

1797 MS. P. 37

Head Quarters New England
Jan^y 5th 1788 7
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Dear Sir

It is with extreme anxiety and pain of mind, & find myself constrained to inform you, that the event I have long apprehended would be the consequence of the complicated distresses of the Army, and at length taken place. — On the night of the 1st Instant a mutiny was excited by the Non Commissioned Officers and Privates of the Pennsylvania Line, which soon became so universal as to defy all opposition — in attempting to quell this tumult in the first instance, some Officers were killed, others wounded, and the lives of several common Soldiers lost. — Deaf to the arguments, entreaties, and utmost efforts of all their Officers, to stop them, the Men moved off from Mifflin Town, the place of their Cantonment, with their Arms, and six Pieces of Artillery: And from accounts just received by General Wayne's Aid De Camp, they were still in a body, on their march to Philadelphia, to demand a redress of their grievances. — At what point this defection will stop, or how extensive it may

prove, God only knows: at present the Troops at the important Posts in this vicinity remain quiet, not being acquainted with this unhappy & alarming affair. — How long they will continue so cannot be ascertained, as they labor under some of the pressing hardships with the Troops who have revolted. —

The aggravated calamities & distresses that have resulted from the ^{total} want of pay for nearly twelve months, the want of cloathing at a severe season, and not unfrequently the want of provisions, are beyond description. — The circumstances will now point out much more forcibly, what ought to be done, than any thing that can possibly be said by me, on the subject.

It is not within the sphere of my duty, to make requisitions without the authority of Congress from individual States: but at such a crisis as this, and circumstanced as we are, my own heart will acquit me, and Congress and the States (astounded of this) whom for the sake of dispatch, I address, I am persuaded will excuse me, when once for all I give it decidedly as my opinion, that it is vain to think an Army can be kept together much longer, under such a variety of sufferings

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as rare has experienced: and that unless
✓ some immediate & spirited measures are adop-
ted to furnish at least three Months pay to
the troops, in Money which will be of some
value to them - And at the same time ways
(and Means are devised to cloath and feed them
better (more regularly I mean) than they have
been - the worst that can befall us, may be
expected.

I have transmitted Congress a Copy of
this Letter, and have in the most pressing
terms requested them to adopt the measure
which I have above recommended, or a
similar to it, and as I will not doubt of
their compliance, I have thought it proper
to give you this previous notice, that you
may be prepared to answer the requisition.

As I have used every endeavour in
my power to avert the evil that has come
upon us, for will I continue to exert every
mean I am possessed of, to prevent an extension
of the mischief, but I can neither foretell, or
be answerable for the issue.

That you may have every information
that an Officer of rank and abilities can
give

give of the true situation of our affairs, and
the condition and temper of the troops, I
have prevailed upon Brigadier General Knott
to be the bearer of this letter, to him I beg
leave to refer you for many matters, which
would be too tedious for a letter.

I have the honor to be
With great regard & esteem
Sir

Your most Obedt
Wth Servant
G. Washington

in Genl Washingtons
5 Jan^y 1781
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state of the army the depth
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The Hon^{ble} Michael Moore Esq^r
President of New Hampshire