

Speech to the House of Commons (22 March 1627)

Sir Francis Seymour

Transcript

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S[i]r Fran[cis] Seymo[u]r Mar [th]e 22th 1627

This is [th]e great Counsell (of [th]e Kingdo[m], and here (if not here alone) his Ma[jes]tie may see (as in ^{true} a glasse) [th]e state of [th]e hole Kingdo[m]. Wee are cauled hether by his writts, to giue him faithfull counselll such as may stand with his honor. but [tha]t wee must doe with out flattery / And chosen by [th]e co[m]mons to deliuer vp there iust greiuance{s} and this wee must doe with out feare. Let vs not then doe like Cambises Iudge who being demanded of him tuching something which was vnlawfull, said [tha]t if it weare not written, then [th]e Persian Kings might what they listed. This way base flattery, fitter for reprofe then Imitation. And as flattery soe feare takes awaie [th]e iudgment. For my owne Part, I shall shew both these, and speake my concienc, with as much duty to his Ma[jes]tie (as any man) not negleckting [th]e Publiqe But how can wee speake our affecktions while wee releiue our fears or spea{k} of giuing, till wee know wheather wee haue any thing to giue, or not for if his Ma[jes]tie bee perswaded hee may take what hee will, what nede wee giue. That this hath bine done it appears by billiting of Soldiers, a thing noe way aduantagious but a burthen to [th]e Co[m]monwelth. The Imprisonment of gentlemen for [th]e lone, who if they had done contrary for feare, there fault had bine as great as thers [tha]t weare proiectors in it to countenanc these procedings, hath it not bin preached (nay rather prated) All we haue is [th]e Kings. But these forsake there owne caulng, and turne ignorant statesmen, Wee see how willing they would bee to chang a good conscience for a Bisshopbrig. It is to apparent [th]e people suffer more now then euer they did; will you know [th]e true reason wee shall finde those Princes haue bine in greatest wants, and necessities, [tha]t haue exackted most from there subieckts. The reason is plain. a Prince is strongest by faithfull and wise counsell. I would I could truly say such had bine employed abroade, I speake ð this to [th]e eand to shew [th]e defeckt procedes not from his howse. I confesse hee is noe good subieckt [tha]t will not willingly, and solely lay downe his life, when [th]e eand may bee [th]e seruice of his Ma[jes]tie, and [th]e good of [th]e Commonwelth. But hee is noe good subieckt, but a slaue, [tha]t will haue his goods taken away against his will, and his liberty against [th]e laws of [th]e Kingdome. In doing this wee shall but tred [th]e steps of our foreFathers, who still preferred [th]e publiqe intrest before there owne liues. if we are a wrong to vs, our posterit, and to our consciences, for to forgoe this. Wee shall doe well to present to his Ma[jes]tie I offer this in generall thinking [th]e particuler fitter for committes. and what I now say or shall then say I submit to better iudgments