

KEEPING THE KING

Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658)

to Colonel Robert Hammond (1621–1654), Governor of the Isle of Wight

3 January 1647/1648

Oh (blessed be God) I can write, and you receive, freely. I never in my life saw more deep sense, and less will to show it unchristianly, than in that which you did write to us when we were at Windsor, and you in the midst of your temptation, which indeed (by what we understood of it) was a great one, and occasioned the greater by the letter the General sent you, of which you were not mistaken when you did challenge me to be the penner.

How good has God been to dispose all to mercy! And although it was trouble for the present, yet glory is come out of it, for which we praise the Lord with you and for you. And truly your carriage has been such as occasions much honour to the name of God and to religion. Go on in the strength of the Lord, and the Lord be still with you. But, dear Robin, this business has been (I trust) a mighty providence to this poor Kingdom and to us all.

The House of Commons is very sensible of the King's dealings, and of our brethren's, in this late transaction. You should do well, if you have anything that may discover juggling, to search it out and let us know it. It may be of admirable use at this time, because we shall (I hope) instantly go upon business in relation to them, tending to prevent danger.

The House of Commons has this day voted as follows: Firstly, they will make no more addresses to the King. Secondly, none shall apply to him without leave of the two Houses, upon pain of being guilty of high treason. Thirdly, they will receive nothing from the King, nor shall any other bring anything to them from him, nor receive anything from the King.

Lastly, the Members of both Houses who were of the Committee of Both Kingdoms are established in all that power in themselves for England and Ireland which they had to act with both Kingdoms. And Sir John Evelyn,¹ of Wiltshire, is added in the room of Mr. Recorder,² and Nathaniel Fiennes³ in the room of Sir Philip Stapleton,⁴ and my Lord of Kent⁵ in the room of the Earl of Essex.⁶ I think it good you take notice of this, the sooner the better.

Let us know how it is with you in point of strength and what you need from us. Some of us think the King well with you, and that it concerns us to keep that island in great security because of the French, etc. and, if so, where can the King be better? If you have more force, you will be sure of full provision for them. The lord bless you.

Letters Between Col. Robert Hammond, Governor of the Isle of Wight, and the Committee of Lords and Commons at Derby House...
(London: Robert Horsfield, 1764):23–26.

¹ John Evelyn (1601–1685), Member of Parliament for Wilton (1626–1628) and Ludgershall (1640–1648)

² John Glynn (1602–1666), Member of Parliament for Caernarvon (1628) and Westminster (1640–1647), member of the Committee for Both Kingdoms (1643–1647), and Recorder of London. On 16 June 1647 Parliament removed him from all his offices.

³ Nathaniel Fiennes (1608–1669)

⁴ Sir Philip Stapleton (1603–1647), Member of Parliament for Boroughbridge (1640–1647) until his impeachment on 16 June 1647.

⁵ Henry (1594–1651), Earl of Kent, Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire (1646–1651)

⁶ Robert (1591–1646), Earl of Essex