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FIRST REPORT

FROM THE

Committee of Secrecy,

To whom the several PAPERS referred to

*IN HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE*

OF THE 12TH OF MAY, 1794

And which were presented (sealed up) to the House, by

MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS,

Upon the 12th and 13th Days of the said Month,

*BY HIS MAJESTY'S COMMAND,*

WERE REFERRED;

And who were directed to examine the Matters thereof, and report the same, as they should appear to them, to the House; have proceeded, in Obedience to the Orders of the House, to the Consideration of the Matters referred to them,

Ordered to be printed 17th May 1794.

FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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1794

[Price One Shilling.]

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## REPORT, &c.

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**T**HEY find, on the First Inspection, that the Books and Papers which they are directed to examine, contain a full and authentic account of certain proceedings of Two Societies, calling themselves The Society for Constitutional Information, and The London Corresponding Society, who appear to be closely connected with other Societies in many parts of Great Britain, and in Ireland; and the Committee also observe, from recent circumstances, which have already come under their observation, that these proceedings appear to become every day more and more likely to affect the internal peace and security of these kingdoms, and to require, in the most urgent manner, the immediate and vigilant attention of Parliament.

The Committee have, therefore, thought it their indispensable duty, in the first instance, to submit to the House the general view which they have been enabled to form of these transactions, reserving a more particular statement for a subsequent Report.

In the book containing the proceedings of the Society for Constitutional Information, which was found in the custody of the person acting as Secretary to the Society, there are regular entries of what passed on each day of meeting, from the end of the year 1791 to the 9th of May in the present year.

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From these it appears, that during almost the whole of that period, and with hardly any considerable interval, except during part of the summer in 1792 and 1793, this Society has, by a series of Resolutions, Publications, and Correspondence, been uniformly and systematically pursuing a settled design, which appears to your Committee to tend to the subversion of the established Constitution, and which has of late been more openly avowed, and attempted to be carried into full execution.

The principles on which this design is founded are strongly and unequivocally proved, from Resolutions formed as early as the 18th of May 1792, in which the Society applaud the intention of publishing a cheap edition of the First and Second Part of *The Rights of Man*; and resolve, "That a copy of Mr. Paine's letter [informing them of this intention] together with these Resolutions, be transmitted to all the Associated Societies in Town and Country; and that this Society do congratulate them on the firm as well as orderly spirit and tranquil perseverance manifested in all their proceedings, and exhort them to a steady continuance therein;" and also, "That 3000 copies of the Letter and Resolution should be printed for use of the Society." This single circumstance would, in the judgement of your Committee, leave little doubt of the real nature of the designs entertained by this Society. Their conduct in other respects has corresponded with it.

On the 11th of May in the same year they vote an address, in terms of approbation and applause, to the Society of Jacobins at Paris.

They adopt a similar measure, under circumstances still more striking, by sending, on the 9th of November following, an Address to the National Convention of France, full of panegyric on the French Revolution, and expressing the strongest wishes for its progress and success. This Address was actually presented at the Bar of the Convention by two persons of the name of

Barlow

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Barlow and Frost; and the answer of the President was read at the meeting of the Society on the 7th of December 1792.

On the 14th of the same month a letter is received from persons, calling themselves the Friends of *Liberty and Equality*; at Laon, capital of the Department de L'Aisne: and referred by the Society to their Committee of Correspondence.

On the 21st of the same month, certain Members are expressly appointed a Committee for Foreign Correspondence.

The Proceedings of this Committee are ordered to be entered in a separate book; and a letter received that day from the Friends of Liberty and Equality at Macon is referred to that Committee.

On the 25th of January, and on the 1st of February 1793, (at the eve of the commencement of the war, and after the repeated Representations which had been made on the part of the British Government, complaining of the conduct of France) the Citizens Barrere and Roland (then leading Members of the French Convention) are admitted Associated Honorary Members of the Society; and the speeches of Barrere and St. André (also an Honorary Member of the Society) as given in the *Moniteur* of the 4th, 6th, and 7th of January, are directed to be inserted in the books of the Society.

Subsequent to the Declaration of War, which interrupted this system of direct correspondence and concert with France, and down to the present time, the Society have continued, on various occasions, to manifest their attachment to the cause of the French Revolution; and have affected to follow, in their proceedings and in their language, the forms and even the phrases which are adopted in that country.

The next leading circumstance which has engaged the attention of your Committee, is the unremitting activity and diligence with which this Society have attempted to disseminate their principles, both by Publications

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lications and Resolutions industriously and extensively circulated, and by endeavouring to establish a general correspondence and concert among the other seditious Societies in the Metropolis, and in different parts of England and Scotland, as well as in Ireland. With many of these, this Society appears itself to have carried on an immediate correspondence, particularly with those at Sheffield, Norwich, and Manchester, who have, on all occasions, taken the most forward and active part in these transactions. In their correspondence with Norwich in particular, as early as the 12th of April 1793, there is a passage which so clearly marks the real object which (whatever may have been their pretexts) they appear uniformly to have had in view, that your Committee think it right here to insert it :

“ Extract of a Letter from the Secretary to the  
 “ Society for Constitutional Information, to  
 “ the Secretary to the United Political So-  
 “ cieties at Norwich; dated 16th April,  
 “ 1793.

“ Where then are we to look for the remedy?  
 “ To that Parliament of which we complain?  
 “ To the Executive Power, which is implicitly  
 “ obeyed if not anticipated in that Parliament;  
 “ or to ourselves, represented in some Meeting of  
 “ Delegates for the especial purpose of Reform,  
 “ which we suppose you understand by the Term  
 “ CONVENTION?

“ It is the end of each of these Propositions  
 “ that we ought to look to; and as success in a  
 “ good cause must be the effect of perseverance  
 “ and the rising reason of the time, let us deter-  
 “ mine with coolness, but let us persevere with  
 “ decision.—As to a Convention, we regard it as  
 “ a plan the most desirable and most practicable,  
 “ so soon as the great body of the people shall be  
 “ courageous and virtuous enough to join us in  
 “ the “

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[ 7 ]

“ the attempt. Hitherto we have no reason to  
 “ believe that the moment is arrived for that pur-  
 “ pose. As to any petition to the Crown, we  
 “ believe it hopeless in its consequences. With  
 “ respect to the last of the proposals, we are at a  
 “ loss to advise. If the event is looked to in the  
 “ vote which may be obtained from that body to  
 “ whom this petition is to be addressed, which of  
 “ us can look to it without the prospect of an ab-  
 “ solute negative? In this point of view, there-  
 “ fore, it cannot require a moment's considera-  
 “ tion. But if we regard the *policy* of such a  
 “ petition, it may, in our apprehension, be well  
 “ worth considering as a warning voice to our  
 “ present Legislators, and as a signal for imitation  
 “ to the majority of the people. Should such a  
 “ plan be vigorously and generally pursued, it  
 “ would hold out a certainty to our fellow coun-  
 “ trymen that we are not a handful of individuals  
 “ unworthy of attention or consideration, who  
 “ desire the restoration of the antient Liberties of  
 “ England; but, on the contrary, it might bring  
 “ into light that host of well-meaning men, who,  
 “ in the different towns and counties of this  
 “ realm, are silently but seriously anxious for  
 “ reformation in the Government.

“ We exhort you with anxiety to pursue your  
 “ laudable endeavours for the common good, and  
 “ never to despair of the public cause.”

But of all the Societies with which they corresponded, the two of the greatest importance are, The London Corresponding Society (which has been already referred to, and with whom, during this whole period, the correspondence appears to have been continually kept up) and the assembly which called itself The British Convention at Edinburgh. The first of these it will be necessary for the Committee to advert to particularly. The proceedings of the second are already sufficiently notorious. It is therefore only necessary here to  
 add,

add, that on the meeting of the Constitutional Society, on the 25th of October last, after their adjournment for the summer, a letter was read from the Secretary of the Convention of the Friends of the People at Edinburgh, to the Secretary of the Corresponding Society—in consequence of which it was resolved, that there should be an extraordinary general meeting, to consider of sending delegates to a convention of delegates of the different Societies in Great Britain, to be held at Edinburgh, for the purpose of obtaining a parliamentary reform.

On the Monday following, the 28th of October, this meeting took place. Two delegates were chosen, and the following instructions given them:

“ The delegates are instructed, on the part of  
 “ this Society, to assist in bringing forward and  
 “ supporting any constitutional measures for pro-  
 “ curing a real representation of the Commons of  
 “ Great Britain in Parliament. That in specify-  
 “ ing the redress to be demanded of existing  
 “ abuses, the delegates ought never to lose sight  
 “ of the two essential principles—General suf-  
 “ frage, and annual representation, together with  
 “ the unalienable right in the people to reform.  
 “ And that a reasonable and known compensa-  
 “ tion ought to be made to the representatives of  
 “ the Nation, by a national contribution.

“ That the delegates do punctually correspond  
 “ with the society, for the purpose of communi-  
 “ cating information, and of receiving such fur-  
 “ ther instructions as the exigency may require.

“ And it was further resolved,

“ That the society be desired to write to the  
 “ different societies with which this society is in  
 “ correspondence, informing them, that the Lon-  
 “ don Corresponding Society, together with this  
 “ society, have elected delegates to the Conven-  
 “ tion of Delegates to meet at Edinburgh on the

“ 29th

“ 29th instant, and to request their concurrence  
 “ in this important measure.”

The delegate appears, according to his instructions, to have corresponded with the Secretary of the society; but no resolutions are entered on the subject, till the 17th of January, subsequent to the apprehension and trial of several of the members of the Convention at Edinburgh. On that day the society passed the following resolutions:

“ Resolved, That law ceases to be an object  
 “ of obedience whenever it becomes an instru-  
 “ ment of oppression.

“ Resolved, that we call to mind, with the  
 “ deepest satisfaction, the merited fate of the in-  
 “ famous Jeffries, once Lord Chief Justice of  
 “ England, who, at the æra of the glorious Re-  
 “ volution, for the many iniquitous sentences  
 “ which he had passed, was torn to pieces by a  
 “ brave and injured people.

“ Resolved, That those who imitate his exam-  
 “ ple deserve his fate.

“ Resolved, That the Tweed, though it may  
 “ divide countries, ought not, and does not make  
 “ a separation between those principles of com-  
 “ mon severity in which Englishmen and Scotch-  
 “ men are equally interested; that injustice in  
 “ Scotland is injustice in England; and that the  
 “ safety of Englishmen is endangered whenever  
 “ their brethren in Scotland, for a conduct which  
 “ entitles them to the approbation of all wise,  
 “ and the support of all brave men, are sentenced  
 “ to Botany Bay; a punishment hitherto inflicted  
 “ only on felons.

“ Resolved, That we see with regret, but we  
 “ see without fear, that the period is fast approach-  
 “ ing, when the liberties of Britons must depend  
 “ not upon reason, to which they have long ap-  
 “ pealed, nor on their powers of expressing it,  
 “ but on their firm and undaunted resolution to

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“ oppose

“ oppose tyranny by the same means by which it is exercised.

“ Resolved, That we approve of the conduct of the British Convention, who, though assailed by force, have not been answered by arguments; and who, unlike the members of a certain assembly, have no interest distinct from the common body of the people.

“ Resolved, That a copy of the above resolutions be transmitted to Citizen Skirving, Secretary to the British Convention, who is now imprisoned under colour of law in the Talbooth of Edinburgh.”

Subsequent to this period the books of the society are full of repeated declarations of approbation and attachment, addressed to Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margat, and Gerrald, the persons recently convicted of sedition by the Court of Justiciary in Scotland; and of the most violent and inflammatory attacks on the proceedings of that court.

Your Committee have thus far traced separately some of the leading proceedings of this society, as appearing from the entries in their own books. Before they take notice of those of a more recent date, and which are in the present moment of more immediate importance, it becomes necessary to give an account of the other society, called The London Corresponding Society, because the measures which have been adopted during the last six weeks, appear to have been the result of a more particular and intimate concert between the two societies.

It appears from the evidence before your Committee, that the London Corresponding Society meets occasionally in a body, but that its ordinary meetings are in separate divisions in different parts of the town; that the number of these divisions has been gradually increasing; and that there are now about thirty of them established. That there is a secretary to each division, another to the whole body, and a general committee

mittee formed from one member of each division.— That when the society originally met (which is stated to have been in 1792) it consisted of about two hundred persons, but that in about six months it had considerably increased, and it was agreed that it should divide itself into ten different divisions; that afterwards it was the plan, that when the numbers of any division amounted to more than thirty, they should divide themselves again.—That this has not been strictly adhered to; but nevertheless, in some instances, several separate divisions have been formed out of one. One of these divisions is said now to consist of six hundred persons, and the number of the others to be various.

It farther appears, that this society has been in the habit of corresponding with the societies in the country, particularly at Sheffield, Manchester, Bristol, Coventry, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester Norwich, Birmingham, Leeds, Newcastle upon Tyne, Royston, York, Hereford, Edinburgh, and different societies in Scotland.

This society appears likewise, in the course of the year 1792, to have presented an address to the French Convention, of a nature similar to that from the Society for Constitutional Information, and to have communicated it to this latter society, in whose book it is entered.

The Committee are not enabled to lay before the House a connected statement of the proceedings of the Corresponding Society, from the time of its institution, as the Committee are not in possession of any regular journal of them. But they think it right here to insert a printed paper, which was found in the custody of the Secretary of the society, and contains an address stated to have been agreed upon at a general meeting of this society, on the 20th of January last.

[The following is a copy of the said printed paper.]

[ 12 ]

“ At a General Meeting of the London Cor-  
 “ responding Society, held at the Globe  
 “ Tavern, Strand, on Monday the 20th  
 “ Day of January, 1794, Citizen John Mar-  
 “ tin in the Chair, the following Address  
 “ to the People of Great Britain and Ire-  
 “ land was read and agreed to :

“ CITIZENS,

“ We find the nation involved in a war, by  
 “ which, in the course of ONE Campaign, im-  
 “ mense numbers of our countrymen have been  
 “ slaughtered; a vast expence has been incur-  
 “ red, our Trade, Commerce, and Manufactories  
 “ are almost destroyed, and many of our Manu-  
 “ facturers and Artists are ruined, and their fa-  
 “ milies starving.

“ To add to our affliction, we have reason to  
 “ expect, that other taxes will soon be added to  
 “ the intolerable load of imposts and impositions  
 “ with which we are already overwhelmed; for  
 “ the purpose of defraying the expences which  
 “ have been incurred, in a fruitless crusade, to re-  
 “ establish the odious despotism of France.

“ When we contemplate the principles of this  
 “ war we confess ourselves to be unable to ap-  
 “ prove of it, as a measure, either of justice or  
 “ discretion;—and if we are to form our calcula-  
 “ tion of the result, from what has already passed,  
 “ we can only look forward to defeat, and the  
 “ eternal disgrace of the British name.

“ While we are thus engaged in an expensive  
 “ and ruinous foreign war, our state at home is  
 “ not less deplorable.

“ We are every day told, by those persons  
 “ who are interested in supporting the *Corruption*  
 “ List, and an innumerable Host of *Sinecure* Place-  
 “ men, that the Constitution of England is the  
 “ perfection of human wisdom; that our laws

“ (we

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“ (we should rather say, THEIR laws) are the per-  
 “ fection of justice; and that *their* administration  
 “ of those laws is so impartial and so ready, as to  
 “ afford an equal remedy, both to the rich and  
 “ to the poor; by means of which, we are said  
 “ to be placed in a state of absolute freedom, and  
 “ that our rights and liberties are so well secured  
 “ to us as to render all invasion of them impos-  
 “ sible.

“ When we ask, how we enjoy these tran-  
 “ scendent privileges, we are referred to MAG-  
 “ NA CHARTA, and the BILL of RIGHTS;  
 “ and the glorious REVOLUTION, in the  
 “ year 1688, is held out to us, as the bulwark of  
 “ British liberty.

“ CITIZENS,

“ We have referred to *Magna Charta*, to the  
 “ *Bill of Rights*, and to the *Revolution*, and we  
 “ certainly do find that our ancestors did esta-  
 “ blish wise and wholesome laws: But we as  
 “ certainly find, that, of the venerable Consti-  
 “ tution of our ancestors, hardly a vestige re-  
 “ mains.

“ The only Chapters of the Great Charter,  
 “ which are now in legal existence, are the  
 “ 14th and 29th.

“ The important provision of the 14th Chap-  
 “ ter runs thus:

“ A Freeman shall not be amerced for a small  
 “ fault, but after the manner of the fault; and  
 “ for a great fault after the greatness thereof,  
 “ saving to him his contenment: and a mer-  
 “ chant likewise, saving to him his merchandize;  
 “ and any other's villain than ours shall be like-  
 “ wise amerced, saving to him his wainage;  
 “ and none of the said amerciements shall be  
 “ assessed, but by the oath of honest and lawful  
 “ men of the vicinage.”

“ But

“ But by the usurped power of the judges in  
 “ assessing Fines (and what fines!!) in the cases  
 “ of misdemeanour, this glorious right of the sub-  
 “ ject, of having these fines assessed by a jury,  
 “ (the only possible protection from slavery and  
 “ the vilest oppression) is unjustly and infamously  
 “ ravished from us.

“ The provision of the 29th chapter runs thus :  
 “ No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or  
 “ be disseised of his freehold, or liberties, or free  
 “ customs, or be outlawed, or exiled, or any  
 “ otherwise destroyed, nor we will not pass upon  
 “ upon him, nor condemn him, but by the law-  
 “ ful judgement of his peers, or by the law of the  
 “ land. We will sell to no man, we will not deny,  
 “ or defer to any man, either justice or right.”

“ The various methods now in constant prac-  
 “ tice by which the benefits of this provision are  
 “ totally defeated and destroyed, might induce  
 “ us to suppose, that the GREAT CHARTER  
 “ has been repealed; if we did not assuredly  
 “ know, that it is the fundamental basis of our  
 “ constitution; which even the REAL represen-  
 “ tatives of the people (much less the miserable  
 “ nominees of HELSTONE and OLD SA-  
 “ RUM) have not the right, nor (as we trust it  
 “ will be found by experience) the POWER to  
 “ repeal. Yet what do we find in practice? Un-  
 “ constitutional and illegal INFORMATIONS  
 “ EX OFFICIO, that is, the arbitrary will of  
 “ the King's Attorney General usurping the of-  
 “ fice of the ACCUSING jury; and the inte-  
 “ rested oath of a vile common informer, with  
 “ the judgement of as vile a common trading or  
 “ pensioned justice, substituted in the room of  
 “ our birth-right, an impartial trial *by our coun-  
 “ try.*

“ Add to this, that the exorbitant expense of  
 “ judicial proceedings, the novel practice of ar-  
 “ bitrarily

“ bitrarily and repeatedly annulling the verdicts  
 “ of juries, and the dilatory practice of the courts,  
 “ most openly and shamefully contradict the  
 “ clause which forbids the denial, the delay, and  
 “ the sale of justice.

“ A man accused of FELONY (for which by  
 “ the common law of England, his life and goods  
 “ are forfeited) may be bailed on finding two  
 “ sureties for forty pounds each; but upon a  
 “ charge of MISDEMEANOUR by *words* only,  
 “ bail to the amount of ONE THOUSAND  
 “ POUNDS has been demanded.

“ Upon conviction also, for such misdemea-  
 “ nour, enormous fines, long and cruel impris-  
 “ onments, unknown to our ancient laws, and  
 “ un sanctioned by any new statutes, have of late  
 “ (and but of late) been too frequently, and too  
 “ oppressively inflicted. And all this although  
 “ by this bill of rights it is declared, that “ ex-  
 “ cessive bail shall not be demanded, nor cruel  
 “ and unusual punishments inflicted.”

“ If we look to IRELAND we find that ac-  
 “ knowledged privilege of the people, to meet  
 “ for the support and protection of their rights  
 “ and liberties, is attempted, by terror, to be  
 “ taken away by a late infamous act of parlia-  
 “ ment: whilst titles of honour---no, but of dis-  
 “ honour---are lavished; and new sources of cor-  
 “ ruption opened, to gratify the greedy prostitu-  
 “ tion of those, who are the instruments of this  
 “ oppression.

“ In SCOTLAND, the wicked hand of power  
 “ has been impudently exerted, without even the  
 “ wretched formality of an act of parliament.  
 “ Magistrates have forcibly intruded into the  
 “ peaceful and lawful meetings of freemen; and,  
 “ by force, (not only without law, but against  
 “ law) have, under colour of magisterial office,  
 “ inter-



" interrupted their deliberations, and prevented  
 " their association.  
 " The wisdom and good conduct of the BRI-  
 " TISH CONVENTION at Edinburgh has been  
 " such, as to defy their bitterest enemies to name  
 " the law which they have broken; notwith-  
 " standing which, their papers have been seized,  
 " and made use of as evidence against them, and  
 " many virtuous and meritorious individuals  
 " have been, as cruelly as unjustly, for their vir-  
 " tuous actions disgraced and destroyed by infam-  
 " ous and illegal sentences of transportation.  
 " And these unjust and wicked judgements have  
 " been executed with a rancour and malignity  
 " never before known in this land; our respect-  
 " able and beloved fellow Citizens have been  
 " cast FETTERED into dungeons amongst felons  
 " in the Hulks, to which they were not sen-  
 " tenced.

" CITIZENS,

" We all approve the sentiments, and are daily  
 " repeating the words, for which these our re-  
 " spectable and valuable brethren are thus un-  
 " justly and inhumanly suffering. We, too as-  
 " sociate in order to obtain a fair, free, and full  
 " representation of the people in a house of real  
 " national representatives. Are we also willing  
 " to be treated as FELONS, for claiming this our  
 " inherent right, which we are determined never  
 " to forego but with our lives, and which none  
 " but thieves and traitors can wish to withhold  
 " from us? Consider, it is one and the same cor-  
 " rupt and corrupting influence which at this  
 " time domineers in Ireland, Scotland, and Eng-  
 " land. Can you believe, that those who send  
 " virtuous Irishmen and Scotchmen fettered with  
 " felons to Botany Bay, do not meditate, and  
 " will

" will not attempt to seize the first moment to  
 " send us after them? Or if we had not just cause  
 " to apprehend the same inhuman treatment; if,  
 " instead of the most imminent danger, we were  
 " in perfect safety from it, should we not disdain  
 " to enjoy any liberty or privilege whatever, in  
 " which our honest Irish and Scotch brethren did  
 " not equally and as fully participate with us?—  
 " Their cause then and ours is the same. And it is  
 " both our duty and our interest to stand or fall  
 " together. The Irish Parliament and the Scotch  
 " Judges, actuated by the same English influence,  
 " have brought us directly to the point. There  
 " is no farther step beyond that which they have  
 " taken. We are at issue. We must now chuse  
 " at once either liberty or slavery for ourselves  
 " and our posterity. Will you wait till BAR-  
 " RACKS are erected in every village, and till  
 " subsidized Hessians and Hanoverians are upon  
 " us?

" You may ask, perhaps, by what means shall  
 " we seek redress?

" We answer, that men in a state of civilized  
 " society are bound to seek redress of the grie-  
 " vances from the laws, as long as any redress  
 " can be obtained by the laws. But our common  
 " Master whom we serve (whose law is a law of  
 " liberty, and whose service is perfect freedom)  
 " has taught us not to expect to gather grapes  
 " from thorns, nor figs from thistles. We must  
 " have redress from our own laws and not from  
 " the laws of our plunderers, enemies, and op-  
 " pressors.

" THERE IS NO REDRESS FOR A NA-  
 " TION CIRCUMSTANCED AS WE ARE,  
 " BUT IN A FAIR, FREE, AND FULL RE-  
 " PRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE."

“ RESOLVED, That during the ensuing session of Parliament, the general committee of this society do meet daily, for the purpose of watching the proceedings of the parliament and of the administration of the government of this country. And that upon the first introduction of any bill, or motion inimical to the liberties of the people, such as for **LANDING FOREIGN TROOPS IN GREAT BRITAIN or IRELAND**, for suspending the **HABEAS CORPUS ACT**, for proclaiming **MARTIAL LAW, FOR PREVENTING THE PEOPLE** from **MEETING IN SOCIETIES** for **CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION**, or any **OTHER INNOVATION** of a similar nature, that, on any of these emergencies, the general committee shall issue summonses to the delegates of each division, and also to the secretaries of the different societies affiliated and corresponding with this society, forthwith to call a **GENERAL CONVENTION** of the **PEOPLE**, to be held at such place and in such a manner as shall be specified in the summons, for the purpose of taking such measures into their consideration.

“ Resolved, that the preceding address and resolution be signed by the Chairman, and printed and published.

“ J. MARTIN, CHAIRMAN.  
“ T. HARDY, SECRETARY.”

“ COMMITTEE ROOM, January 23, 1794.

“ RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

“ That a hundred thousand copies of the Address to the people of Great Britain and Ireland, voted at the general meeting, be printed and distributed by the society.

“ Resolved

“ Resolved unanimously, That the following toasts, drank at the anniversary dinner of the society, be printed at the end of the address.

“ I. THE RIGHTS OF MAN, and may Britons never want spirit to assert them.

“ II. *The British Convention*, lately held at Edinburgh; and success to the important objects it had in view.

“ III. *Citizen William Skirvin*, charged by the sentence of the Court of Justiciary with the honour of being the cause of calling that Convention.

“ IV. *The London Corresponding Society*, and other patriotic Societies of Great Britain and Ireland.

“ V. *Citizen Maurice Margarot*, the condemned Delegate of this Society; and may his manly and patriotic conduct be rewarded by the attachment of the people.

“ Citizen Gerrald then arose, and in a stream of inspiring eloquence, pronounced the just eulogium of this truly valuable Citizen, so emphatically called by *Citizen Aitchinson* (one of the witnesses on his trial) the **SECOND SIDNEY**. He concluded with wishing we might rather *die the last of British Freemen*, than *live the first of Slaves*.

“ VI. *Citizen Joseph Gerrald*, the other Delegate of this Society, now under prosecution; and may his concluding sentiment be engraved upon every British heart.

“ VII. The transactions at *Toulon*. May Britons remember them as they ought, and profit by *dear-bought experience*.

“ VIII. *Citizen Hamilton Rowan*, and the other true patriots of *Ireland*; and may the authors of the *Convention-bill* find that they have committed a *bull*.

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“ IX. *Citi-*

“ IX. *Citizens Muir and Palmer*—May their sentence be speedily reversed, and *Botany Bay* be peopled with a colony of *real criminals*.

“ X. Success to the arms of *Freedom* against whomsoever directed; and confusion to *Despots* with whomsoever allied.

“ XI. All that is *good* in every constitution; and may we never be superstitious enough to reverence in any that which is *good for nothing*.

“ XII. *Citizen Thomas Paine*—May his virtue rise superior to calumny and suspicion, and his name still be dear to Britons.

“ XIII. *Lord Loughborough, the Earl of Moira, Sir Gilbert Elliot*, and the other apostates from Liberty; and may they enjoy the profits of their apostacy *so long as they live*.

“ XIV. A speedy and honourable *peace* with the *brave Republic of France*.

“ XV. The *starving manufacturers* and *neglected peasantry* of Great Britain and Ireland.

“ XVI. *Citizen John Frost*; and a speedy restoration of that health which he lost in the dungeons of Newgate.

“ XVII. The *virtuous and spirited Citizens*, now in confinement for matters of *opinion*: and may we shew them by our conduct, that they are not forgotten.”

On this paper it appears unnecessary to offer any comment, or to do more than call the attention of the House to the concluding Resolution.

On the 27th of March the Society sent a Letter to the Society for Constitutional Information, to which the Committee also feel it right to call the attention of the House, as it led to the particular concert already taken notice of, between the two Societies, and to the recent measures founded thereupon, which now remain to be taken notice of.

This

This Letter and the Resolutions of the two Societies in consequence, are stated in a *printed* paper, which was likewise found in the custody of the Secretary of the Society, a copy of which is here subjoined. They are also entered in the book of the Society for Constitutional Information.

“ March 27th, 1794.

“ To the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

“ CITIZEN,

“ I am directed by the London Corresponding Society to transmit the following Resolutions to the Society for Constitutional Information, and to request the sentiments of that Society respecting the important measures which the present juncture of affairs seems to require. The London Corresponding Society conceives, that the moment is arrived when a full and explicit declaration is necessary from all the Friends of Freedom. Whether the late illegal and unheard-of prosecutions and sentences shall determine us to abandon our cause, or shall excite us to pursue a radical Reform with an ardour proportioned to the magnitude of the object, and with a zeal as distinguished on our parts as the treachery of others in the same glorious cause is notorious. The Society for Constitutional Information is therefore required to determine whether or no they will be ready, when called upon, to act in conjunction with this and other Societies to obtain a fair representation of the people. Whether they concur with us in seeing the necessity of a speedy convention, for the purpose of obtaining, in a constitutional and legal method, a redress of those grievances under which we at present labour, and which can only be effectually removed by a full and fair representation of the people of Great Britain.— The London Corresponding Society cannot but

“ remind

“ remind their friends, that the present crisis  
 “ demands all the prudence, unanimity, and  
 “ vigour, that ever was or can be exerted by  
 “ men or Britons; nor do they doubt but that  
 “ manly firmness and consistency will finally,  
 “ and they believe shortly, terminate in the full  
 “ accomplishment of all their wishes.

“ I am, Fellow Citizen,  
 “ (In my humble measure)  
 “ A friend to the Rights of Man,  
 “ T. HARDY, Secretary.”

“ Resolved Unanimously;  
 “ I. That dear as Justice and Liberty are to  
 “ Britons, yet the value of them is comparatively  
 “ small without a dependence on their perma-  
 “ nency; and there can be no security for the  
 “ continuance of any right but in equal laws.  
 “ II. That equal laws can never be expected  
 “ but by a full and fair Representation of the  
 “ People. To obtain which, in the way pointed  
 “ out by the Constitution, has been and is the  
 “ sole object of this Society. For this we are  
 “ ready to hazard every thing, and never, but  
 “ with our lives, will we relinquish an object  
 “ which involves the happiness, or even the po-  
 “ litical existence of ourselves and posterity.  
 “ III. That it is the decided opinion of this  
 “ Society, that to secure ourselves from future il-  
 “ legal and scandalous prosecutions, to prevent a  
 “ repetition of wicked and unjust sentences, and  
 “ to recal those wise and wholesome laws that  
 “ have been wrested from us, and of which  
 “ scarcely a vestige remains, there ought to be  
 “ immediately a Convention of the People, by  
 “ Delegates deputed for that purpose from the  
 “ different Societies of the Friends of Freedom  
 “ assembled in the various parts of this nation.  
 “ And we pledge ourselves to the public to pursue  
 “ every

“ every legal method speedily to accomplish so de-  
 “ sirable a purpose.  
 “ It was resolved by the Society for Constitu-  
 “ tional Information, That their Secretary should  
 “ assure the London Corresponding Society, that  
 “ they heartily approved of their intentions, and  
 “ would co-operate with them in obtaining an  
 “ object of so much importance to the peace and  
 “ happiness of Society. And that he also request  
 “ the London Corresponding Society to send a  
 “ Delegation of its Members to confer upon the  
 “ subject, with an equal number of the Society  
 “ for Constitutional Information.”  
 “ A Meeting of the Delegates from the Two  
 “ Societies being held, they came to the follow-  
 “ ing Resolutions:  
 “ Resolved,  
 “ First, That it appears to this Committee very  
 “ desirable, that a Convention or General Meet-  
 “ ing of the Friends of Liberty should be called,  
 “ for the purpose of taking into consideration the  
 “ proper methods of obtaining a full and fair Re-  
 “ presentation of the People.  
 “ Second, That it be recommended to the So-  
 “ ciety for Constitutional Information, and Lon-  
 “ don Corresponding Society, to institute a regu-  
 “ lar and pressing correspondence with all those  
 “ parts of the country where such measures may  
 “ be likely to be promoted, not only to instigate  
 “ the Societies already formed, but to endeavour  
 “ also to produce such other Associations as may  
 “ further the general object.  
 “ Third, That it appears to this Committee,  
 “ that the general object would be promoted if a  
 “ a Standing Committee of Co-operation between  
 “ the two Societies were established, for the pur-  
 “ pose of holding personal communication with  
 “ such Members of similar Societies in other  
 “ parts of the country, as may occasionally be in  
 “ Lon-

“ London, and who may be authorized by their  
 “ respective Societies to act with such Committee.  
 “ The above Resolutions being reported to the  
 “ Society for Constitutional Information, it was  
 “ by them resolved, that the same should be en-  
 “ tered on their books as part of the proceedings  
 “ of the Society; and the Committee of Cor-  
 “ respondence was appointed to co-operate with  
 “ the Committee of the London Corresponding  
 “ Society, in conformity with the Third Reso-  
 “ lution.”

It further appears, from correspondence of a recent date between different Societies in the country and the Secretary of the Corresponding Society, that some time in the course of a few weeks past, circular letters had actually been sent to different parts of the kingdom, on the subject of assembling a Convention, and a *printed* paper to this effect has been found in the custody of the Secretary to the Society; which is here inserted, and which your Committee have good reason to believe is a copy of the circular letter referred to.

[The following is a copy of the said printed paper.]

“ CITIZENS!

“ The critical moment is arrived, and Britons  
 “ must either assert with zeal and firmness their  
 “ claims to liberty, or yield without resistance  
 “ to the chains that ministerial usurpation is forg-  
 “ ing for them. Will you co-operate with us in  
 “ the only peaceable measure that now presents  
 “ itself with any prospect of success? We need  
 “ not intimate to you that, notwithstanding the  
 “ unparalleled audacity of a corrupt and over-  
 “ bearing Faction, which at present tramples on  
 “ the rights and liberties of the people, our meet-  
 “ ings cannot, in England, be interrupted with-  
 “ out the previous adoption of a Convention Bill;  
 “ a measure it is our duty to anticipate, that the  
 “ ties of union may be more firmly drawn, and  
 “ the

“ the sentiments and views of the different Socie-  
 “ ties throughout the nation be compared, while  
 “ it is yet in our power, so as to guide and direct  
 “ the future operations of the Friends of Free-  
 “ dom.—Rouse, then, to one exertion more;  
 “ and let us shew our consciousness of this im-  
 “ portant truth—“ If we are to be beaten down  
 “ with threats, prosecutions, and illegal sen-  
 “ tences, we are unworthy—we are incapable of  
 “ Liberty. We must, however, be expeditious.  
 “ Hessians and Austrians are already among us;  
 “ and if we tamely submit, a cloud of these armed  
 “ Barbarians may shortly be poured in upon us.  
 “ Let us form, then, another British Conven-  
 “ tion. We have a central situation in our view,  
 “ which we believe would be most convenient  
 “ for the whole island; but which we forbear to  
 “ mention, (entreating your confidence in this  
 “ particular) till we have the answer of the So-  
 “ cieties with which we are in correspondence. Let  
 “ us have your answer, then, by the 20th, at  
 “ farthest, earlier if possible, whether you ap-  
 “ prove of the measure, and how many Delegates  
 “ you can send, with the number also, if possi-  
 “ ble, of your Societies.

“ We remain your's,  
 “ in Civic affection,  
 “ THE LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCIETY,  
 “ T. HARDY, Secretary.

“ For the management of this business we  
 “ have appointed a Secret Committee; you will  
 “ judge how far it is necessary for you to do the  
 “ same.”

Subsequent to the proceedings now stated, there was another general meeting of the Corresponding Society held at Chalk Farm; the proceedings of which are stated in a *printed* paper likewise found on the Secretary

tary of the society, and which your Committee find has been circulated by order of the society.

This paper is here inserted (as follows):

“ At a GENERAL MEETING of the  
“ London Corresponding Society, held on  
“ the Green at Chalk Farm, on Monday,  
“ the 14th of April, 1794, J. LOVETT  
“ in the chair, *The following letters were*  
“ read :

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE.

“ SIR,  
“ AT a crisis so important as the present,  
“ there needs no apology on the part of the *London Corresponding Society*, for addressing itself  
“ to all other associated societies, who have in  
“ view the same object as themselves.  
“ To the ‘*Society of the Friends of the People*,’  
“ arguments are not wanting to shew the im-  
“ portance and absolute necessity of a full and  
“ fair representation of the people of Great  
“ Britain. *They* have investigated the subject for  
“ themselves; *they* have exposed to the world a  
“ series of plain and indisputable facts, which  
“ must excite in the mind of every man well  
“ disposed to his country, apprehensions of alarm  
“ for the security of the few remaining vestiges  
“ of liberty, from which, as Britons, we derive  
“ consolation.  
“ Deeply impressed with considerations of this  
“ nature, the London Corresponding Society ear-  
“ nestly solicits, at this time, the concurrence  
“ and assistance of the *Society of the Friends of the*  
“ *People*, in assembling, as speedily as the nature  
“ of the business will admit, a convention of the  
“ friends of freedom, for the purpose of obtaining,  
“ in

“ in a legal and constitutional method, a full and  
“ effectual representation.  
“ Our request is not made from the impressions  
“ of the moment, but after the maturest deli-  
“ berations on the value and importance of the  
“ object for which we are contending, and of the  
“ difficulties we may expect from those whose  
“ present interests render them hostile to the  
“ welfare of their country.  
“ The opposition of such persons is no small  
“ argument for the goodness of our cause; and  
“ their late conduct, when compared with their  
“ former professions, exhibits a depravity unparal-  
“ leled, we trust, on the page of history.  
“ Under the auspices of apostate reformers,  
“ we have lately beheld serious and alarming  
“ encroachments on the liberties of the people.  
“ We have seen with indignation and horror  
“ men *legally and peaceably* assembled dispersed  
“ by unconstitutional powers, and their papers  
“ seized.  
“ We have seen some of our most virtuous  
“ brethren, whose only crime has been an imita-  
“ tion of Mr. PITT and his associates, sentenced  
“ to fourteen years transportation, without the  
“ sanction of law, or even of precedent, of which  
“ number, one was held up in the British parlia-  
“ ment as *convicted and condemned*, before he was  
“ even put upon his trial.  
“ The insidious attempts also to introduce  
“ foreign troops into this country, without the  
“ consent of Parliament, and the intended bill  
“ to embody foreigners into his Majesty’s service,  
“ are measures sufficiently calculated to awaken  
“ our fears for the existence even of the name of  
“ liberty. Nor can we overlook that part of the  
“ present system of corruption which maintains,  
“ out of the public plunder, a train of spies, more  
“ dangerous to society than so many assassins,  
“ whose

“ whose avowed business is to destroy the friends  
“ of the country one by one.

“ These are grievances which demand immediate redress, and when added to those evils which are necessarily connected with every *partial* representation of the people, call for the strenuous exertions of every lover of his country.

“ But we are told, that the present is not the time for reform, and that innovation may introduce disturbance. Are those persons to judge of the proper time to make a reform, who exist only by corruption? Are the people of Britain to endure every thing without repining, without ardently seeking a radical reform, because disturbances *may* happen?— Have the enemies to reform told us whence these disturbances are to originate? Has a single overt act been committed by the friends to freedom? Have not all the riots, all the public disturbances, all the seditious assemblies, been excited by the enemies to reform? And do they mean to tell us, that they will still find other instruments for their wicked designs; that they have yet those who will act over again the outrages that have been perpetrated in some parts of Britain, and attempted in others?

“ If such is the determination of those persons *hostile* to a *fair* representation, let them look to the consequences, but let them recollect that it has happened, and may happen again, that those who kindled the flames have perished by them.

“ The friends to *reform* are friends to *peace*, their principles can be promoted only by peaceable means, they know of no other method of obtaining the object they desire. But they will not be alarmed by the threats

“ of

“ of *venal apostates*; they will not draw back because they have seen some of their best friends doomed to exile; they will pursue the course in which they have began, and turn neither to the right nor to the left.

“ Convinced, as the London Corresponding Society is, that there is no power which *ought*, so there is no power which *can* finally withstand the just and steady demands of a people resolved to be Free; they will, therefore, look with confidence to the *determination*, and, they hope, to the *co-operation* of the “ *Society of the Friends of the People,*” in the attainment of an object which involves the dearest interests of society.

“ Convinced also that their intentions are of the purest kind, they will never stoop to answer the calumnies of their enemies; but will, at all times, and in all circumstances, endeavour, by firmness and perseverance, to deserve the countenance and approbation of the best friends of their country, *the friends of a fair representation of the people of Great Britain.*

“ I am, Sir,

“ For the London Corresponding Society,  
“ April 4, 1794. THOMAS HARDY, Sec.

“ COMMITTEE ROOMS.

FRITH STREET, April 11, 1794.

“ SIR,

“ YOUR Letter of the 4th instant, addressed to Mr. SHERIDAN, Chairman of the FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE, was laid before that SOCIETY at their Meeting on Saturday last; and they instructed their committee to thank the LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCIETY for their communication, and to express

“ of

“ press the alarm they feel in common with every  
 “ friend of liberty, at the late extraordinary pro-  
 “ ceedings of government, so ably detailed, and  
 “ so justly reprobated by your society. They  
 “ assure you, that all the friends of reform  
 “ may ‘ look with confidence to the deter-  
 “ mination and co-operation’ of this society  
 “ in every peaceable and constitutional mea-  
 “ sure, which shall appear to them calculated  
 “ to promote the object of their institution;  
 “ but they do not think that which is recom-  
 “ mended in your letter, is likely to serve its  
 “ professed purpose. They fear it will furnish  
 “ the enemies of reform with the means of  
 “ calumniating its advocates, and so far from  
 “ forwarding the cause, will deter many from  
 “ countenancing that which they approve.---  
 “ For these reasons, the friends of the people  
 “ must decline to send delegates to the Con-  
 “ vention proposed by the London Corresponding  
 “ Society :---At the same time, they renew their  
 “ assurances of good will, and desire of preserv-  
 “ ing a proper understanding and cordiality  
 “ among all the friends of parliamentary reform,  
 “ notwithstanding any difference of opinion that  
 “ may occur as to the best method of accom-  
 “ plishing it.

“ In Name, and by Order of the Committee,  
 “ (Signed) W. BRETON, Chairman.

To Mr. T. HARDY, Secretary to the  
 London Corresponding Society.

“ The following RESOLUTIONS were then passed  
 “ unanimously :

“ Resolved Unanimously,

“ I. THAT this Society have beheld with  
 “ rising indignation, proportioned to the enor-  
 “ mity

“ mity of the evil, the late rapid advances of  
 “ despotism in Britain; the invasion of public  
 “ security; the contempt of popular opinion;  
 “ and the violation of all those provisions of the  
 “ constitution intended to protect the people  
 “ against the encroachments of power and pre-  
 “ rogative.

“ II. That our abhorrence and detestation  
 “ have been particularly called forth by the  
 “ late arbitrary and flagitious proceedings of  
 “ the Court of Justiciary in Scotland, where  
 “ all the doctrines and practices of the *Star*  
 “ *Chamber*, in the times of Charles the First,  
 “ have been *revived* and *aggravated*; and where  
 “ sentences have been pronounced in open viola-  
 “ tion of all law and justice, which must  
 “ strike deep into the heart of every man, the  
 “ melancholy conviction that BRITONS ARE NO  
 “ LONGER FREE.

“ III. That the whole Proceedings of the  
 “ late British Convention of the People, at  
 “ Edinburgh, are such as claim our approba-  
 “ tion and applause.

“ IV. That the conduct of Citizens MAR-  
 “ GAROT and GERRALD in particular, by its  
 “ strict conformity with our wishes and instruc-  
 “ tions, and the ability, firmness, and disin-  
 “ terested Patriotism which it so eminently dis-  
 “ played, has inspired an enthusiasm of Zeal  
 “ and Attachment which no time can oblite-  
 “ rate, and no persecution remove; and that  
 “ we will preserve their names engraven on  
 “ our hearts till we have an opportunity to redress  
 “ their wrongs.

“ V. That any attempt to violate those yet  
 “ remaining Laws, which were intended for the  
 “ Security of Englishmen against the Tyranny  
 “ of Courts and Ministers, and the Corrup-  
 “ tion of dependent Judges, by vesting in such  
 “ Judges



“ Judges a legislative or arbitrary Power (such  
 “ as has lately been exercised by the Court of  
 “ Justiciary in Scotland) ought to be confi-  
 “ dered as dissolving entirely the social com-  
 “ pact between the English Nation and their  
 “ Governors; and driving them to an imme-  
 “ diate appeal to that incontrovertible maxim  
 “ of eternal Justice, *that the Safety of the People*  
 “ *is the SUPREME, and in Cases of Necessity, the*  
 “ *ONLY Law.*

“ VI. That the arming and disciplining  
 “ in this Country, either with or without the  
 “ Consent of Parliament, any Band of *Emi-*  
 “ *grants and Foreigners, driven from their own*  
 “ *country for their known Attachment to an INFA-*  
 “ *MOUS DESPOTISM, is an outrageous attempt*  
 “ *to overawe and intimidate the free Spirit of*  
 “ *Britons; to subjugate them to an Army of*  
 “ *mercenary Cut-throats, whose views and in-*  
 “ *terest must of necessity be in direct opposition*  
 “ *to those of the Nation, and that no pretence*  
 “ *whatever OUGHT to induce the people to sub-*  
 “ *mit to so unconstitutional a Measure.*

“ VII. That the unconstitutional project of  
 “ raising money and troops by forced bene-  
 “ volences (and no benevolences collected  
 “ upon requisition from the King or his Mini-  
 “ sters can ever in reality be voluntary) and  
 “ the equally unjustifiable Measure of arming  
 “ one part of the People against the other,  
 “ brought Charles the First to the block, and  
 “ drove James the Second and his posterity  
 “ from the Throne; and that consequently  
 “ Ministers in advising such Measures, ought  
 “ to consider whether they are not guilty of  
 “ High Treason.

“ VIII. That this Society have beheld with  
 “ considerable pleasure the *consistent respect* which  
 “ the House of Lords displayed for their own  
 “ Confi-

“ Constitutional Rules and Orders, on the  
 “ fourth of the present month, upon the mo-  
 “ tion of Earl Stanhope, concerning the inter-  
 “ ference of Ministers in the Internal Govern-  
 “ ment of France; and that it is the firm  
 “ conviction of this Society, that this Circum-  
 “ stance, when properly detailed, will have a  
 “ considerable effect in convincing the country  
 “ at large, of the true dignity and utility of  
 “ that branch of HIS MAJESTY'S PAR-  
 “ LIAMENT.

“ IX. That the Thanks of this Meeting be  
 “ given to EARL STANHOPE, for his manly and  
 “ patriotic conduct during the present Session  
 “ of Parliament; a conduct which (unsupport-  
 “ ed as it has been in the Senate, of which HE  
 “ is so truly honourable a Member) has, to-  
 “ gether with the timely interference of cer-  
 “ tain spirited and patriotic Associations, been  
 “ nevertheless already productive of the salu-  
 “ tary effect of chasing the Hessian and Hano-  
 “ verian Mercenaries from our Coasts; who,  
 “ but for these exertions, might have been  
 “ marched perhaps, ere this, into the very  
 “ heart of the Country, together with others of  
 “ their Countrymen, to have peopled the  
 “ BARRACKS, which every where insult the  
 “ Eyes of Britons.

“ X. That it is the firm Conviction of this  
 “ Society, that a steady Perseverance in the  
 “ same bold and energetic sentiments which  
 “ have lately been avowed by the Friends of  
 “ Freedom cannot fail of crowning with ulti-  
 “ mate Triumph, the virtuous Cause in which  
 “ we are engaged, since whatever may be the  
 “ interested Opinion of *Hereditary* Senators, or  
 “ *packed* Majorities of *pretended* Representa-  
 “ tives, Truth and Liberty, in an age so en-  
 “ lightened

“lightened as the present, must be Invincible  
“and Omnipotent.”

—  
“*This Society having already addressed M.  
“Margarot, their Delegate, an ADDRESS  
“to JOSEPH GERRALD was read as fol-  
“lows, and carried unanimously.*

“*To JOSEPH GERRALD, a prisoner  
“sentenced by the High Court of Jus-  
“ticiary of Scotland, to Transporta-  
“tion beyond the Seas for FOUR-  
“TEEN YEARS!*

“WE behold in you, our beloved and re-  
“spected friend and fellow-citizen, a Mar-  
“tyr to the Glorious Cause of Equal Repre-  
“sentation, and we cannot permit you to leave  
“this degraded country without expressing the  
“infinite obligations the people at large, and  
“we in particular, owe to you for your very  
“spirited exertions in that cause upon every  
“occasion; but upon none more conspicu-  
“ously, than during the sitting of the BRITISH  
“CONVENTION of the PEOPLE at Edin-  
“burgh, and the consequent proceeding (we  
“will not call it *trial*) at the bar of the Court  
“of Justiciary.

“We know not which most deserves our  
“admiration, the splendid talents with which  
“you are so eminently distinguished; the ex-  
“alted virtues by which they have been direct-  
“ed; the perseverance and undaunted firm-  
“ness which you so nobly displayed in resisting  
“the wrongs of your insulted and oppressed  
“country; or your present manly and philo-  
“sophical suffering under an *arbitrary*, and till

“of late *unprecedented* sentence: a sentence,  
“one of the most vindictive and cruel that has  
“been pronounced since the days of that *most*  
“*infamous* and *ever to-be detested* Court of Star  
“Chamber, the enormous tyranny of which  
“cost the first Charles his head.

“To you and to your associates we feel our-  
“selves most deeply indebted. For us it is that  
“you are suffering the sentence of transporta-  
“tion with Felons, the vilest outcasts of So-  
“ciety! For us it is that you are doomed to the  
“inhospitable shores of New Holland; where,  
“however, we doubt not you will experience  
“considerable alleviation by the remembrance  
“of that VIRTUOUS CONDUCT for which it is  
“imposed on you, and by the sincere regard  
“and esteem of your Fellow Citizens.

“The Equal Laws of this Country have,  
“for ages past, been the boast of its inhabitants:  
“But whither are they now fled? We are ani-  
“mated by the same sentiments, are daily re-  
“peating the same words, and committing the  
“same actions for which you are thus infa-  
“mously sentenced; and we will repeat and  
“commit them until we have obtained redress;  
“yet we are unpunished! either therefore the  
“law is Unjust towards you in inflicting *Pu-  
“nishment* on the Exertions of *Virtue and Talents*,  
“or it *ought* not to deprive us of our share in  
“the GLORY of the *Martyrdom*.

“We again, therefore, pledge ourselves to you  
“and to our country, never to cease demand-  
“ing our Rights from those who have usurped  
“them, until having obtained an Equal Repre-  
“sentation of the People, we shall be enabled to  
“hail you once more with Triumph to your  
“native country.—We wish you health and  
“happiness; and be assured we never, *never*

“ shall forget *your Name, your Virtues*, nor YOUR  
“ GREAT EXAMPLE.

“ The London Corresponding Society.

“ JOHN LOVETT, Chairman.

“ THOMAS HARDY, Secretary.

“ The 14th of April, 1794.”

“ *It was also unanimously resolved,*

“ That the Committee of Correspondence be  
“ directed to convey the approbation of this So-  
“ ciety---I. To Archibald Hamilton Rowan,  
“ prisoner in the Newgate of the city of Dublin,  
“ for his unshaken attachment to the people,  
“ and for his spirited assertion of their rights.

“ II. To John Philpot Curran for his admira-  
“ ble and energetic defence of A. H. Rowan, and  
“ the principles of Liberty, as well as for his  
“ patriotic conduct in Parliament.

“ III. To the Society of United Irishmen in  
“ Dublin, and to exhort them to persevere in  
“ their exertions to obtain justice for the people  
“ of Ireland.

“ IV. To Skirving, Palmer and Muir, suffer-  
“ ing the same iniquitous sentences, and in the  
“ same cause with our Delegates.

“ V. To John Clark, and Alexander Reid, for  
“ their so readily and disinterestedly giving bail  
“ for our Delegates, instigated thereto solely by  
“ their attachment to Liberty, uninfluenced by  
“ any personal consideration.

“ VI. To Adam Gillies, Malcolm Laing, and  
“ James Gibson, for their able assistance given  
“ to Joseph Gerrald, at the bar of the High  
“ Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh.

“ VII. To felicitate Thomas Walker, of Man-  
“ chester, and the people at large, on the event  
“ of his, as well as several other late trials, and  
“ on

“ on the developement of the infamy of a system  
“ of Spies and Informers.

“ VIII. To Sir Joseph Mawbey, for his manly  
“ conduct at the late surreptitious Meeting held  
“ at Epsom in Surrey.

“ It was also unanimously Resolved,

“ That two hundred thousand copies of the  
“ Proceedings and Resolutions of this Meeting  
“ be printed and published.

“ J. LOVETT, Chairman.

“ T. HARDY, Secretary.

“ Resolved,

“ That the thanks of this Meeting be given to  
“ the Chairman, for his manly and impartial  
“ conduct this day.

“ T. HARDY, Secretary.”

From a Review of these Transactions your Com-  
mittee feel it impossible not to conclude, that the mea-  
sures which have been stated are directed to the object  
of assembling a Meeting which, under the Name of a  
General Convention, may take upon itself the Charac-  
ter of a General Representative of the People. How-  
ever at different periods the term of Parliamentary  
Reform may have been employed, it is obvious that  
the present View of these Societies is not intended to  
be prosecuted by any application to Parliament, but,  
on the contrary, by an open attempt to supersede the  
House of Commons in its Representative Capacity,  
and to assume to itself all the functions and powers  
of a National Legislature.

This Object, as what is really intended to be at-  
tained by assembling a Convention, appears expressly  
and pointedly stated, even as early as the 15th of  
April 1793, in the Letter to the United Societies at  
Norwich, already referred to; and the same Letter  
sufficiently explains the Policy in consequence of  
which, subsequent to that Period, the Topic of Par-  
liamentary

liamentary Reform has been still ostensibly brought forward in some of the Communications which have been made public. As a further illustration of this observation, your Committee think it not immaterial to remark, that in a Letter from Margarot, at Edinburgh, to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information, in December 1793, it is particularly recommended to him not to introduce Politics in his Letter, or at *least* nothing but what *concerns Reform*. Whatever Disguise, however, may have been employed in an earlier period, seems in the later Proceedings to have been wholly relinquished. The Object is still stated to be a fair and equal Representation of the People; but a General Convention of the people, to be chosen by the Delegates of the different Societies, is proposed for the purpose of obtaining this end. No mention is made of any application to Parliament, or of any amendment of the Representation in *Parliament*.

The Circular Letter, inserted in a former part of this Report, recommends forming another British Convention, to be held in a Central Situation most convenient for the whole Island; and states the appointment of a Secret Committee for that purpose.

The Third Resolution passed by the Corresponding Society on the 27th of March, and communicated to the Society for Constitutional Information, which was the foundation of the subsequent joint Proceedings of the Two Societies, states the object of the Convention to be for the purpose "of securing themselves from future illegal and scandalous prosecutions, to prevent a repetition of wicked and unjust Sentences, and to recall those wise and wholesome Laws which have been wrested from them." Terms which appear to your Committee to be material, not so much on account of their general inflammatory Tendency, as because they evidently point at obtaining a Redress of supposed grievances, not by application to Parliament,

ment, but by Acts of Authority to be exercised by themselves.

The Resolutions afterwards passed on the 14th of April, contain open attacks on all the branches of the Legislature, and a direct invitation to the People to resist Measures then in the Contemplation of the Legislature; and expressly stating that they ought equally to be resisted, whether adopted with or without the Consent of Parliament.

When, in addition to these considerations, the Committee reflect on the leading Circumstances which they have already stated, of the declared approbation, at an early Period, of the Doctrine of the *Rights of Man*, as stated in Paine's Publications; of the connection and intercourse with French Societies, and with the National Convention; and, of the subsequent approbation of the French system; and consider that these are the principles which the promoters of a Convention evidently make the foundation of all their Proceedings; they are satisfied that the design now openly professed and acted upon, aims at nothing less than what is stated in his Majesty's Message, and must be considered as a Traitorous Conspiracy for the Subversion of the established Laws and Constitution, and the introduction of that system of Anarchy and Confusion which has fatally prevailed in France.

There still remains two points connected with what has been already stated, which your Committee have not yet had the opportunity of investigating as fully as they wish, but which appear too important to be wholly passed over.

It appears to your Committee, that in some of the Societies referred to Proposals have been received, and that Measures have recently been taken for providing Arms to be distributed among the Members of the Societies.

It also appears, from such information as your Committee have hitherto had the opportunity of receiving, that since the apprehension of the persons in whose custody

custody the papers were found which have been referred to your Committee, there have been several meetings of the Societies in different parts of the Metropolis; that the designs which were before entertained have been by no means abandoned; and that, on the contrary, there have been some indications of a disposition to concert means for forcibly resisting such measures as may be taken for defeating their accomplishment, or for bringing the authors and abettors of them to justice.

FINIS.

# SECOND REPORT

FROM THE

*COMMITTEE OF SECRECY.*

A NEW EDITION;

WITH A

SUPPLEMENT AND APPENDIX.

[The text in this block is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a list or a series of entries, possibly containing names and dates, but the characters are too light to transcribe accurately.]