

H. M. to Ld. Chancellor.  
(Draft of last)

3689 January 1780.

My Lord, I should be sorry if You remained under any Anxiety, from an Idea of having misled into wrong impressions, to the disadvantage of any one of my Subjects. When I have misfortune at any time not thoroughly to conceive what You may represent to Me, You will do right to follow the Method You have adopted on the present Occasion, and Act with the same frankness and candour, which I shall always approve.

It was certainly agreed between Us that You should sound the Persons with whom You should converse only in Your own Name, and I understood You had done so though You had full power if You thought it right, to have done it in Mine; and when You told Me the conversation You had with Lord Shelburne, particularly his remark that it would be more gracious in Me to declare what Openings I would make, that Opposition might judge whether their Sentiments could agree with Mine I confess I was fully persuaded perhaps erroneously, that he sufficiently understood by what Authority You acted, though You did not speak in My Name; it was this indeed Me to consent to Your informing him of this Resolution Lord North had taken with respect to himself, and I at the same time expressed my Expectations that he in return for this advance on my part, should open himself more fully. If there was any Doubt before whether Lord Shelburne knew by what Authority You spoke to him, it is evident that he must now have been clearly apprized of it, for he could never suppose that any servant of Mine would venture without any express permission to disclose to a person in violent Opposition a Secret of such Importance as that my first Minister had declared.

declared to Me his willingness to relinquish His present Situation, a Secret which I had been careful not to communicate to any of the rest of my Confidential Servants; convinced therefore that He knew then that You spoke by My Authority, I own I felt all I expressed in my letter of the 18.<sup>th</sup> of last month as well as the Injustice of that suspicion so frequently insinuated of my want of Confidence in My Ministers, now again conveyed by the Public declaration of Opposition, that those I am to employ will expect to have all my confidence when I think I know sufficiently the extent of My Duty in this respect, and have never been wanting in the discharge of it.

My conduct I think has been Uniform through the whole course of these Transactions; I wished for a Coalition, and that You as my Chancellor should be the Negotiator of it. Not only Your Office, but Your Character and Your acknowledged Firmness and Candour, pointed You out as a proper Person for this business. Soon after it was proposed to You, You said as I understood, that You would not begin the Negotiation, till Lord North had declared that He could not go on, Lord North at that time said He could go on; I know Your sentiments and His did not coincide as to the circumstances which were necessary to enable an Administration to go on, and the whole was explained to Me as stated in your letter; but Lord North not declaring that He could not go on, I considered the Attempt to Negotiate to be for some time at an end; in consequence of this, Lord North recommended the Persons whom He wished to have placed in the Great Offices then Vacant, and I consented to it; indeed it was necessary that two such Offices should be filled up at the opening of the Session, if the Administration was to go on, even while we negotiated.

I never thought myself at liberty to begin the Negotiation again till the 1.<sup>th</sup> of last month, when Lord North expressed a desire that an Attempt should be made to form an Administration on a broader basis. I saw You on the

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3689(2)

He 3<sup>d</sup> told you what had passed, authorized you again to proceed, and returned to you my paper.

I have hitherto certainly refused to declare which of my present Ministers, with a view to Coalition, I was ready to part with, common prudence required that I should act with this reserve, till I knew whether those with whom I treated were ready to consent to any Coalition; I see no reason why I was not to expect that even in this case they should explain themselves first. I condescended however so far as to allow them to be informed that in order to attain the desirable end which I had in view, my first Minister had consented to relinquish his situation; after this concession it belongs to them to make the next advance, and to explain what they mean by Coalition. You will however I am sure recollect that when first we discoursed on this business, I told you that if what related to Principles was settled, I should in other respects be reasonable; but I must add that as yet the answer as to Principles is evasive, and that my mind is not enough given to nice distinctions to admit, that one of My Ministers only remaining, the proposition of joining part of my Ministers would be fulfilled.

I am ready still to authorize a Proposition for a Coalition to be made in My Name, whenever you and Lord North shall think that the State of my Affairs make such a Measure proper, and that from the Temper of any part of Opposition, there is reason to hope that it can be made with the least prospect of success; but the Negotiations must be founded on the Principles laid down in my first paper, and which you have so properly explained in your letter, and I am more convinced than I have been yet, that in order to do any good, it must be a Coalition, and not a total Change of Administration; from what you say in your letter of the present want of Authority in the different Branches of Government, I am sensible there is a want of it, but Authority can never be restored by the mere change of one Party for another it can only be resumed by a strong Government, formed out of the Wise, the Virtuous, and Respectable of all Parties.

Answers up as a State for the  
Chancery's information, but do  
not bring in an Auditors from  
the Date of his letter to the beginning  
of Feb. He does not mean as to  
and time knowledge and do  
do nothing, necessary to allow  
of Feb. 14. 1780.