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DECLARATION.

HIS Majesty owes to himself and to Europe a frank Exposition of the Motives which have dictated his late Measures in the Baltic.

His Majesty has delayed this Exposition only in the Hope of that more amicable Arrangement with the Court of Denmark which it was His Majesty's first Wish and Endeavour to obtain, for which he was ready to make great Efforts and great Sacrifices, and of which he never lost Sight even in the Moment of the most decisive Hostility.

Deeply as the Disappointment of this Hope has been felt by His Majesty, he has the Consolation of reflecting that no Exertion was left untried on his Part to produce a different Result. And, while he laments the cruel Necessity which has obliged him to have Recourse to Acts of Hostility against a Nation with which it was His Majesty's most earnest Desire to have established the Relations of common Interest and Alliance, His Majesty feels confident that, in the Eyes of Europe and of the World, the justification of his Conduct will be found in the commanding and indispensable Duty, paramount to all others amongst the Obligations of a Sovereign, of providing, while there was yet Time, for the immediate Security of his People.

His Majesty had received the most positive Information of the Determination of the present Ruler of France to occupy, with a military Force, the Territory of Holstein, for the Purpose of excluding Great Britain from all her accustomed Channels of Communication with the Continent; of inducing or compelling the Court of Denmark to close the Passage of the Sound against the British Commerce and Navigation; and of availing himself of the Aid of the Danish Marine for the Invasion of Great Britain and of Ireland.

Confident as His Majesty was of the Authenticity of the Sources from which this Intelligence was derived, and confirmed in the Credit which he gave to it, as well by the notorious and repeated Declarations of the Enemy, and by his recent Occupation of the Towns and Territories of other Neutral States, as by the Preparations actually made for collecting a hostile Force upon the Frontiers of His Danish Majesty's Continental Dominions, His Majesty would yet willingly have forborne to act upon this Intelligence, until the complete and practical Disclosure of the Plan had made manifest to all the World the absolute Necessity of resisting it.

His Majesty did forbear, as long as there could be a Doubt of the Urgency of the Danger, or a Hope of an effectual Counteraction to it, in the Means or in the Dispositions of Denmark.

But His Majesty could not but recollect that when, at the Close of the former War, the Court of Denmark engaged in a hostile Confederacy against Great Britain, the Apology offered by that Court for so unjustifiable an Abandonment of a Neutrality which His Majesty had never ceased to respect, was founded on its avowed Inability to resist the Operation of external Influence, and the Threats of a formidable neighbouring Power. His Majesty could not but compare the Degree of Influence which at that Time determined the Decision of the Court of Denmark, in violation of positive Engagements, solemnly contracted but Six Months before, with the increased Operation which France had now the Means of giving to the same Principle of Intimidation, with Kingdoms prostrate at her Feet, and with the Population of Nations under her Banners.

Nor was the Danger less imminent than certain. Already the Army destined for the Invasion of Holstein was assembling on the violated Territory of