

Admiralty July 17<sup>th</sup> 1702

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Present

Lord Chancellor

Lord Privy Seal

Mr. Townshend

Duke of Richmond

Mr. Pitt

Lord Sargent

Intelligence having arrived here last night at the Admiralty by Lieutenant Vancoast of the Inchester (last) transport from the coast of Africa, who gives information that he had seen the Combined fleet at 3 Am on the 14<sup>th</sup> Instant when the Lands End bore about North. or N. by E. of Cape, the wind at WNW, a Spanish frigate had spoke to him before 10 o'clock, he was directed to go under the Admirals Stern & was a little after twelve permitted to depart, Lieutenant Vancoast describes the combined fleet to consist of seven Ships of three decks and thirty three of two Decks making in the whole forty ships of the line and Lord Howes letter received this morning at 7 Am. dated Off Scilly 4<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> Instant giving an account of his having seen the Combined fleet very early in the morning

consisting



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consisting of thirty six ships of the Line, & that he had thought proper to avoid coming to Battle with them in their circumstances, & therefore Steered to the Northward to pass between Scilly & the Lands End, his purpose therein has been to Endeavour to get to the Westward of the Enemy, both for protecting the Jamaica Convoy; and to gain that Advantage of Situation for bringing them to Action, which the difference in his numbers renders desirable.

It is Humbly recommended to your Majesty that the Admiralty should be directed, to pursue every Method in their power, to Increase Lord Howe's force, and to convey to him every Information upon the Subject, and State of the Enemy's Ships Intended to reinforce his Squadron with, and to cooperate with his Lordship's for their safe junction with him, and when his Lordship shall judge his force, within four or five Ships of the Line to that of the Enemy's Combined Fleet. It is Humbly recommended to your Majesty that he should



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should be ordered to proceed in quest of them, and If his Lordship should  
meet with them, to use his Endeavours the first favourable Occasion he has, to  
bring them to battle when his Skill & Experience gives him hope of doing it with  
Success.



Minute of Council  
17 July 1922