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Edited by John Gurwood

Excerpt

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THE  
OFFICIAL AND OTHER DISPATCHES  
OF  
FIELD MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.  

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CONGRESS AT VIENNA,  
AND  
WATERLOO CAMPAIGN.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 12th March, 1815.

I received here on the 7th inst. a dispatch from Lord Burghersh, of the 1st, giving an account that Buonaparte had quitted the island of Elba, with all his civil and military officers, and about 1200 *troupes*, on the 26th Feb. I immediately communicated this account to the Emperors of Austria and Russia, and to the King of Prussia, and to the ministers of the different Powers; and I found among all one prevailing sentiment, of a determination to unite their efforts to support the system established by the peace of Paris.

As it was uncertain to what quarter Buonaparte had gone, whether he would not return to Elba, or would even land on any part of the continent, it was agreed that it was best to postpone the adoption of any measure till his farther progress should be ascertained; and we have since received accounts from Genoa, stating that he had landed in France, near Cannes, on the 1st March; \*had attempted to get possession of Antibes, and had been repulsed, and that he was on his march towards Grasse.

No accounts had been received at Paris as late as the middle of the day of the 5th of his having quitted Elba, nor any accounts from any quarter of his farther progress.

In the mean time the Sovereigns, and all persons assembled here, are impressed with the importance of the crisis which this circumstance occasions in the affairs of the world. All are desirous of bringing to an early conclusion the business of the Congress, in order that the whole and undivided attention and exertion of all may be directed against the common enemy; and I don't entertain the smallest doubt that, even if Buonaparte should be able to form a party for himself in France, capable of making

head against the legitimate government of that country, such a force will be assembled by the Powers of Europe, directed by such a spirit in their councils, as must get the better of him.

The Emperors of Austria and Russia and the King of Prussia have dispatched letters to the King of France, to place at His Majesty's disposal all their respective forces; and Austrian and Prussian officers are dispatched with the letters, with powers to order the movement of the troops of their respective countries placed on the French frontiers, at the suggestion of the King of France.

The Plenipotentiaries of the eight Powers who signed the Treaty of Paris assembled this evening, and have resolved to publish a declaration, in which they will, in the name of their Sovereigns, declare their firm resolution to maintain the peace and all its articles with all their force, if necessary. I enclose the draft of what is proposed to be published, which, with the alteration of some expressions and the omission of one or two paragraphs, will, I believe, be adopted.\*

Upon the whole, I assure your Lordship that I am perfectly satisfied with the spirit which prevails here upon this occasion; and I don't entertain the smallest doubt that, if unfortunately it should be possible for Buonaparte to hold at all against the King of France, he must fall under the cordially united efforts of the Sovereigns of Europe.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 12th March, 1815.

I have but little to add to my dispatch regarding Buonaparte's invasion of France. The intention is, as soon as it shall be ascertained that he can make head against the King, to assemble three large corps: one in Italy, solely Austrian, which will consist of 150,000 men; one on the Upper Rhine, Austrian, Bavarian, troops of Baden and Wurtemberg, which will eventually consist of 200,000 men, but will at first consist of only the troops of Bavaria, Baden, and Wurtemberg; the third on the Lower Rhine, consisting of the Prussian corps of Kleist, the Austrian garrison of Mayence, and other troops on the Moselle, to be joined to the British and Hanoverians in Flanders. Of this corps they wish me to take the command. The Russian army, 200,000 men, is to be formed in reserve at Wurtzburg, &c. &c.; the remainder of the Prussian army in reserve on the Lower Rhine.

The Emperor of Russia seems reconciled to the notion of the old system, of managing the great concern in a council, consisting of himself, the King of Prussia, and Schwarzenberg. He expressed a wish that I should be with him, but not a very strong one; and, as I should have neither character nor occupation in such a situation, I should prefer to carry a musket.

The Emperor intimated to me this day that, in case the movement of his troops became necessary, he could do nothing without the assistance of money from England. I told him I should write to your Lordship upon the subject by this courier; and that, in my opinion, the first measure to be adopted was, one something of the nature of the treaty of

\* See Appendix, No. I.

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Chaumont, in which he agreed; and afterwards to think of subsidy, if England could grant such a thing.

It is my opinion that Buonaparte has acted upon false or no information, and that the King will destroy him without difficulty, and in a short time. If he does not, the affair will be a serious one, and a great and immediate effort must be made, which will doubtless be successful. All the measures above stated to be in contemplation tend to this effort; and it will remain for the British government to determine how far they will act themselves, and how far second the effort of the Continent.

I now recommend to you to put all your force in the Netherlands at the disposition of the King of France. I will go and join it if you like it, or do any thing else that government choose. I think we shall have settled our concerns here, and signed the treaty if the Spaniard does not impede us, by the end of the month. We shall have finished every thing that is important much sooner, so that I shall be ready whenever you please to call for me.

To Lord Burghersh.

Vienna, 13th March, 1815.

Many thanks for your letters, which I have received to the 6th inclusive. Bony's conduct is very extraordinary, and is, in my opinion, certainly an *effet d'illusion*. But ———, if not fit for Bedlam, as I believe, ought to be hanged. We ought to have known of his intention before he put it in execution, and then we might have hoped to have had some of our 6 sail of the line, with their &c. &c., now in the Mediterranean, off the island by the 26th. Here we are all zeal, and, I think, anxious to take the field. I moderate these sentiments as much as possible, and get them on paper; and in the mean time am working at a great exertion, in case things should become serious in France. But I think the King will settle the business himself, which is the result most to be wished.

I'll enclose our declaration, if I can get one. I write a line to Priscilla. I have desired Lord FitzRoy to send you your picture.

P.S. Remember me most kindly to Cooke, whose letter I have received.

To Lieut. Col. Sir H. Hardinge, K.C.B.

Vienna, 14th March, 1815.

Having received the passport of the Prince de Talleyrand, you will proceed on your mission, and endeavor to place yourself as near as you can to the situation in which you may find Napoleon; and, if possible, in communication with the officer commanding any body of troops employed against that person by the King of France. You will communicate your instructions to such officer, and request him to furnish you with the information which it may be desirable you should be able to send here.

You will likewise be so kind as to send to His Majesty's minister at Paris copies of all reports that you may send here, in order that he may communicate them to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to be laid before the King.

Enclosed you have copies of the Declaration of the Powers,\* which you will communicate to the authorities in France.

\* See Appendix, No. I.

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To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 18th March, 1815.

I have the honor to inform your Lordship that on the 16th inst. I exchanged with Field Marshal the Prince de Wrede the ratification of the Prince Regent for the ratification of the King of Bavaria, of the King's accession to the convention of the 3d Jan.; and I send herewith the King's act of ratification, with the certificate of its delivery signed by Marshal Prince Wrede.

I delivered to the Marshal a certificate, as directed by the Earl Bathurst in his dispatch No. 1, and I enclose another.

I likewise delivered to the Field Marshal the snuff-box with the Prince Regent's portrait enriched with diamonds, and received that of His Bavarian Majesty in return.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 18th March, 1815.

In consequence of Lord Bathurst's dispatch, No. 2, of the 28th Feb., directing me to deliver the sum of £500 to the Bavarian Chancery, upon the exchange of the ratifications of the King's accession to the convention of the 3d Jan., I have paid that sum of money to M. —, of the Bavarian Chancery, for which I enclose his receipt.

The same sum was received from him, and a receipt has been given for it; but as I have replaced the sum taken up to be paid to the Bavarian Chancery with that received, there will be no draft on that account upon your Lordship.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 18th March, 1815.

We have received here the accounts of the state of affairs in France, and of Buonaparte's progress as known at Paris on the night of the 11th, and of the intentions of the King and of the government; and I am happy to inform your Lordship that what has occurred in that country has augmented the eagerness of the different Powers to put forth the general strength for the common protection.

I enclose your Lordship the protocols of two military conferences, the first held while I was absent at Presburg, the other last night at my house, in presence of the Emperor of Russia, in which you will see the detail of the force which it is intended to employ. I am not certain that I am correct in the estimate I have formed of the extent of the disposable allied force in the Low Countries; but I believe I have rather underrated it.

I have this moment returned from a conference of the Ministers of the four allied courts; at which it has been determined to renew the treaty of Chaumont between the four courts, and to invite the accession of the King of France, the Sovereign of the Low Countries, the King of Sardinia, the King of Bavaria, and the Kings of Spain, Portugal, Hanover, Wurtemberg, and Denmark.

Adverting to the situation in which the Sovereign of the Low Countries is placed in Europe, and in consequence of a wish expressed by M. de Gagern, His Royal Highness' minister here, in case of the formation of such a treaty, I proposed that His Royal Highness should be one of the contracting parties, instead of an acceding party; but this proposition,

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although at first favorably received, was finally overruled by the ministers of the other Powers, on the grounds, 1st; of the inconvenience which would attend its adoption of forming a totally new treaty: and, 2dly; of the jealousy it would occasion, particularly in the Court of Turin.

I also declared that I had no power to make any stipulation for the grant of a subsidy, without which assistance the ministers of all the Powers declared they could not act. I stated that, supposing Great Britain should have it in her power to give any subsidy, it was very obvious that she could not give more than had been stipulated by the treaty of Chaumont; but that it was equally so, that other Powers, particularly Bavaria and Hesse, would require some assistance of this description; and that this must fall upon those Powers with whose armies the contingents of those smaller Powers should be employed. I likewise stated that, seeing that Great Britain engaged to employ 150,000 men for the common cause, and that it was probable she could likewise afford further assistance in subsidy, I hoped all the Powers would attend to the Low Countries, by which our interests were more particularly united with those of the continent, although I believed that all ought to feel the same interest in their preservation from the hands of the enemy; and that I trusted they would take care to support properly the efforts which should be made in that quarter by the Sovereign of the Netherlands and the Prince Regent. In this sentiment they all cordially agreed; and I then consented that the sums to be paid by Great Britain for any deficiency of the numbers stipulated to be employed by her should be paid to the smaller Powers, under the selection of Great Britain, whose troops should be employed in the common cause, in proportion to their numbers. The treaty then will contain an article by which the Prince Regent will engage to take into consideration the desire of the three Powers to be assisted by subsidies, and nothing more.

It is very desirable that government should without loss of time send their orders regarding treaties and subsidies; but I must state it as my decided opinion that none of the Powers can act at all unless they receive assistance of this description at least to the amount stipulated by the treaty of Chaumont.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 18th March, 1815.

I have the honor to inform you that, deeming it desirable to receive the earliest and most authentic information of the progress of Buonaparte, and of the operations of the armies in the south of France, I have thought it expedient to employ Col. Hardinge upon that service; and I have desired him to send his reports here and to England through His Majesty's minister at Paris.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 18th March, 1815.

You will see in both the protocols of the military conferences, enclosed in my dispatch, No. 14, of this date, the desire expressed by the Allied Powers that I should proceed to the Netherlands to take the command of the troops in that country, and particularly in the last that I should lose no time.

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As this desire is so strongly expressed, and as the principal business here is nearly settled, and, at all events, will fall into the hands of the Earl of Clancarty, who is in every way qualified in so superior a degree to bring it to the conclusion wished by His Majesty's government, and as I think it probable that the wishes of His Majesty's government would coincide with those expressed by the Allied Powers in the military conferences, I propose to quit Vienna and to proceed to Bruxelles immediately that I shall have concluded the treaty for renewing that of Chaumont, which I hope will be in the course of to-morrow.

I shall of course wait at Bruxelles till I shall receive your Lordship's orders.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 18th March, 1815.

I have but little to add to my public dispatches. I should have waited for orders to go into the Netherlands if I had not been so pressed by the Allies, and had not thought it necessary myself, and most satisfactory to government. I shall not go, however, I think, till I shall receive your first instructions from London.

I recommend you to reinforce the army in the Netherlands as much as you can, particularly in cavalry and artillery.

In the conference this morning, the Allies pressed very strongly for an increase of subsidy, which I told them I was quite certain could not be given. Hardenberg said that it would be very useful to them if Great Britain could give them arms and ammunition, which would not fall so hard upon the public resources as money. But this assistance was to be besides money.

According to the accounts received from Paris by Talleyrand this night, of the 11th at midnight, it appears that matters are rather in a better state than they appeared to be in by the letters written during the day by the ministers from the several Courts. God send these last appearances may be verified!

To His Excellency Sir C. Stuart, G.C.B.

Vienna, 22d March, 1815.

The Prince will have shown you, or communicated to you the contents of, my dispatches of Saturday last, if he should be at Bruxelles, or should have been there; and if not, he will have told you that Lord Clancarty wrote to him by the same occasions, and you will be aware of the state of affairs here.

I am still detained here by the necessity of concluding the treaty of Chaumont before I set out; but I hope to be off in a day or two. I have received your letter of the 15th.

I have written by this occasion to the Hereditary Prince, to beg him to be very cautious in what he does regarding the French fortresses. An incautious step there might ruin the cause, and no step can do us much good.

Beg the Prince to provision Breda and Bois le Duc.

To Lord Burghersh.

Vienna, 22d March, 1815.

I have received your letter and dispatches of the 16th. I have no more

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instructions from England respecting Murat than you have, and can give you none.

He has offered the Austrians, and even the King of France, to join in the general confederacy against Napoleon, which offer has not yet been accepted by either; and in regularity he ought not to march; and in marching he commits an act of direct hostility against the Pope, against Austria, and against the world.

It may be questioned whether that act of hostility can or ought now to be resented, if Murat should himself gloss it over with the professions of good intentions. When I say 'it may be questioned,' I hope you will believe that I consider it only a question of means; and that, if the Austrians have the means, they ought forthwith to fall upon him. I take it, however, to be almost certain that, unless he has coupled this act of hostility with a declaration that he intends to be King of Italy, he will not be attacked; and I recommend to you to shape your course accordingly. Our last accounts from Paris are of the 19th. At that time matters were in a very uncertain state; and although I understand that the legislature intended to accompany the King if he should quit his capital, the existence of the means of a civil war appeared to be very doubtful. The solution of this question would probably decide upon the measures to be adopted against Murat.

I am going into the Low Countries, to take the command of the army, as soon as I shall have settled here a treaty something like the treaty of Chaumont, without the subsidiary part. Other matters here are going on but slowly; and Napoleon's expedition has not increased our facilities.

Give my best love to Priscilla.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 23d March, 1815.

In my letter of the 3d, I communicated to your Lordship my opinion of the difficulties which we should experience in carrying into execution the measures proposed for the destruction of Antwerp as a naval port; and, after consulting with the Earl of Clancarty, he and I were decidedly of opinion that the best mode of effecting our object would be to have the consideration of what should be destroyed, and the execution, referred to Commissioners to be named by the British and Dutch governments. The Earl of Clancarty having proposed to the Commission on rivers, that a report should be made accordingly on this subject, the Commission adopted his proposal, and I enclose a copy of the report which will be made.

To H. H. Prince Metternich.

Vienna, 25th March, 1815.

The undersigned has the honor of acknowledging the receipt of Prince Metternich's note of the 23d March.

He had already made known to his government the wishes of His Majesty the Emperor, that some measures should be adopted to procure at Malta a supply of grain for the Austrian armies about to be collected in Italy, and he has reason to believe that such measures have been taken; and as soon as Prince Metternich shall acquaint him to what port in the Adriatic it is the Emperor's wish that these supplies should be sent, the

undersigned will write to His Majesty's officers in the Mediterranean to give them directions.

The undersigned has received no directions from his government to say on what account these supplies of grain are to be considered.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 25th March, 1815.

I have the honor to enclose the copy of a note from M. le Marquis de St. Marsan, claiming the assistance of Great Britain in the existing crisis, in troops, money, arms, and ammunition.

I have told M. de St. Marsan that I should transmit this note to England; but that I had every reason to believe that it would not be in the power of the Prince Regent to give assistance to the King excepting in arms and ammunition, which M. de St. Marsan said had been already promised.

He informed me that the King had now 10,000 effective men; and that in two months he would have 30,000, if assistance could be given in arms and ammunition, and particularly in money.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 25th March, 1815.

It is very satisfactory to me to find from your dispatch (No. 3) of the 12th March, that I have anticipated the wishes of His Majesty's government in nearly every object to which they have called my attention.

Measures have been for some time taken to prepare the general treaty by which the affairs which have come under the consideration of the Congress are to be regulated, and by which all the powers of Europe are to be bound; and before this work can be concluded, I should hope that the affairs of Bavaria, of Italy, and the questions still depending in Germany and the Ionian Islands, will be settled. All parties have their instructions on all points; and very little time would settle them. Indeed, on Italy there is no difference of opinion, excepting on the part of Spain. Some general bases must likewise be laid for a constitution for Germany, in which, if they are sufficiently general, I don't believe there will be much difference of opinion. It will be impossible to settle this point in any reasonable period of time, if it is attempted to define powers too exactly. I therefore don't propose to interrupt the work of the general treaty, unless I should find it absolutely necessary.

I am highly flattered by the confidence which the Prince Regent and his government have placed in me. As soon as I shall have signed the treaty, I shall be prepared to set out for the Low Countries; and my journey will be delayed only by the immediate prospect of settling any question in which my assistance may be deemed necessary.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 25th March, 1815.

I have received your letters of the 12th and 14th, the last this morning, and I sincerely congratulate you upon the American peace.

I hope you will, upon the whole, approve of our declaration of the 13th. You well know how difficult it was to say any thing favorable. Our declaration is as firm and moderate as could have been expected. We understand it was well liked at Strasbourg.

You will see in my dispatch how things stand in respect to Naples. I must mention to you however, that Metternich complains a good deal of



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the ———. She has done every thing in her power to put Murat in motion immediately before the Austrians can be prepared for him; and she patronises publicly the Jacobin party in Italy. She is now gone to Genoa, where it is apprehended she will do a great deal of mischief.

Metternich likewise complained to me, and showed me a letter from Bellegarde, containing complaints of the employment of ——— in Italy, which it appears that Bellegarde understood had been promised should not be. Bellegarde does not mention any new fact; but says, generally, that his conduct towards the Austrians has not been fair.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 25th March, 1815.

I found it much more difficult than I imagined when I wrote my dispatch, No. 18, to conclude a treaty with the Allies on the plan of the treaty of Chaumont, which work I have accomplished only this night, and now enclose. It will be signed to-morrow night.

The occasion of the delay has been, 1st; the desire of all the Powers to connect with the engagement for employing a large force, one for the grant of a subsidy from England: and 2dly; the extreme jealousy regarding the command of the contingents of the small Powers in the north of Germany. An endeavor was made to dispose of the contingents of those Powers by an entry on the protocol of the military conference held here in presence of the Emperor of Russia; and as I refused to sign this protocol, upon finding it contained an arrangement which had not been mentioned, and to which I had not agreed, they have delayed to sign the treaty for a week.

Your Lordship will observe, that the article providing for Great Britain paying a stipulated sum instead of furnishing men is separate, and the Allies are desirous that it should not be made public till it should be necessary. I found it impossible to frame this article, as I wished, to keep, by agreement, in the power of Great Britain the selection of the Power which should be paid for the deficiency of her contingent, as the treaty of Chaumont was different. The article, however, as it stands, does not deprive her of this power.

I likewise enclose the protocol of what passed at the conclusion of the treaty this night, in which you will see the urgency with which they all desire to be assisted by subsidies. I believe your Lordship is perfectly aware that it will be quite impossible for these Powers to make an effort adequate to the occasion, unless they should obtain this aid. With such a force as they will bring into the field, there is every reason to hope that, if there should be any resistance at all to Napoleon on the part of the Royalist party in France, the contest will be a very short one, and decidedly successful. Nothing can be done with a small or inefficient force; the war will linger on, and will end to our disadvantage. Motives of economy, then, should induce the British government to take measures to bring the largest possible force into action at the earliest and the same period of time.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 25th March, 1815.

The Duke de Campochiario called upon me some days ago, in company with the Prince Cariati, and informed me that as soon as Murat had heard

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at Naples, on the 5th inst., of the departure of Buonaparte from the island of Elba, he had called together his council, and had informed them of his determination to adhere to his alliance with the Emperor of Austria; and had directed him (the Duke de Campochiario) to inform the Austrian ministers and the plenipotentiaries of the Allies collected at Vienna of this determination. He made the same verbal communication to Prince Metternich, Prince Talleyrand, and all the other ministers.

In three days afterwards, on the 23d, Prince Metternich received from Naples reports that the whole of the Neapolitan army was in movement towards the frontier; that Murat's horses and field equipages had been sent to Ancona; that he was himself to follow immediately, and to establish his head quarters at that place. He had not moved, however, as late as the 12th.

It appears that, for some days after the 5th, he had manifested a good deal of interest in what was passing in France, and was much agitated. He had had frequent interviews with certain French officers established at Naples, and had dispatched several of them into France; and he had given very unsatisfactory answers to the Austrian minister, Count Mier, both in regard to the line he intended to pursue in the contest likely to take place in France, and in regard to the object of the movement of his troops to the frontiers.

By the same occasion accounts were received from Rome, by which it appeared that he had given notice to Lucien Buonaparte of his intention to enter the Papal states and to move one column upon Rome, and that Lucien, thinking the measure was in the progress of execution, had informed the Pope of it. It is imagined that the failure of Buonaparte at Antibes, of which accounts had been received at Naples, had induced Murat to stop the march of his troops, and to delay his own departure from Naples, but that the plan will have been resumed and carried into execution as soon as the accounts will have been received of the first successes of Buonaparte.

These accounts of the conduct of Murat, coupled with the proofs transmitted to me by your Lordship in your dispatch of the 12th inst. of Murat's treachery in the last war, appear to have convinced the Powers assembled here of the absolute necessity of attacking him forthwith.

According to the latest accounts, the whole of Italy was quiet, and apparently the expedition of Buonaparte into France had occasioned a good deal of disgust and terror.

I entertain no doubt that Murat will move forward as soon as he shall hear of Buonaparte's success; and if he should find that the Austrians do not tamely submit to his encroachments, he will probably proclaim himself King of Italy, and will endeavor to revolutionize the country.

To Visc. Castlereagh, K.G.

Vienna, 26th March, 1815.

I have this instant received your dispatch of the 16th inst., and I earnestly hope that the Declaration of the Plenipotentiaries of the Powers here of the 13th inst. will meet with the approbation of His Majesty's government, although made under very different circumstances from those of which we have here a knowledge at present.