

The Iroquois becoming more threatening, Governor De la Barre requested more troops from France and called out the local forces. With the latter, in 1684, he undertook an expedition to Lake Ontario, which, however, resulted very unfavorably for the colony. The Iroquois were convinced of the weakness of the French power in Canada, the expenses of the colony were greatly increased, and a rupture resulted with the farmers of the revenue who refused, the following year, to contribute the usual amount of funds for the government. In consequence of this combination of circumstances, the Intendant Demeulles found himself running short of funds to meet the increasing expenses, especially for the pay of the troops.

The supplies for Canada, at this time, were provided in France in the early part of each year for that year only, but did not usually reach Canada till late in the summer. The consequence was that when the stores ran out there was nothing at the command of the Intendant with which to meet the expenses of the first six months of the following year. This did not present special difficulties where the chief payments were to be made to merchants or others who could wait a few months for their money. But, with a considerable military force, the pay of the soldiers had to be provided regularly.

Such were the circumstances in which Demeulles found himself in 1685. His supplies were exhausted, he had neither cash on hand nor stores to sell, yet the soldiers were clamoring for their pay and complaining of the conditions under which they were called out.

In the following letter, dated 24th September, 1685, he describes his situation and the device by which he managed to tide over the difficulty.

"I have found myself this year in very great straits with reference to the supplies for the soldiers. You did not, my lord, provide funds beyond the first of January last. I made every effort to support them for the whole eight months till September. I drew from my own purse and from those of my friends all that was possible. But at last, seeing it impossible for them to render me any further service, and not knowing to which saint to make my vows, money being very scarce, having distributed very considerable sums on all sides for the pay of