

Liberty or Property of my Subjects, I should less wonder at any Endeavours to alienate the Affections of my People and draw them into Measures, that can end in nothing but their own Destruction.

But to hope to persuade a Free People, in full Enjoyment of all that is dear and valuable to them, to exchange Freedom for Slavery, the Protestant Religion for Popery, and to sacrifice at once the Price of so much Blood and Treasure, as have been spent in Defence of our present Establishment, seems an Insatiation not to be accounted for. But however vain and unsuccessful these desperate Projects may prove in the End, they have at present so far the desired Effect, as to create Uneasiness and Diffidence in the Minds of my People; which our Enemies labour to improve to their own Advantage. By forming Plots they depreciate all Property that is vested in the publick Funds, and then complain of the low State of Credit: They make an Increase of the National Expences necessary, and then clamour at the Burthen of Taxes, and endeavour to impute to my Government, as Grievances, the Mischiefs and Calamities which they alone create and occasion.

I wish for nothing more, than to see the publick Expences lessened, and the great National Debt put in a Method of being gradually reduced and discharged, with a strict Regard to Parliamentary Faith: And a more favourable Opportunity could never have been hoped for, than the State of profound Peace, which we now enjoy with all our Neighbours. But publick Credit will always languish under daily Alarms and Apprehensions of publick Danger: And as the Enemies of our Peace have been able to bring this immediate Mischief upon us, nothing can prevent them from continuing to subject the Nation to new and constant Difficulties and Distresses, but the Wisdom, Zeal, and vigorous Resolutions of this Parliament.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I have ordered the Accounts to be made up, and laid before you, of the extraordinary Charge that has been incurred this Summer, for the Defence and Safety of the Kingdom; and I have been particularly Careful, not to direct any Expence to be made greater, or sooner, than was of absolute Necessity.

I have likewise ordered Estimates to be prepared, and laid before you, for the Service of the Year ensuing; and I hope the further Provisions, which the reasonable Practices of our Enemies have made necessary for our common Safety, may be ordered with such Frugality, as very little to exceed the Supplies of the last Year.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I need not tell you of what infinite Concern it is to the Peace and Tranquility of the Kingdom, that this Parliament should upon this Occasion exert themselves with a more than ordinary Zeal and Vigour. An entire Union among all that sincerely wish well to the present Establishment, is now become absolutely necessary. Our Enemies have too long taken Advantage from your Differences and Dissensions. Let it be known that the Spirit of Popery, which breaths nothing but Confusion to the Civil and Religious Rights of a Protestant Church and Kingdom, however abandoned some few may be, in Despite of all Obligations Divine and Human, has not so far possessed my People, as to make them Ripe for such a Fatal Change. Let the World see that the general Disposition of the Nation is no Invitation to foreign Powers to invade us, nor Encouragement to domestick Enemies to kindle a Civil War in the Bowels of the Kingdom. Your own Interest and Welfare call upon you to defend yourselves. I shall wholly rely upon the divine Protection, the Support of my Parliament, and the Affections of my People, which I shall endeavour to preserve by steadily adhering to the Constitution in Church and State, and continuing to make the Laws of the Realm the Rule and Measure of all my Actions.

St. James's, October 10.

His Majesty having determined to hold a Chapter of the most Noble Order of the Garter, the Knights Companions resident in and near London, were summoned by Vertue of Letters from the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, Chancellour of the Order, signifying the Sovereign's Pleasure for their personal Appearance here this Day at One a-Clock; whereupon nine Knights Companions habited in their Mantles, together with the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Winchester Prelate, the Chancellour, Garter King of Arms, and the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Officers of the said Order, wearing their different Badges and respective Mantles, waited His Majesty's coming, in the Apartment next to His Closet: And upon His Majesty's Appearance robed in the Mantle of the Order, Garter by the Sovereign's Command called over the Names of the Knights Companions beginning with the Juniors, and then the Procession to the Council Chamber was in the following Order, wherein the Juniors went first, and those Knights, whose Companions were not present, went single, viz.