

# Royal Gazette, and Miscellany of the Island of Saint John.

CHARLOTTE TOWN: PRINTED BY WILLIAM A. RIND, PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

LETTER

FROM L'ABBE RAYNAL TO THE  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

READ MAY 31, 1791.

GENTLEMEN,

ON arriving in this capital after a long absence, my heart and looks are turned towards you; and I should have thrown myself at the feet of your august Assembly, would my age and infirmities suffer me to speak to you, without too strong an emotion, of the great things which you have done, and of all that remains for you to do, in order to confer upon this agitated land that Peace, Liberty, and Prosperity, which it is your intention to procure us.

Do not imagine, Gentlemen, that I am one of those who are ignorant of the indefatigable zeal, the talents, the information, and the courage which you have shewn in your immense labours. A sufficient number of other persons have addressed you upon these subjects; a sufficient number have reminded you of the title which you have to the esteem of the nation: for my part, whether you consider me as a citizen availing himself of his right to petition, or whether, in indulging my gratitude in an unincumbered flight, you permit an old friend of liberty to restore to you what he is indebted, for the

protection with which you have honoured him, I beseech you not to reject useful truths. I have long dared to speak to kings of their duty; permit me now to speak to a people of their errors, and to the representatives of the people of the dangers with which we are all threatened.

I confess that I profoundly lament the disorders and the crimes which have covered this empire with mourning. Can it be true, that I must recollect with horror, that I am one of those who, in testifying a generous indignation against arbitrary power, have perhaps armed licentiousness? Do religion, the laws, the royal authority, the public order, require back from philosophy and reason, the ties which united them to that great society of the French nation, as if, in pursuing abuses, in stating the rights of the people, and the duties of the prince, our efforts had criminally broken these ties? But no, the bold conceptions of philosophy were never presented by us as the rigorous measures for acts of legislation. You cannot attribute to us as errors what could only result from a false interpretation of our principles. And yet ready to descend into the grave, ready to quit this immense family, of which I have so ardently wished the welfare, what do I see around me, Religious troubles, civil dissen-

tions, the contentions of some, the audacity and passions of others, a government enslaved by popular tyranny, the sanctuary of the laws surrounded by ungovernable men, who will alternately either dictate or brave them; soldiers without discipline, chiefs without authority, ministers without means, a king, the first friend of his people, plunged into affliction, outraged, threatened, deprived of all authority, and the public power existing but in those Clubs, where ignorant and brutal men dare to decide upon all political questions.

Such, Gentlemen, is beyond all doubt, the true situation of France. Another, perhaps, would not dare to tell it you; but I dare, because I consider it as my duty; because I am on the verge of eighty years of age; because no one can accuse me of regretting the former government; because, in lamenting over the present state of desolation of the church of France, no one can accuse me of being a fanatic priest; because in considering the re-establishment of the legitimate authority as the only means of safety, no one will accuse me of being the partizan of despotism, and of expecting favours from it; because, in attacking before you those writers who have blown the kingdom into a flame, and perverted its understanding, no