

[1813, June 19]



Dear Sir

Monticello June 19. 13.

Your favors of the 7th & 16th are received & I now return you the 11th -
 - most enclosed in the former. I am much gratified by it's communication
 because, as the plan appeared in the newspapers soon after the new Seve-
 - lany at War came into office, we had given him the credit of it, every line
 of it is replete with wisdom; and we might lament that our tardy en-
 - listments prevented it's execution, were we not to reflect that these
 proceeded from the happiness of our people at home. it is more a subject
 of joy that we have so few of the desperate characters which compose
 modern regular armies, but it shows more forcibly the necessity of
 obliging every citizen to be a souldier, this was the case with the Greeks
 & Romans and must be that of every free state. where there is no oppres-
 - sion there will be no pauper hirelings. we must train & classify the whole
 of our male citizens, and make military instruction a regular part of
 collegiate education. we can never be safe till this is done.

I have been persuaded ab initio that what we are to do in Canada,
 must be done quickly; because our enemy, with a little time, can empty pick-
 - pockets upon us faster than we can enlist honest men to oppose them.
 if we fail in this acquisition, Hull is the cause of it. Pike in his retreat
 would have swept their posts to Montreal, because his army would have
 grown as it went along. I fear the reinforcements arrived at Quebec
 will be at Montreal before Gen^l. Dearborne, & if so the game is up. if the
 marching of the militia into an enemy's country be once ceded as un-
 - constitutional (which I hope it never will be) then will their force, as
 now strengthened, bid us permanent defiance. could we acquire the
 country, we might perhaps insist successfully at S^t. Petersburg ~~at~~ retaining
 all ~~westward~~ westward of the Meridian of L. Huron, or of Ontario, or of Montreal,
 according to the pulse of the place, as an indemnification of the past, & security for
 the future. to cut them off from the Indians, even West of the Huron would be a

35280

Col^o. Monroe

great future security.

Your kind answer of the 16th entirely satisfies my doubts as to the employment of the navy, if kept within striking distance of our coast; & shows how erroneous views are apt to be with those who have not all in view. yet as I know from experience that profitable suggestions sometimes come from lookers on, they may be usefully tolerated provided they do not pretend to the right of an answer. they would cost very dear indeed were they to occupy the time of a high officer in writing when he should be acting. I intended no such trouble to you, my dear Sir; and were ~~it~~ you to suppose I expected it I must cease to offer a thought on our public affairs. altho' my entire confidence in their direction prevents my reflecting on them but accidentally, yet sometimes facts, & sometimes ideas occur, which I regard as worth the trouble of reading but not of answering. of this kind was my suggestion of the facts which I recollected as to the defence of the Chesapeake, and of what had been contemplated at the time between the Secretaries of War & the navy ^{by my self.} if our views were sound, the object might be effected in one year, even of war, and at an expence which is nothing compared to the population & productions it would cover.

We are here laboring under the most extreme drought ever remembered at this season. we have had but one rain to lay the dust in two months. that was a good one, but was three weeks ago, corn is but a few inches high & dying, oats will not yield their seed. of wheat the hard winter & the leaves is about $\frac{2}{3}$ of an ordinary crop so that, in the lottery of human life you see that even farming is but gambling. we have had three days of excessive heat. the thermometer on the 16th was at 92. on the 17th 92½ & yesterday at 93. it had never before exceeded 92½ at this place; at least within the periods of my observation. ever & affectionately yours

Th: Jefferson