

L. H. J. Exercise of such Powers, as are incompatible with the indubitable
 Liber No. 54 Authority of Government, the permanent Security of Property and
 Nov. 20 the constitutional Liberty of the Subject. Pretences for Censure are
 so easily framed that the most circumspect Behaviour can't prevent
 them. When they unhappily excite Animosity, give rise to querulous
 Expostulation, tend to promote popular Discontent, and obstruct the
 Course of publick Business, tho' the Mischiefs they produce, are
 much to be lamented, yet I can't but derive great Consolation from
 Reflection, when they spring from Passions I am not answerable for.
 Your positive Assertion, that the last Prorogation was an undue and
 ill advised Exertion of Power, permit me, Gentlemen, to observe,
 carries with it no Reasoning to convince my Judgment, nor any
 Authority to preclude a Vindication, especially as the Motives, which
 influenced me to apply for the Advice of those who are appointed by
 the Constitution to give it, and the Reasons by which they evinced
 the Propriety of their Opinion, have not been explained to you. When
 Conjecture is indulged, there is great Danger of Deception. Jealousy
 may raise an Alarm which an accurate Information of Circumstances
 might prevent; and under this Influence, Animadversion be directed
 against the Product of mere Imagination. Whether it would have
 been more regular in *your* Department to have called for a Detail of
 those Motives, and Reasons, and arraigned my Conduct in the Exer-
 cise of an unquestionable Prerogative, because not agreeable to your
 Views, or conformable to your Ideas, than it would be in *mine*, should
 I require an Account of, and on the same Ground condemn, your
 Conduct when exercised in any peculiar Privilege of your House, I
 shall not undertake to determine, but I must remark that, a precise
 Information of the Subject ought to have preceded your peremptory
 Decision upon it, especially a Decision derogatory from the Charac-
 ter of those, who are bound by the strictest Ties not to deserve the
 Reproach it conveys.

I do not mean to shelter, under forms, the Principles on which I
 was advised, and pursued the Measure of Prorogation, and shall
 therefore frankly explain them. When I acted upon them, I acted
 on a Conviction that I performed a most incumbent Obligation.
 When I review them I have great Complacency in the firm Persua-
 sion, that I did what I ought, and should have been culpable, if I had
 omitted. It can hardly, I presume, be a Question, whether when a
 Subject in this Government is illegally deprived of his personal Lib-
 erty, it is the Duty of the executive Power to relieve him. Whether,
 where the Authority to afford Relief is placed, there the Applica-
 tion for it is regular. Where this is cognizable, there the Propriety
 of it is determinable? The Right of Petition is established for Pur-
 poses so important, and secured, and enforced by Sanctions so inter-
 esting, that the Representatives of a free People, can never, on any
 Occasion, dispassionately wish to impair, or discountenance it. They