

# LEGALITY OF SHIP MONEY

7 February 1637

When the good and safety of the Kingdom in general is concerned and the whole Kingdom in danger, whether may not the King, by writ under the Great Seal of England, command all the subjects of Our Kingdom at their charge to provide and furnish such a number of ships, with men, victuals, and munition, and for such time as We shall think fit, for the defence and safeguard of the Kingdom from such danger and peril, and by law compel the doing thereof, in case of refusal or refractoriness. And whether in such a case is not the King the sole judge both of the danger, and when and how the same is to be prevented and avoided?

May it please your Most Excellent Majesty, we have, according to Your Majesty's command, every man by himself, and all of us together, taken into serious consideration the case and question signed by Your Majesty and enclosed in your royal letter. And we are of opinion that when the good and safety of the Kingdom in general is concerned, and the Kingdom in danger, Your Majesty may, by writ under the Great Seal of England, command all your subjects of this, your Kingdom, at their charge to provide and furnish such a number of ships, with men, victuals, and munition, and for such time as Your Majesty shall think fit for the defence and safeguard of this Kingdom from such danger and peril. And that by law Your Majesty may compel the doing thereof in case of refusal or refractoriness. And we are also of opinion that in such case Your Majesty is the sole judge both of the danger, and when and how the same is to be prevented and avoided.

John Bramston, Chief Justice of the King's Bench  
George Croke, Justice of the King's Bench  
Robert Berkeley, Justice of the King's Bench  
William Jones, Justice of the King's Bench  
John Finch, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas  
George Vernon, Justice of the Common Pleas  
Francis Crawley, Justice of the Common Pleas  
Richard Hutton, Justice of the Common Pleas  
Sir Humphrey Davenport, Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer  
John Denham, Baron of the Court of Exchequer  
Thomas Trevor, Baron of the Court of Exchequer  
Richard Weston, Baron of the Court of Exchequer

G.B. Adams and H.M. Stephens, eds., *Select Documents of English Constitutional History* (London: MacMillan, 1901):349–350.  
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