

A State of the Expedition From Canada: As Laid Before the House of Commons (Classic Reprint)

John Burgoyne

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Excerpt from A State of the Expedition From Canada: As Laid Before the House of Commons

I have been supported under that aspersion by the consciousness I did not deserve it, and the confidence that you (to whom chiefly upon that charge I was responsible) would not adopt it. After the fortunes we have run together, it is not surely unworthy of belief, that I should rather have desired, than avoided to partake the closing scene: uniting with a due sense of personal attachments, the preservation of my military fortune, and a retreat from the distractions of my country. The defence of your honour and my own, at one time, and resistance to an affront which my nature could not bear, at another, alone detained me here.

In regard to my political transactions, I have stated them, and I wish them to be considered by my friends, apart from my military conduct. I bear very high respect to some eminent and ill-treated characters in our profession, who in deference to the tranquility of government, have silently resigned the stations which they could no longer hold with security to their honour, or benefit to the state. But the option is not left to those, who having a voice in Parliament are obliged to act as citizens as well as soldiers. The number of officers altogether of the army and navy, who with known love to their country and professional spirit equally conspicuous, have voluntarily withdrawn themselves from employment within these two years, exceeds all precedent. I do not place my name in the list with the same pretensions; but it is not arrogant to emulate where we cannot compare; and I am desirous of following the high examples before me in no point more than in that of avoiding to disturb the zeal of those who are now employed.

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