

the illinois Colony with a large population can harass the English Colonies, it is hardly less easy for the Latter to seize illinois if left in its present weak condition. Of all the regions we now occupy it is the one whither they can come most easily with a small force, and if they should once succeed in so thrusting themselves between our two Colonies, the loss of the Mississipi and the ruin of the inland trade of Canada would be certain, while the Spanish Colonies and even Mexico would be in very great danger.

From all this it results that by uniting illinois to Canada but little would be gained as regards the expense of the troops, the number of which should, in my opinion, be increased rather than diminished. They are, moreover, absolutely needed there to restrain the savages and sometimes the residents, and for the purpose of increasing the number of the latter in time.

Through lack of sufficient soldiers, Monsieur de Bertet was throughout the war in constant danger from which he extricated himself chiefly through his own good management, and to a slight extent by means of the munitions and goods that were sent him from here.

It should also be observed that, as that post is at the extreme end of our two Colonies, the Coureurs des bois and other good-for-nothing men usually make it their refuge, and might cause much disorder, if the Commanding officer had not a sufficient force at hand to repress it.

It cannot be expected that much can be obtained by farming out that post. I think this would complete its ruin, and that, at the most, some money might be obtained from licenses, or by compelling those who procure them to convey munitions and provisions; and I do not know whether this could be secured.

I agree with you, Monseigneur, that it is quite a matter of indifference, considering the share the illinois settlement can have in the defence or even the subsistence of Louisiana, whether the commanding officer there be one from Canada or one from Louisiana. Orders can be given him always to send as much flour etc. as possible to new Orleans and to give that town and all its dependencies every assistance in his power.