

DECLARATION AGAINST THE ROYAL FAMILY

Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), Lord Protector (1653–1658)

Whitehall, 4 October 1655

His Highness, the Lord Protector, upon advice with his council, finding it necessary, for the reasons and upon the grounds expressed in his late declaration, to use all good means to secure the peace of the nation, and prevent future troubles within the same, has thought fit to publish and declare, and by and with the consent of his council, does publish, order, and declare that no person or persons whatsoever in England or Wales, whose estates have been sequestered for delinquency, or who were actually in arms for the late King against the then Parliament, or for Charles Stuart his son, or have adhered to, abetted, or assisted the forces raised against the said Parliament, do, from and after 1 December 1655, buy, use, or keep in his or their house, or houses, or elsewhere, any arms, offensive or defensive; upon pain that every person and persons so offending shall forfeit and lose such arms, and be otherwise proceeded against, according to the orders of His Highness and the council for securing the peace of the Commonwealth.

And his Highness, by the advice of his council, does also publish, declare, and order that no person or persons aforesaid do, from and after 1 January 1655, keep in their houses and families as chaplains or schoolmasters, for the education of their children, any sequestered or ejected minister, fellow of any college, or schoolmaster; nor permit any of their children to be taught by such, upon pain of being proceeded against in such sort as the said orders do direct in such cases.

And that no person who has been sequestered or ejected out of any benefice, college, or school for delinquency or scandal shall, from and after 1 January, keep any school, either public or private, nor any person who after that time shall be ejected for the causes aforesaid.

And that no person who, for delinquency or scandal, has been sequestered or ejected, shall, from and after 1 January aforesaid, preach in any public place, or at any private meeting of any other persons than those of his own family; nor shall administer baptism, or the Lord's Supper, or marry any persons, or use the Book of Common Prayer, or the forms of prayer therein contained; upon pain that every person so offending in any of the premises shall be proceeded against as by the said orders is provided and directed.

And to the end all persons concerned may take notice hereof, and avoid the danger of any of the said penalties, His Highness does charge and command all sheriffs within their respective counties, cities, and towns to cause this declaration to be proclaimed and published.

Nevertheless, his Highness does declare that towards such of the said persons as have, since their ejection or sequestration, given, or shall hereafter give, a real testimony of their godliness and good affection to the present government, so much tenderness shall be used as may consist with the safety and good of this nation.

Thomas Park, ed. *The Harleian Miscellany* (London: White and Company, 1810), V:268–269.