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KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA



ENGLANDS PETITION TO THEIR KING.

O R,

An humble *Petition* of the distressed and almost destroyed Subjects of ENGLAND.

To the Kings most excellent Majestie.

Containing (in the judgement of the wise) the very sense of all the true-hearted of the Kingdome:

But because the way to the Kings eare is stopt, it was sent to LONDON, and there printed, as it is *briefly declared to the Reader.*

EXOD. 10. 7.

Knowest thou not yet that our Canaan is destroyed?

Printed on the day of *Jacobs* trouble, and to make way (in hope) for its deliverance out of it.

May 5. 1643:

To the obvious not desired Reader.



Good Friend, We would have you know this Petition was intended onely for his Majesties view, but because plain dealing is seldome well taken, and his Majesty so guarded from the Requests of his Subjects, we are therefore forced to submit it to your common view, and to turn it out, in hope his Majestie may light of one Copie, and seriously read it, and lay to heart the distresse of the miserable: if you censure it as the work of some few discontented persons, Know you it is the sense of our part of the Kingdome, and if you will promise us freedom and hopes of successe, we'll soone returne it you with the hands of 1000000. If you condemne us for speaking too plainly, Know that misery makes men forget good manners; and dying men use not complements; We are in the case of the Lepers, If we sit still we perish, therefore we will move in the way of hope, and go in to the King, though it be not according to Law, and if we perish we perish. Yet know, we will come far short of the plainnesse of better persons and tymes, 2. Sam. 12. 7. 1 King. 18. 18. &c. &c. &c.

To the Kings most Excellent Majestie;

The humble Petition of Your distressed and almost
destroyed Subjects of Your Kingdome of England.



READ SOVERAIGNE, Its a double griefto
our foules, that wee should be constrained to
beg for our lives at Your hands, who are
bound by the Law of God and nature, and by
Your Oath, to preserve them, and that wee
should bee forced to entreat You to spare our
estates, liberties, and bloud, whose honour

and strength depends so much on these our enjoyments: But extre-
mity prevaileth and drives us to You, and casteth us here prostrate
at the feet of your Majestie: And let not your Majestie bee offended,
if we speak more plainly then usually becometh us; for necessitie
hath no law: It is for our lives and more, and therefore blame us
not to speak; our friends, our wives, our children, our wants, our
dangers, our Countrey, our bloud, do all pierce our eares and hearts
with their daily and dolfull cryes; Oh that our requests could finde
as quick accessse to yours! Surly its impossible your Majesty should
bee ignorant of the dolefull condition your two Kingdomes are in;
Do you not know that our houses are plundered, and the fruit of
our long labours taken from us; that men who have heretofore re-
lieved hundreds of the poore, have not left them a bed to lye on,
food to sustaine them, or a house to put their heads in? And the poor
they were wont to relieve, are forced to become Souldiers, that they
may rob us by authority. Know you not how many thousand di-
stressed foules cry to God day and night, in their anguish and misery,
while they see you the Father of their Countrey, having no com-
passion on them? Oh! where is now your Majesties ancient cle-
mencie: You were wont if we lost our estates by Pyrates, or but a
house by fire, to grant your gracious Letters Patents for our re-
lief; but now your Souldiers rob us of all, and burne our houses to

the ground, and this not onely for obtaining victory in heat of fight, but upon deliberation afterwards, as they did at *Brimingham* in *Warwickshire* by neere a hundred houses the next day when they left the Town. You were wont to relieve Your Subjects when taken by Pyrates, and made Gally-slaves; and now the loathsome prisons of *Oxford*; & other places, are filled with their miserable, starved, diseased bodies, who (some of them) would think themselves half free-men were they Turkish Gally-slaves; such is their cruell usage. Know you not how our Lands lye untilled, while your Souldiers take our horses by a thousand at a time? and what can follow this but extreame famine? Know you not how our blood is spilt, and the dead bodies of your Subjects, yea, many of your Nobles scattered as dung on the face of the earth? Have not your eyes seen it, and your eares heard the groanes of the wounded, gasping for life? Is all this nothing in your eyes? To whom should your people go but to your Majestie in this our distresse? We have tryed all other known means, and professe in the sight of God, we know none but your Majestie, under God, that can deliver us without more blood and desolation; and the world knows it is in your hands, you may do it if you will; and do it easily, and do it with increase of your honour, safety, and happinesse. What if it were to part with something of your right, yet should not your Majestie do it to save the life of your people, from whom, and for whose good, You first received it?

Dread Sovereigne, We beseech you consider, what hath your Parliament and people done, that deserues all this from you? It is because your Parliament relieved us from oppressing Courts, and illegall taxations? Was it not with your own consent? and is it not your glory, to be King of a rich and free people? Is it because they prosecute Delinquents? Why, to what end are your Courts of Justice els? and are not they your chiefest Court? And can those bee friends to You, and worth the defending, that are enemies to your Kingdomes For your Forts and Navy, are they not yours for your Kingdomes good? And is not your Parliament, the Kingdomerepresentative? We know your Majesty cannot mannage them in your own person, but by your Ministers, and those chosen by Counsell; and can You

or the Kingdom possible judge any more able, impartiall, and faithfull to advise You in this, then your Parliament? They medled not with it, till absolute necessitie constrained; till they saw *Ireland* in rebellion, the rebels threatning *England*, the same spirits as malignant and active at home, and their own lives and the Kingdom in present apparent jeopardy, and your Majesties consent to their Bill denied. We cannot but see the same Counsels setting your Majestie against your Parliament now, which caused their so long discontinuance, which caused the Ship money, and other illegall taxations, which caused the late innovations in Church and State, which caused the war with *Scotland*, which broke up the last Parliament, and caused that investive Declaration against them, in the very language of the present times. Wee cannot possible conceive what your Parliament can do now to remedy any of these miseries; they humbly seek your royall consent in vain; the offenders legallie proceeded against are defended from them, yea those that your Majestie hath proclaimed such; that is denied them which is yeilded to every the lowest sourt of Justice; they desire nothing more then your presence and concurrence; and wee know if humble Petitions or loyall affections would procure it, there would not have been so long a distance. Neither is there any visible means left, but either give up our states, liberties, lives and Religion to the dispose of your too long tryed secret Councell, and make your Majesties meere will the onelie law, and so betray their countrey, and the trust committed to them, (which God forbid) or else defend us by the sword.

And for us your people, what have we done that we are made a common spoyl? VVould your Majestie desire us perfidiousslie to betray them whom we have trusted? and desert them that have been so faithfull to us? and to kill them whom wee have chosen to save us? and destroy those who are our selves representatively? Then should we be the disgrace of the *English* Nation, the reproch of our posteritie, the verie shame of nature, and should presentlie expect some strange judgement of God, according to the strangeness of our offence. Its true, we are forced to take *Antidotum contra Cæsarem*; or rather to save our throats from the violence of desperat persons about

You ; but vve beseech You call not this bearing Arms against You; it may be against your wil; but if any of your now followers be more respectiue of your royall authoritie established by Law, more truelie tender of your person and honour then we ; then let not God prosper our proceedings, but cause us to fall before them, and give us up into their hands. VVe are fallen upon by the cruel, and because wee will not die quietly & without resistance, we are accused as traytors and enemies to your Majestie. VVe beseech your Majestie, consider in the presence of God, if your own Father & King had run upon you with his drawne sword, whether would you have suffered death without resistance, or have taken the sword *pro tempore* out of his hand? and yet neither be averse to his honour and person, or his proprietie in his weapon. Doth not nature teach us the preservation of our selves? will not the eye winke without deliberation? and the smallest worm turn back, if you tread on it? And beside nature, wee have frequent presidents in sacred Writt, for even more then defensive resistance of Transcendent Monarch, 1 *Sam.* 14. 44, 45. 1 *Sam.* 23. 11, 12. 2 *King.* 1. 10, 12, 13. 2 *Chr.* 26. 18, 20. *Dan.* 6. 14, &c. But if all this were nothing, yet we know your Majestie hath passed an act for the continuance of this Parliament: and sure that act must needs mean a Parliament with its power and authoritie, and not the meere name and carkasse of a Parliament; Its not onely that they shall stay together in *London*, and do nothing, or no more then another Court; but that they continue your chief Counsel, your chiefe Court, and have sole legislative power, which are your Parliaments peculiar properties. And if your Majestie hath enacted the continuance of a reall Parliament in its power, who seeth not that You have thereby joynd with them your royall authority, though not your person? Doth not your Majestie in your Expresses oft mention your selfe a part of the Parliament? and that the head without which the body cannot live, and is the Parliament valid without your authoritie? therefore if your Majestie may and have withdrawn from them your royall authority, then you may and have broke your own lawes; which we dare not judge after so many solemne protestations to maintaine and rule by the knowne Laws: wherefore we hope your Majesty must needs discern

discerne that we fight not against you, but for your known established authoritie in Parliament. And we hope your Majesty will not deny them to be your entire Parliament; for is the act recalled whereby they were established? if not, how can they cease to be your Parliament? neither let the fault be laid on part of them; for wee all know the *major* part hath the authoritie of the whole; and if it were the *minor* part, why did not, or doth not the *major* over-vote them? And we beseech your Majesty blame us not to think our Religion and all lyés at the stoke, while wee looke back by what a train Poperie had been almost brought upon us by that partie, and see them still the chief in favour, and when so many Papists *English* and forreigne are now in armes against us, and know not one Papist in the Land that is not zealous in the cause. VVonder not, *Dread Sovereigne*, if wee hardly beleve that those come now to save us, who in 88. and the Powder plot, would so cruelly have destroyed us: that Papists should be most zealous in fighting for the Protestant Religion, and Delinquents (proceeded against in Parliament) should stand for the priviledges and Lawes of the Parliament; that oppressing Monopolists should fight for the Subjects liberties, seem all riddles and paradoxes to us. Blame us not, we beseech You, to fear, while we see no contradiction appeare to Monsieur *de Chesne* his booke, sold openly for many yeares, not in *Paris* onely, but in *London*, and read at Court, which records your Majesties Letter to the Pope, promising to venture Crowne and all to unite us to *Rome* again.

Dread Sovereigne, many princes have gone astray through strength of temptation, and after have been happie in repenting and returning, Oh that the LORD would make it your case, and glorifie his mercy on You and us, in making knowne to You the thing concerning our peace, and not his Justice in hardning You to destruction: that it may never be read in our Chronicle by the Generations to come, that *England* had a Prince who lived and dyed in seeking the desolation of his people, and the Church of God. Your Majesty knoweth there is a King and a Judg above you; before whom you must very shortly stand and give account of your Government: Wee desire You in the presence of that God, to think, and thinke seriously, and thinke
again

again how sad it will bee, to have all this bloud charged on your soule. Can your Majesty think of this with comfort when You are dying? Can these Counsellors that now put you on, then bring You as safely off? Your Majestie may despise what we say, and cast away our Petition, and tread down your poore people, and judgeus your enemies, because we tell you the truth, and speake as dying men in the sorrow of our soules; but You cannot so put by Divine Justice, or quiet conscience at the last: As true as the Lord liveth, your Majestie will one day know that Blasphemers, Papists, and flatterers, are not your friends, but plain dealers: Who do assure You, the way You take, tends to the utter ruine and destruction of your selfe and Kingdome: And can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong in the day the Lord will reckon with You for His people committed to your charge? Oh! suppose You now heard the bloud of your people already spilt, crying in your ears, and saw the many thousands yet living a life worse then death, lying in their sorrows at your feet, crying for pittie, help, O King help, or we lose our liberties, Laws, lives and Religion; help that your Selfe and Royall Posteritie, be not Princes of an impoverished desolate Nation: Help as ever You would have God help You in the day of death and judgement, when your Self shall cry for help and pitie; help that deliverance come not some other way, while You and your Fathers house are destroyed. The Lord God of our hopes, who hath for our sinnes most justly afflicted us in You, give your Majestie a discerning eye, a holy and tender heart, to yeeld to the Petition of your distressed subjects, *Turne to and concurre with your Parliament*, that God and man may forget your mistakings, and You may bee the blessedest Prince that ever reigned in our land, the terrour of your reall enemies, the joy of your people, and the glory of posteritie: Such shall be the daily and heartie prayers of

Your MAJESTIES loyall (how ever esteemed) Subjects, &c.

F I N I S.

