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Westminster, January 27.

HIS Majesty came this Day to the House of Peers, and being in His Royal Robes, seated on the Throne with the usual Solemnity; Sir Charles Dalton Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod; was sent with a Message from His Majesty to the House of Commons, commanding their Attendance in the House of Peers; the Commons being come thither accordingly, His Majesty was pleased to make the following most gracious Speech.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

It is a great Satisfaction to me, that at the meeting the first Parliament summoned and convened by my Authority, I am able to give you Hopes of seeing the publick Peace and Tranquility very soon restored. I very much wished, that the first Period of my Reign might have been distinguished, by putting an immediate End to the Troubles and Disorders of Europe, by a Reduction of some Part of my Forces, a Diminution of Taxes, and all the happy Consequences of an honourable and established Peace: To which my Endeavours have in no Manner been wanting, as far as was consistent with maintaining the Possessions, Rights and Privileges of my Kingdom, and, I promise myself, not without great Probability of Success.

I am very sensible of the disagreeable and uneasy Situation in which our Affairs have been for some Time, and have been extremely concerned to see many of the Inconveniences of a War attending us, without any Opportunity of resenting the Injuries we sustained, or gaining any of those Advantages in Return; which the vigorous Prosecution of so just a Cause, and the Success of our Arms might probably have secured to us.

But you are sufficiently apprized, that Preliminary Articles for a General Pacification were some time ago signed and accepted by the contracting Parties on both Sides, and although the Ratifications of them had been exchanged by me and my Allies, with his Imperial Majesty, the good Effects expected from them were retarded by the Refusal, on the Part of Spain, to execute some of the most material Points contained in them, and by Endeavours to alter and explain some Articles; in such a manner as immediately affected the Possessions and the just Rights of my Kingdom. It therefore; jointly with my Allies, declined exchanging the Ratifications of the Preliminaries with the Court of Spain, and rejected all such Propositions as were detrimental and injurious to my Honour and the Interest of my People.

By these Means the Negotiations were unavoidably carried into a tedious Length, which I endured with the greater Patience, from an earnest Desire to procure to my Sub-

jects a safe and honourable Peace, and to see the Tranquility of Europe preserved and settled upon a solid and lasting Foundation. During which Time I received from the most Christian King, and the States General, the greatest Proofs of their Sincerity; and a Renewal of the strongest Assurances imaginable, that they would effectually make good all their Engagements; in Support of the Common Cause, and of our mutual Interests; and I am very glad, that I can acquaint you, that our joint Endeavours have had so good an Effect; that by the last Advices from Abroad, I have great Reason to hope; that the Difficulties which have hitherto retarded the Execution of the Preliminaries, and the opening of the Congress, will soon be entirely removed.

However, it will in the mean time be absolutely necessary to continue, as our Allies have already resolved to do; the Preparations which have hitherto been our Security; and prevented an open Rupture in Europe, that we may not at once lose all the Advantages which our former Expences and Vigour have so nearly procured, by not being in a Condition, if that Necessity should unexpectedly be brought upon us, to vindicate our Honour and assert our Rights: And you may depend upon it, that my first Care shall be, to reduce from Time to Time the Expence of the Publick as often, and as soon as the Interest and Safety of my People will permit it.

The Preliminary Articles, and such other Treaties and Conventions, as have not yet been communicated to Parliament, and which may without manifest Prejudice be exposed to publick View, shall be laid before you.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I have given Orders to the proper Officers to prepare and lay before you Estimates of the Expences for the Service of the Current Year, and you may be assured; that the Supplies which I find myself obliged to demand of you, shall as certainly, as they do exceed my Wishes and Inclinations, be employed solely for the Interest and Security of the Nation. And I make no doubt, but that if any Method can be found out, for raising the necessary Supplies, less grievous to my People than another, that will have the Preference in all your Deliberations:

I think myself obliged to recommend to you a Consideration of the greatest Importance, and I should look upon it as a great Happiness, if; at the Beginning of my Reign, I could see the Foundation laid of so great and necessary a Work; as the Increase and Encouragement of our Seamen in general, that they may be invited rather than compelled by Force and Violence; to enter into the Service of their Country, as often as Occasion shall require it. A Consideration worthy of the Representatives of a People great and flourishing in Trade and Navigation.

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