

## THE SUMMONS OF CONTRECOEUR

*A Summon, by order of Contrecoeur, Captain of one of the companies of the detachment of the French Marine, Commandre-in-chief of his most Christian Majesty's troops, now on the Beautiful River, to the Commander of those of the King of Great Britain, at the mouth of the river Monongialo:*

Sir: – Nothing can surprise me more that to see you attempt a settlement upon the lands of the King, my Mater; which obliges me now sir, to send you this gentleman, Chevalier Le Mercier, Captain of the Bombardiers, Commander of the Artillery of Canada, to know of you, sir, by virtue of what authority you are to come to fortify yourself within the dominions of the King, my Master. This action seems so contrary to the last treaty of peace concluded as Aix La Chapelle, between his most Christian Majesty and the King of Great Britain, that I do not know to whom to impute such a usurpation, as it is incontestable that the lands situated along the Beautiful River belong to his Christian Majesty.

I am informed, sir, that your undertaking has been concerted by none else that by a company who have more in view the advantage of the trade than to endeavor to keep the union of harmony which subsists between the crowns of France and Great Britain, although it is as much the interest, sir, of your nation as ours to preserve it.

Let it be as well, sir, if you come into this place charged with orders, I summon you in the name of the King, my Master, by virtue of orders which I got from my General, to retreat peaceably with your troops from off the lands of the King (and not to return; or else I find myself obliged to fulfill my duty, and compel you to it. I hope, sir, you will not defer an instant, and that you will not force me to the last extremity). In that case, sir, you may be persuaded that I will give orders that there shall be no damage done by the detachment.

I prevent you, sir, from the trouble of asking me one hour of delay, nor to wait for my consent to receive orders from your Governor. He can give none within the dominions of the King, my master. Those I have received of my General, are my laws, so that I cannot depart from them.

If, on the contrary, sir, you have not got orders, and only come to trade, I am sorry to tell you, that I cannot avoid seizing you, and to confiscate your effects to the use of the Indians, our children, allies, and friends; as you are not allowed to carry on a contraband trade. It is for this reason, sir, that we stopped two Englishmen, last year, who were trading upon our lands; moreover, the King, my master, asks nothing but his right; he has not the least intention to trouble the good harmony and friendship which between his Majesty and the King of Great Britain.

The governor of Canada can give proof of having done his utmost endeavors to maintain the perfect union which reigns between the two friendly princes; as he had learned that the Iroquois and Nepissingues of the Lake of the two mountains, had struck and destroyed an English family towards Carolina, he has barred up that road and forced them to give him a little boy belonging to that family, which was the only one alive, and which Mr. Welrich, a merchant of Montreal, has carried to Boston; and what is more, he has forbid his savages from exercising their accustomed cruelty upon the English and friends.

I could complain bitterly, sir, of the means taken all last winter to instigate the Indians to accept the hatchet, and to strike us, while we were striving to maintain the peace.

I am well persuaded, sir, of the polite manner you will receive Monsieur Le Mercier, as well out of regard to his business as his distinction and personal merit. I expect you will send him back with one of your officers, who will give me a precise answer. As you have got some Indians with you, sir, I join Monsieur Le Mercier, an interpreter, that he may inform them of my intentions upon that subject.

I am with great regard, sir,

Your most humble and obedient,

CONTRECOEUR.

Done at our Camp, April 16, 1754.