

29

them; and as it is only in a Meeting of the People that their Sense respecting such Petition and Remonstrance can be obtained, that the Right of assembling is as undoubted. To attempt, therefore, under the Mask of Authority, to prevent or forbid a Meeting of the People for such Purposes, or to interrupt their Proceedings when met, would be a vain Effort unduly to exercise Power in direct Opposition to the Constitution.

Far be it from us then, Sir, even to wish to prevent the Operations of the Convention now held at Newbern, or to agree with your Excellency in bestowing upon them the injurious Epithet of an illegal Meeting. They are, Sir, the respectable Representatives of the People, appointed for a special and important Purpose, to which, though our Constituents might have thought us adequate, yet as our Meeting depended upon the Pleasure of the Crown, they would have been unwise to have trusted to so precarious a Contingence, especially as the frequent and unexpected Prorogations of the Assembly, one of them in particular, as if all Respect and Attention to the Convenience of their