



An Answer to the Inquiries of the Right Hon^{ble}. the Lords Commissioners for Foreign Plantations
to the Governo^r of Virginia

Inquiry 1st What Councils Assemblies and Courts of Judicature are within yo^r government and of what nature and kind

Ans^r There is a Governo^r and Sixtyone Councello who have from his Sacred Maty a Comission of oyer and Terminer who indige and determine all Causes that are about 15th St^g. For what is under them are ftinler Courts in every County 3 are Trinity in number Every yeare at least the Assembly is Called before whom h^{is} appeals And This Assembly is Composed of Two Burgesses out of every County. These lay the necessary Taxes as the necessity of the Countrey with the Indians or other exigencies require

2 What Courts of Judicature are within yo^r Govern^t relating to the Admiralty

Ans^r In Twenty Eight yeares There has been never one private brought into this Countrey. Soe That there is noo neede of a private Court for that concern

3 Where the Legislative and executive powers of yo^r Govern^t are seated

Ans^r In the Governo^r Councell and Assemblies and officers substituted by them

4 What Statute Lawes and ordinances are now made and in force

Ans^r The Secretary of this Countrey every yeare sends to the Lord Chancellor or one of the Principal Secretaries what Lawes are yearly made soe for the most part concerne onely our owne private exigencies for contrary to the Lawes of England wee never did nor dare make any onely this that noe Sale of Land is good and legall unless within three monthes after the Conveyance it be recorded in the Gen^l Court or County Courts.

5 What number of horse and foot are within yo^r Govern^t and whether they be trayned bands or standing forces

Ans^r All our freemen are bound to be trayned every month in their ftinler Countreys soe wee suppose and doe not much mistake in the Calculation are neare 8000 horse if there are more but it is too changeable for good people as wee are to exercise them

6 What Castles and Forts are within yo^r Govern^t & how fortified as also what Stores and Provisions they are furnished with
Ans^r There are fiv^e Forts in the Countrey two in James River and one in the three other Rivers of yorde Rappahannock & Potomack but God knows wee have neither skill or ability to make or maintain them for there is not now as far as my inquiry can reach there was one Ingenieur in the Countrey. Soe that wee are at continuall charge to expaine unskillfull & inartificiall buildings of that nature there is not above thirty great and serviceable Guns. this wee yearly supply with powder & shot as far as our almost abilities will permit us

7 What number of privateers doe frequent yo^r Coasts and neighboring Seas what their numbers are the names of their Commanders
Ans^r None to our knowledge since the late Antt^h warre

8 What is the strength of yo^r bordering neighbors so they Indians or others by Sea & Land what Correspondence doe you keep with yo^r neighbors
Ans^r Wee have now Europeans seated neare to us, then St^h Christophers or Mexico that wee know of, except some few Spaniards that are beyond now England the Indians our neighbors are absolutely subidect soe that there is noo fears of them as for Correspondence wee have none with any European Stronghold nor is there a possibility to have it at this time

9

What Armes Ammunition and Stores did you find upon the place or have been sent unto you since upon his Matys account
When retained here employed what part of them is ^{present} remaining and where:

Ans^r



When I came into the Country I found one onely ruined fort to the right greater Guns most unserviceable and all
dismounted but flamm, situated in a most unhealthy place & without if an Enemy know the foundings hee could keepe
out of the danger of the best Guns in Europe. his Maty in the year of the Dutch war sent us thirty greater Guns
most of w^{ch} were lost in the ship that brought them before or since this wee never had one greater or small gun sent
us since my coming hither now I believe in Twenty years before. All that have been sent by his Sacred Maty are still
in the Country with a few more new lately bought

10

What monyes have been paid or appointed to be paid by his Maty or levied within yo^r government for and towards the
buying of Armes or maintaining of any fortifications or Castles and how have the said Monyes been expended:

Ans^r

Besides those Guns I mentioned wee never had any monyes of his Maty towards the buying of Ammunition or building of forts
but w^{ch} monyes can be spared out of the publicke Revenue we yearly lay out in Ammunition

11

What are the boundaries and Contents of the Land within your Government

Ans^r

As for the boundaries of our Land it was once greater (encompassing in Latitude) but now it hath pleased his Maty to confine us to halfe
degrees knowingly I speake this way God it may be for his Matys service but I much feare the contrary

12

What Commodities are there of the production growth and manufactory of yo^r plantation and principally to materials
are there already growing or may be produced for shipping in the same

Ans^r

Commodities of the growth of our Country we never had any (till of late) but Tobacco is in this yet is considerable ⁱⁿ his Matys
ag^t renowned, but of late we have begun to make silke & soe many mulberry trees are planted and planting that if wee
had skillfull men from Naples or Sicilly to teach us the art of making it perfectly in less then halfe an age we should
make as much silke in an yeare as England doe yearly expend threescore yeares since but now wee have it is growne to
a greater extent and more common and vulgar usage for shipping. Wee have admirable Mastes and very good oakes
but for Iron ore I dare not say there is sufficient ~~in the Country~~ ^{in the Country} ~~to smelt Iron ore~~ ^{to smelt Iron ore}

13

Whether Salt Peter is or may be found within yo^r plantation and if soe at what rate may it be sold in England

Ans^r

Salt peter we know of none in the Country

14

What Rivers Harbours or Roads are there in or about yo^r plantation and Government of its depth and soundings and they

Ans^r

Rivers we have found as I named before all able safely and securely to beare a thousand ships of the
greatest burthen:

15

What number of Planters Servants and Slaves & how many families are there in yo^r plantation

Ans^r

Wee suppose and I am very sure wee doe not much miscount that there is in Virginia above forty thousand persons
more Women and Children of 10th there are Two thousand black Slaves, six thousand Christian Servants for a
short time the rest are borne in the Country or have come into settle or found in hope of bettering their Condition
in a growing Country:

16

What number of English Scotch or Irish have for these seven yeares last past come yearly to plant & inhabit
within yo^r Government and alsoe of blacks or Slaves have been brought in within the said time

Ans^r

Yearly we suppose there comes in of Servants about fiftie hundred of 10th most are English few Scotch & few
Irish and not above two or three ships of Negroes in seven yeares

17

What number of people have yearly died within yo^r plantation & Government for these seven yeares last past both
whites and blacks

Ans^r

All new plantations are for an age or two unhealthy till they are thoroughly cleared of wood but unless wee had a plentiful register of
how the dying all that dye I cannot give a further answer to this query only this I can say that there is not often any personed hands
(as wee terme them) that dye now whereas heretofore not one of ffinn staped the first yeare

18 What number of Ships doe trade yearly to and from yo^r plantations and of ^{what} burthen and they
 Answer - English Ships were Eighty some out of England & Ireland only go and for Tobacco from new England & others; but of our own
 19 What objections doe you find to the improvement of trade and navigation of the plantations within yo^r Government

Answer - Mighty and Distant as that several Acts of Parliament in England us from sending any Commodity to any Nation
 in Europe but our own, so that we cannot add to our plantations any Commodity that grows out of it as a Linc. tawd
 Cotton or Vins. before this we cannot procure any skillfull man for our new hopefull Commodity like flax it is not
 large enough to carry a piece of stuff or a bushell of Corn to any place in Europe out of the Kings dominions
 of this world for his Majesty's service or the good of his Subject who should not asperse it with any foreign
 but on my sense it is the contrary for both, and this is the cause why no small or great vessels are built here
 for we are most obedient to all laws whilst the new England men trade through them to any place that they
 interest leads them too

20

What advantage or improvements doe you observe that may be gained to yo^r trade & navigation

Answer - None unless we had Liberty to transport our pepper Staves Tymber and Cord to other places besides the Kings dominions

21

What Rates and Duties are charged & payable upon any Goods exported out of yo^r plantations whether of yo^r
 own growth or manufacture or otherwise as also upon Goods imported:

Answer - No Goods either exported or imported pay any the least duties here only two shillings the hind on Tobacco exported
 which is to defray all publique Charges and this year we could not get an account of more than fifteen thousand
 out of which the King allows me a thousand a year the 10th I must maintain the Port of my place and an
 hundred pounds for the Charges that cannot be put to publique account and I am thoroughly assured
 that there is no Government of ten years Settlement but has there as much allowed them from each year's Support
 -ed by my hopes that his Excellency's Majesty will one day render me:

22

What Revenue doe or may arise to his Majesty within yo^r Government of ^{what} nature is it by what means is the
 same collected & how accounted & accounted to his Majesty

Answer - There is no Revenue arising to his Majesty but out of the Dutch Rents and this hee hath given away to adorning
 servant Coll Henry Norwood:

23

What Course is taken about yo^r instructing of the people within yo^r Government in the Christian Religion and in
 provision is there made for the raising of yo^r ministry:

Answer - The same Course that is taken in England out of Thomas every man according to his ability instructing his Children
 we have forty eight parishes and our Ministers are well paid and by my consent should be better if they would pray
 oftener, and goddly less; but of all other Comodities of this the worst have sent us and we had flow that we can boast
 of since the persecution in Cromwells Tyranny drove sundry worthy men hither. but I thank God there is no need
 of schools nor printing and I hope we shall not have these hundred years for learning has brought disobedience & heresy
 and Sects into the world and printing has divulged them and Libell against the best Government: God keep us from both:

S^g Reg

June 20th 1671



your Lordships most humble
 and most Obedient servant
 William Berkeley