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Duke of Wellington to Sir H. Taylor

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Stratfield Saye April 14

My dear General I am very happy to learn
from your letter of the 12th that you have been
my correspondent with the Adjutant General
regarding the question of Corporal Pennhurst,
and that His Majesty takes an interest in it.

It appears to me extraordinary that so
few persons of consideration or account of
their talents and weight in Parliament, should
attach importance to this question. I
consider it to be a question not whether the
rank be more or less of discipline in the
Army; but whether that body shall be
disciplined at all, and in a state of efficiency
and order to perform its duty. If it should
be decided that the powers of Court Officers
of Regts are to be destroyed I am convinced
that it would be better for the King, as well

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as for those who look for the King for Protection
for their Lives, Properties and Honours that
there should be no Regular Army at all.

In truth that is the Spirit which those
have in view who are raising a clamour
to put an end to this Description of
Punishment.

Respects the indifference of this Description
of Men of Talent and Reputation in Parli-
there are two Classes of Officers even in the House
of Commons upon whom no reliance can be
placed. I put out of the Description the Princes
for Nobility of whom there are some. But
there are true respectable Men, supporters of
Government who represent popular Places,
and who are apprehensive of the consequences
of speaking out, and of saying what they have

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and feel upon this subject. The other class
highly respectable is of Men who in the course
of their Service have been little of Regiments
Part; and that little when they were young.
These Men have but little knowledge of the
Details of the Service of a Regiment; and of
the Manner in which the Soldiers must be
kept in a state of Order and Discipline.
They and others see the Army in a perfect state
of Discipline and Efficiency. They do not
consider how it has been brought to, nor by
what means it is kept in that State; and
probably their Minds have never adverted
to the Consequences as well of the Sovereign
as to Individuals of a serious Maturity of the
doctrines upon a critical Reason.
On the other hand whatever may be the
Opinion of the King's Servants upon this Question
I have not heard, and probably it might be

unpleasant for them to declare positively
in Parliament their Intentions.

If we had stood where we did in this
Bill, and the present Lord in Chief, called
upon to make a "speech to put his Opinion
had asked my Opinion, I should have
answered at once "Maintain the Statute
Discipline of the Army." I should have been
certain that the Government would be supported
in that course by Parliament.

But situated as we are, and seeing things
as they are I have recommended the
Lord in Chief to endeavour to acquire
for himself all the information that can be
obtained regarding the State of Crime and
Punishment in the Army, in order that he may
have it in his Power more effectually to
check any irregularities; and to convey the

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and Parliament a knowledge of the
 real state of the case if such information
 should be called for.

If when this arrangement ^{is made} the General
 Council in Chief should still be called
 upon to make a concise & popular
 Opinion I have recommended to him
 that a Commission should be appointed
 to enquire into and report upon the state
 of the case before any step should be taken.

Although I don't think that the inquiry
 would be attended by any inconvenience I agree
 with you in thinking that it would be better
 that such an inquiry should not be made
 if a better Commission should not be proposed
 upon the General Council in Chief.
 But in the existing state of things is that

Probable?

It appears to me the desirable ^{purpose}
the Genl Comd^r in Chief is proposed to
make such enquiries the Respectable
Members of Parliament and the public
at large should know what is the
real subject for deliberation; what is the
object he attained; and what the
consequences to the Sovereign on the Throne
and to those of the Community who look to
him for Protection.

It is with these views that I wrote to the
Adjutant General the Letter which have
been laid before you. And by the Adjutant
Genl's most sincere & obliging
Letter writing to above it seems that the
you wrote me on the 12th you had not seen my
Letter to the Adjutant Genl of the 10th

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Duke of Wellington

April 14. 1833

By William Brough

London April 15th