Thomas Cushing to Benjamin Franklin, December 30, 1774

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[Boston, December 30, 1774][2]

I have lately been favoured with a Copy of Lord Dartmouth's circular Letter to the Governors of the respective Colonies upon this Continent, wherein he Informs them, that His Majesty has thought fit, by his order in Council of the 19th October 1774, to prohibit the exportation from Great Britain of Gunpowder or any sort of Arms or Ammunition & that it is his Majesty's Command that they take the most Effectual Measures for arresting, detaining and securing any Gunpowder or any sort of Arms or Ammunition, which may be Attempted to be imported into the Provinces under their Government, unless the master of the Ship, having such Military Stores on board, shall produce a licence from his Majesty or the Privy Council, for the exportation of the same from some of the Ports of Great Britain: The Colonies apprehend this Political Manoevre of the Ministry forbodes the most rigorous exertions of Martial Force, They are therefore adopting the most Effectual Methods to defend themselves against any Hostile Invasions of the Enemies to America ? I am informed that the People of Rhode Island having in consequence of this Intelligence been alarmed with the same Apprehensions, have removed the Powder Guns, Cannon & other Military Stores from the Fort at the Enstrance of their Harbor into the County where they are safely Lodged and That the People at Portsmouth in New hampshire have done the like by their Cannon & other Military Stores at the Fort at New castle at the entrance of their Harbour

1. Franklin Papers, LVIII, 107, APS.

2. The date is approximated. On December 30, 1774, Cushing wrote to Josiah Quincy, Jr., who, like Franklin, was in London. The Quincy letter conveyed the same account of the reaction in Rhode Island and New Hampshire to the Order in Council. Cushing (1725-1788) had been a member of the First Continental Congress

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