

H. K. to Lord North

Fortescue 2649

3372

Thurs June 11th 1779 ^{am} 25 p. 10. A.M.

Though I shall return this day unto Lord North the Box containing the voluminous papers he delivered yesterday unto me, yet I do not chuse to delay untill noon returning the paper that contains the supposed purport of the address to be moved this day by Sir W. Meredith, as Lord North may wish to examine it this forenoon and as the Note he sent unto me the last afternoon, mentions his not having read the paper delivered by Mr. Eden unto him on that and other matters of an important nature.

The object of Sir W. Meredith, pretends to be the desire of Peace with America, that of Mr. Eden is to be employed as a private Negotiator with Franklin to effect Peace with America, it is therefore easy to blend my thoughts on both ideas, indeed I rather wish to convey my sentiments to Lord North on so very serious a subject on Paper, as it will enable him at any time to recur to this when he wants to know my ideas on the Subject.

I should think it the greatest instance among the many I have met with of ingratitude and injustice, if it could be supposed, that any Man in my Dominions more ardently desired the restoration of Peace and solid happiness in every part of this Empire than I do, there is no personal sacrifice I could not readily yield for so desirable an object; but at the same time

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no inclination to get out of the present difficulties which certainly keep my mind very far from a state of ease, can incline me to enter into what I look upon as the destruction of the Empire. I have heard Lord North frequently drop that the advantages to be gained by this contest would never repay the expense, I own that let any War be ever so successful if persons will sit down and weigh the Expenses they will find as in the last that it has impoverished the State, enriched individuals, and perhaps raised the Name only of the Conquerors, but this is only weighing such events in the Scales of a Tradesman behind his Counter, it is necessary for those in the Station it has pleased Divine Providence to place me to weigh whether expenses though very great are not some times necessary to prevent what might be more ruinous to a Country than the loss of money. The present Contest with America I cannot help seeing as the most serious in which any Country was ever engaged it contains such a train of consequences that ^{they} must be examined to feel its real weight; whether the laying a Tax was deserving all the Evils that have arisen from it, I should suppose no man could alledge that without being thought more fit for Bedlam than a Seat in the Senate; but ^{step by step} the Demands of America have risen - independence in their Object, that certainly is one which every man not willing to sacrifice every Object to a momentary and inglorious Peace _{must}

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must concur with me in thinking that this Country can never submit to, should America succeed in that, the West Indies must follow them, not independant, but must for its own interest be dependant on North America; Ireland would soon follow the same plan and be a separate State, then this Island would be reduced to itself, and soon would be a poor Island indeed, for reduced in her Trade Merchants would retire with their Wealth to Chimney more to their Advantage, and Shoals of Manufacturers would leave this Country for the New Empire; these self evident consequences, are not worse than what can arise should the Almighty permit every event to turn out to our disadvantage; consequently this Country has but one sensible, one great line to follow, the being ever ready to make Peace when to ^{be} obtained without submitting to terms that in their consequence must annihilate this Empire, and with firmness to make every effort to disengage herself.

which certainly
line me to
the Empire.
the advantages
appear, I am
with respect down
the best
individuals, and
but this is
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it has pleased
their expenses
prevent
the loss of
not help seeing
or engaged
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[Faint, illegible cursive handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

Amur...

11 June 1779