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Source: Governor Berkeley and His Council on Their Inability to Defend Virginia Against a Dutch Attack, December 1673

We thought it our duty . . . to set forth in this our Declaration, the true state and condition of this country in general and our particular . . . disabilit[y] to . . . [engage in] war at the time of this invasion [by the Dutch]. . . . [We] therefore do most humbly beseech your majesty and your most honorable council to consider that Virginia is intersected by so many vast rivers as makes more miles to defend than we have men of trust to defend them. For by our nearest computation we leave at our backs as many servants (besides Negroes) as there are freemen to defend the shores and all our frontiers [against] the Indians. . . . [This] gives men fearful apprehensions of the danger they leave their estates and families in, while they are drawn from their houses to defend the borders. Also at least one third [of the freemen available for defense] are single freemen (whose labor will hardly maintain them) or men much in debt, . . . [whom] we may reasonably expect upon any small advantage the enemy may gain upon us, . . . [to defect] to them in hopes of bettering their condition by sharing the plunder of the country with them.