

A  
LETTER

FROM THE

*Rt. Honourable Edmund Burke*

TO HIS GRACE THE

DUKE OF PORTLAND.

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[Price 2s. 6d.]

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*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*



The following letter was published, contrary  
to Mr. Burke's intention - one of his disciples,  
a contemptible, worthless fellow of the  
name of Woodford, who has since fled  
from his country for sodomy & speculation,  
was employed to seduce Owen the  
bookseller from my service and  
succeeded by promising that he  
should be publisher for Mr. Burke  
- Mr. Burke proud of the acquisition  
and fancying he should acquire a deal  
of matter against me, supposing no  
doubt that I made Mr. Owen my companion  
and confidant, took him to  
Beaconsfield - carried him and  
employed him - In return for all  
this excessive kindness, his conduct &  
Protocols forced his Executive, stole  
the MSS writing of the following letter  
and astonished his employer by the  
publication of it as well as the  
poor soul of a Duke to whom it  
was addressed - Mr. Burke in a  
rage flew to town, applied to  
Chancery for an Injunction,  
was to get it - The mischief  
was done & the wretched employe  
to detain this man, was  
properly rewarded by his  
Party to his seducer



A  
LETTER

FROM THE

*Rt. Honourable Edmund Burke*

TO HIS GRACE THE

DUKE OF PORTLAND,

ON THE

*Conduct of the Minority in Parliament.*

CONTAINING

FIFTY-FOUR ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT

AGAINST

*The Rt. Hon. C. J. Fox.*

FROM THE ORIGINAL COPY, IN THE POSSESSION OF  
THE NOBLE DUKE.

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LETTER, &c.

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MY LORD,

APPROACHING towards the close of a long period of public service, it is natural I should be desirous to stand well (I hope I do stand tolerably well) with that public, which, with whatever fortune, I have endeavoured faithfully and zealously, to serve.

I am also not a little anxious for some place in the estimation of the two persons to whom I address this paper. I have always acted with them, and with those whom they represent. To my knowledge I have not deviated, no not in the minutest point, from  
B their



their opinions and principles. Of late, without any alteration in their sentiments, or in mine, a difference of a very unusual nature, and which, under the circumstances, it is not easy to describe, has arisen between us.

In my journey with them through life, I met Mr. Fox in my road; and I travelled with him very cheerfully as long as he appeared to me to pursue the same direction with those in whose company I set out. In the latter stage of our progress, a new scheme of liberty and equality was produced in the world, which either dazzled his imagination, or was suited to some new walks of ambition, which were then opened to his view. The whole frame and fashion of his politics appear to have suffered about that time a very material alteration. It is about three years since, in consequence of that extraordinary change, that, after a pretty long preceding period of distance, coolness, and want of confidence, if not total alienation on his part, a compleat public separation has been made between that gentleman and me. Until lately the breach between us appeared  
reparable.



reparable. I trusted that time and reflection, and a decisive experience of the mischiefs which have flowed from the proceedings and the system of France, on which our difference had arisen, as well as the known sentiments of the best and wisest of our common friends upon that subject, would have brought him to a safer way of thinking. Several of his friends saw no security for keeping things in a proper train after this excursion of his, but in the re-union of the party on its old grounds, under the Duke of Portland. Mr. Fox, if he pleased, might have been comprehended in that system, <sup>+</sup> with the rank and consideration to which his great talents entitle him, and indeed must secure to him in any party arrangement that *could* be made. The Duke of Portland knows how much I wished for, and how earnestly I laboured that re-union, and upon terms that might every way be honourable and advantageous to Mr. Fox.— His conduct in the last session has extinguished these hopes for ever.

+ I was at that time in the habit of  
 B<sub>2</sub> Mr.  
 conversing daily with those, who were in  
 confidential intercourse with the  
 Minister and it was then proposed to  
 by a person in a confidential situation  
 and with respect towards Mr. Pitt  
 that I saw on the subject.



Mr. Fox has lately published in print, a defence of his conduct. On taking into consideration that defence, a society of gentlemen, called the Whig Club, thought proper to come to the following resolution—  
 “ That their confidence in Mr. Fox is confirmed, strengthened, and encreased, by the calumnies against him.”

To that resolution my two noble friends, the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, have given their concurrence.

The calumnies supposed in that resolution, can be nothing else than the objections taken to Mr. Fox's conduct in this session of Parliament ; for to them, and to them alone, the resolution refers. I am one of those who have publicly and strongly urged those objections. I hope I shall be thought only to do what is necessary to my justification, thus publicly, solemnly, and heavily censured by those whom I most value and esteem, when I firmly contend, that the objections which I, with many others of the friends to the Duke of Portland, have made to Mr.  
 Fox's



Fox's conduct, are not *calumnies*, but founded on truth ; that they are not *few*, but many ; and that they are not *light and trivial*, but in a very high degree, serious and important.

That I may avoid the imputation of throwing out, even privately, any loose random imputations against the public conduct of a gentleman, for whom I once entertained a very warm affection, and whose abilities I regard with the greatest admiration, I will put down distinctly and articulately, some of the matters of objection which I feel to his late doctrines and proceedings, trusting that I shall be able to demonstrate to the friends, whose good opinion I would still cultivate, that not levity, nor caprice, nor less defensible motives, but that very grave reasons influence my judgment. I think that the spirit of his late proceedings is wholly alien to our national policy, and to the peace, to the prosperity, and to the legal liberties of this nation, *according to our ancient domestic and appropriated mode of holding them.*

Viewing



Viewing things in that light, my confidence in him is not encreased, but totally destroyed by those proceedings. I cannot conceive it a matter of honour or duty (but the direct contrary) in any member of parliament, to continue a systematic opposition for the purpose of putting Government under difficulties, until Mr. Fox (with all his present ideas) shall have the principal direction of affairs placed in his hands; and until the present body of administration (with their ideas and measures) is of course overturned and dissolved.

To come to particulars :

1. The Laws and Constitution of the Kingdom, entrust the sole and exclusive right of treating with foreign potentates, to the King. This is an undisputed part of the legal prerogative of the Crown. However, notwithstanding this, Mr. Fox, without the knowledge or participation of any one person in the House of Commons, with whom he was bound by every party principle, in matters of delicacy and importance,

confiden-



confidentially to communicate, thought proper to send Mr. Adair, as his representative, and with his cypher, to St. Petersburg, there to frustrate the objects for which the Minister from the Crown was authorized to treat. He succeeded in this his design, and did actually frustrate the King's Minister in some of the objects of his negociation. +

This proceeding of Mr. Fox does not (as I conceive) amount to absolute high treason; Ruffia, though on bad terms, not having been then declaredly at war with this kingdom. But such a proceeding is, in law, not very remote from that offence, and is undoubtedly a most unconstitutional act, and an high treasonable misdemeanor.

The legitimate and sure mode of communication between this nation and foreign powers, is rendered uncertain, precarious, and treacherous, by being divided into two channels, one with a Government, one with the head of a party in opposition to that Government; by which means the foreign powers

*plation, not expecting that in 1792. I should be in fact the measure of Ruffia supported a British Parliament!*

*This happened in 1792. In June 1799 I was wounded at a foreign Court by two persons who in the confidence of the late Emperor had the practicability of engaging a popular speaker in the house of Commons to support the cause of Ruffia. I perceived that I had*



powers can never be assured of the real authority or validity of any public transaction whatsoever.

On the other hand, the advantage taken of the discontent which at that time prevailed in parliament and in the nation, to give to an individual an influence directly against the Government of his country, in a foreign court, has made a highway into England for the intrigues of foreign courts in our affairs. This is a fore evil; an evil from which, before this time, England was more free than any other nation. Nothing can preserve us from that evil--which connects cabinet factions with popular factions here and abroad---but the keeping sacred the Crown, as the only channel of communication with every other nation.

This proceeding of Mr. Fox has given a strong countenance and an encouraging example to the doctrines and practices of the Revolution and Constitutional Societies, and of other mischievous societies of that description, who, without any legal authority,  
and



and even without any corporate capacity, are in the habit of proposing, and to the best of their power, of forming leagues and alliances with France.

This proceeding, which ought to be reprobated on all the general principles of government, is, in a more narrow view of things, not less reprehensible. It tends to the prejudice of the whole of the Duke of Portland's late party, by discrediting the principles upon which they supported Mr. Fox in the Russian business, as if they, of that party also, had proceeded in their parliamentary opposition, on the same mischievous principles which actuated Mr. Fox in sending Mr. Adair on his embassy.

2. Very soon after his sending this embassy to Russia, that is, in the Spring of 1792, a covenanting club or association was formed in London, calling itself by the ambitious and invidious title of "*The Friends of the People.*" It was composed of many of Mr. Fox's own most intimate, personal and party friends, joined to a very considerable

C

part



part of the members of those mischievous associations called the Revolution Society, and the Constitutional Society. Mr. Fox must have been well apprized of the progress of that society, in every one of its steps; if not of the very origin of it. I certainly was informed of both, who had no connection with the design, directly or indirectly. His influence over the persons who composed the leading part in that association, was, and is unbounded. I hear, that he expressed some disapprobation of this club in one case, (that of Mr. St. John) where his consent was formally asked; yet he never attempted seriously to put a stop to the association, or to disavow it, or to controul, check, or modify it in any way whatsoever. If he had pleased, without difficulty, he might have suppressed it in its beginning. However, he did not only not suppress it in its beginning, but encouraged it in every part of its progress, at that particular time, when Jacobin Clubs (under the very same, or similar titles) were making such dreadful havock in a country not thirty miles from the coast of England, and when every motive of moral prudence called for  
the



the discouragement of societies formed for the encrease of popular pretensions to power and direction.

3. When the proceedings of this society of the Friends of the People, as well as others acting in the same spirit, had caused a very serious alarm in the mind of the Duke of Portland, and of many good patriots, he publicly, in the House of Commons, treated their apprehensions and conduct with the greatest asperity and ridicule. He condemned and vilified, in the most insulting and outrageous terms, the proclamation issued by Government on that occasion---though he well knew, that it had passed through the Duke of Portland's hands, that it had received his fullest approbation, and that it was the result of an actual interview between that noble Duke and Mr. Pitt. During the discussion of its merits in the House of Commons, Mr. Fox countenanced and justified the chief promoters of that association; and he received in return, a public assurance from them of an inviolable adherence to him, singly and personally. On account of this



proceeding, a very great number (I presume to say, not the least grave and wise part) of the Duke of Portland's friends in Parliament, and many out of Parliament, who are of the same description, have become separated from that time to this from Mr. Fox's particular Cabal; very few of which Cabal are, or ever have, so much as pretended to be attached to the Duke of Portland, or to pay any respect to him or his opinions.

4. At the beginning of this session, when the sober part of the nation was a second time generally and justly alarmed at the progress of the French arms on the Continent, and at the spreading of their horrid principles and cabals in England, Mr. Fox did not (as had been usual in cases of far less moment) call together any meeting of the Duke of Portland's friends in the House of Commons, for the purpose of taking their opinion on the conduct to be pursued in Parliament at that critical juncture. He concerted his measures (if with any persons at all) with the friends of Lord Lansdowne, and those calling themselves Friends of the  
 People,



People, and others not in the smallest degree attached to the Duke of Portland; by which conduct he wilfully gave up (in my opinion) all pretensions to be considered as of that party, and much more of being considered as the Leader and Mouth of it in the House of Commons. This could not give much encouragement to those who had been separated from Mr. Fox, on account of his conduct on the first proclamation, to rejoin that party.

5. Not having consulted any of his party in the House of Commons; and not having consulted them because he had reason to know that the course he had resolved to pursue would be highly disagreeable to them, he represented the alarm, which was a second time given and taken, in still more invidious colours than those in which he painted the alarms of the former year. He described those alarms in this manner, although the cause of them was then grown far less equivocal, and far more urgent. He even went so far as to treat the supposition of the growth of a Jacobin spirit in England

as



as a libel on the nation. As to the danger from *abroad*, on the first day of the session, he said little or nothing upon the subject. He contented himself with defending the ruling factions in France, and with accusing the public Councils of this kingdom of every sort of evil design on the liberties of the people; declaring distinctly, strongly, and precisely, that the whole danger of the nation was from the growth of the Power of the Crown. The policy of this declaration was obvious. It was in subservience to the general plan of disabling us from taking any steps against France. To counteract the alarm given by the progress of Jacobin arms and principles, he endeavoured to excite an opposite alarm concerning the growth of the Power of the Crown. If that alarm should prevail, he knew that the nation never would be brought by arms to oppose the growth of the Jacobin empire; because it is obvious that war does, in its very nature, necessitate the Commons considerably to strengthen the hands of Government; and if that strength should itself be the object of terror, we could have no war.



6. In the extraordinary and violent speeches of that day, he attributed all the evils which the public had suffered to the Proclamation of the preceding summer, though he spoke in presence of the Duke of Portland's own son, the Marquis of Titchfield, who had seconded the Address on that Proclamation; and in presence of the Duke of Portland's brother, Lord Edward Bentinck, and several others of his best friends and nearest relations.

7. On that day, that is, on the 13th of December, 1792, he proposed an amendment to the Address, which stands on the Journals of the House, and which is, perhaps, the most extraordinary record which ever did stand upon them. To introduce this amendment, he not only struck out the part of the proposed Address which alluded to insurrections, upon the ground of the objections which he took to the legality of the calling together Parliament, (objections which I must ever think litigious and sophistical) but he likewise struck out that *part which related to the Cabals and Conspiracies*  
*of*



of the French Faction in England, although their practices and correspondences were of public notoriety. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Watt had been deputed from Manchester to the Jacobins. These ambassadors were received by them as British Representatives; other deputations of English had been received at the bar of the National Assembly; they had gone the length of giving supplies to the Jacobin armies; and they in return had received promises of military assistance to forward their designs in England; a regular correspondence for fraternizing the two nations had also been carried on by societies in London with a great number of the Jacobin societies in France; this correspondence had also for its object the pretended improvement of the British Constitution.— What is the most remarkable, and by much the more mischievous part of his proceedings that day, Mr. Fox likewise struck out every thing in the Address which *related to the tokens of Ambition given by France, her aggressions upon our allies, and the sudden and dangerous growth of her power upon every side*; and instead of all those weighty, and  
at







closest, the most natural, the nearest, and, at the same time, from many internal as well as external circumstances, the weakest of our allies, Holland, would have been given up, bound hand and foot, to France, just on the point of invading that republic. A general consternation would have seized upon all Europe; and all alliance with every other power, except France, would have been for ever rendered impracticable to us. I think it impossible for any man, who regards the dignity and safety of his country, or indeed the common safety of mankind, ever to forget Mr. Fox's proceedings in that tremendous crisis of all human affairs.

9. Mr. Fox very soon had reason to be apprised of the general dislike of the Duke of Portland's friends to this conduct. Some of those who had even voted with him, the day after their vote expressed their abhorrence of his amendment, their sense of its inevitable tendency, and their total alienation from the principles and maxims upon which it was made; yet, the very next day, that is, on Friday, the 14th of December, he  
brought



brought on what in effect was the very same business, and on the same principles, a *second* time.

10. Although the House does not usually sit on Saturday, he a *third* time brought on another proposition, in the same spirit, and pursued it with so much heat and perseverance as to sit into Sunday; a thing not known in Parliament for many years.

11. In all these motions and debates he wholly departed from all the political principles relative to France, (considered merely as a state, and independent of its Jacobin form of government) which had hitherto been held fundamental in this country, and which he had himself held more strongly than any man in Parliament. He at that time studiously separated himself from those to whose sentiments he used to profess no small regard, although those sentiments were publicly declared. I had then no concern in the party, having been for some time, with all outrage, excluded from it; but, on general principles, I must say, that a person

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who



who assumes to be leader of a party composed of freemen and of gentlemen, ought to pay some degree of deference to their feelings, and even to their prejudices. He ought to have some degree of management for their credit and influence in their country. He shewed so very little of this delicacy, that he compared the alarm raised in the minds of the Duke of Portland's party, (which was his own) an alarm in which they sympathized with the greater part of the nation, to the panic produced by the pretended Popish plot in the reign of Charles the Second—describing it to be, as that was, a contrivance of knaves, and believed only by well-meaning dupes and madmen.

12. The Monday following, (the 17th of December) he pursued the same conduct.—The means used in England to co-operate with the Jacobin army in politics agreed; that is, the mischievous writings circulated with much industry and success, as well as the seditious clubs, at that time, added not a little to the alarm taken by observing and well-informed men. The writings and the clubs



clubs were two evils which marched together. Mr. Fox discovered the greatest possible disposition to favour and countenance the one as well as the other of these two grand instruments of the French system.— He would hardly consider any political writing whatsoever, as a libel, or as a fit object of prosecution. At a time in which the press has been the grand instrument of the subversion of order, of morals, of religion, and I may say of human society itself, to carry the doctrines of its liberty higher than ever it has been known by its most extravagant assertors even in France, gave occasion to very serious reflections. Mr. Fox treated the associations for prosecuting these libels, as tending to prevent the improvement of the human mind, and as a mobbish tyranny. He thought proper to compare them with the riotous assemblies of Lord George Gordon in 1780, declaring that he had advised his friends in Westminster, to sign the associations whether they agreed to them or not, in order that they might avoid destruction to their persons or their houses, or a desertion of their shops. This  
insidious



infidious advice tended to confound those who wished well to the object of the association, with the seditious, against whom the association was directed. By this stratagem, the confederacy intended for preserving the British constitution, and the public peace, would be wholly defeated. The magistrates, utterly incapable of distinguishing the friends from the enemies of order, would in vain look for support when they stood in the greatest need of it.

13. Mr. Fox's whole conduct, on this occasion was without example. The very morning after these violent declamations in the House of Commons against the association, (that is on Tuesday the 18th) he went himself to a meeting of St. George's parish, and there signed an association of the nature and tendency of those he had the night before so vehemently condemned; and several of his particular and most intimate friends, inhabitants of that parish, attended and signed along with him.

14. Imme-



14. Immediately after this extraordinary step, and in order perfectly to defeat the ends of that association against Jacobin publications, (which, contrary to his opinions, he had promoted and signed) a mischievous society was formed under his auspices, called, the *Friends of the Liberty of the Press*. Their title groundlessly insinuated, that the freedom of the press had lately suffered, or was now threatened with some violation.— This society was only, in reality, another modification of the society calling itself the *Friends of the People*, which, in the preceding summer had caused so much uneasiness in the Duke of Portland's mind, and in the minds of several of his friends. This new society was composed of many, if not most of the members of the club of the *Friends of the People*, with the addition of a vast multitude of others (such as Mr. Horne Tooke) of the worst and most seditious dispositions that could be found in the whole kingdom. In the first meeting of this club, Mr. Erskine took the lead, and directly (without any disavowal ever since on Mr. Fox's part) *made use of his name and authority in*  
*favour*



*favour of its formation and purposes.* In the same meeting Mr. Erskine had thanks for his defence of *Paine*, which amounted to a complete avowal of that Jacobin incendiary, else it is impossible to know how Mr. Erskine should have deserved such marked applauses for acting merely as a lawyer for his fee, in the ordinary course of his profession.

15. Indeed Mr. Fox appeared the general patron of all such persons and proceedings. When Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and other persons, for practices of the most dangerous kind, in Paris and in London, were removed from the King's Guards, Mr. Fox took occasion, in the House of Commons, heavily to censure that act as unjust and oppressive, and tending to make officers bad citizens. There were few, however, who did not call for some such measures on the part of Government, as of absolute necessity for the King's personal safety, as well as that of the public; and nothing but the mistaken lenity (with which such practices were rather discountenanced than punished) could



could possibly deserve reprehension in what was done with regard to those gentlemen.

16. Mr. Fox, regularly and systematically, and with a diligence long unusual to him, did every thing he could to countenance the same principle of fraternity and connection with the Jacobins abroad, and the National Convention of France, for which these officers had been removed from the Guards. For when a bill (feeble and lax indeed, and far short of the vigour required by the conjuncture) was brought in for removing out of the kingdom the emissaries of France, Mr. Fox opposed it with all his might. He pursued a vehement and detailed opposition to it through all its stages, describing it as a measure contrary to the existing treaties between Great Britain and France; as a violation of the law of nations, and as an outrage on the great charter itself.

17. In the same manner, and with the same heat, he opposed a bill, which, (though awkward and artful in its construction) was right and wise in its principle, and was pre-

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cedented



cedented in the best times, and absolutely necessary at that juncture, I mean the Traitorous Correspondence Bill. By these means the enemy, rendered infinitely dangerous by the links of real faction and pretended commerce, would have been (had Mr. Fox succeeded) enabled to carry on the war against us by our own resources. For this purpose that enemy would have its agents and traitors in the midst of us.

18. When at length war was actually declared, by the usurpers in France, against this kingdom, and declared whilst they were pretending a negociation through Dumourier with Lord Auckland, Mr. Fox still continued, through the whole of the proceedings, to discredit the national honour and justice, and to throw the entire blame of the war on Parliament and on his own country, as acting with violence, haughtiness, and want of equity. He frequently asserted, both at the time and ever since, that the war, though declared by France, was provoked by us, and that it was wholly unnecessary and fundamentally unjust.

19. He



19. He has lost no opportunity of railing, in the most virulent manner, and in the most unmeasured language, at every foreign power with whom we could now, or at any time, contract any useful or effectual alliance against France, declaring that he hoped no alliance with those powers was made, or was in a train of being made. \* He always expressed himself with the utmost horror concerning such alliances, so did all his phalanx. Mr. Sheridan, in particular, after one of his invectives against those powers, sitting by him, said, with manifest marks of his approbation, that if we must go to war, he had rather go to war alone than with such allies.

20. Immediately after the French declaration of war against us, Parliament addressed the King in support of the war against them, as just and necessary, and provoked as well as formally declared against Great Britain. He did not divide the House upon this

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measure ;

\* It is an exception, that in one of his last speeches, (but not before) Mr. Fox seemed to think, an alliance with Spain might be proper.



measure ; yet he immediately followed this our solemn Parliamentary engagement to the King, with a motion proposing a set of resolutions, the effect of which was, that the two Houses were to load themselves with every kind of reproach for having made the address, which they had just carried to the Throne. He commenced this long string of criminatory resolutions against his country (if King, Lords and Commons of Great Britain, and a decided majority without doors are his country) *with a declaration against intermeddling in the interior concerns of France.* The purport of this resolution of non-interference, is a thing unexampled in the history of the world, when one nation has been actually at war with another. The best writers on the law of nations, give no sort of countenance to his doctrine of non-interference, in the extent and manner in which he used it, *even when there is no war.* When the war exists, not one authority is against it in all its latitude. His doctrine is equally contrary to the enemy's uniform practice, who, whether in peace or in war, makes it her great aim, not only to change the Government



vernment, but to make an entire revolution in the whole of the social order in every country.

The object of the last of this extraordinary string of resolutions moved by Mr. Fox, was to advise the Crown not to enter into such an engagement with any foreign power, so as to hinder us from making a *separate* peace with France, or which might tend to enable any of those powers to introduce a government in that country, other than such as those persons whom he calls the people of France, shall choose to establish. In short, the whole of these resolutions appeared to have but one drift---namely, the sacrifice of our own domestic dignity and safety, and the independency of Europe, to the support of this strange mixture of anarchy and tyranny which prevails in France, and which Mr. Fox and his party were pleased to call a Government. The immediate consequences of these measures was (by an example, the ill effects of which, on the whole world, are not to be calculated) to secure the robbers of the innocent nobility, gentry, and ecclesiastics



astics of France, the enjoyment of the spoil they have made of the estates, houses, and goods of their fellow-citizens.

21. Not satisfied with moving these resolutions, tending to confirm this horrible tyranny and robbery, and with actually dividing the House on the first of the long string which they composed, in a few days afterwards he encouraged and supported Mr. Grey in producing the very same strings in a new form, and in moving, under the shape of an address of Parliament to the Crown, another virulent libel on all its own proceedings in this session, in which not only all the ground of the resolutions was again travelled over, but much new inflammatory matter was introduced. In particular, a charge was made, that Great Britain had not interposed to prevent the last partition of Poland. On this head the party dwelt very largely, and very vehemently. Mr. Fox's intention, in the choice of this extraordinary topic, was evident enough. He well knows two things; first, that no wise or honest man can approve of that partition, and without prognosticating  
great



great mischief from it to all countries at some future time. Secondly, he knows quite as well, that, let our opinions on that partition be what they will, England, by itself, is not in a situation to afford to Poland any assistance whatsoever. The purpose of the introduction of Polish politics into this discussion, was not for the sake of Poland; it was to throw an odium upon those who are obliged to decline the cause of justice from their impossibility of supporting a cause which they approve, as if we, who think more strongly on this subject than he does, were of a party against Poland, because we are obliged to act with some of the authors of that injustice, against our common enemy, France. But the great and leading purpose of this introduction of Poland into the debates on the French war, was to divert the public attention from what was in our power, that is, from a steady co-operation against France, to a quarrel with the Allies for the sake of a Polish war, which, for any useful purpose to Poland, he knew it was out of our power to make. If England can touch Poland ever so remotely, it must be through the medium of alliances.



alliances. But by attacking all the combined powers together for their supposed unjust aggression upon France, he bound them by a new common interest, not separately to join England for the rescue of Poland. The proposition could only mean to do what all the papers of his party in the Morning Chronicle have aimed at persuading the public to, through the whole of the last autumn and winter, and to this hour; that is, to an alliance with the Jacobins of France, for the pretended purpose of succouring Poland. This curious project would leave to Great Britain no other Ally in all Europe, except its old enemy France.

22. Mr. Fox, after the first day's discussion on the question for the address, was at length driven to admit---(to admit rather than to urge, and that very faintly) that France had discovered ambitious views, which none of his partizans, that I recollect, (Mr. Sheridan excepted) did, however, either urge or admit. What is remarkable enough, all the points admitted against the Jacobins, were brought to bear in their favour as much



as those in which they were defended. But when Mr. Fox admitted that the conduct of the Jacobins did discover ambition, he always ended his admission of their ambitious views by an apology for them, insisting, that the universally hostile disposition shewn to them, rendered their ambition a sort of defensive policy. Thus, whatever road he travelled, they all terminated in recommending a recognition of their pretended Republic, and in the plan of sending an ambassador to it. This was the burthen of all his song--“Every thing which we could reasonably hope from war, would be obtained from treaty.” It is to be observed, however, that in all these debates, Mr. Fox never once stated to the House upon what ground it was he conceived, that all the objects of the French system of united fanaticism and ambition would instantly be given up whenever England should think fit to propose a treaty. On proposing so strange a recognition and so humiliating an embassy as he moved, he was bound to produce his authority, if any authority he had. He ought to have done this the rather, because Le Brun, in his first propositions, and



in his answers to Lord Grenville, defended, *on principle, not on temporary convenience,* every thing which was objected to France, and shewed not the smallest disposition to give up any any one of the points in discussion. Mr. Fox must also have known, that the Convention had passed to the order of the day, on a proposition to give some sort of explanation or modification to the hostile decree of the 19th of November, for exciting insurrections in all countries; a decree known to be peculiarly pointed at Great Britain. The whole proceeding of the French administration was the most remote that could be imagined from furnishing any indication of a pacific disposition: for at the very time in which it was pretended that the Jacobins entertained those boasted pacific intentions, at the very time in which Mr. Fox was urging a treaty with them, not content with refusing a modification of the decree for insurrections, they published their ever memorable decree of the 15th of December, 1792, for disorganizing every country in Europe, into which they should on any occasion set their foot; and on the 25th and the 30th of the same



same month, they solemnly, and on the last of these days, practically confirmed that decree.

23. But Mr. Fox had himself taken good care in the negociation he proposed, that France should not be obliged to make any very great concessions to her presumed moderation---for he had laid down one general comprehensive rule, with him (as he said) constant and inviolable. This rule, in fact, would not only have left to the faction in France, all the property and power they had usurped at home, but most, if not all, of the conquests which by their atrocious perfidy and violence, they had made abroad. The principal laid down by Mr. Fox, is this, "*That every state, in the conclusion of a war, has a right to avail itself of its conquests towards an indemnification.*" This principle (true or false) is totally contrary to the policy which this country has pursued with France, at various periods, particularly at the treaty of Ryfwick, in the last century, and at the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in this. Whatever the merits of his rule may be, in the eyes of neutral judges, it is a rule, which no statesman



statesman before him ever laid down in favour of the adverse power with whom he was to negotiate. The adverse party himself, may safely be trusted to take care of his *own* aggrandisement. But (as if the black boxes of the several parties had been exchanged) Mr. Fox's English ambassador, by some odd mistake, would find himself charged with the concerns of France. If we were to leave France as she stood at the time when Mr. Fox proposed to treat with her, that formidable power must have been infinitely strengthened, and almost every other power in Europe as much weakened, by the extraordinary basis which he laid for a treaty. For Avignon must go from the Pope; Savoy (at least) from the King of Sardinia, if not Nice. Liege, Monk, Salm, Deux Ponts, and Bale, must be separated from Germany. On this side of the Rhine, Liege, at least, must be lost to the empire, and added to France. Mr. Fox's general principle fully covered all this. How much of these territories came within his rule, he never attempted to define. He kept a profound silence as to Germany. As to the Netherlands he was something more explicit.



explicit. He said, (if I recollect right) that France, on that side, might expect something towards strengthening her frontier. As to the remaining parts of the Netherlands, which he supposed France might consent to surrender, he declared, went so far as that England ought not to permit the Emperor to be repossessed of the remainder of the ten Provinces, but that *the People* should choose such a form of independent Government as they liked. This proposition of Mr. Fox was just the arrangement which the usurpation in France had all along proposed to make. As the circumstances were at that time, and have been ever since, his proposition fully indicated what Government the Flemings *must* have in the stated extent of what was left to them. A Government so set up in the Netherlands, whether compulsory, or by the choice of the Sans Culottes, (who he well knew were to be the real electors, and the sole electors) in whatever name it was to exist, must evidently depend for its existence, as it has done for its original formation, on France. In reality, it must have ended in that point, to which, piece by  
 piece,



piece, the French were then actually bringing all the Netherlands ; that is, an incorporation with France, as a body of new departments, just as Savoy and Liege, and the rest of their pretended independent popular sovereignties, have been united to their republic. Such an arrangement must have destroyed Austria ; it must have left Holland always at the mercy of France ; it must totally and for ever cut off all political communication between England and the Continent. Such must have been the situation of Europe, according to Mr. Fox's system of politics, however laudable his personal motives may have been in proposing so compleat a change in the whole system of Great Britain, with regard to all the Continental powers.

24. After it had been generally supposed that all public business was over for the session, and that Mr. Fox had exhausted all the modes of pressing this French scheme, he thought proper to take a step beyond every expectation, and which demonstrated his wonderful eagerness and perseverance in  
his



his cause, as well as the nature and true character of the cause itself. This step was taken by Mr. Fox immediately after his giving his assent to the Grant of Supply voted to him by Mr. Serjeant Adair and a Committee of Gentlemen, who assumed to themselves to act in the name of the public. In the instrument of his acceptance of this Grant, Mr. Fox took occasion to assure them, that he would always persevere *in the same conduct* which had procured to him so honourable a mark of the public approbation. He was as good as his word.

25. It was not long before an opportunity was found, or made, for proving the sincerity of his professions, and demonstrating his gratitude to those who had given public and unequivocal marks of their approbation of his late conduct. One of the most virulent of the Jacobin Faction, Mr. Gurney, a banker at Norwich, had all along distinguished himself by his French politics. By the means of this Gentleman, and of his associates of the same description, one of the most insidious and dangerous hand-



hand-bills that ever was seen, had been circulated at Norwich against the war, drawn up in an hypocritical tone of compassion for the Poor. This Address to the Populace of Norwich was to play in concert with an Address to Mr. Fox; was signed by Mr. Gurney and the higher part of the French Fraternity in that town. In this paper Mr. Fox is applauded for his Conduct throughout the session; and requested, before the prorogation, to make a motion for an immediate Peace with France.

26. Mr. Fox did not revoke to this suit: he readily and thankfully undertook the task assigned to him. Not content, however, with merely falling in with their wishes, he proposed a task on his part to the Gentlemen of Norwich, which was, *that they should move the people without doors to petition against the War.* He said, that without such assistance, little good could be expected from any thing he might attempt within the walls of the House of Commons. In the mean time, to animate his Norwich friends in their endeavours to besiege Parliament,



ment, he snatched the first opportunity to give notice of a motion, which he very soon after made, namely, to address the Crown to make Peace with France. The Address was so worded as to co-operate with the hand-bill in bringing forward matter calculated to inflame the manufacturers throughout the kingdom.

27. In support of his motion, he declaimed in the most virulent strain, even beyond any of his former invectives, against every power with whom we were then, and are now, acting against France. In the *moral* forum, some of these powers certainly deserve all the ill he said of them; but the *political* effect aimed at, evidently was to turn our indignation from France, with whom we were at war, upon Russia, or Prussia, or Austria, or Sardinia, or all of them together. In consequence of his knowledge that we *could* not effectually do *without* them, and his resolution that we *should* not act *with* them, he therefore proposed, that having, as he asserted, “ obtained the only avowed object of the  
G “ War



“ War (the evacuation of Holland), we  
 “ ought to conclude an instant Peace.”

28. Mr. Fox could not be ignorant of the mistaken basis upon which his motion was grounded. He was not ignorant, that, though the attempt of Dumourier on Holland (so very near succeeding), and the navigation of the Scheld (a part of the same piece), were among the *immediate* causes, they were by no means the only causes alledged for Parliament's taking that offence at the proceedings of France, for which the Jacobins were so prompt in declaring war upon this kingdom. Other full as weighty causes had been alledged: They were, 1. The general overbearing and desperate ambition of that Faction. 2. Their actual attacks on every nation in Europe. 3. Their usurpation of territories in the empire with the governments of which they had no pretence of quarrel. 4. Their perpetual and irrevocable consolidation with their own dominions of every territory of the Netherlands, of Germany, and of Italy, of which they got a temporary possession. 5. The mischiefs attending the prevalence of their  
 system



system, which would make the success of  
 their ambitious designs a new and peculiar  
 species of calamity in the world. 6. Their  
 formal public decrees; particularly those of  
 the 19th of November, and 15th and 25th  
 of December. 7. Their notorious attempts  
 to undermine the Constitution of this coun-  
 try. 8. Their public reception of deputa-  
 tions or traitors for that direct purpose. 9.  
 Their murder of their Sovereign, declared  
 by most of the members of the Convention,  
 who spoke with their vote (without a dis-  
 avowal from any) to be perpetrated, as an  
 example to *all* Kings, and a precedent for *all*  
 subjects to follow. All these, and not the  
 Scheld alone, or the invasion of Holland  
 were urged by the Minister, and by Mr.  
 Wyndham, by myself, and by others who  
 spoke in those debates, as causes for bring-  
 ing France to a sense of her wrong in the  
 war which she declared against us. Mr.  
 Fox well knew, that not one man argued  
 for the necessity of a vigorous resistance to  
 France, who did not state the war as being  
 for the very existence of the social order  
 here, and every part of Europe; who did  
 not



not state his opinion, that this war was not at all a foreign War of Empire, but as much for our Liberties, Properties, Laws, and Religion; and even more so than any we had ever been engaged in. This was the war, which, according to Mr. Fox and Mr. Gurney, we were to abandon, before the enemy had felt, in the slightest degree, the impression of our arms.

29. Had Mr. Fox's disgraceful proposal been complied with, this kingdom would have been stained with a blot of perfidy hitherto without an example in our history, and with far less excuse than any act of perfidy which we find in the history of any other nation. The moment, when by the incredible exertions of Austria (very little through our's) the temporary deliverance of Holland (in effect our own deliverance) had been achieved, he advised the House instantly to abandon her to that very enemy, from whose arms she had freed ourselves, and the closest of our allies.

30. But







occasion. So far as to the pretended sole object of the war, which Mr. Fox supposed to be so completely obtained, but which then was not at all, and at this day is not completely obtained, as to leave us nothing else to do than to cultivate a peaceful, quiet correspondence with those quiet, peaceable and moderate people, the Jacobins of France.

31. To induce us to this, Mr. Fox laboured hard to make it appear, that the powers with whom we acted, were full as ambitious and as perfidious as the French. This might be true as to *other* nations. They had not, however, been so to *Us* or to Holland. He produced no proof of active ambition and ill faith against Austria. But supposing the combined Powers had been all thus faithless, and had been all alike so, there was one circumstance which made an essential difference between them and France. I need not be at the trouble of contesting this point, (which, however, in this latitude, and as at all affecting Great Britain and Holland, I deny utterly). Be it so. But the great Monarchies have it  
in



in their power to keep their faith *if they please*, because they are Governments of established and recognized authority at home and abroad. France had, in reality, no Government. The very factions who exercised power, had no stability. The French Convention had no powers of peace or war. Supposing the Convention to be free (most assuredly it was not) they had shewn no disposition to abandon their projects.—Though long driven out of Liege, it was not many days before Mr. Fox's motion, that they still continued to claim it as a country, which their principles of fraternity bound them to protect, that is, to subdue and to regulate at their pleasure. That party which Mr. Fox inclined most to favour and trust, and from which he must have received his assurances (if any he did receive) that is the *Brissotins*, were then either prisoners or fugitives. The Party which prevailed over them (that of Danton and Marat) was itself in a tottering condition, and was disowned by a very great part of France. To say nothing of the Royal Party who were powerful and growing, and who had full as good a right to



claim to be the legitimate Government as any of the Parisian Factions with whom he proposed to treat—or rather (as it seemed to me) to surrender at discretion.

32. But when Mr. Fox began to come from his general hopes of the moderation of the Jacobins, to particulars, he put the case, that they might not perhaps be willing to surrender Savoy. He certainly was not willing to contest that point with them; but plainly and explicitly (as I understood him) proposed to let them keep it; though he knew (or he was much worse informed than he would be thought) that England had, at the very time, agreed on the terms of a Treaty with the King of Sardinia, of which the recovery of Savoy was the *Casus Federis*. In the teeth of this Treaty, Mr. Fox proposed a direct and most scandalous breach of our faith, formally and recently given. But to surrender Savoy, was to surrender a great deal more than so many square acres of land, or so much revenue. In its consequences, the surrender of Savoy, was to make a surrender to France  
of



of Switzerland and Italy, of both which countries, Savoy is the key—as it is known to ordinary speculators in politics, though it may not be known to the Weavers in Norwich, who, it seems are, by Mr. Fox, called to be the judges in this matter.

33. A sure way indeed, to encourage France not to make a surrender of this key of Italy and Switzerland, or of Mayence, the key of Germany, or of any other object whatsoever which she holds, is to let her see, *that the People of England raise a clamour against the War before terms are so much as proposed on any side.* From that moment, the Jacobins would be masters of the terms.—They would know, that Parliament, at all hazards, would force the King to a separate Peace. The Crown could not, in that case, have any use of its judgment. Parliament could not possess more judgment than the Crown, when besieged (as Mr. Fox proposed to Mr. Gurney) by the cries of the Manufacturers. This description of men, Mr. Fox endeavoured in his speech, by every method,

to



to irritate and inflame. In effect, his two speeches were, through the whole, nothing more than an amplification of the Norwich Hand-bill. He rested the greatest part of his argument on the distress of Trade, which he attributed to the war, though it was obvious, to any tolerably good observation, and much more must have been clear to such an observation as his, that the then difficulties of the Trade and Manufacture could have no sort of connection with our share in it. The war had hardly begun. We had suffered neither by spoil, nor by defeat, nor by disgrace of any kind. Public credit was so little impaired, that instead of being supported by any extraordinary aids from individuals, it advanced a credit to individuals to the amount of five millions, for the support of Trade and Manufactures, under their temporary difficulties, a thing before never heard of;—a thing of which I do not commend the policy—but only state it, to shew, that Mr. Fox's ideas of the effects of war were without any trace of foundation.



33. It is impossible not to connect the arguments and proceedings of a Party with that of its leader—especially when not disavowed or controlled by him. Mr. Fox's partizans declaim against all the powers of Europe, except the Jacobins, just as he does; but not having the same reasons for management and caution which he has, they speak out. He satisfies himself merely with making his invectives, and leaves others to draw the conclusion. But they produce their Polish interposition, for the express purpose of leading to a French alliance. They urge their French Peace, in order to make a junction with the Jacobins to oppose the powers, whom, in their language, they call Despots, and their leagues, a combination of Despots. Indeed, no man can look on the present posture of Europe with the least degree of discernment, who will not be thoroughly convinced, that England must be the fast friend or the determined enemy of France. There is no medium; and I do not think Mr. Fox to be so dull as not to observe this. His Peace would involve us instantly in the most extensive and  
 most



most ruinous wars; at the same time that it would have made a broad highway (across which no human wisdom could put an effectual barrier) for a mutual intercourse with the fraternizing Jacobins on both sides. The consequences of which, those will certainly not provide against, who do not dread or dislike them.

34. It is not amiss in this place to enter a little more fully into the spirit of the principal arguments on which Mr. Fox thought proper to rest this his grand and concluding motion, particularly such as were drawn from the internal state of our affairs. Under a specious appearance (not uncommonly put on by men of unscrupulous ambition) that of tenderness and compassion to the Poor; he did his best to appeal to the judgments of the meanest and most ignorant of the people on the merits of the War. He had before done something of the same dangerous kind in his printed Letter. The ground of a political War is of all things that which the poor labourer and manufacturer are the least capable of conceiving. This  
fort



Sort of people know in general that they must suffer by War. It is a matter to which they are sufficiently competent, because it is a matter of feeling. The *causes* of a War are not matters of feeling, but of reason and foresight, and often of remote considerations, and of a very great combination of circumstances, which *they* are utterly incapable of comprehending; and, indeed, it is not every man in the highest classes who is altogether equal to it. Nothing, in a general sense, appears to me less fair and justifiable, (even if no attempt were made to inflame the passions) than to submit a matter on discussion to a Tribunal incapable of judging of more than *one side* of the question. It is at least as unjustifiable to inflame the passions of such Judges against *that side*, in favor of which they cannot so much as comprehend the arguments. Before the prevalence of the French System (which as far as it has gone has extinguished the salutary prejudice called our Country) nobody was more sensible of this important truth than Mr. Fox; and nothing was more proper and pertinent, or was more felt at the time, than

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his



his reprimand to Mr. Wilberforce for an inconsiderate expression which tended to call in the judgment of the poor, to estimate the policy of war upon the standard of the taxes they may be obliged to pay towards its support.

35. It is fatally known, that the great Object of the Jacobin System is to excite the lowest description of the People to range themselves under ambitious men, for the pillage and destruction of the more eminent orders and classes of the community. The thing, therefore, that a man not fanatically attached to that dreadful project, would most studiously avoid, is, to act a part with the French *Propagandists*, in attributing (as they constantly do) all Wars and all the consequences of Wars, to the pride of those orders, and to their contempt of the weak and indigent part of the society. The ruling Jacobins insist upon it, that even the Wars which they carry on with so much obstinacy against all Nations, are made to prevent the Poor from any longer being the instruments and  
victims



victims of Kings, Nobles, and the Aristocracy of Burghers and Rich Men. They pretend that the destruction of Kings, Nobles, and the Aristocracy of Burghers and Rich Men, is the only means of establishing an universal and perpetual Peace. This is the great drift of all their writings from the time of the meeting of the States of France, in 1789, to the publication of the last Morning Chronicle. They insist that even the War which, with so much boldness, they have declared against all Nations, is to prevent the poor from becoming the Instruments and Victims of these persons and descriptions. It is but too easy, if you once teach poor labourers and mechanics to defy their prejudices, and as this has been done with an industry scarcely credible, to substitute the principles of fraternity in the room of that salutary prejudice called our Country, it is, I say, but too easy to persuade them agreeably to what Mr. Fox hints in his public Letter, that this War is, and that the other Wars have been, the Wars of Kings; it is easy to persuade them that the terrors even of a

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foreign



foreign conquest are not terrors for *them*— It is easy to persuade them that, for their part, *they* have nothing to lose; and that their condition is not likely to be altered for the worse, whatever party may happen to prevail in the War. Under any circumstances this doctrine is highly dangerous, as it tends to make separate parties of the higher and lower orders, and to put their interests on a different bottom. But if the enemy you have to deal with should appear, as France now appears, under the very name and title of the deliverer of the poor, and the chastiser of the rich, the former class would readily become, not an indifferent spectator of the War, but would be ready to enlist in the faction of the enemy; which they would consider, tho' under a foreign name, to be more connected with them than an adverse description in the same land. All the props of Society would be drawn from us by these doctrines, and the very foundations of the public defence would give way in an instant.



36. There is no point which the Faction of Fraternity in England have laboured more than to excite in the Poor the horror of any War with France upon any occasion. When they found that their open attacks upon our Constitution in favor of a French Republic were for the present repelled--they put that matter out of fight, and have taken up the more plausible and popular ground of general peace, upon merely general principles, altho' these very men in the correspondence of their clubs with those of France, had reprobated the neutrality which now they so earnestly prefs. But, in reality, their maxim was and is "Peace and Alliance with France, and War with the rest of the World."

37. This last motion of Mr. Fox bound up the whole of his politics during the sessions. This motive had many circumstances, particularly in the Norwich Correspondence, by which the mischief, of all the others, was aggravated beyond measure. Yet, this last motion, far the worst of Mr.

Fox's



Fox's proceedings, was the best supported of any of them, except his amendment to the Address. The Duke of Portland had directly engaged to support the War—Here was a motion as directly made to force the Crown to put an end to it before a blow had been struck. The efforts of the Faction have so prevailed that some of his Grace's nearest friends have actually voted for that motion: some, after shewing themselves, went away—Others did not appear at all. So it must be where a man is for any time supported from personal considerations, without reference to his public conduct. Thro' the whole of this business, the spirit of fraternity appears to me to have been the governing principle. It might be shameful for any man, above the vulgar, to shew so blind a partiality even to his own Country, as Mr. Fox appears, on all occasions, this Session, to have shewn to France. Had Mr. Fox been a Minister, and proceeded on the principles laid down by him, I believe there is little doubt he would have been considered as the most criminal Statesman that ever lived



lived in this Country. I do not know why a Statesman out of place is not to be judged in the same manner, unless we can excuse him by pleading in his favor a total indifference to principle; and that he would act and think in quite a different way if he were in office. This I will not suppose. One may think better of him; and that in case of his power he might change his mind. But supposing, that from better or from worse motives, he might change his mind on his acquisition of the favor of the Crown, I seriously fear that if the King should tomorrow put power into his hands, and that his good genius would inspire him with maxims very different from those he has promulgated, he would not be able to get the better of the ill temper, and the ill doctrines he has been the means of exciting and propagating throughout the kingdom. From the very beginning of their inhuman and unprovoked rebellion and tyrannic usurpation, he has covered the predominant Faction in France, and their adherents here, with the most exaggerated panegyrics; neither  
has



has he missed a single opportunity of abusing and villifying those, who in uniform concurrence with the Duke of Portland's and Lord Fitzwilliam's opinion, have maintained the true grounds of the Revolution Settlement in 1688. He lamented all the defeats of the French; he rejoiced in all their victories; even when these victories threatened to overwhelm the Continent of Europe, and by facilitating their means of penetrating into Holland, to bring this most dreadful of all evils with irresistible force to the very doors, if not into the very heart, of our Country. To this hour he always speaks of every thought of overturning the French Jacobinism by force, on the part of any Power whatsoever, as an attempt unjust and cruel, and which he reprobates with horror. If any of the French Jacobin leaders are spoken of with hatred or scorn, he falls upon those who take that liberty, with all the zeal and warmth with which men of honor defend their particular and bosom friends, when attacked. He always represents their cause as a cause of Liberty; and  
all



all who oppose it as partizans of despotism. He obstinately continues to consider the great and growing vices, crimes and disorders of that country, as only evils of passage, which are to produce a permanently happy state of order and freedom. He represents these disorders exactly in the same way, and with the same limitations which are used by one of the two great Jacobin Factions, I mean that of PÉTION and BRISSOT. Like them he studiously confines his horror and reprobation only to the massacres of the second of September, and passes by those of the 10th of August, as well as the imprisonment and deposition of the King, which were the consequences of that day, as indeed were the massacres themselves to which he confines his censure, tho' they were not actually perpetrated until early in September. Like that Faction, he condemns, not the deposition, or the proposed exile, or perpetual imprisonment, but only the murder of the King. Mr. SHERIDAN on every occasion, palliates all their massacres committed in every part of France,



as the effects of a natural indignation at the exorbitances of despotism, and of the dread of the people of returning under that yoke—He has thus taken occasion to load, not the actors in this wickedness, but the Government of a mild, merciful, beneficent and patriotic Prince, and his suffering, faithful subjects, with all the crimes of the new anarchical tyranny, under which the one has been murdered, and the others are oppressed. Those continual either praises or palliating apologies of every thing done in France, and those invectives as uniformly vomited out upon all those who venture to express their disapprobation of such proceedings, coming from a man of Mr. Fox's fame and authority, and one who is considered as the person to whom a great party of the wealthiest men of the Kingdom look up, has been the cause why the principle of French fraternity formerly gained the ground which it had obtained. It will infallibly recover itself again, and in ten times a greater degree, if the kind of Peace, in the manner which he preaches, ever shall be



be established with the reigning faction in France.

38. So far as to the French practices with regard to France and the other Powers of Europe—as to their principles and doctrines, with regard to the Constitution of States, Mr. Fox studiously, on all occasions, and indeed when no occasion calls for it, (as on the Debate of the petition for Reform) brings forward and asserts their fundamental and fatal principle, pregnant with every mischief and every crime, namely that “ in every Country the People is the legitimate Sovereign,” exactly conformable to the Declaration of the French Clubs and Legislators. “ *La Souveraineté est une, indivisible, inalienable, et imprescriptible. Elle appartient a la Nation. Aucune Section du peuple, ni aucun Individu ne peut s’en attribuer l’exercise.*” It confounds, in a manner equally mischievous and stupid, the origin of a Government from the people with its continuance in their hands. I believe, that no such doctrine has ever been heard



of in any public act of any Government whatsoever, until it was adopted (I think from the writings of Rousseau) by the French Assemblies, who have made it the basis of their Constitution at home, and of the matter of their apostate in every country. These and other wild declarations of abstract principle, Mr. Fox says, are in themselves perfectly right and true; tho' in some cases he allows the French draw absurd consequences from them. But I conceive he is mistaken. The consequences are most logically, though most mischievously drawn from the premises and principles by that wicked and ungracious faction. The fault is in the foundation.

39. Before society, in a multitude of men, it is obvious, that sovereignty and subjection are ideas which cannot exist. It is the compact on which society is formed that makes both. But to suppose the people, contrary to their compacts, both to give away and retain the same thing, is altogether absurd. It is worse, for it supposes in some things



things combination of men a power and right of always dissolving the social union; which power, however, if it exists, renders them again as little sovereigns as subjects, but a mere unconnected multitude. It is not easy to state for what good end, at a time like this, when the foundations of all antient and presumptive Governments such as ours (to which people submit, not because they have chosen them, but because they are born to them) are undermined by perilous theories, that Mr. Fox should be so fond of referring to those theories, upon all occasions, even tho' speculatively they might be true, which God forbid they should! Particularly I do not see the reason why he should be so fond of declaring, that the principles of the Revolution have made the Crown of Great Britain *elective*; why he thinks it seasonable to preach up with so much earnestness, for now three years together, the doctrine of resistence and Revolution at all; or to assert that our last Revolution of 1688 stands on the same or similar principles with that of France. We are not called upon to bring forward



forward these doctrines, which are hardly ever resorted to but in cases of extremity, and where they are followed by correspondent actions. We are not called upon by any circumstance, that I know of, which can justify a revolt, or which demands a Revolution, or can make an election of a successor to the Crown necessary, what ever latent right may be supposed to exist for effectuating any of these purposes.

40. Not the least alarming of the proceedings of Mr. Fox and his friends in this Session, especially taken in concurrence with their whole proceedings, with regard to France and its principles, is their eagerness at this Season, under pretence of Parliamentary Reforms (a project which had been for some time rather dormant) to discredit and disgrace the House of Commons. For this purpose these Gentlemen had found a way to insult the House by several atrocious libels in the form of petitions. In particular they brought up a libel, or rather a complete digest of libellous matter, from the Club called the  
 Friends



Friends of the People. It is indeed at once the most audacious and the most insidious of all the performances of that kind which have yet appeared. It is said to be the penmanship of Mr. Tierney to bring whom into Parliament the Duke of Portland formerly had taken a good deal of pains, and expended, as I hear, a considerable sum of money,

41. Among the circumstances of danger from that piece and from its precedent, it is observable that this is the first petition (if I remember right) *coming from a Club or Association, signed by Individuals, denoting neither local residence, nor corporate capacity.* This mode of petition not being strictly illegal or informal, tho' in its spirit in the highest degree mischievous, may and will lead to other things of that nature, tending to bring these Clubs and Associations to the French model, and to make them in the end answer French purposes: I mean, that without legal names, these Clubs will be lead to assume political capacities; that they



they may debate the forms of Constitution; and that from their Meetings they may insolently dictate their will to the regular authorities of the Kingdom, in the manner in which the Jacobin Clubs issue their mandates to the National Assembly or the National Convention. The audacious remonstrance, which I observe is signed by all of that Association (the Friends of the People) *who are not in Parliament*, and it was supported most strenuously by all Associations *who are Members*, with Mr. Fox at their head. He and they contended for referring this libel to a committee. Upon the question of that reference, they grounded all their debate for a change in the Constitution of Parliament. The pretended Petition is, in fact, a regular charge or impeachment of the House of Commons, digested into a number of Articles. This plan of reform is not a criminal Impeachment, but a matter of prudence, to be submitted to the public wisdom, which must be as well apprised of the facts as petitioners can be. But those accessors of the  
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House of Commons have proceeded upon the principles of a criminal process; and have had the effrontry to offer proof on each Article.

42. This charge, the party of Mr. Fox maintained article by article, beginning with the first; namely, the interference of Peers at Elections, and their nominating in effect several of the Members of the House of Commons. In the printed list of grievances which they made out on the occasion, and in support of their charge, is found the Borough, which under Lord Fitzwilliam's influence, I now sit. By this Remonstrance and its object, they hope to defeat the operation of property in Elections, and in reality to dissolve the connection and communication of interests which makes the Houses of Parliament a mutual support to each other. Mr. Fox and the Friends of the People are not so ignorant as not to know, that Peers do not interfere in Elections as Peers, but as men of property—They well know that the House of Lords

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s by itself the feeblest part of the Constitution; they know that the House of Lords is supported only by its connections with the Crown and with the House of Commons; and that without this double connection the Lords could not exist a single year. They know, that all these parts of our Constitution, whilst they are balanced as opposing interests, are also connected as friends; otherwise nothing but confusion could be the result of a complex Constitution. It is natural, therefore, that they who wish the common destruction of the whole and of all its parts, should contend for their total separation. But as the House of Commons is that link which connects both the other parts of the Constitution (the Crown and the Lords) *with the Mass of the People*, it is to that link (as it is natural enough) that their incessant attacks are directed. That artificial representation of the people being once discredited and overturned, all goes to pieces, and nothing but a plain *French* democracy or arbitrary monarchs can possibly exist.



43. Some of these gentlemen who have attacked the House of Commons, lean to a representation of the people by the head, that is, to *individual representation*. None of them that I recollect, except Mr. Fox, directly rejected it. It is remarkable, however, that he only rejected it by simply declaring an opinion. He let all the argument go against his opinion. All the proceedings and arguments of his reforming friends lead to individual representation and to nothing else. It deserves to be attentively observed, *that this individual representation is the only plan of their reform, which has been explicitly proposed*. In the mean time, the conduct of Mr. Fox appears to be far more inexplicable, on any good ground, than theirs, who propose the individual representation; for he neither proposes any thing, nor even suggests that he has any thing to propose, in lieu of the present mode of constituting the House of Commons.— On the contrary, he declares against all the plans which have yet been suggested, either from himself or others: yet, thus un-



provided with any plan whatsoever, he pressed forward this unknown reform with all possible warmth; and for that purpose, in a speech of several hours, he urged the referring to a committee, the libellous impeachment of the House of Commons by the association of the Friends of the People. But for Mr. Fox to discredit Parliament *as it stands*,—to countenance leagues, covenants, and associations for its further discredit,—to render it perfectly odious and contemptible,—and at the same time to propose nothing at all in place of what he disgraces, (is worse if possible) than to contend for personal individual representation, and is little less than demanding, in plain terms, to bring on plain anarchy.

44. Mr. Fox and these gentlemen have, for the present, been defeated; but they are neither converted nor disheartened, They have solemnly declared, that they will persevere until they have obtained their ends; persisting to assert, that the House of Commons not only is not a true



true representative of the people; but that it does not answer the purpose of such representation; most of them insist that all the debts, the taxes, and the burthens of all kinds on the people, with every other evil and inconvenience, which we have suffered since the Revolution, have been owing solely to an House of Commons which does not speak the sense of the people.

45. It is also not to be forgotten, that Mr. Fox, and all who hold with him, on this, as on all other occasions of pretended Reform, most bitterly reproached Mr. Pitt with treachery, in declining to support the scandalous charges and indefinite projects of this infamous libel from the Friends of the People. By the animosity with which they persecute all those who grow cold in this cause of pretended Reform, they hope, that if through levity, inexperience, or ambition, any young person (like Mr. Pitt, for instance) happens to be once embarked in their design, they shall, by a false shame, keep him fast in it for ever. Many they have so hampered,



1746. I know it is usual, when the peril and alarm of the hour appears to be a little overblown, to think no more of the matter. But for my part, I look back with horror on what we have escaped; and am full of anxiety with regard to the dangers, and, in my opinion, are still to be apprehended both at home and abroad; this business has cast deep roots. Whether it is necessarily connected in theory with Jacobinism is not worth a dispute. The two things are connected in fact. The partizans of the one are the partizans of the other. I know it is common with those who are favourable to the Gentlemen of Mr. Fox's party, and to their leader, though not at all devoted to all their reforming projects, or their Gallican politics to argue in palliation of their conduct, that it is not in their power to do all the harm which their actions evidently tend to. It is said, that as the people will not support them, they may safely be indulged in those eccentric fancies of Reform, and those theories which lead to nothing. This apology is not very much to the honour of those politicians,



politicians, whose interests are to be adhered to in defiance of their conduct. I cannot flatter myself that these incessant attacks on the Constitution of Parliament are safe. It is not in my power to despise the unceasing efforts of a Confederacy of about fifty persons of eminence; men, for the far greater part, of very ample fortunes either in possession or in expectancy; men of decided characters and vehement passions—men of very great talents of all kinds; of much boldness, and of the greatest possible spirit of artifice, intrigue, adventure, and enterprize, all operating with unwearied activity and perseverance. These gentlemen, are much stronger too without doors than some calculate. They have the more active part of the dissenters with them; and the whole clan of speculators of all denominations—a large and growing species. They have that floating multitude which goes with events and which suffer the loss or gain of a battle, to decide their opinions of right and wrong. As long as by every art this party keeps alive a spirit of disaffec-  
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tion against the very Constitution of the kingdom, and attributes, as lately it has been in the habit of doing, all the public misfortunes to that Constitution, it is absolutely *impossible*, but that some moment must arrive, in which they will be enabled to produce a pretended Reform and a real Revolution. If ever the body of this *compound Constitution* of ours is subverted either in favor of unlimited Monarchy, or of wild Democracy, that ruin will *most certainly* be the result of this very sort of machinations against the House of Commons. It is not from a confidence in the views of intentions of any Statesman that I think he is to be indulged in these perilous amusements.

47. Before it is made the great object of any man's political life to raise another to power, it is right to consider what are the real dispositions of the person to be so elevated. We are not to form our judgment on these dispositions from the rules and principles of a court of Justice, but from those of private discretion; not looking for what



what would serve to criminate another, but what is sufficient to direct ourselves.— By a comparison of a series of the discourses and actions of certain men, for a reasonable length of time, it is impossible not to obtain sufficient indication of the general tendency of their views and principles. There is no other rational mode of proceeding. It is true, that in some one or two, perhaps not well weighed expressions, or some one or two unconnected and doubtful affairs, we may and ought to judge of the actions or words by our previous good or ill opinion of the man. But this allowance has its bounds. It does not extend to any regular course of systematic action, or of constant and repeated discourse. It is against every principle of common sense and of justice to oneself, and to the public, to judge of a series of speeches and actions from the man, and not of the man from the whole tenor of his language and conduct. Had Mr. Fox been a minister, and proceeded in that capacity on the principles and in the manner in which he has acted during the whole of the last

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Session, I believe he would be considered as the most criminal statesman that ever existed in this country. I do not see why a statesman out of place is not to be judged of in the same manner, unless we excuse him by pleading in his favor a total indifference to moral principle, and that he would speak and act in quite a different way, if he were in office. I have stated the above matters, not as inferring a criminal charge of evil intention. If I had meant to do so, perhaps they are stated with tolerable exactness—But I have no such view. The intentions of these Gentlemen may be very pure. I do not dispute it. But I think they are in some great error. If these things are done by Mr. Fox and his friends, with good intentions, they are not done less dangerously; for it shews these good intentions are not under the direction of safe maxims and principles.

48. Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and the Gentlemen who call themselves the phalanx, have not been so very indulgent to others. They have



have thought proper to ascribe to those Members of the House of Commons, who, in exact agreement with the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, abhor and oppose the French system, the basest and most unworthy motives for their conduct;—as if none could oppose that atheistic, immoral, and impolitic project set up in France, so disgraceful and destructive, as I conceive, to human nature itself, but with some sinister intentions. They treat those Members on all occasions with a sort of lordly insolence, tho' they are persons that (whatever homage they may pay to the eloquence of the Gentlemen who choose to look down upon them with scorn), are not their inferiors in any particular which calls for and obtains just consideration from the public—not their inferiors on knowledge of public law, or of the Constitution of the kingdom—not their inferiors in their acquaintance with its foreign and domestic interests—not their inferiors in experience or practice of business—not their inferiors in moral character—not their inferiors in the proofs they have given of zeal and industry  
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in the service of their country. Without denying to these Gentlemen, the respect and consideration which, it is allowed, justly belongs to them, we see no reason why they should not as well be obliged to defer something to our opinions, as that we should be bound blindly and servilely to follow those of Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Francis, Mr. Taylor, and others. We are Members of Parliament and their equals, We never consider ourselves as their followers. These Gentlemen (some of them hardly born, when some of us came into Parliament) have thought proper to treat us as deserters, as if we had been lifted into their phalanx like soldiers, and had sworn to live and die in their French principles. This insolent claim of superiority on their part, and of a sort of vassalage to them on that of other Members, is what no liberal mind will submit to,

49. The Society of the Liberty of the Press, the Whig Club, and the Society for Constitutional Information, and (I believe) the  
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Friends of the People, as well as some Clubs in Scotland, have indeed declared, "That their confidence in and attachment to Mr. Fox, has lately been confirmed, strengthened, and encreased by the calumnies (as they are called) against him." It is true, Mr. Fox and his friends have those testimonies in their favour, against certain old friends of the Duke of Portland. Yet on a full, serious, and I think dispassionate consideration of the whole of what Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan and their friends have acted, said and written, in this Session, instead of doing any thing which might tend to procure power, or any share of it whatsoever, to them or to their phalanx (as they call it) or to encrease their credit, influence, or popularity in the nation, I think it one of my most serious and important public duties, in whatsoever station I may be placed for the short time I have to live, effectually to employ my best endeavours, by every prudent and every lawful means, to traverse all their designs. I have only to lament, that my abilities are not greater, and

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that my probability of life is not better, for the more effectual pursuit of that object. But I trust, that neither the principles nor exertions will die with me. I am the rather confirmed in this my resolution, and in this my wish of transmitting it, because every ray of hope concerning a possible control or mitigation of the enormous mischiefs which the principles of these Gentlemen, and which their connections full as dangerous as their principles, might receive from the influence of the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, on becoming their colleagues in office, is now entirely banished from the mind of every one living.—It is apparent, even to the world at large, that so far from having a power to direct or to guide Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, &c. &c. &c. in any important matter, they have not, thro' this Session, been able to prevail on them to forbear or to delay, or mitigate, or soften any one act, or any one expression upon subjects on which they essentially differed.



50. Even if this hope of a possible control did exist, yet the declared opinions and the uniform line of conduct conformable to those opinions, pursued by Mr. Fox, must become a matter of serious alarm if he should obtain a power either at Court or in Parliament, or in the nation at large; and for this plain reason—He must be the most active and efficient member in any Administration of which he shall form a part. That a man, or set of men, are guided by such not dubious, but delivered and avowed principles and maxims of policy as to need a watch and check on them, in the exercise of the highest power, ought, in my opinion, to make every man, who is not of the same principles, and guided by the same maxims, a little cautious how he makes himself one of the traversers of an adder, to help such a man or such a set of men, to climb up to the highest authority. A minister of this country is to be controlled by the House of Commons. He is to be trusted, not *controlled*, by his colleagues in office; if he were to be controlled

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led, Government, which ought to be the source of order, would itself become a scene of anarchy. Besides, Mr. Fox is a man of an aspiring and commanding mind, made rather to control, than to be controlled, and he never will be, nor can be, in any Administration, in which he will be guided by any of those whom I have been accustomed to confide in. It is absurd to think that he would or could. If his own opinions do not control him, nothing can. When we consider of an adherence to a man which leads to his power, we must not only see what the man is, but how he stands related. It is not to be forgotten that Mr. Fox acts in close and inseparable connection with another Gentleman of exactly the same description as himself, and who, perhaps, of the two is the leader. The rest of the body are not a great deal more tractable; and over them if Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan have authority, most assuredly the Duke of Portland has not the smallest degree of influence.



51. One must take care, that a blind partiality to some persons, and as blind an hatred to others, may not enter into our minds under a colour of inflexible public principle. We hear, as a reason for clinging to Mr. Fox at present, that nine years ago Mr. Pitt got into power by mischievous intrigues with the Court, with the Dissenters, and with other factious people out of Parliament, to the discredit and weakening of the power of the House of Commons. His conduct nine years ago I still hold to be very culpable. There are, however, many things very culpable that I do not know how to punish. My opinion, on such matters, I must submit to the good of the state, as I have done on other occasions; and particularly with regard to the authors and managers of the American war, with whom I have acted, both in office and in opposition, with great confidence and cordiality, though I thought many of their acts criminal and impeachable. Whilst the misconduct of Mr. Pitt and his associates was yet recent, it was not possible to get Mr. Fox of himself to take a single step, or even to counte-



nance others in taking any step upon the ground of that misconduct and false policy, though if the matters had been then taken up and pursued, such a step could not have appeared so evidently desperate as now it is.— So far from pursuing Mr. Pitt, I know that then, and for some time after, some of Mr. Fox's friends were actually, and with no small earnestness, looking out to a coalition with that gentleman. For years I never heard this circumstance of Mr. Pitt's misconduct on that occasion mentioned by Mr. Fox, either in public or in private, as a ground for opposition to that minister. All opposition, from that period to this very Session, has proceeded upon the separate measures as they separately arose, without any vindictive retrospect to Mr. Pitt's conduct in 1784. My memory, however, may fail me. I must appeal to the printed debates, which, (so far as Mr. Fox is concerned) are unusually accurate.

52. Whatever might have been in our power, at an early period, at this day I see no remedy for what was done in 1784. I had



had no great hopes even at the time, I was therefore very eager to record a remonstrance on the journals of the House of Commons, as a caution against such a popular delusion in times to come ; and this I then feared, and now am certain, is all that could be done. I know of no way of animadverting on the Crown. I know no mode of calling to account the House of Lords, who threw out the India Bill, in a way not much to their credit. As little, or rather less, am I able to coerce the people at large, who behaved very unwisely and intemperately on that occasion. Mr. Pitt was then accused, by me as well as others, of attempting to be Minister, without enjoying the confidence of the House of Commons, though he did enjoy the confidence of the Crown. That House of Commons, whose confidence he did not enjoy, unfortunately did not itself enjoy the confidence, (though we well deserved it) either of the Crown or of the public. For want of that confidence, the then House of Commons did not survive the contest. Since that period Mr. Pitt has en-



joyed the confidence of the Crown, and of the Lords, and of the House of Commons, through two successive Parliaments; and I suspect that he has ever since, and that he does still, enjoy as large a portion, at least, of the confidence of the people without doors, as his great rival. Before whom, then, is Mr. Pitt to be impeached, and by whom? The more I consider the matter, the more firmly I am convinced, that the idea of proscribing Mr. Pitt *indirectly*, when you cannot *directly punish* him, is as chimerical a project, and as unjustifiable, as it would be to have proscribed Lord North. For supposing, that by indirect ways of opposition, by opposition upon measures which do not relate to the business of 1784, but which on other grounds might prove unpopular, you were to drive him from his seat, this would be no example whatever of punishment for the matters we charge as offences in 1784. On a cool and dispassionate view of the affairs of this time and country, it appears obvious to me, that one or the other of those two great men, that

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is, Mr. Pitt or Mr. Fox, must be Minister. They are, I am sorry for it, irreconcilable. Mr. Fox's conduct *in this Session* has rendered the idea of his power a matter of serious alarm to many people, who were very little pleased with the proceedings of Mr. Pitt in the beginning of his administration. They like neither the conduct of Mr. Pitt, in 1784, nor that of Mr. Fox, in 1793; but they estimate, which of the evils is most pressing at the time, and what is likely to be the consequence of a change. If Mr. Fox be wedded, they must be sensible, that his opinions and principles, on the now existing state of things at home and abroad, must be taken as his portion. In his train must also be taken the whole body of gentlemen, who are pledged to him and to each other, and to their common politics and principles.— I believe no King of Great Britain ever will adopt for his confidential servants, that body of gentlemen, holding that body of principles. Even if the present King or his successor should think fit to take that step, I apprehend a general discontent of those, who



who wish that this nation and that Europe should continue in their present state, would ensue ; a discontent, which, combined with the principles and progress of the new men in power, would shake this kingdom to its foundations. I do not believe any one political conjecture can be more certain than this.

53. Without at all defending or palliating Mr. Pitt's conduct in 1784, I must observe, that the crisis of 1793, with regard to every thing at home and abroad, is full as important as that of 1784 ever was ; and, if for no other reason, by being present is much more important. It is not to nine years ago we are to look for the danger of Mr. Fox's and Mr. Sheridan's conduct, and that of the Gentlemen who act with them. It is at *this* very time, and in *this* very session, that, if they had not been strenuously resisted, they would not only merely have discredited the House of Commons (as Mr. Pitt did in 1784, when he persuaded the King to reject their advice, and to appeal  
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from them to the people), but, in my opinion, would have been the means of wholly subverting the House of Commons and the House of Peers, and the whole Constitution actual and virtual, together with the safety and independence of this nation, and of the peace and settlement of every state in the now Christian world. It is to our opinion of the nature of Jacobinism, and of the probability by corruption, faction, and force, of its gaining ground every where, that the question who and what you are to support is to be determined. For my part, without doubt or hesitation, I look upon Jacobinism as the most dreadful, and the most shameful evil, which ever afflicted mankind, a sting which goes beyond the power of all calculation in its mischief; and that if it is suffered to exist in France, we must in England, and speedily too, fall into that calamity.

54. I figure to myself the purpose of these Gentlemen accomplished, and this Ministry destroyed. I see that the persons who in  
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that case must rule, can be no other than Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Thurlow, Lord Lauderdale, and the Duke of Norfolk, with the other Chiefs of the Friends of the People, the Parliamentary Reformers, and the Admirers of the French Revolution. The principal of these are all formally pledged to their projects. If the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam should be admitted into that system (as they might and probably would be), it is quite certain they could not have the smallest weight in it; less, indeed, than what they now possess, if less were possible: because they would be less wanted than they now are; and because all those who wished to join them, and to act under them, have been rejected by the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam themselves; and Mr. Fox, finding them thus by themselves disarmed, has built quite a new fabric, upon quite a new foundation. There is no trifling on this subject. We see very distinctly before us the Ministry that would be formed, and the  
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plan that would be pursued. If we like the plan, we must wish the power of those who are to carry it into execution; but to pursue the political exaltation of those whose political measures we disapprove, and whose principles we dissent from, is a species of modern politics not easily comprehensible, and which must end in the ruin of the country, if it should continue and spread. Mr. Pitt may be the worst of men, and Mr. Fox may be the best; but, at present, the former is in the interest of his country, and of the order of things long established in Europe: Mr. Fox is not. I have, for one, been born in this order of things, and would fain die in it. I am sure it is sufficient to make men as virtuous, as happy, and as knowing as any thing which Mr. Fox, and his friends abroad or at home, would substitute in its place; and I should be sorry that any set of politicians should obtain power in England, whose principles or schemes should lead them to countenance persons or factions whose object is to introduce some new devised order of things into

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England, or to support that order where it is already introduced, in France; a place, in which if it can be fixed, in my mind, it must have a certain and decided influence in and upon this kingdom. This is my account of my conduct to my private friends. I have already said all I wish to say, or nearly so, to the public. I write this with pain, and with an heart full of grief!

EDMUND BURKE.