

L. H. J.
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Representatives of the People of Maryland; and I am therefore deeply affected with Concern, to be thus driven to express a Disapprobation of the Spirit by which some of your Proceedings have been guided, and which prompted your last Address. My Duty I shall always esteem it to be, to avoid every Occasion of reasonable Complaint, but I must not forget that it is my indispensable Duty, to check the Exercise of such Powers as are incompatible with the indubitable Authority of Government, the permanent Security of Property, and the constitutional Liberty of the Subject. Pretences for Censure are so easily framed, that the most circumspect Behaviour cannot prevent them. When they unhappily excite Animosity, give Rise to querulous Expostulation, tend to promote a popular Discontent, and obstruct the Course of Publick Business, tho' the Mischiefs they produce are much to be lamented, yet I cannot 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 Exercise 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 Decision upon it, especially a Decision derogatory from the Character 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 Measures 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 a great Complacency in the firm Persuasion, 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 Liberty, it is the Duty of the executive Power to relieve him?