

Mem<sup>o</sup>  
Count  
Munster

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Mem<sup>o</sup> from Count Munster

to the

Having been informed by a confidential communication, of the very delicate, and at the same time decisive, situation of the negotiations pending between Great Britain and Russia, it is my duty to lay the following humble observations before Your Majesty, convinced that an absolute refusal of the two conditions under which alone the Emperor of Russia can be prevailed upon to ratify the Treaty already signed by His Plenipotentiarys, would not only endanger Your Majesty's benevolent views in regard to the future safety of the continent, but probably destroy all hope of saving the political existence of Your Majesty's Electoral Dominions saved.

It is from this last consideration that I flatter myself of Your Majesty's indulgence in giving my humble advice and I am persuaded Your Majesty will do justice to the sincerity of my wishes should my arguments be so unfortunate as not to meet with Your Majesty's approbation.

None of the conditions alluded to will hardly make any serious difficulty, however nice the point, upon which it bears, may be.

The Emperor of Russia Declaration. deliv<sup>er</sup>  
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vered to your Majesty's Ambassadors at  
St. Petersburg, states the probability of  
Bonaparte objecting to the proposals now  
intended to be made to him from the mo-  
tifs of pretended grievances against the  
maritime Law of Great Britain, and  
wishes on that account that Nowafitzoff  
may be authorized to propose

" Que Sa Majesté Imperiale s'occupe de  
" suite a rassembler des données précises et  
" propres a mettre cette matiere dans son  
" véritable jour, et a ajouter que dans le cas  
" ou contre une allente plus ou moins fondée  
" il se trouverait dans le cours de ces  
" propositions contraires a l'usage  
" des gens, l'Empereur s'emp  
" priser ses bons offices pour engager la Majesté  
" Britannique a y remédier "

This proposition does by no means assert  
that there exists anything in the Law of this  
Country relative to the navigation, contra-  
ry to the Law of Great Britain, but that Great Bri-  
tain should be bound to comply with the  
bons offices of the Emperor of Russia, should  
He in future find any objections to it. This  
however is not to be expected, the principal  
points, under the Convention, being settled by  
the Convention at St. Petersburg of the 17<sup>th</sup> June  
1801. from which the Emperor does certainly  
by not intend to deviate. A plain

regular answer to this condition would be  
 unavoidably considered by the enemies of  
 Great Britain as an unwillingness even  
 to allow other nations to articulate their  
 complaints.

A greater difficulty may likely arise from  
 the second condition concerning the posses-  
 sion of Malta. It is expressed by Russia  
 in the following terms

"Les hautes parties contractantes sont égale-  
 ment convenues, que si après de vains efforts  
 pour que Malte reste entre les maines de  
 l'Angleterre ce point ne pourrait être obtenu,  
 on s'en désisterra plutôt que de rompre la ne-  
 gociation; dans ce cas l'évacuation de Malte  
 serait accordée si cette île recouvrait une gar-  
 nison Russe moyennant un arrangement  
 ultérieur à la convenance des indigènes."

Do not presume to argue upon the impor-  
 tance of the possession of Malta; but I observe  
 that a similar proposal ~~to this~~, now made by  
 your Government, and I venture to say  
 in answer to this condition, limited as  
 it is, would most pro-  
 bably procure the cooperation of the Emperor  
 of Russia in the present contest with France  
 without endangering the interest of Great Britain

The limitation under which I should think  
Your Majesty might be pleased to consent to the  
proposal of Russia is this, that Great Britain  
would finally consent to give up Malta, under  
the conditions offered by Russia, provided on the  
other hand, Bonaparte should accept all the  
conditions of peace to be proposed by Great-  
Britain and Russia, and further, that in case  
France should not promise these terms, Your  
Majesty would no more listen to any future  
proposals respecting the cession of Malta.

There is scarce any probability that Bonaparte  
regarding to the full extent of the conditions  
D. Howasillgoff is to make. In this case the Emperor of Russia  
be bound to cooperate with Great Britain conformably  
to the treaty already signed, and the legality of  
the possession of Malta would be acknowledged by  
Russia. On the other hand consent to give up Germany, Holland  
Switzerland and Italy. In this case I do not hesitate  
to say that the chief cause which rendered the possession  
of Malta necessary to England might be looked upon  
as removed, and its cession upon such terms would  
be a real advantage to the world which Great Britain  
depends. I have only to add that the disposition  
shown in this instance to accept of the proposals of Russia  
will decide on the triumph of the contending parties in  
that country; and that a negative answer, in destroying  
all prospect of a continental cooperation against  
France, may likely determine the disposition of Russia  
conducted not only in the present crisis but in part  
down to the end of his Reign.