

Admiral A. Keppel. Memo<sup>m</sup>

Apr. 19 1778

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In the present Important  
Moment of concern, It is Impossible  
to keep thoughts in total Silence,  
I never Allow myself to form  
plans in my Imagination for  
Execution & Interpore upon the Enemy,  
without continually meeting a compleat  
check or stop, from the want of the  
force both of Land & sea, that is  
Employed in North America, but  
I will Interpore as little as possible  
with that great question, It seems  
decided,

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yet I may be permitted to say  
 the Great Land force as well as sea  
 force in that part, the number of  
 transports, of Victuallers, of Ordnance  
 ships & other store ships, Employ the  
 Largest stock of seamen belonging  
 to this Country, and therefore till I can  
 see my way in this great Consideration,  
 I must be rather silent, and content  
 myself, with hopes, tho' not the certainty  
 of being able to face the french  
 where-ever they may suddenly show  
 themselves, for which purpose, my  
 first consideration & proposition would  
 be: supposing the great Fleet suddenly

strong, to form a plan & in great  
 haste, for a Fleet of frigates, cutters &  
 small craft of every sort, to be able  
 to disappoint the french in the attempts  
 they may make to land upon the coasts  
 of England & Scotland, Land Force  
 will be wanted to occur & check, bodies  
 of the french troops, that may escape  
 the vigilance of the English Fleets, As  
 Indeed there are many circumstances  
 & probable situations that may render  
 the Fleet of assistance unable to stop that  
 of the french, and now In regard  
 to the great Fleet, the Consideration  
 of its being the Bulwark & real  
 safety.

of these dominions, I cannot but  
think, that in every view of it,  
It should be preserved in force  
superior to the enemies. If possible,  
and depend upon good Intelligence  
for adopting any separation of it,  
should the enemy send a large  
detachment of its Fleet to either West  
or East Indies, the same force may be  
Instantly sent from this Country, but  
till that is clearly understood, sending  
any considerable detachment from  
Home can have little other effect than  
weakening our force, & yet remaining  
Insufficiently strong Abroad to

resist the Enemy, what is to be  
Apprehended by it, is that the Enemy  
will be able to beat & disperse such  
Inferiority as four or five ships <sup>would be</sup> (that is  
Admitting that they get out unobserved)  
and being so successfull, the Additional  
force sent of four or five ships to  
strengthened of others, might be defeated  
in their turn, those they expected to  
join having met that fate before  
them, some means & Questions must  
be thought of, to raise & or good men  
for the Fleet, If the service can be  
carried on without disgrace, to the  
period of such a recruit of men,

The face & appearance of things  
would much change, but in the present  
moment I must repeat, that it would be  
unwise to separate the great Fleet  
by detachment, such a measure might  
put the sea force of England, in the  
best state of that of the French,  
divided & left to the possibility of  
being cutt off from joining, I am  
therefore firm in my opinion that  
detachment & separation is dangerous,  
& risks too much, If the Spaniards  
the French Fleet from Lisbon, the  
siege of Gibraltar may be their Object  
in that thought, all sea force to that

ness of things  
 a, but in the present  
 at, that it would be  
 the great Fleet  
 a measure might  
 of England, in the  
 of the South,  
 the possibility of  
 joining, I am  
 my opinion that  
 operation is dangerous,  
 If the Spanish  
 from London, the  
 may be their object,  
 see force to that

place not completely adequate in giving  
 away. (I don't mean that a risk, if  
 supplies are necessary must not be run.)  
 If the destination of the London Fleet  
 can ever be ascertained, I suppose vessels  
 of equal force with our course  
 be sent close upon them,  
 The length of time for the great  
 Fleet keeping the sea is a matter  
 of the utmost consequence to have  
 in constant consideration;

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Paper delivered by Adam. Rogers  
Sunday April 19. 1778.