Benjamin Franklin Addresses Conflict Over the Wyoming Valley

In Council
Philadelphia June 12
th 1786

Gentlemen

I received in its time your letter of the twenty fifth of February last, written in behalf of the People settled at Virginia, and requesting a protection of Government for an Agent who might be sent hither, to explain your Grievances &ca. The request appeared to us to be reasonable, and such a protection would have been immediately sent, but that we were told the Gentlemen who brought your letter, Captain Schott, being in Town, and well acquainted with your affairs; the giving him a hearing might possibly answer your purpose as well and spare you the expence and trouble of sending a special Agent. He was accordingly heard before the Council, and had an opportunity of conversing separately with several of the Members, as well as with the Members of Assembly; and gave so clear and so affecting an account of the situation of your People, their present disposition, and former sufferings, as inclined the Government in general to shew them every kind of reasonable favor. The Assembly accordingly took the necessary previous steps...
for a compliance with your request respecting a separate County, which will probably be compleated at their next session. But as there may be other matters necessary to be considered and discussed in order to establish solid and lasting quiet, the Council have since judged that it might still be useful if your first proposal of sending an Agent hither were agreed to; and if one, or more chosen and [2] appointed by the People should accordingly be here about the beginning of the session which was first for the twenty second of August next. You may therefore now acquaint the Setters that upon information of such appointment, a passport or Safe-conduct under the Great Seal for the person or persons so appointed Shall be sent to you, giving him or them perfect security in coming, residing here, and returning from all Arrests on suits of any kind, and full freedom and protection from every hindrance, Restraint or Molestation whatsoever.

Be assured, Gentlemen that it will be a great pleasure to the whole Council, as well as to myself in particular, if we can be instrumental by just and reasonable measures in promoting the happiness of so great a body four People as the settlers at Wioming consist of-

I am Gentlemen Your friend and humble Servant

B. Franklin Presidt.

Messrs. John Franklin William Hooker Smith and John Jenkins-