

Duke of Northumberland to Col. Mackintosh
A.A. No. 96

19767-8

Alnwick Castle 30th May 1812.

Private

My Dear Colonel

By the Post last night I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 27th, with its accompanying Papers; and am concerned to perceive there is so much difficulty in forming such an Administration, as His Royal Highness would wish for. Lord Wellesley could not have contrived a more certain method of preventing H: R: H: from receiving the aid, and assistance, of any of Lord Liverpool's Friends, than by establishing the Emancipation of the Catholics, as the first, of the two Principles, laid down, on which the new Administration was to be formed. It is perfectly clear this was done, with a view of catching the Lords Grey, and Grenville, with their Friends; but in this it would appear that He has been disappointed; for however anxious that Party may be in the Catholic Cause, it is as determined a measure with them, should they ever come into power, to withdraw our troops from the Peninsula, and abandon the Spanish Cause. Nor is this kind of System new to them; for when Buonaparte was in Poland, opposed by the armies of Russia and Prussia, with a large Corps of Observation from the Austrians a little in the Rear of his right Flank, and directly

The Right Honourable
Colonel Mackintosh -

cutting off his Retreat to France, should he have been worsted, & they should
have chosen to act, The L^{ds} G. & F. not positively refused to send the
Allied Courts any Assistance, altho' repeatedly pressed so to do, particularly
by the Court of Petersburg. Had they at that time, in Conjunction
with the Court of Stockholm, headed ten thousand Men, from the
Islands of Usedom, & Wollin, in the Rear of the Israel Army,
barricade must inevitably have been ruined. Tho' not earnestly
pressed to do this, with a plan given them for the Execution of this
Measure, they not positively refused all aid; and instead of it,
formed their absurd Plan for the Siege of the Dardanelles, & the
Conquest of Egypt. I take it for granted I am to suppose, from Lord
W. being laid down the two Principles, as the ground on which
the new Ministry was to be formed, that he had brought the
Prince Regent to consent to these Measures, in his first
Interview with H. R. H.; as I can hardly bring myself to believe
that his Lordship would venture of himself to propose these, or
any other Propositions, as *sine qua non*, without H. R. H.'s
Directions. Particularly the first, to which the P. R. had formerly
signified His Disapprobation, should this first Proposition form
the Basis of the Administration which H. R. H. shall establish

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Duke of Northumberland to Col. Beckwith
A.A. No. 96

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I most sincerely hope the measure my answer H: R: H: is expecting
and that the great care our Ancestors have taken, not to allow the
Catholics any Acquisition of Power, (as in which I cannot but think
they have acted with great Wisdom) may or may not be found to have
been perfectly needless. It must however be confessed that the Trial
is a very dangerous one, which ought not to be risked without
the most serious Consideration of all those ^{circumstances} which
may possibly attend it. I likewise most sincerely hope, that those
who have behaved with so great Insolence, & Insult, towards
H: R: H:, and whose Object has been to storn the Crown, & make
the Report their Prisoner, may not falsely flatter themselves
that they have gained their Point, and by their uninterrupted
Violence induced H: R: H:, at last, to consent to this their
favorite Measure. Should they conceive this, & act accordingly, I
fear H: R: H: will find them very troublesome, & need strong Supports.
God grant however this may not be the Case. Surely if the
D: R: does Don Wellesley the honor of entrusting him with
the Direction of the Affairs of the Country, His Lordship is in
Duty bound to give up one of his two favorite Principles, if
H: R: H: should wish him to do so. Indeed I carry my Opinion much
further; and insist upon^{it} that in every Case, & every Measure, it is

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The undoubted Right, & indeed Duty of the Minister to propose,
yet the ultimate Decision on the Subject, does, & ought to
depend wholly upon the Pleasure of the Sovereign, or should
occupies this Situation. Otherwise He is a mere Fool, and
Puppet, in the Hands of his Ministers. This, I insist upon it,
is agreeable to the Constitution of the Country. Whereas to
allow any Minister to govern, without control, is in direct
contradiction to the Constitution, and highly dangerous to the
State. You see, my Dear Colonel, I give you my Opinion, with
the utmost Freedom. Was I not to do so, I must cease writing
for I am incapable of saying what I do not think. You shall see
Honesty, I have always thought the best Policy; this I have
always pursued, & I am now bound to alter. I have no
-ed Views to gratify, nor Ambitious Object to obtain. My direct
Attachment to the Service, & the Love of my Country, are the sole
Motives of my Actions, and the sole Causes which could induce me
at any Age, & in any Situation, to trouble my Head with Politics.
I beg you will present my Duty to H. R. H. & assure Him I am perfectly
sensible of, & most properly gratefull for, that Partiality He is
graciously pleas'd to show me. Accept, with H. M. Rec-
and believe me ever your's most faithfully
Northumberland.