

your situation. If the latter were the case, your judgment cannot remain unimpeached. If, on the contrary, you had estimated them justly, however positive might be your orders, and whatever might be your ideas of criminality in disobeying them, your regard for your country should have taught you to disregard every personal consideration, and you should have endeavoured to promote her true interest, careless of what blame might fall upon you, or to whose resentment you might be exposed. The most eminent and illustrious characters have not hesitated in cases of public necessity, to violate the laws of the land, when evidently conducive to the public benefit, and have trusted to the generosity of their countrymen to indemnify them against the consequences. The supposition which you make, that "your army was meant to be hazarded, perhaps circumstances might require it should be devoted," is too romantic for serious consideration. Such reasoning might become the captain of a fire-ship, or the leader of a forlorn hope; but that it can apply to an army of 10 000 men, under any circumstances, is rather improbable; that