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Westminster, December 5, 1782.

THIS Day His Majesty came to the House of Peers, and being in His Royal Robes, seated on the Throne with the usual Solemnity, Sir Francis Molyneux, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, was sent with a Message from His Majesty to the House of Commons; commanding their Attendance in the House of Peers. The Commons being come thither accordingly, His Majesty was pleased to make the following most Gracious Speech:

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

SINCE the Close of the last Sessions, I have employed My whole Time in the Care and Attention which the important and critical Conjunction of Public Affairs required of Me.

I lost no Time in giving the necessary Orders to prohibit the further Prosecution of offensive War upon the Continent of North America. Adopting, as My Inclination will always lead Me to do, with Decision and Effect, whatever I collect to be the Sense of My Parliament and My People; I have pointed all My Views and Measures, as well in Europe as in North America, to an entire and cordial Reconciliation with those Colonies.

Finding it indispensable to the Attainment of this Object, I did not hesitate to go the full Length of the Powers vested in Me, and offered to declare them Free and Independent States, by an Article to be inserted in the Treaty of Peace. Provisional Articles are agreed upon, to take Effect whenever Terms of Peace shall be finally settled with the Court of France.

In thus admitting their Separation from the Crown of these Kingdoms, I have sacrificed every Consideration of My own to the Wishes and Opinion of My People. I make it my humble and earnest Prayer to Almighty God, that Great Britain may not feel the Evils which might result from so great a Dismemberment of the Empire; and, that America may be free from those Calamities, which have formerly proved in the Mother Country how essential Monarchy is to the Enjoyment of Constitutional Liberty. Religion, — Language, — Interest, — Affections may, and I hope will yet prove a Bond of permanent Union between the Two Countries: To this End, neither Attention nor Disposition shall be wanting on My Part.

While I have carefully abstained from all offensive Operations against America, I have directed My whole Force by Land and Sea against the other Powers at War, with as much Vigour as the Situation of that Force, at the Commencement of the Campaign, would permit. I trust that you feel the Advantages resulting from the Safety of the great Branches of Our Trade. You must have seen with Pride and Satisfaction the gallant Defence of the Governor and the Garrison of Gibraltar; and My Fleet, after having effected the Object of their Destination, offering Battle to the Combined Force of France and

Spain on their own Coasts; those of My Kingdoms have remained at the same Time perfectly secure, and your domestic Tranquillity uninterrupted. This respectable State, under the Blessing of God, I attribute to the entire Confidence which subsists between Me and My People, and to the Readiness which has been shewn by My Subjects in My City of London, and in other Parts of My Kingdoms, to stand forth in the general Defence. Some Proofs have lately been given of Public Spirit in private Men, which would do Honour to any Age and any Country.

Having manifested to the whole World, by the most lauding Examples, the signal Spirit and Bravery of My People, I conceived it a Moment not unbecoming my Dignity, and thought it a Regard due to the Lives and Fortunes of such brave and gallant Subjects, to shew Myself ready on My Part to embrace fair and honourable Terms of Accommodation with all the Powers at War.

I have the Satisfaction to acquaint you, that Negotiations to this Effect are considerably advanced, the Result of which, as soon as they are brought to a Conclusion, shall be immediately communicated to you.

I have every Reason to hope and believe, that I shall have it in my Power in a very short Time to acquaint you, that they have ended in Terms of Pacification, which, I trust, you will see just Cause to approve.—I rely however with perfect Confidence on the Wisdom of My Parliament and the Spirit of My People, that if any unforeseen Change in the Dispositions of the Belligerent Powers should frustrate My confident Expectations, they will approve of the Preparations I have thought it advisable to make, and be ready to second the most vigorous Efforts in the further Prosecution of the War.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I have endeavoured, by every Measure in My Power, to diminish the Burthens of my People.—I lost no Time in taking the most decided Measures for introducing a better Economy into the Expence of the Army.

I have carried into strict Execution the several Reductions in My Civil List Expences, directed by an Act of the last Sessions.—I have introduced a further Reform into other Departments, and suppressed several Sine Cure Places in them. I have by this Means so regulated My Establishments, that My Expence shall not in future exceed My Income.

I have ordered the Estimate of the Civil List Debt, laid before you last Sessions, to be completed. The Debt proving somewhat greater than could be then correctly stated, and the proposed Reduction not immediately taking Place, I trust you will provide for the Deficiency, securing, as before, the Repayment out of My annual Income.

I have ordered Enquiry to be made into the Application of the Sum voted in Support of the American