

(Circular)

Newburgh 25 June 1781

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Sir,

On the 14th of May last, Congress passed a resolve, earnestly recommending to the executives of the several states, from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania inclusive, to forward on to such places as the quarter-master-general should direct, at the expense of the respective states in the first instance, all such supplies of provisions as they have been called upon to furnish; by the resolution of Congress of the 14th of November last. I hope the several legislatures have, in consequence, agreed on such measures as shall render this recommendation effectual, by furnishing the executives with the power and the means of carrying it into execution.

At the time the resolution reached me, the business of transportation was in such a train as promised the keeping up a supply of provisions till the measures above referred to could be fixed. The time is now arrived when they must take effect, or the army be again subjected to the distresses which they have already too often experienced. I therefore beg leave, in the most im-

25th June respecting the necessary
on supplies
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importunate manner to request an immediate compli-
-ance with the above recommendation of Congress. - This
request I should sooner have presented, but I was em-
-barraressed on a comparison of the present with
some former resolutions, which at the moment occurred
to me, but which I could not then take into consideration,
and the resolve having been by accident folded within
another paper, where for sometime it lay concealed; and
not recollecting precisely the terms of it, this application
has been unavoidably postponed. - The former Reso-
-lutions particularly referred to are those of the 15th July
& 30th November last, by which the storekeepers in the
quarter masters department are made the receivers of
provisions, including live stock. By these resolutions it
is made the duty of the storekeepers to examine all
articles received, to note deficiencies, and to reject such
as should be deficient in quality. This was practicable
when all articles were to be delivered at certain depositories,
-ries, but on the states being required to forward to the
army all their quotas of provisions, I conceived they
would deem it unnecessary at a great expence to col-
-lect them, part perhaps by a retrograde transportation
to the posts where the storekeepers were stationed: and
yet.

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without it, the inspection required, and consequent rejection of bad provisions, could not easily be effected. But if the provisions pass no inspection in the states where raised, and any part should afterwards be rejected on their arrival at the army, a very great expence would be incurred for nothing, but which the state sending such provision would be unwilling to sustain. — Other difficulties presented, but it is not necessary to enter into a detail of them. At all events, as matters are circumstanced, all the provisions, required by the resolutions of the 4th of Novem^r. last, must be transported to the army by the respective states solely, or by furnishing money to the quarter masters to enable them to do it. Should there be a failure, I see no alternative but the starving or disbanding of the army, or their supporting themselves by an oppressive military force.

I therefore earnestly intrust the immediate assistance of your state, to effect the transportation of provisions agreeably to the intentions of congress in the resolution first above mentioned. Should your Excellency think proper to con-

continue the present mode of transportation, through the agency of the quarter masters, they must be furnished with the means of providing teams & drivers with due dispatch, and of defraying their expenses. — This mode appears to me the least embarrassing, as the commissaries will make their applications to the quarter masters in the usual way. — But if any other mode be adopted, the quantities & species of provisions, & the places to which they must be transported, must be determined by the demands which the commissaries shall make, and the consequent transportation take place as if done thro' the agency of the quarter masters.

I have the honour to be,
with the greatest respect

Your Excellency's

most obed^t serv^t

Thos. Pickering

LMG

H^{is} Excellency Meshech Weare Esq^r