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AUTHENTIC COPIES

MR. PITT'S LETTER

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE OF WALES,

AND OF

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S REPLY.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, PALL-MALL, BOOKSELLER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE OF WALES; AND J. DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE,
PICCADILLY.

MDCCLXXXIX.

*Authentic Copy of Mr. PITT's Letter to his HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE OF WALES, left at Carlton House, on Tuesday
Night, the 30th of December.*

S I R,

THE proceedings in PARLIAMENT being now brought to a point, which will render it necessary to propose to the HOUSE of COMMONS, the particular measures to be taken for supplying the defect of the Personal Exercise of the ROYAL AUTHORITY during the present interval, and your ROYAL HIGHNESS having some time since signified your pleasure, that any communication on this subject should be in writing, I take the liberty of respectfully entreating YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS's permission to submit to your consideration the out-lines of the plan which HIS MAJESTY's *Confidential Servants* humbly conceive, (according to the best judgment which they are able to form) to be proper to be proposed in the present circumstances.

It is their humble opinion, that YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS should be empowered to Exercise the ROYAL AUTHORITY in
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the name and on the behalf of HIS MAJESTY, during HIS MAJESTY'S illness, and to do all Acts which might legally be done by HIS MAJESTY, with provisions, nevertheless, that the care of HIS MAJESTY'S Royal Person, and the management of HIS MAJESTY'S Household, and the direction and appointment of the Officers and Servants therein, should be in the QUEEN, under such Regulations as may be thought necessary.—That the Power to be exercised by YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS should not extend to the granting the Real or Personal PROPERTY of the KING, (except as far as relates to the *Renewal of Leases*) to the granting any OFFICE in Reversion, or to the granting, for any other Term than during HIS MAJESTY'S pleasure, any PENSION, or any office whatever, *except such as must by Law be granted for Life, or during good behaviour*, nor to the granting any Rank or Dignity of the PEERAGE of this Realm, to any Person, except HIS MAJESTY'S Issue, who shall have attained the age of twenty-one years.

These are the chief points which have occurred to HIS MAJESTY'S Servants. I beg leave to add, that their ideas are formed on the supposition that HIS MAJESTY'S Illness is only temporary, and may be of no long duration. It may be difficult

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cult to fix before hand, the precise period for which these Provisions ought to last; but if unfortunately HIS MAJESTY'S Recovery should be protracted to a more distant period, then there is reason at present to imagine, it will be open hereafter to the wisdom of PARLIAMENT, to re-consider these provisions, whenever the circumstances appear to call for it.

If YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS should be pleased to require any further explanation on the subject, and should condescend to signify your orders, that I should have the honour of attending YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS for that purpose, or to intimate any other mode in which YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS may wish to receive such explanation, I shall respectfully wait YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS'S commands.

I have the honour to be,

With the utmost deference and submission,

SIR,

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

Most dutiful and devoted Servant,

(Signed)

W. PITT.

Downing-Street,

Tuesday Night, Dec. 30, 1788.

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*Authentic Copy of the Paper delivered by the PRINCE OF WALES
to the LORD CHANCELLOR, in Reply to the Letter sent to his
ROYAL HIGHNESS from MR. PITT.*

THE PRINCE OF WALES learns from Mr. Pitt's letter, that the proceedings in Parliament are now in a train which enables Mr. Pitt, according to the intimation in his former letter, to communicate to the PRINCE, the outlines of the Plan which His MAJESTY'S Confidential Servants conceive to be proper to be proposed in the present circumstances.

Concerning the steps already taken by Mr. Pitt, the Prince is silent.—Nothing *done* by the two HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT can be a proper subject of his animadversion; but when *previously* to any discussion in Parliament, the outlines of a scheme of Government are sent for his consideration, in which it is proposed that he shall be personally and principally concerned, and by which the ROYAL AUTHORITY, and the PUBLIC WELFARE may be deeply affected, the PRINCE would be unjustifiable, were he to withhold an explicit declaration of his sentiments.

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sentiments. His silence might be construed into a previous approbation of a plan, the accomplishment of which every motive of duty to his FATHER and SOVEREIGN, as well as of regard for the PUBLIC INTEREST, obliges him to consider as injurious to both.

In the state of deep distress, in which the PRINCE, and the whole ROYAL FAMILY were involved, by the heavy calamity which has fallen upon the KING, and at a moment, when Government, deprived of its chief energy and support, seemed peculiarly to need the cordial and united aid of all descriptions of good subjects, it was not expected by the PRINCE, that a plan should be offered to his consideration, by which Government was to be rendered difficult, if not impracticable, in the hands of any person intended to represent the KING's authority,—much less in the hands of his ELDEST SON—the HEIR APPARENT of his kingdoms, and the person most bound to the maintenance of His MAJESTY'S just Prerogatives and Authority, as well as most interested in the HAPPINESS, the PROSPERITY, and the GLORY of the PEOPLE.

The Prince forbears to remark on the several parts of the sketch of the plan laid before him; he apprehends it must

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have been formed with sufficient deliberation to preclude the probability of any argument of *his* producing an alteration of sentiment in the projectors of it. But he trusts, with confidence, to the wisdom and justice of Parliament, when the whole of the subject, and the circumstances connected with it, shall come under their deliberation.

He observes therefore, only generally on the heads communicated by Mr. *Pitt*—and it is with deep regret the PRINCE makes the observation, that he sees, in the contents of that paper, a project for producing WEAKNESS, DISORDER, and INSECURITY in every branch of the Administration of Affairs.—A project for DIVIDING the ROYAL FAMILY from EACH OTHER—for separating the COURT from the STATE, and thereby disjoining GOVERNMENT from its natural and accustomed SUPPORT.—A scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to the PRINCE all the invidious duties of Government, without the means of softening them to the public, by any one act of grace, favor, or benignity.

The PRINCE's feelings on contemplating this plan, are also rendered still more painful to him, by observing that it is
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not founded on any general principle, but is calculated to infuse jealousies and suspicion (wholly groundless, he trusts) in that quarter, whose confidence it will ever be the first pride of his life to merit and obtain.

With regard to the motive and object of the limitations and restrictions proposed, the PRINCE can have but little to observe. No light or information is offered him by His MAJESTY's Ministers on these points. They have informed him *what* the powers are which they mean to *refuse* him, not *why* they are *with-held*.

The PRINCE, however,—holding as he does, that it is an UNDOUBTED and FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE of this CONSTITUTION, that the POWERS and PREROGATIVES of the CROWN are vested there, as a TRUST for the benefit of the PEOPLE, and that they are sacred *only* as they are *necessary* to the preservation of that poise and balance of the constitution, which experience has proved to be the true security of the liberty of the subject—must be allowed to observe, that the plea of public utility ought to be strong, manifest, and urgent, which calls for the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the Supreme Power, or its Representative; or which can justify

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the PRINCE in consenting, that, in *his person*, an *experiment* shall be made to ascertain with how small a portion of the Kingly Power the Executive Government of this country may be carried on.

The PRINCE has only to add, that if security for His MAJESTY's re-possessing his rightful Government, whenever it shall please Providence, in bounty to the country, to remove the calamity with which he is afflicted, be any part of the object of this plan, the PRINCE has only to be convinced, that any measure is necessary, or even conducive to that end, to be the first to urge it as the preliminary and paramount consideration of any settlement in which he would consent to share.

If attention to what it is presumed might be his MAJESTY's feelings and wishes on the happy day of his recovery, be the object, it is with the truest sincerity the PRINCE expresses his firm conviction, that no event would be more repugnant to the feelings of his ROYAL FATHER, than the knowledge, that the Government of his SON and Representative had exhibited the SOVEREIGN POWER of the realm in a state of degradation, of curtailed authority, and diminished energy—a state, hurtful in practice to the prosperity and good Government of his

PEOPLE,

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PEOPLE, and injurious in its precedent to the security of the MONARCH, and the rights of his Family.

Upon that part of the plan which regards the KING's real and personal property, the PRINCE feels himself compelled to remark, that it was not necessary for Mr. *Pitt*, nor proper to suggest to the PRINCE, the restraint he proposes against the PRINCE's granting away the KING's real and personal property. The PRINCE does not conceive, that, during the KING's life, he is, by law, entitled to make any such grant; and he is sure, that he has never shewn the smallest inclination to possess any such power. But it remains with Mr. *Pitt* to consider the eventual interests of the ROYAL FAMILY, and to provide a proper and natural security against the mismanagement of them by others.

The PRINCE has discharged an indifference giving his free opinion on the consideration.

His Conviction of interests, to the peace and to the safety and welfare of the country remain.

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bilitated state, outweighs, in the PRINCE's mind, every other consideration, and will determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by the present melancholy necessity (which of all the KING's subjects he deplors the most) in full confidence, that the AFFECTION and LOYALTY to the KING, the experienced ATTACHMENT to the HOUSE of BRUNSWICK, and the GENEROSITY which has always distinguished this NATION, will carry him through the many difficulties, inseparable from this most critical situation, with comfort to himself, with honour to the KING, and with advantage to the PUBLIC.

(Signed)

G. P.

*Carlton House,
January 2, 1789.*

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