

I have no reason to suppose that there ever was one in Boston, at least among the natives of the country. But rioters are in the same situation, as far as my argument is concerned, and proper officers may suppress rioters, and so may even private persons. The defense is not put on the sole ground that they were acting in obedience to orders; but as citizens who were entitled to the protection of the laws as much as any other citizens. The sentry being attacked in the street by a mob, any persons had a right to go to his assistance, and endeavor to suppress the riot. Suppose a press-gang should come on shore in this town, and assault any sailor, or householder in King street, in order to carry them on board one of his majesty's ships, and impress him without any warrant, as a seaman in his majesty's service, how far do you suppose the inhabitants would think themselves warranted by law to interpose against that lawless press-gang? I agree that such a press-gang would be as unlawful an assembly as that was in King street. If they were to press an inhabitant, and carry him off for a sailor, would not the inhabitants think themselves warranted by law to interpose in behalf of their fellow citizens? Now, gentlemen, if the soldiers had no right to interpose in the relief of the sentry, the inhabitants would have no right to interpose with regard to the citizen, for whatever is law for a soldier is law for a sailor and for a citizen, they all stand upon an equal footing in this respect. I believe we shall not have it disputed, that it would be lawful to go into King street and help an honest man there against the press-master.

Now, suppose you should have a jealousy in your minds, that the people who made this attack on the sentry had nothing more in their intention than to take him off his post, and that was threatened by some; suppose they intended to go a little farther, and tar and feather him, or to ride him (as the phrase is in *Hudibras*), he would have had a good right to have stood upon his defense, the defense of his liberty, and if he could not preserve that without hazard to his own life, he would be warranted in depriving those of life