

duplicate

Secret & Confidential

It being beyond a doubt that Don Solano's Squadron is at the Havanna, I very much wish to know, whether the Spanish General Don Galvez, with any considerable number of Troops were left at Cape Francois before we pass the gulph of Florida.

Now the question is, what can be Vandrenil's plan with the Ten ships of the Line he put to sea, in company with the Spanish Admiral.

If he is gone to America he will have done his business before we get there and be secure against any attack, unless he can be met with in deep water.

Should he be gone to Europe, I fear His Majesty's fleet can do but little good upon the American coast, but it must go to New York to complete water &c.

But is it unlikely Vandrenil may have an eye on the Jamaica convoy, and the captured Line of battle Ships? The object must be confessed to be very tempting: and may not Solano have retreated to the Havanna on the same motive, in order to take a double chance? for if he had not some immediate design in view, would he be laying with all his ships, at this season of the year, in that perfect readiness for sea?

Having turned all circumstances in my mind, I will very candidly express my thoughts.

The

The Kings fleet now consists of twenty four ships of the line the *Jupiter*, and four frigates: I would have a flag officer with ten or eleven ships, the *Jupiter* and two frigates, push on towards Bermuda, and cruise forty or fifty Leagues, to the South west of that Island for 14 or 16 Days, then repair to New York, and the rest of the fleet, after the Convoy is through the Gulf, to go to that port, looking at the Chesapeake in its way. This latter Squadron would thereby very probably be complete in water, by the time the other arrived, which would prevent delay, and much confusion, for the powers of New York, are by no means equal to the completing so large a fleet, at one, & the same time.

Suppose then, there is no object for His Majesty's fleet, upon the coast of America, in that case, it should put to sea again without the least avoidable impediment, and proceed directly off Cape Francis, before which port one half* should cruise, with a 30 gun ship, and a frigate between the Cape & the Mona channel, and the other half, between the Grand Caynes & Henego

This would give a very fair chance for preventing a junction between Solano and Vandusenil, admitting an attack upon Jamaica is still intended

* The *Invincible* & *Warrior* are expected to join daily and the *Conruch* & *Hanson* will come to us at New York

and

and upon receiving intelligence to be relied upon, that the design of an attack is abandoned; The fleet should push away to windward: But a frigate should immediately be dispatched to Barbadoes, whose Captain should be most strictly ordered to join at New York, as expeditiously as possible, and another frigate or the Leander, should be directed from that quarter to cruise for the fleet, between Cape Francois, and the Grand Caynes, that the commander in chief may not be ignorant of the state of the Enemy, and of the windward Islands

But should the French Squadron be found harboured upon the coast of America, a sufficient force must be left to watch it, and the rest of the ships should proceed off Cape Francois to guard that Port, against Solano's entrance or Vaudreuil's, should he slip by the Squadron cruising against him.