

Contemporary sources – Charles I

Statement sent by Charles I to Parliament (1626)

I must let you know that I will not let any of my ministers be questioned by you... hasten my supply (taxes) or it will be worse for yourselves; for if any ill happen, I think I shall be the last to feel it.

Petition signed by twelve members of the House of Lords (1640)

That your majesty's sacred person is exposed to hazard and danger in the present expedition against the Scottish army, and by occasion of this war your revenue is much wasted...your whole kingdom become full of fear and discontents.

To remedy this and prevent further dangers to you, your subjects beseech your most excellent majesty that you summon a parliament within some short and convenient time, whereby the causes of these and other great grievances which your people lie under may be taken away.

Lucy Hutchinson wrote an account of Charles I's trial. Her husband was one of those who signed the king's death warrant.

In January 1648, the king was brought to his trial... When he was charged with the blood spilt in the war... he smiled...

His looks and gestures suggested that his only sorrow was that all the people that opposed him had not been killed... Mr. Hutchinson... addressed himself to God by prayer... God did not signal his favour towards the King..... it was therefore his duty to act as he did.

Charles I made a short speech before he was executed (1649)

I never did begin the war with the two Houses of Parliament... They began war upon me...

If anybody will look at the dates of what happened... they will see clearly that they began these unhappy troubles, not I... therefore I tell you I am the martyr of the people.

John Lilburne, who was a member of a radical political group called the Levellers, wrote a pamphlet attacking the execution of Charles I (1649)

I refused to be one of his (Charles I) judges... they were no better than murders in taking away the King's life even though he was guilty of the crimes he was charged with... it is murder because it was done by a hand that had no authority to do it.