

Letters of Members of the Continental Congress

EDITED BY
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The Lord Baltimore Press
BALTIMORE, MD., U. S. A.

such Dispositions of the Troops under your Command as you shall judge proper.²

I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of Esteem and Respect,
Sir your most obed. and very hble Servt

JOHN HANCOCK Presidt.

His Excellency Genl Washington.³

207. JOHN WITHERSPOON TO THE GOVERNOR OF NEW JERSEY
(WILLIAM LIVINGSTON).¹

PHILADELPHIA Nov. 14, 1776

Sir

The inclosed Letter delivered to me this morning in Congress has been so long on its Way that perhaps Mr Stockton is himself at home by this time yet I thought it necessary that you should receive it by Express and lay it before the Assembly who will do upon it what appears to them necessary.²

I also take leave to inform you and by you the Council and Assembly that this Moment Congress have received an Express that ships are turning out from the Hook and steering southward. The former Intelligence which you can inform them of will enable them to determine what use they should make of this. Expresses are sent to the southern Governments and every means is using in this City to prepare for its Defence in Case the Enemy should intend here. The ships come out slowly but 100 were seen two of them large yesterday afternoon when the Express left Long branch. It is the opinion of intelligent Persons that you should immediately send a Body of Militia to the fort at Willingsport on Delaware lest they should send a detachment against it. As soon as further Intelligence comes the Assembly shall be made acquainted with it and I doubt not the most vigorous Exertions will be made as most here seem to think the Design is against this important Place.³

I am Sir your most obedt humble servant

JNO WITHERSPOON

² The letters of Searle, written from Long Branch, N. J., Nov. 13, are in Force, *Am. Arch.*, fifth ser., III. 669-670. One of them is in *N. C. Col. Recs.*, X. 908. The Pennsylvania council of safety also sent out an urgent call for assistance. See their letters to the Lancaster committee and to the several battalion commanders in Lancaster County, Nov. 14, Force, *Am. Arch.*, fifth ser., III. 672-673; also a letter of William Hooper to the North Carolina congress, Nov. 14, in *N. C. Col. Recs.*, X. 902 (the original is in the office of the North Carolina Historical Commission), and Samuel Adams to James Warren, Nov. 16, in *Warren-Adams Letters*, I. 277. William Ellery (Nov. 16, no. 212, *post*) mentions that on Nov. 15 Searle brought to Congress further information. This proved to be a false alarm. See nos. 207, 208, 211, 212, *post*.

³ Appended to the text in the *Am. Arch.* is the statement (from the Hancock Letter-Book): "The same to the Commanding Officer in New Jersey, and to his Excellency Governor Livingston." Similar letters were also written to the Southern states, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina (Force, *Am. Arch.*, fifth ser., III. 669, 670). The original of the letter to North Carolina is in the office of the North Carolina Historical Commission. It is printed in *N. C. Col. Recs.*, X. 908.

[207]¹ N. J. State Lib., Stryker Coll.

² Probably such a letter as that from Stockton to Abraham Clark, Oct. 28, in Force, *Am. Arch.*, fifth ser., II. 1274.

³ See no. 206, *ante*.