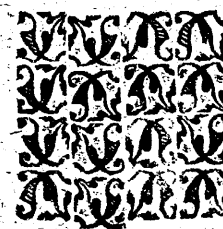


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THE
COMPLAINT
OF
LIBERTY and PROPERTY
AGAINST
Arbitrary Government:
DEDICATED
To all True English Men, and Lovers
OF
Liberty, Law, and Religion.



EDINBURGH,
Re-printed, Anno DOM. 1681.



The Complaint of Liberty, &c.

There is no Nation under Heaven that enjoys a greater share of what all Mankind covet, than the *English*; nor is there any thing of which they are more Jealous, than the Liberty of their Persons, and the Property of their Estates; and with good Reason: for their is but a Third, which is *Health* to Enjoy these, which renders Humane Life as happy as this World can afford; And for this Reason our Ancestors have obtained all those admirable Laws, which stand as a continuall Guard about us Night and Day, to Protect our Freedoms and our Estates.

There is a known Fable of the Dog, that covering the Shadow, lost the Substance, and once already we of this Nation have been so Stupid to turn the Fable into Truth. We were frighted with the shadow of the Government, which we were told, had a black, and longer Reach, then did appear, and were Terrified out of our Wits, Reason and Religion, into a most Bloody and unnatural War, and at last into that very Mischief, which we took up unlawful Arms to avoid.

To cry out against *Arbitrary Government*, is of late become, not only a Virtue, but a point of Religion, and has been set up as a Mark and Estimate of a True Protestant: But to lay the Saddle upon the Right Horse is accounted a Crime so great, that whosoever attempts it, is presently cryed out upon, for a Papist, And the Reason is evident, for they who make all this noise about it, are the most Arbitrary principled persons in the World, and if I do not make it appear so, I will be content to be esteemed the most infamous Liar under the Cope of Heaven: But if I speak Truth, and such evident Truth as is perfect matter of Fact, and too notoriously known by Thousands yet living, to be denied. If I cannot prevent the Mischief, which may follow these wild groundless Clamors against the Government, I shall however discharge my Conscience to my Neighbour, and my Duty to God, and my King, and leave a Testimonie against such as pretend to be Religious, for *speaking evil of Dignities, and despising Dominions*, which will one day rise up in Judgement against them, and defeat them of the Plea *That they did it ignorantly*.

I would only desire the honest Reader to Enquire who they were that first cryed out against *Arbitrary Government*, or the Designs of it in the Reign of King Charles the First? It was the *Protestant Dissenters*, and principally these, then called *Presbyterians*. Let them deny it if they can, or dare. For if they do, I will shew that they not only did it, but gloried in it; and were reputed the most noble Patriots, and so styled for so doing.

Who was it that animated the People to take up Arms for Defence of *Liberty*, and *Property*, against the King? the very same.

Who maintained, continued, and finished the War, and the Tragidy of the Kings Murther? the same Men, though now they had gotten new Frocks and Vizards on, and called themselves *Independents*, or, *Congregational Church-Men* a Name that comprehended all Sects, and Opinions. I love Truth, and will speak it. Many of the *Presbyterians* deserted them, and declared boldly against their Proceedings: But still the others went on, and called themselves the *Godly party*, and all the thanks the poor *Presbyters* got for assisting them to get into

into Power, was to be trampled upon themselves, and reviled as Antichristians and Apostates.

Who were they that Banished His present Majestie, fought that Life which could not have been preserved but by a Miracle? Who Composed and Commanded Oliver's standing Army? Who Comanded all the Garrisons, Forts, Castles and Ships? Who Ruled according to Will, without and against Law? Even the very same Men, the Godly party of Congregational Protestant Dissenters.

Who are they that cry out now against the Government, and talk of the great Danger of Arbitrary Power? Search the City, Examine the Countrey, Ransack the Coffee Houses, Frequent the Clubs: If you hear any Person inveigh against the Government, or Discourse of the Fear of Arbitrary Designs, you may pawn your Life on't, you may find him in a Conventicle upon a Sunday, if he pretends to any Religion, or Reading Hobs's Divinity, and Atheistical Principles at Home.

It is an Old Saying, He that Accuses another ought to be clear himself: For shame, Let the Congregational-Men leave Clamouring about Persecution and Arbitrary Government, of which they are so horribly guilty, and for which they have so great an Account to make to God Almighty: For though the Law may have forgiven them, yet without Repentance there is no Remission in Heaven; and it is a very wild Repentance which brings no other Testimonie than the Repetition of the same Offences, for which they ought to be penitent.

And if this be a Demonstration, that they are the same Congregational Men, and only want Power, I will shew you their Picture drawn by their own hand, and if they look Black and Ugly, Persecuting and Arbitrary with a Superlative Tincture, 'Tis their own handy-work, not one stroke of mine, more than hanging the picture in its proper Light, which will discover its native Colours.

At the Council at Whitehall, Decemb. 21. 1653.

Present,

Mr. Lawrence Lord President,
Sir Anthony Ashley-Cooper,
Mr. Strickland,
Lord Viscount Leslie,
Sir Charles Wolseley,

Coll. Jones,
Major General Lambert,
Major General Skippon,
Coll. Sydenham.

That it be referred to Sir Anthony Ashley-Cooper, and Coll Jones, to draw up and present to the Council a Bill, for restraining and punishing of Sedition and Treason, and to Advise therein with the Council Learned of the Commonwealth.

Observe, this Treason was to Aid or Assist His present Majesty, (then in Exile) to recover His Crowns. Observe, here is a Bill without a Parliament, but you shall presently see a Bill passed into a formal Law without either Consent of Lords or Commons: And was not this excellent Freedom of Parliament, Liberty of the Subjects, and a Fence against Arbitrary Government.

Saturday

Saturday, December 31. 1653.

Present,

His Highness the Lord Protector,

Mr. Lawrence Lord President, Coll. Mountague, &c.
Sir Anthony Ashley-Cooper,

Sir Anthony Ashley-Cooper Reports an Ordinance for Continuing the Powers to Commissioners for Compounding, &c. For Advance of Money, and Indemnity, which was this day read, the first and second time, &c.

The Ordinance Agreed.

Resolved, That this Ordinance be presented to His Highness the Lord Protector, as the Advice of the Council.

The Lord President did accordingly present the same to His Highness, and being read, the said Ordinance was by His Highness with the Advice and Consent of the Council passe for a LAW, and was Ordered to be Printed and Published.

Observe here, After all the Blood and Treasure spent, and the Solemn Oathes taken to defend the Liberties, and Priviledges of the Parliament, against Arbitrary Power, how it is drawn into a Compendium of a Council of State! and the Free-born English Governed at the Will of His Highness and Officers! But this is not all, We want only a standing Arm, and absolute Dominion over Liberty and Estate to make up the compleat Picture of Arbitrary Government, and here it follows;

Tuesday, December 4. 1655.

Present,

His Highness the Lord Protector,

Lord President Lawrence,
Lord Deputy of Ireland,
Sir Charles Woolseley,
Col. Sydenham,

Mr. Strickland,
Col. Jones
Lord Lambert.

Ordered by His Highness the Lord Protector and the Council, That it be, and hereby is referred to the Committee for the Army to send into the severall Counties of this Nation Printed Copies of the Order and Declaration of His Highness, with the Advice of His Council, for an Assessment of Sixty Thousand Pounds by the Month for the next Six

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Six Months Commencing from the 25th of December, Instant, for and towards the maintaining the Army of this Common-wealth, and to commend the same Speedily to the Care of such Persons in each County as they shall think fit, to distribute the same to the Commissioners thereby appointed, or some of them, to the Intent the matters therein contained, may be put in effectual Execution.

December 1. 1655.

Instructions of His Highness and Council to certain Commisfioners for securing the Peace of the Common-wealth.

I.
If it appear, That any Person hath actually engaged in any design, against the Person of His Highness the Lord Protector, or in any Insurrection in England or Wales, since Nov. 16. 1653. That all such Persons shall be secured, by Imprisonment, or Banishment, and have their Estates Sequestred for the Payment of the Forces newly raised, and other publick Charges of the Nation, Allowance for wives and Children, not exceeding the third Part.

II.
That all Persons whatsoever, That shall appear by words or Actions to adhere to the Interest of the Late King, or of Charles Stuart His Son, and to be dangerous Enemies to the Peace of the Common-wealth, to be secured by Imprisonment, or sent beyond the Seas.

III.
That an extraordinary Tax be Levied upon the Estates of every Person, whose Estate hath been Sequestred for Delinquency in England and Wales, or who hath been in actual Arms for the King against the Parliament, every one that hath an Estate of 100 l. per Annum, and so proportionably for all greater Estates: And whosoever hath a Real, and Personal Estate to the value of 1500 l. or more, the real Estate of every such Person, shall be assessed at 10 l. or at the Rate of 100 l. per Annum, to be paid half yearly; The said Payment to be made Decemb. 21. next ensuing: And the payment to be made to such Persons as the Commissioners shall appoint, And if any will refuse to make Payment, then the Real Estates of such persons shall be Sequestred by the Commissioners for the use of the Common-wealth, which Sequestration shall continue, untill such Persons shall have paid in their Tax, and given sufficient security for the payment of all such Sums of Money as his real Estate shall be Assessed, and Taxed at as aforesaid; And the same Rule to be observed for all Personal Estates of those that stand in Contempt: Nevertheless if any of the Persons, whose Estates are so charged as aforesaid shall be desirous to free their whole Estates from the Tax, and, if such Persons do set over by sufficient Assurances in Law, Convey and Assure to the Protector, and his Successors for the use of the Common-wealth, Land free from Incumbrances of the Yearly Value imposed on them, they shall be free.

IV.
That all of the said Party who are Persons of no Estates, and live loosely without Labour, be Apprehended, and sent to Foreign Parts.

V. That

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V.
That if any Persons shall be sent out of the Common-wealth, and shall return without Licence, that their Estates shall be Sequestred to the publick use.

VI.
That any three of the Commisfioners shall be impowred to Administer Oathes, send for Persons, Papers and Records, as also to Imprison any Person for Contempt of their Order; for which the Commisfioners shall be saved harmless, and indemnified.

Instructions for Commisfioners of each County.

YOU are to find out all Persons comprised under the First Head, and to cause them to be forthwith secured within your County, and you are also by good ways and means to discover and find out, what Estates Real or Personal such Persons, or any other intrusted for them, or to their use, and benefit have had at, or on the first day of Sept. 1653. And to secure and sequester the same for the use of the Common-wealth; and to certifye their Names together with the Account of your Proceedings to His Highness.

II.
You are to use your utmost Endeavours, to find out the Persons comprised under the second Head, and to secure them.

III.
You are forthwith to inform your selves of the Names, and places of abode of all such Persons as are comprised under the third Head, and their Estates, and who are entrusted for them, And as soon as you know their estates to proceed accordingly, and Tax the same.

Observe here, Dear Countrey-men, Imprisonment, Fine, and Banishment Comman d ed, and Practised with the highest Arbitrary Power, and to maintain a standing Army.

Observe, It was by Clamouring against Arbitrary Government, that deluded the People to Rebel, and Assist them with Power, which when they had got, you see how the Congregational People used it.

Observe who are they that now make the out-cry against Arbitrary Government Andrew Marvel, Oliver's Latin Secretary leads the Van, in a Libel, which wore that Name, and I need not tell you who they are that prosecute the out-cry.

If after all this you connot by Comparing their past Actions, with their present, see the snare they are laying for your Liberty and Property, you are not so wise, as the Fowls of the Air, or the Beasts of the Field; for Solomon tells you, In vain is the Snare laid in the sight of any Bird. I have done my duty, I have told you the Truth, I have forwarn'd you of the danger, If you suffer your selves to be imposed upon, you can blame only your own Folly and Credulity.

I have but one thing to add, and that is, If you think, and find I have told you a plain Truth, and pointed to you where the real danger of Arbitrary Government lodge

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 lodges, That you would be as valiant for the Truth, as some Ill People are against It. That you would upon all occasions shew your selves good Subjects by vindicating His Majestie and the Government from the scandalous Imputations, with which Virulent and Seditious Tongues Blaspheme the *Footsteps of Gods Anointed*. That you would inform the Ignorant, conform the Impudent, satisfie the Doubtful and Staggering, and unite the Loyal, which will be no more than your own Duty. In the rest, Safety, Liberty, and Property calls for at your Hands; And for the Congregational Declaimers against Arbitrary Government, Let them remember *Adoniram's* Toes and thumbs, and the Gracious Act of Oblivion, and know that in Heavens High Court of Judicature, forbearance is no part of Payment. Let them repent of their former Arbitrary and Tyrannical Usurpation, or else I fear and justly too, they will pull down *swift destruction* upon themselves, while they are preparing a pit for others.

FINIS.