

George Washington to John Sullivan, November 7, 1775, Orders, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

***INSTRUCTIONS TO BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN SULLIVAN**

Head Quarters, November 7, 1775.

You are to proceed immediately to Portsmouth in New Hampshire,¹ and complete the Works already began, to secure that and the other Towns at the Entrance of Piscataway River, from any Attacks by Ships of War. For this Purpose, you are to fix Ships and Fire Rafts in such Places as you find most convenient to prevent the Enemy from passing up the River. As great Calamities and Distress are brought upon our Sea Port Towns, through the malicious Endeavours and false Representations of many Persons, holding Commissions under the Crown, who, not content with bringing Destruction upon some of our principal Towns, are yet using every Art that Malice can devise to reduce others to the same unhappy State; in Hopes, by such diabolical and cruel Conduct to please an arbitrary and tyrannical Ministry, and to receive from them in Return, a Continuance of such Places and Pensions as they now hold at the Expence of the Blood and Treasure of this distressed Continent.

You are, therefore, immediately upon your arrival in that Province, to seize such Persons as hold Commissions under the Crown and are acting as open and avow'd Enemies to their Country, and hold them as Hostages for the Security of those Towns, which our ministerial Enemies threaten to invade. In Case any Attack should be made upon Portsmouth, or other Sea Ports in that Quarter, you are immediately to collect such Force

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as can be raised, to repel the Invasion; and at all Hazards prevent the Enemy from landing and taking Possession of any Posts in that Quarter. When you have compleated the Works at Portsmouth, and secured the Passage of the River there, you are to return without Delay to the Army, unless you find the Enemy are about to make an immediate Attack upon that or the neighbouring Towns; [the above is rather to be considered as matters of advice than orders; as I do not conceive myself authorizd to Involve the Continent in any Expence for the defence of Portsmouth, or other place out of the Line of the great American defence; particular Colonies being called upon by the Congress to prepare for their own Internal Security. Given under my Hand etc.]²

¹General Sullivan was already at Portsmouth.

²The words in brackets are in Washington's writing.