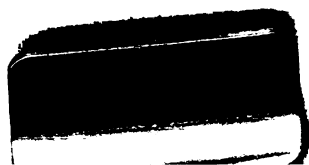


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EXPLAINING THE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
MARQUESS WELLESLEY,

AND OF THE
EARL OF MOIRA,
IN THE
RECENT NEGOTIATIONS

FOR THE FORMATION OF
AN ADMINISTRATION.

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INTRODUCTORY PAPER

Marked A, for the purpose of explaining the several Documents.

ON Friday, the 22d of May, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent was pleased to command the Marquess Wellesley to submit to his Royal Highness's gracious consideration the plan of an Administration, properly adapted to the present crisis of Affairs.

In preparing to execute His Royal Highness's commands, Lord Wellesley deemed it to be necessary, in the first instance, to advert to certain practical principles, which should, in his humble judgment, constitute the basis of the system of measures, calculated to meet the actual exigencies of the Country.

It appeared to be desirable to reduce these leading principles within the narrowest compass, which the situation of affairs could admit, omitting for the present, the discussion of many questions, which (however important in their nature) might not be deemed of such instantaneous pressure, or might not be expected to involve so much difference of opinion.

Lord Wellesley, upon the most mature reflection, considered, that the practical principles, upon which an Administration might be constituted, in the present crisis, might be safely comprised in the two following Propositions :

First, That the state of the Laws affecting the Roman Catholics, and the Claims of that Body of his Majesty's Subjects, should be taken into immediate consideration, with a view to a conciliatory adjustment of those Claims.

Secondly, That the war in the Peninsula

should be prosecuted on a scale of adequate vigour.

It appeared to Lord Wellesley to be indispensably necessary towards the due execution of His Royal Highness's commands, to endeavour to ascertain the views and dispositions of all parties, with regard to these general principles, previously to submitting any names of persons to His Royal Highness, for the purpose of filling the several offices in His Royal Highness's service.

Lord Wellesley therefore conceived it to be his duty to open a communication with the principal persons of ALL Parties, carefully confining that communication to the point of ascertaining their respective Sentiments on the two propositions stated in this Paper.

In these communications, Lord Wellesley was particularly cautious to explain, that he had received no authority from His Royal High-

ness to form an Administration, nor to communicate with any particular party or description of persons; but that His Royal Highness had been apprised of the necessity of Lord Wellesley's holding such intercourse with all parties, as might enable him to prepare a plan for His Royal Highness's approbation.

He also explained, that in this transaction, he was merely the instrument of executing His Royal Highness's commands, neither claiming nor desiring for himself any station in the Administration, which it was in His Royal Highness's contemplation to form.

Under these circumstances, as Mr. Canning and Lord Wellesley agreed in the general principles already stated, Lord Wellesley requested Mr. Canning to communicate them to Lord Liverpool, believing that to be the channel of communication which was likely to be most agreeable to Lord Liverpool.

Mr. Canning transmitted to Lord Wellesley the annexed minute, No. 1, of his conversation with Lord Liverpool, together with the answer from Lord Liverpool, No. 2, and a letter, No. 3, from Lord Melville.

Lord Wellesley made the communication stated in the Paper No. 4, to Lords Grey and Grenville, and received from them the answer marked No. 8.

Lord Wellesley also communicated with Lord Moira, and verbally, with Lord Erskine and Mr. Sheridan, who all expressed their concurrence in the principles already stated; Lord Moira's Letter is marked No. 5.

Lord Wellesley also received the letters from Lords Lansdowne and Holland, marked No. 6, and 7, expressing their concurrence in the memorandum received from Lords Grey and Grenville.

On Sunday, the 24th of May, all these documents were submitted by Lord Wellesley to the Prince Regent, together with a report of his proceedings, in executing His Royal Highness's commands.

On the 27th of May, Lord Wellesley was apprised, by a communication from Lord Melville to Mr. Canning, that the powers granted to Lord Wellesley, on the 23d of May, by the Prince Regent, were considered to be at an end. Lord Wellesley communicated that circumstance to Lords Grey and Grenville, in a letter marked No. 9, together with all the preceding papers from No. 1, to No. 8.

An explanatory correspondence took place between Lords Wellesley and Grey, which is contained in the letters marked No. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

On the 1st of June, the Prince Regent grant-

ed to Lord Wellesley full authority to form an Administration under His Royal Highness's commands.

The proceedings which occurred, in consequence of that authority, are contained in the papers marked from No. 16 to No. 25, both inclusive.

On the 3rd of June, Lord Wellesley resigned into the hands of His Royal Highness the authority which His Royal Highness had entrusted to him on the 1st of June; and late on the evening of the 5th of June, Lord Moira humbly solicited and received permission to address himself specially to Earl Grey and Lord Grenville, lest they should have any difficulties about treating with him under the general power which the Prince Regent had been pleased to entrust to him.

The details of Lord Moira's transactions are explained in the papers and documents marked Nos. 25, 26, 27, 28.

On Monday the 8th of June, Lord Moira resigned the commission with which he had been intrusted by the Prince Regent; and on the same day, the Earl of Liverpool was appointed first Commissioner of the Treasury.

Two letters, which, although collateral, are regarded as capable of throwing light on the ground of part of the transaction, are subjoined. They are marked B. and C.

No. I.

Minute of Mr. Canning's Communication to the Earl of
Liverpool, May 23d.

Fife House, May 23d, 1812.

THE Prince Regent having laid his commands on Lord Wellesley to form a plan of an administration, to be submitted for His Royal Highness's approbation, Mr. Canning was requested by Lord Wellesley, (as the channel of communication thought likely to be most agreeable to Lord Liverpool,) to enquire of Lord Liverpool whether there would be a disposition on the part of Lord Liverpool, and of his colleagues, or of any of them, to entertain any proposal which should be made to them for forming part of such administration.

The principles upon which the Administration was intended to be formed, were stated to be,
1st. The taking into the early and serious con-

sideration of the executive government the state of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, with a sincere and earnest desire to bring that important question to a final and satisfactory settlement.

2dly. The prosecution of the war in the Peninsula, with the best means of the country.

It was stated that there would be the strongest wish to comprehend in the arrangement, without any individual or party exclusion whatever, as many as possible of such persons as might be able to agree in giving their public service to the country on these two principles.

With respect to the distribution of offices, it was stated that nothing of any sort was decided, or stipulated: but that every thing would be open to be arranged to the honour and satisfaction of all parties.

No. 2.

Lord Liverpool's Letter to Mr. Canning, May 23d.

Fife house, May 23d, 1812.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I have communicated to my colleagues the memorandum which I received from you this afternoon.

They do not think it necessary to enter into any discussion of the principles stated in that memorandum, because they all feel themselves bound, particularly after what has recently passed, to decline the proposal of becoming members of an administration to be formed by Lord Wellesley.

Believe me, &c. &c.

(Signed)

LIVERPOOL.

No. 3.

Lord Melville's Letter to Mr. Canning, May 23d.

Park Lane, 23d May, 1812.

DEAR CANNING,

You will probably have received to-night from Lord Liverpool, the answer to the proposal which you left with him and communicated to me this afternoon. Having stated to you my strong repugnance, or rather my decided objection, under present circumstances, to join an Administration of which Lord Wellesley was to be the head, it might be sufficient for me to refer to Lord Liverpool's Reply, more especially as I do not wish to enter into any detailed reasoning on a question relating to a matter of personal feeling. I think it due, however, to you, as well as to myself, to state distinctly, that I have no objection to act with an Administration formed on the two principles mentioned in your memorandum; though I think it improbable that any consideration, which

the government can give to the subject of the restrictions on the Roman Catholics, will enable it to propose such a system as will wholly satisfy their claims, and at the same time afford that degree of security to the Protestant Establishment, which is generally felt to be necessary.

I remain, &c.

(Signed)

MELVILLE.

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No. 4.

Minute of Lord Wellesley's Communication to Lords Grey and Grenville, May 23d.

Minute of a Communication made by Lord Wellesley to Lords Grey and Grenville, at Lord Grey's house, May 23d.

Lord Wellesley stated, that he had received the commands of his Royal Highness the

Prince Regent, to lay before his Royal Highness the plan of such an administration as he (Lord Wellesley) might deem adapted to the present crisis of affairs.

That he had apprised his Royal Highness of the necessity of ascertaining the views and dispositions of all parties with regard to certain general principles previously to the formation of any such plan.

That he considered himself merely as the instrument of executing his Royal Highness's commands on this occasion, and that he neither claimed nor desired for himself any station in the administration which it was in his Royal Highness's contemplation to form.

Under these circumstances, he requested to know whether any obstacle existed to the concurrence of Lords Grey and Grenville, or their friends in the following general principles, as the basis upon which an administration might be formed :

First, That the state of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, and the claims of that body of his Majesty's subjects, should be taken into immediate consideration, with a view to a conciliatory adjustment of those claims.

Secondly. That the war in the Peninsula should be prosecuted on a scale of adequate vigour.

Lord Wellesley stated, that, as Mr. Canning and he agreed in these principles, he had requested Mr. Canning to communicate them to Lord Liverpool.

Lord Wellesley has reduced the substance of this communication to writing, and now submits it to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

No. 5.

Lord Moira's Letter to Lord Wellesley, dated 23d May,
relative to No. 4.

St. James's Place,
May 23d, 1812.

MY LORD,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of the Minutes of the conversation which your Lordships held with Lords Grey and Grenville; and I feel much indebted for the communication accompanying them.

The proposed consideration of the Catholic Claims, and the adoption of a system of support to the Spaniards, such as may be really capable of producing a decisive result, are the two points of policy which I have long thought the most urgent for the benefit of the country. The question relative to the Orders in Council may be deemed as in effect settled by the evidence adduced before the two Houses: and the active.

correction of internal abuses must be confidently assumed as the object of such a Ministry as is likely to be formed through your instrumentality. A plan of government, therefore, on the basis proposed by your Lordship, would have my most cordial wishes. Allow me to say, that this is not to convey any implication of engagement to accept office. This is not mentioned from the remotest regard to the possible distribution of situations; nor does it involve objections to any individual, as there is nothing I should so much deprecate in the present state of public affairs, as a spirit of exclusion. Indeed, the candour and delicacy manifested by your Lordship in these communications, are a perfect pledge that the details of arrangements could not but be entirely satisfactory.

I have the honour, my Lord, to be with high esteem, your Lordship's very obedient and humble servant.

(Signed)

MOIRA.

The Marquis Wellesley.

No. 6.

Lord Lansdowne's Letter to Lord Wellesley, dated 23d
May, relative to No. 4.

*Berkeley Square,
Saturday night, May 23d.*

MY LORD,

I am exceedingly sorry not to have been at home when your Lordship did me the honour of calling at my house this morning, and am much obliged by the trouble you have taken in sending for my consideration, a copy of the minute of the communication made by your Lordship to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville.

As Lord Grey and Lord Grenville thought proper to acquaint me confidentially with that communication, as well as the minute of the answer they proposed to return to it; and as I generally concur in the sentiments they have there stated, I shall take the liberty of referring your Lordship to that paper, and shall only add

there is no part of it in which I more cordially coincide with them, than in the expression of the gratification they have derived from your powerful exertions in support of the claims of the Roman Catholics, and from the manner in which that subject is adverted to in your minute.

I have the honour to remain, with great respect, your Lordship's very faithful, and most obedient servant.

(Signed)

LANSDOWNE.

The Marquis Wellesley, &c. &c.

No. 7.

Lord Holland's Letter to Lord Wellesley, dated May 23d,
relative to No. 4.

MY LORD,

I had the honour of receiving your note and

enclosure, and beg leave to return my sincere thanks for your attention in sending me so interesting and so early a communication.

Lord Grenville and Lord Grey have been so good as to talk the matter over with me confidentially, and I have the satisfaction of finding that I concur generally in their views of the subject, and indeed, know no better way of expressing my opinion, than by referring you to a memorandum which, I believe, it is their intention to deliver to you to-morrow morning.

I am, my Lord, your obliged and obedient humble Servant,

(Signed)

VASSAL HOLLAND,

Camelford House,

May 23d.

No. 8.

Memorandum from Lords Grey and Grenville, May 24th,
in Reply to Lord Wellesley's Minute, No. 4.

May 24th, 1812.

In such a moment as the present, we feel it to be the duty of all public men, both by frank and conciliatory explanations of principle, and by the total abandonment of every personal object, to facilitate, as far as may lie in their power, the means of giving effect to the late vote of the House of Commons, and of averting the imminent and unparalleled dangers of the country.

Lord Wellesley has selected two among the many important subjects which must engage the attention of any men, who could, in such circumstances, be called upon to consider of the acceptance of stations in public trust. On those two

points, our explanation shall be as distinct as it is in our power to make it.

On the first, indeed, our opinion is too well known, and has been too recently expressed, to need repetition.

We have derived a very high gratification from Lord Wellesley's powerful exertions in support of the claims of the Roman Catholics, as well as from the manner in which that subject is adverted to in his Minute, and we do not hesitate to assure him, that we will warmly support any proposal made by any Ministers for the immediate consideration of those claims, with a view to their conciliatory adjustment; a measure without which, we have already declared, that we can entertain no hope, in any case, of rendering our own services useful.

As to the second point, no person feels more strongly than we do, the advantages which would result from a successful termination of

the present contest in Spain. But we are of opinion that the direction of military operations in an extensive war, and the more or less vigorous prosecution of those operations, are questions, not of principle, but of policy; to be regulated by circumstances, in their nature temporary and fluctuating, and in many cases known only to persons in official stations, by the engagements of the Country, the prospect of ultimate success, the extent of the exertions necessary for its attainment, and the means of supporting those efforts without too great a pressure on the finances and internal prosperity of the Country.

On such questions, therefore, no public men, either in or out of office, can undertake for more than a deliberate and dispassionate consideration, according to the circumstances of the case as it may appear, and to such means of information as may then be within their reach.

But we cannot in sincerity conceal from

Lord Wellesley, that in the present state of the finances, we entertain the strongest doubts of the practicability of an increase in any branch of the public expenditure.

No. 9.

Lord Wellesley to Lord Grey, dated 27th May, communicating the termination of Lord Wellesley's Commission.

Apsley House, 27th May, 1812.

1 o'clock, P. M.

MY LORD,

I take the earliest opportunity of communicating the enclosed papers to your Lordship. The paper (No. 2) has not reached me until within this hour. It appeared to me to be important, that the intelligence which it contains should be conveyed to your Lordship, to Lord

Grenville, and to your respective friends, as soon as may be practicable.

I shall be happy to have an opportunity of stating to your Lordship and to Lord Grenville, at any time that you may appoint, the whole course of my conduct, since I had the honour of seeing you.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and faithful servant,

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

I shall remain at home for some time, and shall be happy to see your Lordship and Lord Grenville, if it should be convenient.

No. 10.

Mr. Canning's Statement to Lord Melville, inclosed in
No. 9.

Park Lane, 26th May, 1812.

Lord Melville having stated to Mr. Canning that the ministers, his colleagues, were considering, under the special command of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, how far they could advance to meet the first of the two propositions laid down as the basis of the Administration, proposed to be formed by Lord Wellesley; Mr. Canning feels it necessary before he offers any observation on that statement, to inquire in what situation Lord Melville's colleagues consider themselves as standing at the present moment.

1st. Do they consider Lord Wellesley's commission at an end, and the former Administration as re-established?

Qd. Are the discussions, which are now going on among them, directed to the ascertaining the possibility of the individual members of that Administration, or any of them, acceding to an Administration to be formed by Lord Wellesley; or to some proposal to be made by them as a government to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning?

If Lord Wellesley's commission is considered as at end; it is essential to Lord Wellesley's honour that the fact should be publicly known. He has entered upon communications which he could not terminate at the point to which they were brought, without distinctly stating his commission to be at an end.

If what is now in contemplation is some new proposal to be made to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, from the former Administration revived, then the revival of that Administration ought to be made matter of notoriety: and the proposal itself must be distinctly stated, before

Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning can form any judgment upon it.

No. 11.

Lord Melville's Communication to Mr. Canning, inclosed in No. 9.

Glocester Lodge, Wed. May 27, 1812.

10 A. M.

Lord Melville called upon Mr. Canning, and informed him, in answer to the questions which Mr. Canning put to Lord Melville yesterday.

1st. That Lord Wellesley's commission is considered by the Prince Regent as at an end.

2d. That the persons now holding offices, hold them only until their successors shall be appointed.

Lord Melville had understood Mr. Canning yesterday to say, that Lord Wellesley was of

opinion that his commission was at an end; but that he (Mr. Canning) doubted it.

This was a mistake. What Mr. Canning stated was, that Lord Wellesley was in doubt as to the Prince Regent's intention; and that he (Mr. Canning) had no means of forming any opinion upon it.

No. 12.

Lord Grey to Lord Wellesley, 27th May, on the subject of some words in Mr. Canning's Minute, No. I, of the Communication to Lord Liverpool.

Portman Square, May 27th, 1812.

MY LORD,

I have the honour of returning the papers which your Lordship was so good as to put into my hands this morning.

I observe a material difference between the

terms in which the two principles, proposed as the basis of a new Administration, are stated in Mr. Canning's Minute, and in that sent to Lord Grenville and me by your Lordship. I think it necessary to call your Lordship's attention to this circumstance, because if these discussions should proceed further, it may become of the utmost importance.

I am, with the highest regard, my Lord,
your Lordship's very faithful and humble
Servant,

(Signed)

GREY.

No. 13.

Lord Wellesley to Lord Grey, 28th May, transmitting
an explanatory Paper, No. 14, signed by Lord Wel-
lesley.

Apsley House, 28th May, 1812.

MY LORD,

I should have returned an earlier acknowledg-

ment of the honour of your Lordship's Letter of yesterday, had I not thought it necessary to see Mr. Canning, before I troubled your Lordship with my answer to your observations on our respective minutes.

Having carefully examined those papers, and compared them with our view of the points, to which they refer, we have drawn the enclosed paper for your Lordship's information, and have authenticated it by our respective signatures.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, My Lord, your Lordship's faithful and humble servant.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

No. 14.

Paper signed by Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, and transmitted to Lord Grey, in reply to Lord Grey's Letter, No. 12.

The variance in point of phrase in the two Propositions as stated by Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, in their Minutes of Conference, arises from this circumstance, that Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning went to their respective conferences without having thought it necessary previously to reduce, into a written form, the communications, which they were to make, being in full possession of each others sentiments upon the subject of them.

The two minutes were written by them as containing the substance of their respective communications; that of Mr. Canning in Lord Liverpool's presence; that of Lord Wellesley immediately after his return from Lord Grey.

There does not appear to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, to be any substantial variance in the first proposition.

The word "early" in Mr. Canning's Minute, might be exchanged for the word "immediate" used by Lord Wellesley, without, in any degree, altering the sense; as with a motion actually pending in the House of Commons, which (but for the events which have recently taken place) would have come on this very day, the object of which, was to compel the executive government to take the subject of the Catholic Question into consideration, it cannot be necessary to say, that Mr. Canning has no wish to defer that consideration; on the other hand, consideration by the executive government is the object which it is Lord Wellesley's intention to recommend; nor does he conceive any further Parliamentary proceeding to be necessary or practicable, this session, than such as might be sufficient to insure, either by compulsion upon a hostile Administration, or by pledge from a

friendly one, the consideration of the question during the recess, with a view to its being brought before Parliament, by the recommendation of the crown, early in the ensuing session.

A committee to enquire into the state of the laws, has been already negatived in both Houses, this session. A "conciliatory adjustment," of the claims of the Irish Catholics is the object which Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning have equally at heart : and it enters equally into both their views that to be "conciliatory," that adjustment must be so framed as to embrace the interests and opinions of the English Catholics also, and to obtain the enlightened and deliberate consent of the Protestants of both countries.

They would think any adjustment very imperfect, which, instead of extinguishing discontent, only transferred it from the Catholic to the Protestant.

But they concur in entertaining a confident

belief, that the great purpose of securing the Peace of the Empire, may be best answered not by giving a triumph to any one party, but by reconciling all.

In the substance of the second proposition there is no variance as to any practical and prospective purpose, though undoubtedly there is, and it is natural there should be, some as to the past, arising from the difference of Mr. Canning's and Lord Wellesley's respective situations.

When Mr. Canning says, that the Peninsular War is to be carried on "with the best means of the Country," he intends the greatest scale of exertion, which the means of the Country may be found capable of sustaining.

If Lord Wellesley's expression, "a scale of adequate vigour," may be construed to imply the proposition, that the late exertions of this Country have not been proportioned to the great object of the War, or have not been duly

distributed, or apportioned, this proposition Mr. Canning certainly does not intend either to affirm, or to deny; simply, because, not having been in the Government during the last two years, he has not sufficient information to be able to pronounce an opinion, whether the exertions of those two years have or have not been below the proper scale, or have been well or ill administered; nor how far they may now admit of being extended, or of being more judiciously applied.

He concurs, however, entirely with Lord Wellesley in wishing to extend them to the utmost power of the Country, and to apply them in the manner best calculated to answer their end.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

GEORGE CANNING.

No. 15.

Lord Grey's Reply to Lord Wellesley, May 29th.

Portman Square, May 29th, 1812.

MY LORD,

I had last night the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter, enclosing a paper explanatory of the difference which I had remarked between your Lordship's minute and Mr. Canning's, together with a copy of the latter.

I beg your Lordship to be assured that in the observation, to which I had thought it necessary to call your Lordship's attention, I could have no object but that of preventing the possibility of any future misunderstanding. We had not entered into any explanation, (which, under the circumstances of the moment would perhaps have been premature,) of the details of the conduct necessary to give effect to the first of the propositions, offered by your

Lordship as the basis of a new Administration. From the difference of the terms used by Mr. Canning in stating that proposition, I was apprehensive that it might be his opinion, in concurrence with your Lordship's, that no Parliamentary proceeding, with reference to the Claims of the Catholics, should take place during the present session. To such an opinion I could not have assented; and I felt it to be due both to your Lordship and Mr. Canning, immediately to draw your attention to a point, on which it was so desirable that there should be a clear understanding between us.

I hope it is unnecessary for me to state, that I can look at the situation of the Catholics (both Irish and English) with no other view than that of the public interest; and that nothing can be further from my disposition or my intention, in a matter of such pre-eminent importance, than to give to any one party a triumph at the expense of another. But I do not conceive that the Repeal of the disabilities, of which

the Catholics complain, can give any just cause of discontent to their protestant fellow subjects; and I am strongly of opinion, that the efficacy of that measure must in a great degree depend on its being carried into effect with the least possible delay, and with the clearest demonstrations of a conciliatory and confiding spirit. Under this impression, I should very reluctantly abandon the hope of passing a Bill for such Repeal, even during the present session; but if this cannot be done, I hold it to be indispensable, that the most distinct and authentic pledge should be given, of the intention, both of the Executive Government and of Parliament, to take this matter up as one of the first measures of the next. To a proceeding of this nature, from the paper signed by your Lordship and Mr. Canning, I am led to hope that you would not be adverse.

As to the second proposition, the difference which I had observed was much less important. It is impossible to reduce a question of this na-

turs to any fixed principle. Whatever we can say, with our present means of information, must necessarily be general and inconclusive. The whole subject being left open to future consideration and decision, I can have no hesitation in subscribing to the proposition, that, if it should be found expedient to continue the exertions we are now making in the Peninsula, they should be conducted in the manner best calculated to answer their end.

I have, I fear, troubled your Lordship much more than is necessary under the circumstances of our present situation, and I will only add, that if we should be called upon to pursue these considerations in their practical details, it will be my most anxious wish, that no difference of opinion may be found to exist between us respecting the conduct to be adopted by a Government, equally solicitous for the internal peace and harmony of the Empire, and for the prosecution of military operations in such a mode as may appear most conducive to our ulti-

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mate security. Lord Grenville, to whom I have communicated your Lordship's letter, and its enclosures, desires me to express his cordial concurrence in this wish.

I have the honour to be, with the highest regard, My Lord, your Lordship's very faithful
humble servant,

(Signed)

GREY.

No. 16.

Lord Wellesley's Reply to Lord Grey, May 29th, 1812.

Apsley House, 29th May, 1812

MY LORD,

I request your Lordship to accept my sincere thanks for your letter of this day's date.

In the actual state of affairs it might be

deemed premature to enter into any more particular discussions, than those already submitted to your Lordship on the points, to which you have adverted with so much perspicuity, ability, and candour.

But I cannot omit this opportunity of assuring your Lordship, that I have derived from the sentiments, so justly expressed in your letter, a firm expectation, that if the advice, which I have humbly offered to the Prince Regent should be ultimately approved, a happy prospect will open to the Country of recovering internal Peace, and of prosecuting the War with success, under an Administration worthy of the confidence of the Prince, and of the People, and equal to the arduous charge of Public affairs; amidst all the difficulties and dangers of the present crisis.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect, My Lord, your Lordship's most faithful and obedient Servant,

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

No. 17.

Lord Wellesley's Minute of Communication to Lords
Grey and Grenville, June 1st.

Minute of a Communication made by Lord Wel-
lesley to Lord Grey, at Lord Grey's House,

June 1st, 1812.

Lord Wellesley stated that he had, on that morning, received full authority from the Prince Regent to form an Administration under his Royal Highness's commands; and that he was specially authorised to communicate with Lords Grey and Grenville on the subject.

That His Royal Highness entertained no wish to exclude from the proposed Administration, any person, or description of persons, who could unite in the principles on which the Administration was to be founded.

That the two propositions stated in Lord Wellesley's Minute of May 23d, and subse-

quently explained in the letters which had passed between Lord Wellesley and Lord Grey, of the dates of the 27th, 28th, and 29th of May, 1812, were intended by His Royal Highness to constitute the foundation of His Administration.

That His Royal Highness had signified His pleasure, that Lord Wellesley should conduct the formation of the Administration in all its branches, and should be First Commissioner of the Treasury; and that Lord Moira, Lord Erskine, and Mr. Canning, should be Members of the Cabinet.

That it was probable, that a Cabinet, formed on an enlarged basis, must be extended to the number of twelve or thirteen Members: that the Prince Regent wished Lords Grey and Grenville, on the part of their friends, to recommend for His Royal Highness's approbation the names of four Persons, (if the Cabinet should consist of twelve) and of five Persons, (if the Cabinet should consist of thirteen) to

be appointed by His Royal Highness to fill such stations in His Councils as might hereafter be arranged.

That His Royal Highness left the selection of the names to Lords Grey and Grenville without any exception or personal exclusion.

That in completing the new arrangement, the Prince Regent has granted to Lord Wellesley, entire liberty to propose for His Royal Highness's approbation, the names of any persons now occupying stations in His Royal Highness's Councils, or of any other persons.

That if the proposition made to Lords Grey and Grenville, should be accepted as the outline of an arrangement, all other matters would be discussed with the most anxious solicitude to promote harmony and general accommodation.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

No. 18.

Lord Grey to Lord Wellesley, dated 2d June, on the
Subject of No. 17.

Camelford House, June 2d, 1812.

MY LORD,

I lost no time in sending for Lord Grenville, and have communicated to him, since his arrival, the proposal made to me yesterday by your Lordship.

We have felt the necessity of a further communication with our friends, and this, I fear, will make it impossible for us to send our final answer to the minute which I had the honour of receiving from your Lordship yesterday evening, till a late hour to-night, or early to-morrow morning.

To obviate, however, as far as I can, any inconvenience which might arise from this delay, I think it right to state to your Lordship, that

the feeling which I yesterday expressed to you; as to the nature of the proposal which you were authorised by the Prince Regent to make to Lord Grenville and me, has been confirmed by subsequent reflection, as well as by the opinion of Lord Grenville, and, indeed, of every person with whom I have hitherto had an opportunity of consulting.

I have the honour to be, with the highest regard, my Lord, your Lordship's very faithful, humble servant,

(Signed)

GREY.

No. 19.

Lord Grey's and Lord Grenville's Reply, (June 3d) to Lord Wellesley's Minute of the 1st of June.

Camelford House, June 3d, 1812.

MY LORD,

We have considered, with the most serious attention, the minute which we have had the

honour to receive from your Lordship; and we have communicated it to such of our friends as we have had the opportunity of consulting.

On the occasion of a proposal made to us under the authority of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, we wish to renew, in the most solemn manner, the declaration of our unfeigned desire to have facilitated, as far as was in our power, the means of giving effect to the late vote of the House of Commons, and of averting the imminent and unparalleled dangers of the country.

No sense of the public distress and difficulty, no personal feelings of whatever description, would have prevented us, under such circumstances, from accepting, with dutiful submission, any situations in which we could have hoped to serve his Royal Highness usefully and honorably.

But it appears to us, on the most dispassionate

reflection, that the proposal stated to us by your Lordship cannot justify any such expectation.

We are invited not to discuss with your Lordship, or with any other public men, according to the usual practice in such cases, the various and important considerations, both of measures and of arrangements, which belong to the formation of a new government in all its branches; but to recommend to his Royal Highness a number, limited by previous stipulation, of persons willing to be included in a cabinet, of which the outlines are already definitely arranged.

To this proposal we could not accede without the sacrifice of the very object which the House of Commons has recommended, the formation of a strong and efficient Administration. We enter not into the examination of the relative proportions, or of the particular arrangements which it has been judged necessary thus previously to establish. It is to the principle of

disunion and jealousy that we object. To the supposed balance of contending interests in a cabinet, so measured out by preliminary stipulations. The times imperiously require an Administration united in principle, and strong in mutual reliance, possessing also the confidence of the crown, and assured of its support in those healing measures, which the public safety requires, and which are necessary to secure to the government the opinion and affections of the people.

No such hope is presented to us by this project, which appears to us equally new in practice, and objectionable in principle. It tends, as we think, to establish within the cabinet itself a system of counteraction, inconsistent with the prosecution of any uniform and beneficial course of policy.

We must therefore request permission to decline all participation in a government constituted upon such principles. Satisfied, as we

are, that the certain loss of character, which must arise from it to ourselves, could be productive only of distunion, and weakness in the Administration of the public interests.

We have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most faithful, and most obedient, humble servants,

(Signed)

GREY,
GRENVILLE.

No. 20.

Explanatory Letter from Lord Moira to Lord Grey,
June 3d, on the subject of Lord Wellesley's Minute,
No. 17.

June 3d, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

The answer which you and Lord Grenville have returned to the proposal made by Lord Wel-

leasy, seems to throw an oblique imputation upon me: therefore I intreat your re-consideration of your statement, as far as it may convey that impeachment of a procedure in which I was involved. You represent the proposition for an arrangement submitted to you as one calculated to found a Cabinet upon a principle of counteraction. When the most material of the public objects, which were to be the immediate ground of that Cabinet's exertion, had been previously understood between the parties, I own it is difficult for me to comprehend what principle of counteraction could be introduced. If there be any ambiguity which does not strike me, in Lord Wellesley's last paper, surely the construction ought to be sought in the antecedent communication; and I think the basis on which that communication had announced the intended Cabinet to stand, was perfectly clear.

With regard to the indication of certain individuals, I can assert that it was a measure adopted through the highest spirit of fairness to you and your friends. Mr. Canning's name was mentioned, because Lord Wellesley would

have declined office without him; and it was a frankness to apprise you of it; and Lord Erskine's and mine were stated with a view of showing, that Lord Wellesley, so far from having any jealousy to maintain a preponderance in the cabinet, actually left a Majority to those who had been accustomed to concur upon most public questions; and he specified Lord Erskine and myself; that you might see the number submitted for your exclusive nomination was not narrowed by the necessity of advertence to us. The choice of an additional member of the cabinet left to you, must prove how undistinguishable we considered our interests and your's, when this was referred to your consideration as a mere matter of convenience, the embarrassment of a numerous cabinet being well known. The reference to members of the late cabinet, or other persons, was always to be coupled with the established point, that they were such as could concur in the principles laid down as the foundation for the projected ministry. And the statement was principally dictated by the wish to

shew, that no system of exclusion could interfere with the arrangements which the public service might demand. On the selection of those persons, I aver the opinions of you, Lord Grenville, and the others whom you might bring forward as Members of the Cabinet, were to operate as fully as our own, and this was to be the case also with regard to subordinate offices. The expression, that this was left to be proposed by Lord Wellesley, was intended to prove that His Royal Highness did not, even in the most indirect manner, suggest any one of those individuals. It is really impossible that the spirit of fairness can have been carried farther than has been the intention in this negotiation. I therefore lament most deeply, that an arrangement so important for the interests of the country should go off upon points which I cannot but think wide of the substance of the case.

(Signed)

MOIRA.

No. 21.

Lord Wellesley to Lord Moira, approving Lord Moira's
Letter, (No. 20,) to Lord Grey, of the 3d June.

Apsley House, June 3d, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

I return the copy of your Lordship's letter to
Lord Grey. This communication to Lord Grey
is most useful, and the substance of it is admir-
ably judicious, clear, and correct.

My declaration, this day, in the House of
Lords, was indispensably necessary to my public
and private honour; both of which would have
been involved, if I had not, in full Parliament,
announced, that I had resigned the commission,
with which his Royal Highness had charged
me.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

No. 22.

Lord Grey's Reply to Lord Moira's Letter (No. 20.) of
the 3d of June.

Portman Square, 4th June, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

Being obliged to go immediately from the House of Lords to a dinner party, and afterwards to a meeting at Lord Grenville's, which occupied me till a late hour, it was not in my power to answer your letter last night.

You must be too well aware of my personal feelings towards you, of my esteem for your character, and of my confidence in your honour, to entertain any opinion respecting your conduct, inconsistent with those sentiments. Nothing, therefore, could be more remote from my intention, and I am desired by Lord Grenville, to whom I have shewn your letter, to give you the same assurance on his part, than to cast any

imputation whatever on you, as to the part you have borne in the proceedings which have lately taken place, for the formation of a new Administration. We know with how sincere an anxiety for the honour of the Prince, and for the public interest, you have laboured to effect that object.

Whatsoever objections we may feel, therefore, to the proposal which has been made to us, we beg they may be understood as having no reference whatever to any part of your conduct. That proposal was made to us in a formal and authorized communication from Lord Wellesley, both personally to me, and afterwards in a written minute. It appeared to us to be founded on a principle to which we could not assent, consistently with our honour, and with a due sense of public duty. The grounds of this opinion have been distinctly stated in our joint letter to Lord Wellesley, nor can they be altered by a private explanation; which, though it might lessen some obvious objections to a part of the detail, still leaves the general character

of the proceeding unchanged. Nothing could be more painful to me than to enter into any thing like a controversial discussion with you, in which I could only repeat more at large the same feelings and opinions which, in concurrence with Lord Grenville, I have already expressed in our formal answer. I beg only to assure you, before I conclude, that I have felt very sensibly, and shall always have a pleasure in acknowledging your personal kindness to me in the course of this transaction.

I am, with every sentiment of true respect and attention,

MY DEAR LORD,

Your's most faithfully,

GREY.

The Earl of Moira.

No. 23.

Lord Wellesley's Reply to the Letter (No. 19,) from
Lords Grey and Grenville, of the 3d of June.

Apsley House, June 3d, 1812.

MY LORDS,

I received the letter, by which I was honoured from your Lordships this morning, with the most sincere regret; and I have discharged the painful duty of submitting it to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent. It would have afforded me some consolation, if the continuance of the authority confided to me by His Royal Highness had enabled me, under His Royal Highness's commands, to offer to your Lordships a full and candid explanation of those points in my minute of the 1st of June, which your Lordships appear to me to have entirely misapprehended. But as His Royal Highness has been pleased to intimate to me his pleasure, that the formation of a new Administration should be intrusted to other

hands, I have requested permission to decline all further concern in this transaction.

I remain, however, extremely anxious to submit to your Lordships, some explanatory observations respecting the communications which I have had the honour to make to you; and I trust that your Lordships will indulge me with that advantage, although I can no longer address you under the sanction of the Prince Regent's authority.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,
My Lords, your most faithful, and obedient
servant,

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

No. 24.

Lord Wellesley to Lord Grey, on the same Subject,
dated 4th June.

Apsley House, June 4th, 1812.

MY LORD,

When I applied yesterday to your Lordship and Lord Grenville, for permission to submit to you some explanatory observations, respecting the communications which I have had the honour to make to you by the authority of the Prince Regent, I was not aware that Lord Moira had addressed a letter to your Lordship of the same nature as that which I was desirous of conveying to you.

The form of such a letter, either from Lord Moira or me, must have been private, as neither of us possessed any authority from the Prince Regent, to open any further communication with your Lordship, or with Lord Grenville; a circumstance which I deeply lament, under a

sanguine hope, that additional explanations, sanctioned by authority, might have removed the existing obstacles to an amicable arrangement.

Lord Moira has sent me a copy of his letter* to your Lordship of yesterday's date; and as it contains an accurate, clear, and candid statement of the real objects of the proposal, which I conveyed to you, it appears to me to have furnished you with as full an explanation as can be given in an unauthorised paper. Under these circumstances, it might be deemed superfluous trouble to your Lordship and to Lord Grenville, to solicit your attention to a private letter from me; although I should be most happy if any opportunity were afforded, of renewing a conciliatory intercourse, under the commands of the Prince Regent, with a view to attain the object of our recent communications.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,

My Lord, your Lordship's most faithful and
humble servant.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

No. 25.

Lord Grey's Reply to Lord Wellesley's Letter, No. 24.

Portman Square, June 4th, 1812.

MY LORD,

I have had the honour of receiving your
Lordship's Letter of this day's date.

As Lord Moira has communicated to your
Lordship the copy of his letter to me, I take it
for granted that you have in the same manner
been put in possession of my answer, which
contains all that I can say with respect to the

explanation of the proposal made by your Lordship to Lord Grenville and myself.

I was perfectly aware, that Lord Moira's letter could in no degree be considered as an authorised communication, but that it was simply a private explanation offered for the purpose of removing the objections, which had been stated by Lord Grenville and me to the proposal contained in the written minute transmitted to us by your Lordship, under the authority of the Prince Regent. But though it could not vary the effect of that Minute in my opinion, I was happy to receive it as an expression of personal regard, and of that desire, which we readily acknowledge both in your Lordship and Lord Moira, and which is reciprocal on the part of Lord Grenville and myself, that no difference of opinion on the matter in question, should produce on either side any personal impression, which might obstruct the renewal of a conciliatory intercourse, whenever a more favourable opportunity shall be afforded for it.

I have the honour to be, with the highest regard, My Lord, your Lordship's very faithful humble servant.

(Signed)

GREY.

No. 26.

Lord Moira to Lords Grey and Grenville, proposing an Interview with them, 5th June.

Lord Moira presents his best compliments to Earl Grey and Lord Grenville. Since Lord Wellesley has declared his Commission from the Prince Regent to be at an end, Lord Moira, (as being honoured with His Royal Highness's confidence) ventures to indulge the anxiety he feels, that an arrangement of the utmost importance for the interests of the Country should not go off on any misunderstanding,

He therefore intreats Lord Grey and Lord Gren-

ville to advert to the explanatory letter* of the third of June, written by him to the former. And if the dispositions therein expressed shall appear to them likely to lead, upon conference, to any advantageous result towards co-operation in the Prince's Service, he will be happy to have an interview with them.

Should the issue of that conversation prove such as he would hope, his object would be to solicit the Prince Regent's permission to address them formally. He adopts this mode to preclude all difficulties in the outset. Let him be permitted to remark, that the very urgent pressure of Public Affairs renders the most speedy determination infinitely desirable.

June 5, 1812.

N. B. This was written in the presence of the Duke of Bedford, in consequence of conversation with his Grace; and was by him carried to Lord Grey.

* No. 20.

No. 27.

Note from Lords Grey and Grenville, declining unauthorised Discussions, 5th June.

House of Lords, June 5th, 1812.

We cannot but feel highly gratified by the kindness of the motive, on which Lord Moira acts. Personal communication with him will always be acceptable and honourable to us. But we hope he will be sensible, that no advantage is likely to result from pursuing this subject by unauthorised discussions, and in a course different from the usual practise.

Motives of obvious delicacy must prevent our taking any step towards determining the Prince Regent to authorize Lord Moira to address us personally. We shall always receive with dutiful submission His Royal Highness's commands, in whatever manner, and through whatever channel, he may be pleased to signify them, and we trust we shall never be found

wanting in zeal for His Royal Highness's service, and for the public interest. But we cannot venture to suggest to His Royal Highness, through any other person, our opinions, on points in which His Royal Highness is not pleased to require our advice.

(Signed)

GREY,
GRENVILLE.

No. 28.

Lord Moira to Lords Grey and Grenville, informing them, that he has the Prince Regent's Authority to address them, and requesting to know, when and where he can see them.

Lord Moira presents his best compliments to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville

Discouraged, as he unavoidably must be, he yet cannot reconcile it to himself to leave any

effort untried: And he adopts their principle for an interview, though he doubts if the desired conclusion is likely to be so well advanced by it, as would have been the case in the mode suggested by him.

He has now the Prince Regent's instructions to take steps towards the formation of a ministry; and is authorized specially to address himself to Lords Grey and Grenville. It is, therefore, his request to know, when and where he can wait upon them. He would wish to bring Lord Erskine with him.

June 6, 1812. 11, Forenoon.

No. 29.

**Minute of a Conversation between Lord Moira, and
Lords Grey and Grenville, at which Lord Erskine was
present.**

St. James's Place,

June 6th, 1812.

Lord Moira stated to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, that he was authorized by the Prince Regent, to consult with them on the formation of a new government. And satisfactory explanations having taken place between them, respecting such measures as appeared to be of the greatest urgency at the present moment, more especially with reference to the situation of H. M.'s Roman Catholic subjects, and the differences now unhappily subsisting with America; and that Lord Moira had received this commission without any restriction

or limitation whatever being laid by the Prince, on their considering any points which they judged useful for his service; they expressed their satisfaction with the fairness of this proposal, and their readiness to enter into such discussions as must precede the details of any new arrangement. As a preliminary question, which appeared to them of great importance, they thought it necessary immediately to bring forward, to prevent the inconvenience and embarrassment of the further delay which might be produced, if this negotiation should break off in a more advanced state, they asked, *whether this full liberty extended to the consideration of new appointments to those great offices of the household, which have been usually included in the political arrangements made on a change of administration; intimating their opinion, that it would be necessary to act on the same principle on the present occasion.*

Lord Moira answered, *that the Prince had laid no restriction upon him in that respect, and had never pointed in the most distant manner at the*

protection of those officers from removal; that it would be impossible for him (Lord Moira) however, to concur in making the exercise of this power positive and indispensable, in the formation of the administration, because he should deem it on public grounds peculiarly objectionable.

To this Lord Grey and Lord Grenville replied, they also acted on public grounds alone, and with no other feeling whatever than that which arose from the necessity of giving to a new government that character of efficiency and stability, and those marks of the constitutional support of the crown, which were required to enable it to act usefully for the public service; and that on these grounds it appeared to them indispensable, that the connection of the great offices of the court, with the political administration, should be clearly established in its first arrangements.

A decided difference of opinion as to this point having been thus expressed on both sides, the con-

versation ended here, with mutual declarations of regret.

Nothing was said on the subject of official arrangements, nor any persons proposed on either side to fill any particular situations.

B. and C. Two Letters (which passed between Lords Moira, and Grey) subjoined for the purpose of throwing light on the ground of part of these Transactions.

B.

(COPY)

May 31st, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

A just anxiety not to leave any thing subject to misunderstanding, must excuse me if I am troublesome to you. Since I quitted you, the necessity of being precise in terms has occurred to me: And, although I think I cannot have mistaken you, I wish to know if I am accurate in what I apprehend you to have said. I understood the position, stated by you as having been what you advanced in the House of Lords, to be this, "That pledges had been given to the Catholics, a departure from which rendered their present dis- appointment more galling; and that you said "this" in the hearing of persons who could "contradict you if you were inaccurate." Just say whether I have taken your expression correctly or not.

Believe me, &c. &c.

(Signed)

MOIRA.

Earl Grey.

C.

Holland House, May 31, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kind anxiety to procure an accurate statement of the words spoken by me in the House of Lords. It is difficult to remember precise expressions so long after they were spoken; but I am sure I cannot be far wrong in stating the substance of what I said, as follows :

I was speaking on the subject of the Irish Catholics, and particularly on the charge of intemperate conduct which had been made against them. I stated, that great allowances were to be made for this, considering their repeated disappointments; and I cited, as instances of these, the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, and the Union. I then said, that the most distinct and authentic pledges had been given to them, of the Prince's wish to relieve them from the disabilities of which they complained;

that I spoke in the hearing of persons who would contradict me if what I said was unfounded, and who would, I was sure, support its truth if questioned; that now, when the fulfilment of these pledges was confidently expected, to see an Administration continued in power, which stood on the express principle of resisting their claims, was, perhaps the bitterest disappointment they had yet experienced; and that it was not surprising, if, under such circumstances, they felt, and acted, in a way that all well wishers to the peace of the empire must regret.

This I give as the substance, and by no means as a correct repetition of the particular expressions used by me; and this statement I can neither retract, nor endeavour to explain away. If, in consequence of it, the Prince feels a strong personal objection to me, I can only repeat, what I have already said to you, that I am perfectly ready to stand out of the way; that my friends shall have my full concurrence and approbation in taking office without me, and my most cor-

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