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Westminster, February 2, 1801.

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,

At a Crisis so important to the Interests of My People, I derive great Satisfaction from being enabled, for the first Time, to avail Myself of the Advice and Assistance of the Parliament of My United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

This memorable Era, distinguished by the Accomplishment of a Measure calculated to augment and consolidate the Strength and Resources of the Empire, and to cement more closely the Interests and Affections of My Subjects, will, I trust, be equally marked by that Vigor, Energy, and Firmness, which the Circumstances of Our present Situation peculiarly require.

The unfortunate Course of Events on the Continent, and the Consequences which must be expected to result from it, cannot fail to be Matter of Anxiety and Concern to all who have a just Feeling for the Security and Independence of Europe.

Your Astonishment, as well as your Regret, must be excited by the Conduct of those Powers whose Attention, at such a Period, appears to be more engaged in Endeavours to weaken the Naval Force of the British Empire, which has hitherto opposed so powerful an Obstacle to the inordinate Ambition of France, than in concerting the Means of mutual Defence against their common and increasing Danger.

The Representations which I directed to be made to the Court of Petersburg, in consequence of

the Outrages committed against the Ships, Property, and Persons of My Subjects, have been treated with the utmost Disrespect; and the Proceedings of which I complained have been aggravated by subsequent Acts of Injustice and Violence.

Under these Circumstances a Convention has been concluded by that Court with those of Copenhagen and Stockholm, the Object of which, as avowed by One of the Contracting Parties, is to renew their former Engagements for establishing by Force a new Code of Maritime Law, inconsistent with the Rights and hostile to the Interests of this Country.

In this Situation, I could not hesitate as to the Conduct which it became Me to pursue. I have taken the earliest Measures to repel the Aggressions of this hostile Confederacy, and to support those Principles which are essential to the Maintenance of Our Naval Strength, and which are grounded on the System of Public Law, so long established and recognized in Europe.

I have, at the same Time, given such Assurances as manifest My Disposition to renew My antient Relations with those Powers, whenever it can be done consistently with the Honor of My Crown, and with a just Regard to the Safety of My Subjects. You will, I am persuaded, omit nothing on your Part, that can afford Me the most vigorous and effectual Support in My firm Determination to maintain to the utmost, against every Attack, the Naval Rights and the Interests of My Empire.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I have directed the Estimates for the several Branches of the Public Service to be laid before you: Deeply as I lament the continued Necessity of adding to the Burdens of My People, I am persuaded you will feel with Me the Importance of providing effectual Means for those Exertions which are indispensably requisite for the Honor and Security of the Country.