

Transcription of GEO/MAIN/5367

Note: In this transcription, the underlinings of the document are reproduced; these appear to represent intended deletions. The text in italics and square brackets indicates material that has been added between the lines of the original text in the document. Spelling, punctuation and capitalization follow the original.

I cannot at the most serious, as well as most painful moment of My Life, go out of this Great Assembly, without communicating to You My Intentions, not asking Your Advice.

The first time I appeared as Your Sovereign in this place now above twenty two years, I had the pleasing hope that being born among You, I might have proved the happy Instrument of conciliating all Parties and thus collecting to the Service of the State the most respectable and most able Persons this Kingdom produced. Of this object I have never lost sight, though sad experience now teaches Me that selfish Views are so prevalent that they have smothered the first of public Virtues, attachment to the Country, which ought to warm the breast of every Individual who enjoys the advantage of this excellent Constitution, and the want of which Sentiment has prevented that Unanimity which must have rendered Britain invulnerable, though attacked by the most Powerful Combinations.

My own Inclination to alleviate the Distresses of my People, added to the Change of Sentiments of one branch of the Legislature which rendered the real object of the War impracticable, made Me undertake the arduous task of obtaining the Blessings of Peace, rendered indeed more difficult by the Resolution above alluded to. I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the candour with which the Courts of France and Spain have conducted themselves during the Negotiation of the Preliminary Articles, which greatly accelerated that desirable Work.

Circumstances have since arisen that might make those Courts more doubtful of the stability of the Councils of this Country, in forming the Definitive Treaties. I have therefore again attempted to collect the most efficient Men of all Parties that [who] under My Inspection the completion of Peace might be speedily and effectually concluded. [might with dispatch and confidence proceed on forming the Definitive Articles.] But this Patriotic attempt has proved unsuccessful by the obstinacy of a powerful party that has long publicly manifested a resolution not to aid in the Service of their Country, but if employed to have the exclusive management of this Country and who has on[ce] again declined any assistance but agreeable to its own ambitious views, And the [the Empire, unless the whole Exclusive management of Affairs is thrown entirely in its hands, and from which it has not on this Occasion departed; at this same time] want of Zeal prevents others from standing forth at this critical juncture; to become the tool of a Party neither My Duty to the Station I hold among you nor to[o] my own Character will permit. [My obedience to the Oath I took at my Coronation prevents my exceeding the powers vested in Me, or submitting to be a Cypher in the trammels of any self created band.]

I must therefore to end a conflict which certainly puts a stop to every wheel of Government make a final Decision, and that I think my self compelled to do in this Assembly of the whole Legislature.

A long Experience and a serious attention to the Strange Events that have successively arisen, has gradually prepared My mind to expect the time when I should be no longer of Utility to

this Empire; that hour is now come; I am therefore resolved to resign My Crown and all the Dominions appertaining to it to the Prince of Wales my Eldest Son and Lawful Successor and to retire to the care of My Electoral Dominions the Original Patrimony of my Ancestors. For which purpose I shall Draw up and Sign an Instrument to which I shall affix my Private Seal. I trust this Personal Sacrifice will awaken the various parties to a Sense of their Duty and that they will join in the Support and Assistance of the Young Successor.

You may depend on my arduous attention to Educate My Children in the Paths of Religion, Virtue and every other good Principle that may render them if ever called in any Line to the Service of Great Britain, not unworthy of the kindness they may hereafter meet with from a People whom collectively I shall ever Love.

May that All Wise Providence who can direct the inmost thoughts as well as Actions of Men give My Son and Successor not only every assistance in guiding his Conduct, but Restore that sense of Religious and Moral Duties in this Kingdom to the want of which every Evil that has arisen owes its Source; and may I to the latest hour of my Life, though now resolved forever to quit this Island, have the Comfort of hearing that the Endeavours of My Son, though they cannot be more Sincere than Mine have been for the Prosperity of Great Britain, be Crowned with better Success.