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Windsor Castle Sept. 13th 1779

Having reflected very seriously on the various matters stated by Vice Admiral Barrington on Friday, and considered very coolly on our present situation I think it right to send the result to Lord Sandwich that he may see what force he

can provide for several very pressing services;

No one can deny that the House of Bourbon have brought their united Navy to a degree of strength that no Englishman can see with ease, complaining is foolish as it does not effect any remedy, therefore we must see what are the necessary services.

Whilst the United fleet remains at port or attempts any further operation it is impossible to weaken the Fleet under Sir John Jervis in deed beyond Sicily I do not think it advisable that the Phoenix, Argosy or St Albans should venture to sail.

Should the Spaniards return home a Squadron sufficient to relieve Gibraltar and secure the ships now blockading that Fort must without the loss of an hour be sent, and proceed from thence to answer the same salutary purpose at Minorca; after that

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Service is over a part of it must go to the West
Indies where at least seven ships must return being
unable to remain in the Indies. Troops must be
sent sufficient to secure Jamaica and Barbadoes
the Capital Islands belonging to His Majesty, we
must run any risks rather than not secure them
if in addition to this it can be found practicable
to undertake any attacks on St. Domingue it
would be highly desirable but of this the means
must be shown before any thing more can be
with propriety said. I see the difficulties of
the times but I know nothing advantageous can
be obtained without some hazard; I very clearly
see that if we alone attend to home security that
every valuable possession will be lost before
any effort is made to any other tendency but making
the country ^{secure against} ~~easy~~ foreign invasion, this will cause
the minds of the People as yet well disposed,
but this disposition cannot long continue if every
two or three months fresh losses are to be met with.

H. M. to Ed. Sandovich

Fortescue 2773

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3520 (2)
Perhaps no man in my Dominion has a mind more ready
to bear up against misfortune, but then I must feel that
all that could have been done has; it is by bold and
manly efforts Nations have been preserved not passing
along the line of home defence.

[Faint, illegible handwritten text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

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