 29. 1778

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The president informed Congress that the Minister of France had requested him to communicate the following information to Congress namely That the Minister was assured by good intelligence that the enemy's fleet at Rhode Island were greatly distressed for want of masts & spars; that a mast had been taken from a merchant man of Boston & put into a man of war of the line; that others of their ships of war had been rigged with jury masts and that they had little prospect of a supply from Halifax or any other of their ports: That there were in New Hampshire a number of masts fit for ships of the line ready to be exported from thence to St Domingo: That the enemy had been advised of this & were preparing to intercept them. That in his opinion it would be of great consequence to prevent the enemy from obtaining such an important supply and therefore he proposed that the masts should be sunk during the winter & as an inducement there to he would himself pay the expence of sinking & raising them & also the interest of what ever sum might have been expended in procuring the said mast, until the next spring

W. Thompson

Resolved That it be most earnestly recommended to the States of Massachusetts Bay & New Hampshire to take the most effectual measures to prevent any masts or spars from being exported from or laden on board any ships or vessels within the ports of the said States

Extract from the minutes

Chas Thompson Secy

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