

Jan 19 1831

My dear Palmerston,

I know not whether the secret & confidential despatch of Mr Percy is worth the expense of a special Messenger from Berne but as the Regular Paris Courier does not go till Friday, I thought it well to avail myself of the opportunity to tell you what had passed between Sebastiani & myself this morning about M.de [Calles ?] & Belgium.

I still hope & believe that both the King & Sebastiani wish to avoid war, at least for the present, & I was the more pleased with the pacifick & mild Tone of Sebastiani this morning, because I knew, he had yesterday, (indeed he acknowledged it,) an Hours conversation with LaFayette, whom he considers to be so much the Leader of the Propagandists, as to express his persuasion that the Revolutionists can do nothing in foreign Countries without his knowledge & Sanction. Sebastiani expressed great Interest in the preservation of Tranquillity in Ireland; he said he had not been able to discover any connection between the Propagandists here & the Irish agitators, that LaFayette was positive that no such connection existed, & that although the French Post office never opened Letters !!! yet past Enquiries he had made respecting the number of Letters, & the addresses, which passed between Paris & Ireland, it was evident that the correspondence between the two countries had much diminished. He assured me of his Readiness, to give every assistance in detecting Plots, if the French Govt could be of any use, & again repeated what I believe I mentioned in a former Letter or Despatch, that a Revolution in England would be destructive of social order all over the world.

The object of my conference this morning was the communication of your despatch No.9. 210 respecting Portugal & Sardinia - on both his Language was most friendly & satisfactory, but I must defer my Report of it until Friday.

Yours ever sincerely

Granville.

July 18 1831

My dear Palmerston,

I have received your Note with the Enclosure written by Mr O'Reilly. I have not thought it worth while to trouble you with an account of the transaction to which his Letter refers. It appears that my Predecessor, of which I was not aware, had given permission to a Mr [Ivers ?] to use his Seal, & send off packets in the Ambassadors name, for the Times Newspaper. The Motions of this Mr [Ivers ?] were watched, & representations were made by persons in the Post-Office that Letters for the [Duchess de Bessi ?] were transmitted in these Packets. Whether these representations had their Source in the [rivalship ?] of the Morning Herald, which Mr [Ivers ?] asserts, I cannot ascertain. Mr O'Reilly is in error, in supposing that Mr [Ivers ?] had permission from me to send under my Seal; I was ^{not} even aware of the transmission of such Packets, until Sebastiani showed them to me, with Ambassadeur d'Angleterre written at the corner, & all sealed by Lord Stuarts Seal. The contents ~~of~~ of the Packets which were opened in my Presence were of an harmless character. I declined reading Lord Stuarts Letter, of which Mr O'Reilly makes mention.

I have through Sebastiani put Mr Conway, the correspondent of the Times, in communication with the Director of the Ports, for the purpose of facilitating the conveyance of his packages without my Name being employed. I thought it not altogether unwise to give this accommodation to the Times Newspaper.

Yours ever sincerely

Granville.

Sebastiani has requested me, if I have ever any urgent communication to make to you to make use of the Calais Telegraph for that purpose; & he begs that in case you wish to communicate to me any thing very rapidly, you will direct the English Consul to apply to the Mayor of Calais to forward by Telegraph such communication.

Ref.: GR/GC 197

Paris, August 8, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

Perier is very anxious to know what the English Gov. think or say of the entrance of the French army into Belgium. When I met him at Seb.'s two hours ago, he asked me in much earnestness, if I had heard nothing. I told him of the article in the 'Courier' of Saturday evening, which pretends to state, as from authority that the other powers assented to the measure taken by the French Gov. I told Perier that if this article spoke the truth, such assent could only have been given under the persuasion that he would remain at the head of the Gov. and that he was therefore more than ever bound not to abandon his post. He said, if he met with fair support he was willing to go on, but he could not be in a butte continuable avec la chambre.

Lord William Russel set off today for Brussels to join Adair.
No news from Poland.....

Granville

Another letter:-

PS Saturday morning:-

I return ~~the~~ Lord Granville's letter, which I showed to Lord Grey yesterday.- A Delphian proestess could not have answered better.

C.W.(?)

Ref.: GC/GR 198

Paris, August 10, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

I approve very much of your protocol and give you great credit for having concocted one, which in so short a time, shall have been concurred in by all the representatives in the conference, and sanctioned by your colleagues.

I told Perier this morning and you thought he had put your confidence in him to a severe trial, when without any previous understanding, the French Gov. had ordered the march of their army into Belgium; he assured me that your confidence was not misplaced - he thought ~~that the defeat~~ trick and deceit as dishonourable in public affairs, as in private life, in the end never answered. When he spoke to me doubtfully of his majority in the chamber I said that perhaps the unpopularity of the minister for Foreign Affairs might lose him some votes. That is true he answered, but since I have been, Prime Minister Seb. has acted cordially with me, and in entire accordance with my opinions and views, and I should think I acted dishonestly by him if I gave him up in consequence of a clamour which the press has raised against him. I begged him not to understand me as complaining of Seb., but he would allow me to express the wish that, if any change was to take place with regard to the foreign department, he would himself take the portefeuille His manner of answering me gave me reason to think that he was not indisposed to adopt my suggestion. He is very anxious, as indeed you must be, to settle definitely the Dutch and Belgium question. Men's minds will not be tranquillised until it be settled, and after having driven back the Dutch, and saved the Belgians from the Dutch, the conference will have a right to speak more authoritatively to both than they have hitherto done. Has not the K. of Holland by flying in the face of all the powers, and doing what he could to cut all Europe by the ears forfeited all claim to any grace or favour from the conference. Luckily for him the interests of other powers necessitate stipulations of which he will have the benefit.

10 o'clock PM

I have been at the Palais Royale; the accounts from Belgium represent that the defeat of Daine by the P. of C. and the general confusion which prevails at the HQ of Leopold will leave to the French

Ref.: GC/GR 198 (continued)

army nearly the whole work of driving back the Dutch within their own frontier. The K. asked my opinion as to the expediency of lending an office for Marshal Gerard to the P. of O. to urge him to retire conformably to the expressed opinion of all the great powers, and to avoid a collision with the French army. Seeing no possible objection to such a message, I fully acquiesced at the expediency of taking such a step. I never found the K. so cordial, and so overflowing with professions of doing nothing but in concert with England.

Granville.

Ref.: GC/GR 199

Paris, August 12, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

Seb. called out Lamarque for his personality in the debate the ~~Monday~~ day before yesterday; they met in the bois de Bologna, but Lamarque made an explanation, if not an apology, and the matter was made up without the firing of pistols. I know not whether it is this triumph which has again set Seb. on his high horse but as you will, by my report of his conversation, he reverted to that dictatorial tone of which we used to complain, but which he had given up since he served under Cas. Per.. I shall endeavour to see without loss of time Cas. P., because if he upholds Seb. in his notions about raging Maestricht, and making the Dutch pay for having recommended hostilities, it will look as if the French Gov. meant to abide by their present engagements. I cannot however believe that Per. is not honest. The difference between written note and verbal assurances with regard to the period of the return of the French army within its own frontier had not escaped me, but as Tallegrand signed the 31 protocol, and as the Gov. here have declared their concurrence in the contents of it, and as this declaration is subsequent to the written note, it seemed to me better to leave our case as it now stands than to seek for further explanations. My colleagues Werther however did represent that this note fell short of their previous promise, when he was answered, 'we cannot play with the Dutch at prisoners? It cannot be permitted that as often as the Dutch have to go in, and out of this our frontier, we should be obliged to do the same. Our object is to bring matters to an early definitive arrangement, and that object would not be expedited by leaving to the Dutch the power of renewing this invasion of Belgium, which would happen, if we are obliged to retire into France, the moment the Dutch army arrives within its own frontier.

Seb. was imitated today by a despatch from Flahant, which states that some Frenchman, who, he told me was sent to him... Polish affairs...

I am very sorry to observe the hostile language of the monitor belge against Prussia. I trust that Adair will point out to the Gov. the folly of allowing their own newspaper to irritate them when they ought to conciliate.

Granville.

Ref.: GC/GR 200

Paris, August 12, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

Accounts have been received of the K. of Holland having ordered his troops to retire. Nagel has had a despatch directing him to announce it.

The K. this evening in speaking of the recommencement of hostilities said 'Le roi d'Holland a gaté son affaire.' This language is sadly too consonant to that of his own minister for foreign affairs this morning. I fear we shall have some warm discussions.

Granville.

Ref.: GC/GR 201

Paris, August 14, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

My despatches contain nothing which will enable you to satisfy or repress your questioning opponents in the house of commons, and I really know not what excuse you can offer for the French Gov not withdrawing their troops from Belgium, when once the Dutch have retired within their own frontier. I have no hope that the strongest language from all the 4 powers of the conference will obtain for us a faithful performance of their promise; that is, the French will not loose their hold of Belgium, until, in the first place the K. of Holland is bound down by a positive engagement not to under any circumstances to renew hostilities, and until the question of the razing of the forts is finally disposed of. The K. and his ministers, for the sake of the clap trap rashly committed themselves on this point in the K.'s speech; they were mortified to the quick, when the publication of your protocol proved that they had ~~pledged themselves~~ played a trick upon the chamber and the public, and I have found the French in general, even our best friends, and the strongest advocates of peace very angry at the French being not allowed to have a voice respecting the demolition of forts which they have always considered to be erected for the purpose of threatening and overawing the French nation. Seb. repeated to me today that no arrangement of the Belgian affairs would ever have been acknowledged by France, but a condition of the Belgian fortresses being dismantled, and said he, if you really mean to dismantle them, and did not mean to deceive

Ref.: GC/GR 201 (cont.)

us, why delay setting the question of their demolition until our troops have evacuated the country. The cabinet will have to decide how far they will commit England by insisting on the immediate retirement of the French troops within their own frontier. The K. and Gov. certainly dread a war with England. they know all the financial and commercial distress which would immediately follow, and which would in all probability very shortly lead to the ~~total~~ total overthrow of the (—) Gov., but then comes the question of what will be the position of England, and I much doubt whatever the Tories may say ~~in parliament~~ in parliament and out of it whether the country in general would go heartily into a war, for the sake not of driving the French from the permanent possession of Belgium, but to expedite by a few weeks their evacuation of that country. In France on the contrary notwithstanding all the suffering which war might entail, it would be popular.

Granville.

PS

Seb. said nothing of paying the expenses of the French arms, I conclude that in the counsel yesterday after I saw Perier that notion was abandoned.

Ref.: GC/GR 202

Paris, August 15, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

I have done what I can to impress upon Perier, and upon Seb. the very great difficulties they may bring upon the Gov. and upon France if they persevere in attempting to evade the fulfilment of their promises. My representations and Tallegrand's despatches of the state of public feeling in England have alarmed them a little and produced the half measure which Tallegrand is instructed to announce of the immediate return to France of 20,000 men, and of the retreat of the remainder into that part of Belgium between Nivilles and the French frontier; I cannot believe that in this forfeiting their word and retaining a portion of their army within the Belgian territory they have in view any project such as was suggested to Balow by Tallegrand. No, I am convinced that they will avail themselves of the presence of this army in Belgium to effect the demolition of the fortresses. They say, the K. has before all Europe, by his speech to the chambers committed himself; he cannot retract without discredit, and we cannot withdraw entirely our army until that point be settled. Seb. whenever the subject is mentioned, insists strongly that if the French Gov. looked to war and conquest, it would be madness in them to demand the demolition; he says, they must fall into our hands, but he says they have been always looked upon as an eye sore and humiliation to France, that the feelings of the French people would be satisfied by their being destroyed and that the ministry could not remain an hour in office, if they consented to leave this question in the hands of the Belgians and the 4 powers.

12 o'clock PM, Monday:-

I have written the foregoing when I received your letter of the 13 together with the accompanying letter from Lrd Grey. You will see by my despatch that before I received these letters I had been working hard to induce the ministry here to abide by the declaration to your protocol, instead of taking the note of Seb. as containing alone the pledge they were ready to redeem. I went to the K.'s, because I thought the strong language of both your letters might have more weight with him than with either of his ministers. It was unfortunate that I found Seb. with him, whose temper had been much ruffled in the chamber by the violence of the dispute which occurred at the end of the debate, and whose eyes flashed fire, and his tongue indignation when I stated that if you were not able to tell the ~~House of Commons~~ House of Commons that the French adhered to their promise of evacuating Belgium, when the Dutch troops had retired within their own frontier, the most serious consequences would follow. Grey will of course show you my letter in which I give the substance of my conversation at the Pal. Roy

Ref.: GC/GR 202 (cont.)

The K. must have been struck with the pertulence of Seb., for upon my leaving him, he apologized to me for his 'mal adresse' in not seeing me alone.

I trust that though you have not a yes to the question of evacuation the no is so modified that the ultima ratio regum may be still avoided; it is fearful to think that all Europe may be thrown into war, when the real interests of no nation are compromised, and when scarcely any difference exists, except as to the mode of executing that which all are agreed upon. If we do go to war, it will be the fulfilment of the object which has all along directed the policy of the K. of the Netherlands.

When I was with Seb. this morning, he could not find the copy of ~~his~~ letter to Tallegrand, which went to London yesterday by young Cass. Perier. I know not therefore whether in his way of stating the immediate return into France of the 20000 men and the temporary continuance of the remainder in Belgium, he puts the arrangement upon a ground which will admit of being at all justified in parliament.

It is very late and I am tired to death with writing, and with conferences all morning, and all night.

Granville.

Ref.: GC/GR 203

Paris, 18 August, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

I have received yesterday very warlike letter, but I indulge the hope that the communications which will have since reached you from hence will have operated some change in the aspect of affairs. On Monday Seb. said in the chamber of deputies that the entrance, the stay of the French troops, and their return to France were all matters connected with the other powers of the conference, and the K. yesterday declared that he could recall his army in concert and in concurrence with the other powers as soon as it was certain that Belgium could not be exposed to another aggression. Is not this language conformable to that of the protocol, where it is said that the (---) of the French troops seem fixe d'accord les cinq preissances(?) - and now with the respect of the fortresses, about which we are going to quarrel, when in fact all parties are agreed as to the expediency of the demolition, at least many of them. Werther tells me that the ~~militray~~ militray people of Prussia (and Prussia next to Belgium is most concerned in establishing a barrier against French invasion) are unanimous in opinion that the demolition of the Belgian fortresses is advisable, that they would be in the hands of Belgians a source of danger rather than security in the North of Europe. You will see by my last despatch tonight that Seb. disclaims all notion of the French troops remaining in the fortresses, to supervise or enforce the demolition of the fortifications. I certainly feel anxious that we should not get into a war upon this misunderstanding and that we should make no hasty declaration which would precipitate hostilities which might be avoided by explanations. I am the more anxious because I am thoroughly convinced that it is the sincere wish of Perier to preserve peace, and that Seb. is committed with Perier to a specific system. Seb. is fiery and arrogant, and at times I am as much provoked with him as you are always. Soult, I believe is in his heart an advocate for a more hostile policy, and I have no doubt that his speech the other day, was made with the design of committing his Gov. with regard to the occupation of Belgium, and exciting an expectation in the chamber and in the public which would make it difficult for his colleagues to heed upon that question.

I cannot agree in your view of the advantages we shall desire from war, though I concur in all you say as to the evils which it will inflict on France; that we should have brilliant naval victory I have no doubt, but though the French navy be not strong enough to compete with us in a upon battle, do not imagine that our commerce will not suffer from the activity of their K.'s ships and privateers. If we join in a land war in Belgium, we shall have to encounter France when she is in possession of all the Belgian forts with the exception of the citadel of Antwerp.

Granville.

Ref.: GC/GR 204

Paris, August 18, 1831

My Dear Palmerston,

I was not opprized when I last wrote to you of the mission of Count La Tousmarbourg, who is sent to Brussels for the special purpose of negotiating with that of Belgian (---) the demolition of the fortresses. Count Seb. informs me that P. Tallegrand will communicate to you the object of this mission, and he also says that Count Leuchtenberg is directed to communicate confidentially (and not in (---)) with Sir Robert Adair - of course any final arrangement cannot be made respecting the dismantling of the fortresses, but in concurrence with the 4 powers who signed the protocol. Count Mernburg set off this morning for Brussels. Gen Belliard remains as the regular accredited minister. He wrote to represent the (---) of the Dutch evacuating the citadel of Antwerp, and the Belgians Venloo, but Count Seb. replied very properly that this was a question for the conference to deliberate upon and decide.

I saw Cas. P. yesterday who said we wish and we are ready to withdraw our army from Belgium, but let us have a guarantee that the K. of Holland will not recommence war and let us be assured the forts will be demolished.

It seems we are agreed upon the conditions, but there is great danger at us quarrelling at the mode.

Granville

GC/GR/253

Paris

Dec 26th 1831

(Short Note about instructions to Captains of vessels
regarding Slave Trade.)

GC/GR/254

Paris

Dec 30th 1831

My dear Palmerston,

After our Conference had ended yesterday I told Cas, Perier that I had received from you a private confidential Letter in which you had entered at length on the subject of the Emperor of Russia's Refusal to ratify, as well as on the Question of the Belgian Fortresses, & that having no wish to conceal from him your view of the state of these Questions, I would read to him in translation what you had written to me. I performed the task, omitting only certain passages & names which I thought it prudent not to read to him. He was much pleased with all you say relative to the Emperor of Russia advocating the Dutch cause & suspending his Ratification, particularly with that part in which it is stated that of France, England & Prussia who are in contact with Belgium & Holland & if Austria also concurs in ratifying the Treaty with Leopold the execution of it will not be prevented by the non-Ratifying of Russia nor by the Resistance of Holland. I may as well here mention that both Werther & Apponi believe, & wish that the Refusal of Russia could not change the intentions of their respective Courts. Apponi says that it is not in the character of the Court of Vienna, having declared its Intention to ratify, not to act up to its declaration.

When I proceeded to read that part of your Letter which relates to the Fortresses, he testified some impatience at parts of your Reasoning. He made no other remark on your argument about Phillippeville & Marienberg excepting that they were not places constructed at the expense of the allies. He would not admit that the Principle contained in the 4th article of the Fortress Treaty had been explicitly asserted in our previous declaration, or that France by her silence was precluded from objecting to the Kingdom of Belgium losing its condition of Neutrality, & becoming an Instrument of the Confederacy of four Powers against France and when I insisted that the language of the 13th Protocol, that of the Protocol of 17 April, & that of the 29th of August

would have no other construction than that we put upon it, he answered as, if we taking advantage of their confiding simplicity had tried to entrap them into an acquiescence in a principle, which we knew they would not consent to, if distinctly declared. When I pressed upon his attentions your argument that much as we wished him to continue the direction of the Councils of the Country, we could not purchase that temporary advantage by sacrifices affecting permanent Interests, he replied that he also was bound to look to the permanent Interests of France, & not for the sake of present ease to recognise the principle of a confederacy of Europe against France, & that a prospective arrangement giving to the 4 Powers the Right of superintending the Belgick Fortresses, France being excluded from all voice with regard to their preservation, or demolition, was in fact a renewal of a League against France.

When I read to him that the Cabinet had fully considered this question, & had come to the decision that no change can be made in the List of Fortresses, & that they would not give way as to Leopold's obligation to maintain in Repair the Rest of the Fortresses, & that our Interests & Honour were too deeply concerned to admit of Retraction, he answered me that the Question had also been gravely considered by the French Council, & that their decision was he conceived as positive as that of the British Cabinet. I said to him that my communication was not official; confidentially I had put him in possession of the Sentiments of the Govt that it did not appear that Prince Talleyrand had as yet communicated to the conference Count Sebastiani's despatch, & that when he had so, he would, I concluded, report the answer to the communication in a more formal & official shape.

It was evident that M. Casimir Perier felt deeply the difficulty of the position in which he is placed, but he showed no symptom of abandoning the objections, which have been stated in Sebastiani's despatch, to the Fortress Treaty, or that Talleyrand will be permitted to exchange the Ratification with Belgium, if the Fortress Treaty be ratified by Leopold. Belliard called upon me this morning; & said that labouring as he had done for a whole twelvemonth to settle pacifically the Belgian Question, he would rather abandon all the fruits of his Labour than agree to the Principle of the 4th article of the Fortress Treaty.

I fear this may turn out a more serious question than you seem to anticipate when you wrote to me. War would be ruin to Louis Philippe, & misery to France; the suspending the settlement of Belgium in the greatest degree dangerous

her
to ~~the~~ Peace & most important Interests; but I fear that France would not be the only sufferer in the quarrel. If the Merchants of Havre, & Bourdeau & Marseilles complain of a long list of captured vessels, London & Liverpool & Bristol may perhaps be discontented at their commerce being interrupted by innumerable French Privateers, & would not perhaps be made to comprehend that France alone was in the wrong.

I must not detain the Messenger, or he will be too late for the Packet.

Yours ever sincerely

Granville.

Jan 26 1831

My dear Granville,

I do not know in what degree of Confidence this Extract was given you, but if you are at liberty to send it to me in an official Dispatch I should very much like to have it in that way because it is so complete a Refutation of the assertion which it is meant to support. It appears to me that so far from bearing out Sebastiani's statement that the Emperor of Austria had protested against the Prince of Orange, it shows that the Emperor had rather been finding fault with France for being adverse to him & that it was in defending himself against the Attack that Maison used the Expression in the first part of the Extract.

All this Correspondence may have by Possibility to be laid before Parliament and as this bears indirectly upon a particular fact adverted to in two official Dispatches I should like to have this in the shape also.

But if there is any difficulty upon this in Consequence of the manner in which it was given to you only send it me back again in a private Note.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

Jan 31 1831

My dear Granville,

(Letter begins with reference to foreign affairs other than Belgium & Holland.)

The tone of Sebastiani and Soult in the Debates of which the Reports in the Moniteur and [Message ?] is satisfactory and if we can rely upon the words no Apprehension need be entertained that they are not perfectly sincere in their Pacific Intentions. But why are their Actions at Variance with their words ? Why do they go on augmenting their Army at a moment when it is perfectly ridiculous to say that they are threatened with attack from any power in the World ? Why with non-Interference on their lips are they collecting a large army upon the Belgian Frontier ? Is it that they mean to break loose and that they wish to be forced to do so ? I can hardly believe it possible they can sincerely think of making any internal struggle that may occur in Belgium between the different Parties that divide the nation a pretext for Armed Interference. To do so would be to belie all the Principles upon which the Throne of Louis Philippe rests for ~~his~~ support and all the Doctrines they have laid ~~down~~ down for the Guidance of other Powers. If they cannot with safety stand by and see Civil War as they choose to call it in Belgium, what right have they to expect that Austria should do so in Italy if Commotions should break out in Piedmont or Tuscany ?

(Passage continues with references to Spain & Poland.)

If you should find that the French Govt seriously meditate such a departure from the Principles and Engagements it would be well to draw their Attention seriously before hand to all the Consequences which such a Proceeding would not fail to bring on and when Sebastiani says that even in War it is well to be in the Right, I should like to know how he could maintain that that advantage would attend his Banners in the War in which he would in such a case plunge the whole of Europe.

I wish that instead of telling Bresson not to interfere at all they had authorised him to express a wish on their

Part for the Prince of Orange, with all the objections to him he is the best Candidate after all.

We sent off on Saturday to Brussels our last Protocol about the Debt & it would reach the Congress probably today. Notwithstanding their Protocol against our Interference as they call it, I believe these two Protocols will have done much good, it is one thing to ~~interfere~~ interfere in the purely Internal Concern of a Country such as its Constitution & it is another to interfere in those matters which are common to it and its neighbours and which it cannot decide without itself interfering in the affairs of their [sic] neighbours.

If Talleyrand sends a Courier tonight, I shall send this by him.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston

GC/GR/1329

For. Office

2nd April 1831

My dear Granville,

I omitted in my Letters yesterday to say that if the French Govt talk about their memorandum upon the Luxembourg Question, I wish you to say that the Conference had all these Considerations before them when they came to their first decision about Luxenbourg and that consequently there is no case in going over the same ground again.

Yrs

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1330

For. Office

April 22 1831

(Letter referring to diplomatic squabble between France & Spain over the arrest of a Courier.)

GC/GR/1331

Foreign Office

April 22 1831

(Most of Letter refers to apparent lamentable aggressiveness of France's foreign policy as a whole, without specifying any particular country.)

Leopold was to see the Belgians today, & meant to tell them that he could make no decision on their proposition until they have come to an agreement about Limits with the Five Powers.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1332

Cambridge

May 3 1831

(Letter refers to despatch from Gordon, & criticises
at some length Sebastiani's character.)

GC/GR/1333

For.Off.

May 17 1831

(Letter relating to Charles X & his family's residence
in England & suspected intrigues carried on in his
favour.)

GC/GR/133 4

For.Off.

May 21 1831

My dear Granville,

(Letter begins concerning European affairs other than
Holland & Belgium.)

I have kept Ponsonby here a day or two longer that
he might communicate with Zuylen who landed the night
before last. Ponsonby will return on Sunday and I do
not quite despair of our being able to put matters in
such a Train as to remove the objections which prevent
P. Leopold from accepting. The only way is, as you say,
to separate the Luxembourg Question from the Dutch one
& to get the Belgians if possible to come to Terms upon
the latter for the sake of getting Leopold immediately
and by the Hope of afterwards arranging the former.

(Rest of Letter deals with relations with Spain & Rome,
& refers to weakening health of William IV.)

Yrs

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1335

For. Office

June 7 1831

(Short Letter concerning Don Miguel & France's relations with Portugal.)

GC/GR/1336

1 & 2 August 1831

(Short Note about complaint of Duke of Richmond concerning some Inferior Agents of the French Govt.)

GC/GR/1337

Foreign Office

Aug 5 1831

My dear Granville,

I have received today your letter and despatches of the 3rd. We shall be very anxious till we know what is definitely settled as to the formation of the French Ministry. Your account is promising for the present, but I fear such a Government as you expect, which would virtually be Perier's without Perier (The Prince of Denmark without Hamlet) could not be expected to stand long. In these days however every month of Peace is something gained and makes the next month more likely to be pacific also. So here is a pretty [fly ?] out of the King of the Netherlands; who has hit him I cannot guess; we have some suspicions of France; Bagot has always thought there was some secret understanding between France and the Dutch Govt. Talleyrand, if you remember, proposed to me some time ago that we should goad the Dutch on to break the Armistice, Cry out Shame upon them, fly to the aid of the Belgians, cover Belgium with Troops, and then settle every thing as we chose; Is this the realisation of the first step of this Plot ?

France has been angry about the Fortresses. She fancied that by urging the Dutch to war, she should have a fair pretence to enter Belgium as an Ally, and thus to get into these Fortresses and keep or demolish them as she chose. Any of these manoeuvres might have been imagined by Sebastiani. Talleyrand was silent yesterday in conference

when the matter was discussed, but today he backed me well, and acted as fairly as possible. This might however have been occasioned by his finding that the Cabinet have taken the matter up seriously and are determined not to abandon Leopold on this occasion. I send you our communication to Holland and Belgium. What the Dutch will do is uncertain; they may refuse to cease firing. In that case we shall be obliged to take some step of coercion, and a Naval Blockade is that which we shall propose: It is desirable to put off as long as possible any march of Troops. Holland is peculiarly vulnerable by a Blockade, and would feel it much sooner than Belgium. We already on a former occasion determined to apply it to Belgium if the Belgians Govt had refused Compliance with our demands, and therefore it is no new Decision, and would only be to apply our established formula to a new case.

(Para. about island of Java declaring for Belgium.)

The great thing to be done now is to prevail on the French Govt to prevent the French Soldiers or Citizens from running into Belgium, and to induce them to stick to the Alliance and concur in the decision of the Conference.

Sir Robert Adair sets off tomorrow, Codrington's Squadron will be in the Downs on Monday; and a Three Decker just arrived from the Mediterranean at Spithead instead of being paid off will be fitted out again for Sea.

Our Naval Men say it would be too hazardous to risk a Fleet up the Scheldt unless it was supported by Troops, and therefore a Blockade is the only practicable measure.

Yrs

Palmerston.

Aug 11 1831

My dear Granville,

As I am sending off to you a Messenger tonight with my despatch about Portugal, which has been accidentally delayed longer than it ought to have been, I write you a few lines from the Speaker's Room to tell you how much the feelings of this House are excited by the march of the French Troops into Belgium.

I have been assailed with questions & notices of Motions on the subject; all of which have for their object to express the strong expectation felt that now that the Dutch Troops are retiring from Belgium, the French Troops will also return to their own territory. This was the assurance given verbally by the French Ministers to the P.P. of the Four Powers; & it was on the faith of this assurance that the Conference adopted the march of the French as a measure of the Alliance; & forbore to make those objections which they would have been entitled to make, to a decision taken by France singly upon a point of such vast importance to the other powers. I should entertain no doubt that the French Govt will make good their promise if it were not for the additional condition about the restoration of peace which has been slipped into Sebastiani's Note. But that addition, making as it does a most important & essential difference in the nature of the assurance, is calculated to excite my unpleasant doubts.

As long as our last Protocol is not disavowed, I shall believe the French Govt mean to keep their original Engagement; but pray take an early opportunity of speaking to Ferrier on this subject. Tell him that that Note has not been yet considered in Cabinet, & that you have therefore no instructions to make any communication to him on the subject; but that, anxiously desirous of doing every thing that may depend upon you to preserve unimpaired the good understanding which subsists between the two Countries, & to prevent the possibility of different feelings arising, you think it right to apprise him, that the entrance of the French Troops into Belgium even with the consent of the other Powers, is looked upon with the greatest jealousy in England, both in and out of Parl; that I was led by the assurances given to you, & more especially by the communication afterwards made to me by Talleyrand, which I was told the English Govt might make use of in Parl. That I

was led by these to hold out to the Publick here the expectation that the Dutch Troops once "refoulees" within their own limits, the French would retire to the Department of the North; that if this expectation should not be fulfilled, great clamour will infallibly arise in this Country, the French Govt will be accused of bad faith in the whole transaction, & the English Govt will be charged with truckling to France; & that in short, with the strongest desire to be friends with France, & to preserve the peace of Europe, it is impossible for us to say what decisions we may be driven to take. The French Govt are perpetually telling us that certain things must, or must not, be done, in order to consult publick opinion in France, & to enable the French Govt to maintain itself; but they must remember that there is a publick feeling in England as well as in France; & that although that feeling is not as excitable upon small matters as the publick mind in France, yet there are points (& Belgium is one) upon which it is keenly sensitive, & upon which, if once aroused, it would not easily be appeased.

The French Govt ought to know that the Tory Party in Parlt would gladly involve us in a quarrel with France; ~~xxxxxx~~ in hopes of thereby getting rid of Reform; as long as France does not wound the honour of England, nor menace our interests, that party will not succeed: But if they get a handle by which to work upon the deep-rooted feelings of the Nation, I cannot answer for the consequences.

I have spoken today to Talleyrand on this subject, & to this effect; & he promised to write what I said to Perier; but I saw Talleyrand before I came down to the House; & here we have had a storm of questions fully confirming the opinion which I had expressed. Sir R. Vyvyan had a notice upon Belgium: he has put it off at my request from tonight; but distinctly stated, & was much cheered when he said so, that he should fix it for this day week, in order to give time to know whether the French would evacuate Belgium, now that their presence is rendered unnecessary by the retreat of the Dutch.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

Aug 12 1831

10 p.m.

My dear Granville,

We have no official communication to make to you till we know what the French Govt mean to do about our last Protocol; & upon their decision on that point, may turn the Question of Peace or War. But I think it right to lose no time in communicating to you a conversation which took place today between Talleyrand & Buelow, & which was related to me immediately, in confidence, by the latter, because it is highly important in the present state of things, that you should be aware of it. We had a conference here today to place on record the last communication from Verstolk. Talleyrand came first, & after him Buelow, both being in the Red Waiting Room till the rest should arrive. Talleyrand immediately began about Belgium, and said to Buelow that that Country could not go on as it was; that Leopold is a poor creature & unfit to be a King; the Belgians a set of cowardly vagabonds unworthy to be independent; that we have got into a difficulty that threatens to upset either the French or the English Ministry; that if the French Troops retire there is an end of Perier; and if they do not the English Govt must fall; that there is but one solution of these difficulties & that is partition; that if France, Prussia & Holland united, the thing would be simple, and England must be contented with the making of Antwerp a Free Port. He dwelt at some length upon his ^{old} old & favourite project, till the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of the other Plenipotentiaries.

I have also heard today that orders have been received from Paris by Stock Jobbers to sell out on the expectation of a Fall, in consequence of the supposed determination of the French Govt not to evacuate Belgium.

All these are serious things & of vast importance. I can give you no specific Instructions upon them without a Cabinet decision; & we can [?] none till we know what the French determine to do. But you will know how to throw out, as occasion may offer, Hints & warnings to Perier, so as to let him at least understand all the possible Bearings of the decision he is about to take, without expressing any doubts of his Good Faith, but on the contrary, dwelling upon our confident reliance upon it.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

P.S. We have been again attacked tonight in the House, for standing by, passive Spectators of Hostilities committed by France upon our two ancient Allies, Port, & Holland.

Aug 13 1831

My dear Granville,

We were delighted to receive your Despatches & Letters which I received late last night after I had set off my Letter. So far, so good; the Ratification of our Protocol & the renewed assurance of Perier of the Good Faith & Honour of the French Govt are as satisfactory as anything can be; but when you wrote, the decision of the King of the Netherlands to retire was not known in Paris; & the important & eventful question then remains, Will the French Govt withdraw their Troops into France as soon as the Dutch have evacuated Belgium? Pray make them comprehend all that hangs upon that decision.

Grey writes to you on this subject. He is peremptory on this point; & even if the Cabinet had the slightest wish to give way upon it, which they have not, publick opinion in England would prevent them. On Thursday next Vyvyan renews his Motion on Belgium. On that day at latest I shall be compelled to give the House of Commons a categorical answer, Yes or No, to the question, do the French Troops evacuate Belgium or not. Pray enable me to give an answer by that day, & let not the French Govt mistake the import of the answer which they may enable me to give. The Yes or No which I shall have to utter will imply Events of most extensive consequence to the two Countries & to all Europe.

Talleyrand has read me his Despatch of yesterday to Sebastiani, which is perfect.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

Aug 17 1831

My dear Granville,

The Sky begins to blacken and I fear the Storm will soon burst. I like not your letter nor your Despatches, nor those which Talleyrand read to me today by [?] of Sebastiani.

The Dispatches which Talleyrand himself wrote to Sebastiani are perfect and evidently written that he may read them to me; what else he writes I cannot tell but I am not so sure that what he reads to me is all he sends and that the rest is in the same Tone.

One thing is certain. The French must go out of Belgium or we have a general War in a given number of days. But, say the French, we mean to go out, but we must choose our own Time and our own Terms. The time, however, they have agreed shall be settled by the Conference and it must be as early as is consistent with the objects for which they professed to go in.

They are to escort the Dutch to their own Frontier and thus to have military Possession of all Belgium. This looks very like a juggle between them & the Dutch, but it must necessarily delay the Evacuation. Now as to the Terms. They came in at the Invitation of an Allied Sovereign whose neutrality & Independence they have agreed to guarantee and they marched for the accomplishment of the objects which the Five Powers have all been aiming at. What terms then are they entitled to make as to their Retreat? None! with regard to the Fortresses, make them understand that their pretensions are utterly inadmissible. The very Basis upon which we can agree to the demolition of any of their Fortresses is the Security derived from the guarantee of France & of the other Powers.

That guarantee then must be given in the fullest & most formal manner before we can stir a step and to dismantle these Fortresses while the French have them in Possession would be a disgrace to all the five Powers; and as to the making France a Party to the Treaty for the Demolition, that is impossible; nothing shall ever induce me to put my name to such a Treaty and I am quite sure the Cabinet never would sanction it.

We have had no Cabinet today upon your letter and your dispatches because we want to learn the result of my letter

and Grey's of Saturday last. My own opinion is that we shall be at War in ten days and that Sebastiani & Soult mean to drive us to it. They evidently want to pick a Quarrel with all their Neighbours or to compel every body to submit to their Insolence & Aggressions; witness the language about Spain.

They miscalculate their chances however, I think; and they will find that a War with all the rest of the World brought upon them by a violation of their Word will not turn to their advantage, nor redound to their Honour. They will not be the better able to carry on the War on the Continent for losing all the Commerce and for being deprived of the Revenue arising therefrom. The Ruin of their Sea Ports will create general distress throughout the Country; the Chambers will soon be sick of [Craven ?] Glory if they succeed, or of defects brought needlessly upon them if they fail; the Ministry will be turned out and the King may go with them. The Carlist Party will make an effort and with the Republicans may give much embarrassment. Austria & Prussia are well prepared for War & their first operation will be to assist the Russians in crushing the Poles, the better to be able to direct all their forces against France and the destruction of the Poles will thus be owing to the French.

The Belgians will not join the French and if they did they would equally run away.

On our side a Naval War will be exceedingly popular because it will be eminently successful. Our Commerce will resume its Monopoly and any Military effort we may have to make, being in Belgium, will be comparatively cheap.

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

My dear Granville,

I received today at the Levee your dispatch of the 15th which I immediately showed to the King and the Cabinet. We all highly approve of your having applied for explanation in consequence of Soult's Speech and the Passage which you obtained in Sebastiani's Speech is very good and does away the effect of what Soult had said. Just before I received your Dispatch, I had been talking to Talleyrand who gave me to read a private letter to him from Sebastiani dated the 14th. In that letter Sebastiani announced the Retirement of 20,000 French into France & the falling back of the Remainder upon Nevilles, but there was an Ugly passage alluding to the Fortresses & hinting that an Arrangement must be made about them before the French Army would entirely evacuate Belgium.

Talleyrand asked me what I thought of the letter, I said it was good & bad - good as far as related to the March of the 20,000, which I looked upon as the beginning of Evacuation & to good beginning I hoped a good [lead ?] - but bad as related to the Passage about the Fortresses. That his Government would deceive themselves if they thought that we could even consent to mix up the Fortress Question with the evacuation of Belgium. That the French Government have bound themselves to Evacuate Belgium & we must expect them to fulfil their Engagement. That as to the Fortresses if they expected we were to sign a Treaty with them for the Dissolution of ~~them~~ their Fortresses I would tell him that I would never put my Hand to such a Treaty even if the Govt agreed to it, but that I was very sure that the Govt would be of opinion that our Honour requires that France shall not be a Party to such a Treaty & that moreover we cannot even deliberate upon the Question of Demolition till the French Troops are out of Belgium. I asked him what his Government wanted, to have the thing done or to make a theatrical Display ? If the former they ought to be satisfied with the decisions we have taken and communicated to them. We wish some of their Fortresses to be dismantled as much as they do and it will be done. If they want only Dramatic Effect, that may suit them, but it does not suit us; and the other Powers of Europe will not submit to Humiliation to gain a few votes for the Perier Administration. We wish to maintain that Administration, because we believe it to be pacific & that France under its Sway will behave like a good Neighbour. But if it is necessary for

us all to endure Humiliation in order to keep that Ministry in, then we will say, let us have [Manquin & Lamargue ?] at once; at least we shall then know what we are about and who we have to deal with. We fully mean to dismantle many of these Belgian Fortresses, but we will never Endure that France shall dictate to us on this Matter at the Point of the Bayonet. What I said seemed to make some Impression upon Talleyrand & he begged me to write to you immediately.

Young

I hear that Perier has brought Instructions to him to renew his Application for Phillippeville & Marienberg - but we must be firm and resist these Encroaching Claims or we shall not know where to stop. The only value to us of Perier & his Cabinet is that we believe them to be Lovers of Peace and Observers of Treaties but if they are to be merely Puppets put up to play the Part Cast for them by the Violent Party, what is it to us whether they stand or fall.

If they were to fall, and their Successors were to engage in a War of Aggression all Europe would again unite against France and the Treaties of 1815 might perhaps in some future Day be looked upon at Paris as an Arrangement they would be glad to get back to.

France should remember that she has Colonies, Algiers, Troops in the [?] & Commerce scattered over the Seas, a Chamber notoriously Economical & [?] and little disposed to Vote War Estimates without well proved Necessity. That if she pays for the War she makes, the Government will be defeated in the Chamber & if she makes those Countries whom she invades pay for the War she will probably be defeated in the Field. All these Considerations would not even be adverted to, if we were pressing the French Govt to yield to unreasonable Pretensions of ours, because they would only put up their Spirit to resist the more, but when the Question is whether the Government shall act honourably by its Allies, at the Risk of being criticised by a few bad Speakers in the Chamber at the Risk of bringing upon France all the evil Consequences which bad Faith and Aggression involve, then Considerations are not out of place or Season.

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

My dear Granville,

I send you a Dispatch and a Protocol. The Dispatch was to have gone to you last night, but it could not be got ready in Time. It was necessary to submit it to the Cabinet to consider it till this Morning. We had a Conference after the Cabinet and the Protocol is a faithful Record of our Proceedings. We felt that the Four Powers have a Right to require the French Troops to evacuate Belgium as soon as the Dutch have done so, but not yet having any Official Report of the latter Fact we postponed expressing any Opinion as to the Time of French Evacuation.

Talleyrand told me during the Conference that he had received today a Messenger who brought him letters by which it appears that the French Troops will evacuate, that the French Govt do not mean to set up any Claim about Phillippeville and Marienberg but that they must have something settled about the Fortresses and he suggested as from himself that I should write to you to say that if the French will only go out of Belgium, the Fortress Question shall be settled to their Satisfaction.

I told him we never would agree to mix up the two questions. That the French entered Belgium as a measure of the Alliance to succour Leopold promising solemnly that they would go out when that Object had been accomplished. That in their verbal communications to the Ministers of the Four Powers, in the subsequent Note in Talleyrand's Communications to me and in the 31st Protocol the Return of the French Troops is declared to be dependent upon the accomplishment of the Objects for which they went in. But that in no one of those Communications is it pretended that these Troops marched in to demolish the Fortresses; such an Act would indeed have been to make War against the Four Powers and not to cooperate with them.

I asked him whether his Govt wished that People hereafter should believe the French Govt on its word, and should be able to put any Trust in their Promises. That if they did wish this, they must fulfil their Promises & keep their word & not now, when all the Conditions of Retreat are about to be made good, start upon us a new Condition entirely foreign to the Circumstances which led to the March, and to the Object for which it was directed.

I said this Condition is unnecessary because we have ourselves and of our own Accord resolved that the thing must be done and by communicating the Protocol formally to France we shall give it the Character of an Engagement. Moreover we wish the thing and consider it necessary. No new Agreement therefore is required if they only want to be sure of the thing being done. But if they want a Triumph over us and to impose Humiliation upon us, to that we will not submit; a Regard for our Dignity & Honour prevents us from doing so. With France we never will enter into any Convention for the Dismantling of their Fortresses, they were erected as a Barrier against her, and she cannot by the nature of things be taken to Counsel when we are considering which are to be dismantled and France has no Right to take advantage of an Occupation which was made acquiesced in for one Purpose in order to dictate another Purpose wholly & entirely distinct.

Let France ~~keep~~ keep her word honestly & fairly, let her evacuate Belgium as far as the Dutch have retired to their Territory and then we will lose no Time in settling the Details of an Arrangement which we all wish to carry into Execution just as much as France herself. By pursuing such a Course she will preserve her Honour pure. She will retain her Friends, maintain Peace and at the same Time attain her Object. By a contrary proceeding she will put all these things to risk.

If the French want Eclat with the Chambers & the Public what better mode of acquiring it than being able to say that they flew to the Aid of the Belgians & saved them from their Dutch Invaders, that they marched to defend the Principle of National Independence and in Support of the Engagements of France, that having with unexampled rapidity succeeded in ~~all~~ all their objects, they have not sullied their Laurels by any sordid or interested Attempts; that they have maintained their Honour spotless & have instantly withdrawn thereby showing their Respect for that Independence which the Energy of their Arms has rescued and established.

Talleyrand hinted that his Government meant to conclude a Convention with Leopold about these Fortresses. I do not see how this could be: at least if it was to tie him up as to the Choice of Fortresses; because then he would be no longer free to negotiate with the Four Powers. Make

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Perier understand that in fact we are all of one mind; and that it is a pity that he should drive us into a Quarrel about nothing at all but merely because he wants to make a flourish in his Chambers. Will what he may gain by the flourish, be worth all the consequences which it may involve.

I have this Evening got quit of Vyvyan's Motion by declining to give any information or to go into any discussion or explanation. The news of yesterday of the Retreat of the 20,000 Men much aided me in taking this course, but at the same time the Cabinet feel that while the other 30,000 remain the Occupation of Belgium is for all purposes complete & the Retreat of the 20,000 is only valuable as an Earnest of that of the 30,000.

I have seldom seen a stronger feeling than that of the Cabinet, about this Question of the Fortresses.

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

Aug 23rd 1831
11 P.M.

My dear Granville,

I have just received your despatch & private Letters of the 21st inst. Perier & Sebastiani represent our despatch of the other day as more peremptory in point of time than it really is. We did not object to taking security from Holland against a second inroad, but declared we could not agree to the French Army remaining till the Defence Treaty, or in order to enforce the arrangement about the Fortresses. We are inclined to think that security ought to be given by Holland against a renewed attack, & you will see by today's Protocol that we propose a formal Engagement to both parties. If that Engagement is agreed to, security is obtained for Belgium; if it is not we must then announce to Holland that if she renews the attack we shall visit the offence upon herself. There never was certainly a more difficult task than that which we have now to perform in getting the French out of Belgium. The French wish to stay in; the Prussians do not know their own mind on the subject because they have always a second thought that if the French stay & war ensues partition must follow, & they will come in for their share; & hence it is that Werther is not very keen on the subject, though [] ? [] protests to Chad that his only wish is to get the French out. Austria is the nearest to us in her feelings on this point; & has no particular interest to pursue in it. Russia who I suspect knew more of the Dutch King's inroad than she would choose to own, is always ready to use hard words & high language to everybody, but would not be sorry to see us all quarrelling together. The Dutch (here at least) affect to wish the French to stay, pretending that the desire to get rid of them will make the Belgians easier to deal with; & the Belgians say they want this protection while the Belgian Army is remodelling, & until Holland has agreed to a truce. But it is of great importance to get the French out. Only think what our difficulties would be if a change of Govt were to happen at Paris & other men to come in not tied by Perier's Verbal assurances, & indisposed to execute his written Engagements. Pray urge him strenuously to stay in; it is really a duty which he owes to Europe in order that France may be able to keep her faith with other Nations.

I had a long conversation yesterday with Talleyrand. He began by saying he came to ask a little help & a small

act of friendship which would cost us nothing & would be very useful to them. It was about the Fortresses. He only wished that what he meant to do should be done immediately & the French would then immediately withdraw. I said we felt great friendship for & should be glad to help them, but there were things we could not do. That if I understood him they wanted to attach a new condition to their retreat, & that, one nearly touching our pride & Interests, namely the demolition of the Barrier Fortresses. That we could not submit to such a condition because it would be humiliating & that we must [] ? [] the performance of the Engagements entered into by France.

Did France believe that we meant to do what we had recorded our intention of doing, or not? If she did what more could she want than that declaration which She had received; if she did not, then it was evident she wants to enforce by the presence of her Troops something which she fancies would not be done without this presence; & that is dictation. He protested that his proposition was not at all meant as a Condition of evacuation, that it was only asked as a Favour & would be an arrangement contemporaneous with evacuation. I said if it were put as a condition we must refuse it, because it had nothing to do with the circumstances which led to the entry of the French Troops, and because such a condition, so imposed, would be offensive and could not be brooked; that if he asked it as an accommodation, my answer would be, that it would be difficult to do what he wished, 1st because our Protocol of 16th April says that the thing is to be done when the King of Belgium has been recognized by the five Powers, which as yet he has not been, and we could not well depart from a determination formally taken & published to the World, especially when it would be said that we departed from it solely for fear we should not otherwise get rid of the French; and secondly, because, say what we might, the world would always believe that two things coupled in point of time were one the condition of the other. Besides I said, how is this to help you? Are you to keep our determination Secret, or are you to make it publick? If you keep it secret, how can it help you in France; and if you are to make another Coup de Theatre of it, and boast that the French Army did not retire from Belgium till the Powers of Europe had named the Fortresses to be demolished, that may be very useful to Perier's Govt, and highly gratifying to the good people of Paris, but it will be so at the expense of the administration

of Lord Grey, and of the just pride of the English Nation, to say nothing about the other Three, and I added that however much we wished well to Perier, there is no reason why we should undergo humiliation to give him strength. He complained that I was very unyielding, & wanted to brouiller affairs; I denied this, and said that there could be no reason why we should be brouilles if they did not seek to impose a condition, but only asked an accommodation, since they could have no pretence to quarrel with us for not giving the latter, we assigning what to us appeared valid reasons for not doing so. He said he did not mean that we should quarrel, but only that there would be froideur between us; I said if there was, it would be very unjust on their side, because no English Administration since the days of Sir Rob Walpole had shown such a cordial desire as we have to be well with France, nor have been exposed to so much attack in Parliament & in the publick for being too accommodating to France. We discussed this matter today in Cabinet, and it was agreed that all we could do would be to begin the discussion between the Four Powers & Leopold for the purpose of selecting the Fortresses to be dismantled, but that France could not possibly be a Party to this discussion and that the retreat of her Troops cannot be coupled with this question, but must stand upon the grounds upon which it was originally placed. I shall write to Adair to urge Leopold to assent to the April Protocol & to give authority to somebody here to treat about the Fortresses. I doubt Leopold having formally applied for the continuance of the French Troops; at least Adair tells me on the 19th that Leopold had held ~~xxxx~~ opposite language to Belliard & had urged their departure.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

Aug 25 1831

My dear Granville,

I have received with great satisfaction your despatches & letters which arrived yesterday & today announcing that orders have been given for the evacuation of Belgium by the French. I have today also heard from Adair who sends me Copy of the official demand by Leopold, that a division of Infantry with some cavalry & artillery should for a short time remain. This request of his seems reasonable; & if the Force thus left is but a few thousand men, there can be no objection to their continuance till the King of the Netherlands has formally bound himself by the Suspension of Arms not to renew Hostilities.

The Belgian Govt as well as the French are anxious for the immediate exchange of Antwerp & Venlo. This is certainly desirable if it could be obtained; but there is no chance, I fear, of the Dutch agreeing to it; & is it worth while to face them by besieging the Citadel, when a few weeks may settle the whole affair; & this Armistice ties them up in the mean time.

I have sent you copies of what I have written to Bagot about the Dutch [vexations ?] of Antwerp & its neighbourhood, by which you will see we have not been inattentive to the interests of the Belgians.

With respect to the Fortresses we will do all we possibly can to meet the wishes of the French Govt; but they must allow us to do it in our own way. We may be sorry for the embarrassment created by the King's Speech; but we did not make that Speech, & are not bound therefore to indemnify the French Govt at our own expense for the inconvenience it may produce. We cannot admit that a fault committed by them can be converted into the foundation of a right which they would not otherwise have possessed. They will find some difficulty in concluding an arrangement with Leopold even if there were no other objections to it; because, as Van de Weyer maintains, he has not power by the Constitution to agree to anything without his Chambers. But the proposition that we should empower Adair to treat with [Munbourg ?] on this matter is quite inadmissible. The matter is a Military Question which must be decided upon full consideration, & not like the game of Geography by spinning a [Zetoturn ?]. It is only here in London that all the reasons which bear upon it can be fully brought into discussion; & Austria and

Prussia, but especially the latter, have as strong an interest as we have in the decision. We never can admit that these Fortresses were intended for aggression against France; & the nature of things speaks for itself. Fortresses act aggressively only by covering the assemblage of a large army for Invasion. But an army for Invasion cannot be formed in a small kingdom with an inconsiderable Force, & whose whole Establishment is barely sufficient to garrison the Fortresses in question. But supposing such an army to be formed, what part of the said small kingdom would any prudent man choose to form it in. Surely not the very frontier of the country to be attacked, & where the army to be found, the very getting of which together would be a proclamation of War, would be liable to be attacked by the French before it was in a state not to invade, but to defend itself. If these Fortresses were on the extreme frontier of a great & powerful kingdom like France, having a large army as its Peace Establishment, then indeed they might menace the safety of neighbours, because such a Power might, within its own Territory, assemble round such Fortresses a Force sufficient to make a sudden inroad, as France has recently made into Belgium, & the Fortresses would be a support & base of operation. But the Belgian Army is not very likely to invade France; & if the Prussians intended to do so, & through Belgium, it is quite clear which of the two parties, the French or the Prussians, would first get to Mons, Tournay, Menin & other places on the French Frontier.

The Duke of Wellington's opinion as a Military man is decidedly against the dismantling of any of them; as he contends they are all necessary for the defence of Belgium; & that Belgium might easily garrison them against a coup de main; & of course the Times will take that line when the question comes to be discussed in Parlt. Only see then how inconceivably difficult our position would be if the Opposition could assert, not only that we had agreed to sacrifice Fortresses which have cost us Millions Sterling & which in the opinion of the highest military authority are indispensable for the defence of Belgium against France; but that we had permitted the selection of places for dismantling to be made by that very France whose aggression they were destined to prevent. There really would be something in the proceeding so utterly repugnant to common sense & so incompatible with the condition of an independent nation, that it is quite & entirely impossible. The other Powers moreover will not hear of it & especially Prussia. Buelow has received Instructions to press for

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the immediate evacuation of Belgium, & to state that the prolonged continuance of the French Troops would compel the K. of Prussia to put his troops in his Rhenish Provinces into movement.

I should think that of the six Fortresses you say Sebastiani mentioned, Ath & Charleroi could not be spared; as they are the only protection for Brussels against a ride of Cavalry up to its very gates. But Philippewille & Marienberg might be dismantled instead, & when they are unfortified, the French may be less anxious to have them. For the present matters seem to stand as well as under circumstances is possible. The Bulk of the French Army is retiring from Belgium, a small portion remains at the request of Leopold, upon grounds which will cease to exist as soon as Holland has agreed to the armistice. We have now got full Powers for Van de Weyer to negotiate for Peace, and we must try to settle matters definitely as soon as we can.

(Rest of Letter refers to French & British relations with Portugal.)

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

Aug 26 1831

My dear Granville,

(First para. deals with Tory opposition in British Parliament, a reference to progress of Reform Bill.)

I cannot wonder at Leopold's wishing to retain for a time some portion of the French Troops. But when we have the Dutch acceptance of our Armistice & the Belgian Army is a little reorganised, he may be able to let them go, & the sooner this is done the better. Adair says that Belliard tells him that there would be danger of Orange Risings if the French were all to go. This may be true, & certainly is an additional reason for keeping a small Force. But I do not think the presence of a Foreign Garrison good for any Sovereign; & if Leopold means to stay at Brussels, he should have his own people about him & none others. I hope we may soon be able to come to an agreement in the Conference as to the proper terms of peace between the parties, & then we must tell them that is what they are to have; for as to their coming to any common understanding together, they would not do it in six years, instead of six ~~xxxx~~ weeks, if it depended upon their convincing each other. Luxembourg must belong to Belgium, & the Fortress must remain to the Confederation. Part of Limburg must be given to Holland in exchange for Luxembourg, and not a great deal of it can be so given. But recent events have shown that for the safety of Germany & Holland, Maestricht must be entirely Dutch. By giving the upper nook of Limburg, the whole of the Right Bank of the Meuse, & Maestricht to Holland, the Dutch Interests as to Territory would be amply provided for, & Prussia being secured on her own Frontier would probably be pretty easy as to other arrangements; though I see that Buelow has a mighty longing for the Fortress of Luxembourg, with a small district round it; not that he has ever dropped the slightest hint of such a Notion; but knowing him pretty ~~xxxxx~~ accurately I see it pretty clearly at the bottom of the well. This may account for Werther's readiness to give to France Phillippeville & Marienberg; the consent of Prussia to that cession would be purchased by the acquiescence of France in the cession of Luxembourg Fortress to Prussia. But let us stave off these nibblings; if once these great powers begin to taste

blood, they will never be satisfied with one Bite, but will speedily devour the victim.

In the meanwhile Buelow is wishing sincerely for peace; but wants to turn the balance upon every occasion too much in favour of the Orange family. These are his Instructions; & I have written to Chad to beg him to point out to [Ancillon?], that if this is pushed too far, it must tend to unite France & England in favour of Belgium, & to make a split in the Conference.

(Paras. concerning Austria, Rome, Greece, etc.)

You will have seen very violent language in the Times against France. We cannot help it. The Times breaks loose every now & then, & goes its own way; either because it thinks that it is hitting off publick opinion & will thereby promote its own sale, or else because it may want to show its teeth, to carry some private & personal job with the Treasury. However its tone of late can have done not much harm; since it must have tended to convince the French that the Govt would be supported in the tone we have been taking about Belgium; & might even have gone further without exceeding the sentiments of others.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

Aug 27 1831

My dear Granville,

I send you Copy of a Despatch I have addressed today to Adair about the Fortresses & Latour Maubourg's Negotiation. The sentiments which I express in it, are shared equally by Prussia. I will send you an official answer to the proposition made through you, that the Conference should empower & instruct Adair to negotiate with Latour, although that answer is pretty well contained in this Despatch to Adair.

Talleyrand told me today that his Govt meant to do whatever the Conference wishes about the retreat of their Troops, but they proposed to leave 12 or 14,000 men in compliance with Leopold's request. I made suitable acknowledgements in return for the first part of the communication, & with regard to the second admitted that it would be hard to deprive Leopold of a support which he may consider necessary; but proposed that we should postpone the consideration of this matter in Conference till Tuesday, by which time we may know whether Holland accepts the Armistice (which if she does, one reason for detaining a French Force will have ceased), & also how much Force Leopold may want & how long he may require its protection. With respect to the proposal that the Conference should empower Adair to treat about the Fortresses, Talleyrand said he had himself written yesterday to point out that it could not be agreed to, first because Adair is not L'Homme de la Conference, & next because the other Three Powers would probably not choose to give direction to an English Plenipotentiary on a matter so much concerning them.

My dear Granville,

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

August 28 1831

Mydear Granville,

As I am told that Talleyrand has sent to his Govt a Report of a conversation which I had with him yesterday, which is somewhat at variance with the fact, I think it right to send you a correct Version that you may prevent any erroneous impression from being made upon the French Govt.

He called upon me to communicate some dispatches he had received from his Govt which as he said, were very satisfactory. The French Govt, he said, would do whatever their Allies wished about the retreat of their Troops, & those Troops should all quit Belgium whenever the Conference thought it fitting they should go. But he said, Leopold urgently desired that a Division of Infantry with Cavalry & Artillery in proportion should remain as a protection against the Dutch and against the anarchy to which Belgium is reduced; and he hoped the English Govt would not oppose itself to a compliance with that apparently reasonable demand.

I made my thanks & acknowledgements for the frank & handsome communication first made, and said I felt we were all much obliged to him for the efforts which we believed him personally to have made to confirm his Govt in those decisions & views which were so essential to the Maintenance of peace; I then asked what was the amount of Force which it was proposed to leave to Leopold; He said \approx 12 or 14,000 men. I remarked that that was a large Force, especially scattered as it was in the neighbourhood of the Fortresses, and backed by 50,000 more within a couple of days march on the other side of the Frontier; and that whether such a force was necessary in Belgium or not, so long as it remains there, the occupation of Belgium by the French Army virtually & substantially continues.

I said that our Govt would not, I thought, wish to do anything harsh or inconvenient to Leopold, nor to expose him unnecessarily to inconvenience or anger; but that when he made the Requisition he could not tell whether Holland would agree to the Armistice; if the Dutch accept it, that would materially alter the grounds upon which the Requisition was founded; and we should be better able to make a judgement on the subject when we should have received the answer from Holland. He then said, well, but may not write to Paris that your Govt do not oppose a compliance with Leopold's demand; I said no, I cannot give you any answer upon the subject officially without consulting my Colleagues, & therefore pray do not consider

me as having given you any answer at all; I have stated to you my own individual impression, but that of course in a matter of this sort goes for nothing. He then said he would not write, but would wait till we had another meeting upon the subject.

I have been told this morning however that he said last night that he had written to Paris to say that I had told him that we should not object to let 10,000 French stay in Belgium at the requisition of Leopold; pray therefore ascertain whither he has written to this effect or not, and if he has, explain the nature & substance of my conversation with him, & say that I especially warned him that I could give him no answer upon an important question which must depend upon the decisions of the Cabinet & the Conference.

Yrs etc

Palmerston.

From circumstances which I have heard today, there seems some reason to suspect that the French Govt knew of the intention of the Dutch to attack Belgium some days before the Dutch Troops marched, and that the Troops on the Frontiers had received orders to hold themselves in readiness to march at an hour's notice. Does not this corroborate Bagot's suspicions ?

H. of Com.
Aug 30 1831

My dear Granville,

(First para. deals with Franco-Portuguese relations.)

I saw today Talleyrand & [Baudraud?]; the latter wants to persuade us that Leopold cannot stand without French support against anarchy, that is to say against his own subjects. I do not believe this; & neither Van de Weyen nor Stockmar confirm it. We have today received in Conference the full powers of Leopold to treat, & the acceptance of the Armistice by Holland & Belgium. Tomorrow we meet again; for we were hurried today as I was obliged to come down here early.

We shall send you tomorrow a Protocol of the 4 Powers about the Fortresses founded upon my despatch to Adair of which I sent you a Copy, & we shall do something about the [inundations?] which must not be permitted to continue. As to our occupying Antwerp, that would not do, & we must get the French out before a month. Having now got an Armistice & thereby a security against Dutch Invasion (because if this Engagement is not worth anything, of what value is a Treaty of Peace with Holland) the next thing is to get Leopold to say that he can do without French Troops; & if he does not say so, he avows himself to be unfit to be King of Belgium. When we have got that, we may then in Conference require the French to evacuate entirely.

You say I have misunderstood your despatch, which did not say that orders to retreat with his whole army had been sent to Gerard, but that they would be sent. But it was Adair who stated twice that Gerard had received orders to retire.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1350

Foreign Office
2 Sept 1831
11 P.M.

My dear Granville,

I have just received your Despatches & Letter of the 31st, the contents of which are very satisfactory as far as they go; but you say nothing as to the retreat of the French Troops from Belgium, and as yet we have no positive & official knowledge that any part of the French Troops have actually quitted Belgium; let us know anything certain upon this matter which you may be able to communicate.

I do not much mind the camps in Flanders; they are not caused so much by what is decreed at the Hague as by what is expected at Warsaw. If the poor Poles are crushed, as it is to feared they may be, 100,000 Russuans may be set free (or perhaps more than half that number, to speak correctly) to back up a large Prussian army & the Heroes of Hasselt under the Prince of Orange; and all that would place affairs on the Norther Frontier of France in a very different position from that in which they stood some six weeks ago; while on the South the Austrians would be able to turn all their attention to their front, instead of having to guard Galicia. This will make France more peaceable & tractable than she would have been had the Poles succeeded; and we must at all events take advantage of what is good, while we lament the Evil, and endeavour to settle Belgium while the French are beginning to be manageable, & before the Russians & Prussians are become indocile.

Tomorrow the Conference meets again to consider the plans of a Definite Treaty. Talleyrand made great difficulties yesterday about signing the Protocol I sent you, harmless & innocent as it was; alleging that his Government, having demurred about the 34th Protocol, he knew not why. He was afraid of signing anything more without referring to his Court for authority. But Warsaw had already begun to tell with Prussia. Buelow said to him that he knew why he would not sign; the Armistice which we had established tended to settle things, & the wish of France was to keep them unsettled, in order to prolong her occupation; this was her wish though she dared not avow it; but if he (Talleyrand) did not sign that Protocol that very day, he (Buelow) should immediately propose to the Conference to make a formal demand for the immediate retreat of every French Soldier from Belgium. This passed in a corner between the two; and I then afterwards took the thing up in a similar way & observed that if

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we could not make a record of the Armistice because it referred to Protocol 34, which had not yet been accepted, there seemed nothing for us to do except to go back one Number to Protocol 33, which had been accepted, & to execute the deferred purpose of that Protocol by then determining at what time the evacuation of Belgium should be completed. All this brought Talleyrand to his pen & ink, & the paper was signed. But he begged me to write to you to explain his embarrassment in consequence of this demur on the part of his Govt.

I have written privately to Adair & Bagot to beg them to see in concert with each other, whether Antwerp & Venlo could be exchanged; but I do not expect success: and this must form part of the general arrangement of Peace.

(Paras. about Franco-Spanish relations & passage of English Reform Bill.)

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

P.S.

I am very much pleased with what Sebastiani says to you about Latour Maubourg. If Leopold adheres to our Protocol & sends a man to London, the Fortress Question might be settled in a week with satisfaction to all parties concerned.

3 Sept 1831

My dear Granville,

We have today taken the gentlest step towards France which was compatible with our own Honour & Interests. Buelow, the Russians & Esterhazy were with great difficulty persuaded by me to acquiesce in it. They all wanted, but particularly Buelow, to come at once to a protocol summoning France to evacuate Belgium entirely by a given day; and you must admit that Esterhazy might feel a strong temptation to retort upon France the peremptory Mandate which produced the Evacuation of Bologna. They complained that England was shrinking from before France; that this hesitation would take advantage of it, & either refuse to evacuate, or find pretences for delaying to do so. I answered them that we are as anxious as they can be for the final evacuation, & as determined to claim it from France; that we only differed as to the form of proceeding, & that we were of opinion that the course we recommended would be equally effectual for its purpose, while it would be less offensive to the pride amour propre of the French Govt, inasmuch as it afforded them an opportunity of doing the thing of their own accord, without being summoned to it by their allies.

We shall never get on with the Belgians till the French are out. There is no end to the intrigues which their presence gives rise to: that eternal Caballer & Schemer de Celles is constantly plotting together with LeHon, & in communication with the men who are unfortunately at present in power in Belgium. De Celles especially is, I believe, doing much mischief. I do not believe a word about the danger to which Leopold is exposed from what they call anarchy: it is all a pretence got up between Brussels & Paris. Stockmar admits that foreign troops are not necessary for internal quiet, provided Peace from without is secured. No doubt the late Invasion greatly unhinged the Govt & unsettled men's minds & revived the hope of the Orangists; but since the Dutch are gone & cannot come back again, surely Leopold's Army & civic Guards must be able to maintain order; & if they will not do so & uphold their King, I do not see what right we have to interfere in the matter. But this is a pretence: the French want to push their own Interests, & specially the Fortress Question, as is proved by Gerard's asking for the Citadel of Tournay.

As to the Declaration which Adair suggested to [?] it is in the highest degree objectionable, & I wonder what he could have been thinking of when he proposed it. I sent

him our altered form which might do; but probably the Belgians will not adopt it. It is evident they & France are playing into each others hands about the Fortresses, the Armistice & the Evacuation. The Telegraphic Message which Sebastiani said he had sent on the 31st, had produced no effect whatever on the 2nd if ever it arrived. Would it be [?] for you to hint to Perier that De Celles has a slight tendency to intrigue & is actually counter-acting us ?

My dear Granville

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

The Fault of Adair's proposed Declaration was that he made Leopold say that in compliment to France he was going, without consulting the Four powers, to demolish all the Fortresses which, since 1815, had been built for the security of those 4 powers, & at their expense: an extraordinary declaration to be made by an English Minister. He should have said that Leopold meant to concert with the Four Powers which of the Fortresses built since 1815, might now be dismantled under the altered circumstances of Belgium.

A copy of the Memorandum is sent to each of the Representatives of the Four Powers. You had better consult with them as to the best mode of acting upon it; whether to go together or separately; perhaps the latter would be more civil than the former & equally efficacious. We promised Talleyrand, to whom the Memorandum has been read, that it should not be une Pièce, & should not be published. He wanted to put into it some statement of his own. But we pointed out to him that that would be turning it into a sort of Protocol, while our object was not to make one. The Prussian & Russian will wish to give your communication the most formal & peremptory character; but we wish it to be made in the most friendly manner consistent with efficiency. Talleyrand promised to write tonight; but as it was late before we broke up, perhaps he may not have done so, or at least not fully.

Sept 16 1831

My dear Granville,

(First para, about Russo-Polish War.)

We are quite satisfied with the French communication about the evacuation of Belgium, & I have drawn up a civil protocol on the subject, which I send you today.

The Belgians are playing the foolish game of delay, & will now perhaps repent it, since the success of the Russians gives advantage to the King of the Netherlands. We cannot get an answer from him to out three questions about Limits, Debt, & Luxembourg; and instead of answering us they start childish discussions about words merely to kill time.

We have today had a conference with Goblet about the Fortresses; he is an intelligent & well conditioned man, & understands the business. We have all agreed that Menin, Mons, Phillippeville & Marienberg must be dismantled; that Ath or Tournay should be added to them, & that Charleroi ~~x~~ should be maintained. There is a doubt whether either Ath or the Citadel of Tournay ought not to be kept; probably the latter. I confess that for my part I cannot bring myself to see the advantage of laying Brussels entirely open, by levelling everything between the Meuse & Scheldt. Do not however say anything on this Subject to the French Govt at present.

(Last para. about French Quarantine Regulations against British vessels.)

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1353

F.O.

20 Sept 1831

My dear Granville,

(First para, refers briefly to change of command of a British warship in the Mediterranean.)

I have nothing to add to my Public Despatch, and if I had I have no time to write. We have not yet had the Belgian Proposals about Limits, Debt & Luxembourg.

(Rest of Letter about Greek Sovereignty.)

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1354.

Foreign Office

23d Sept 1831.

My dear Granville,

(Opening paras. about sovereignty of Greece.)

Talleyrand showed me today the French Plan for the Belgian Boundary; it is nearly the same as the Belgian, and like theirs proposes that [Ecluse, Ardenburg, Philippine, Sar de Gand, Bierolet and Lies ?] should be Belgian; that is four Fortresses and two Forts, all within that territory which both the Articles of Jan and those of July equally assign to Holland. The only pretence for this Proposal is that the Possession of these Places is necessary to prevent Inundations. But the Inundations from which the Belgians have been suffering are opposite Antwerp, and round about Lillo, places which are to be Belgian, and they have scarcely at all complained of any Inundations which the Possession of the district now sought for would have prevented.

The French say, the tract contains only 12 square Leagues, that may be true, and it is doubtless as unwholesome as they assert, but these Places are the outworks of Dutch Flanders towards the Land, and the possession of them would make the Belgians masters of the Islands whenever they chose to take them; or to let the French come & do so for them.

In all these arrangements we ought to remember that the Dutch and Belgians are at present in unnatural Proposition towards each other. The Dutch with a small Country and only 2 million of Inhabitants, have an army far beyond their ordinary means of supporting one, which has been created by a great Effort, and which will sink into nothing as soon as peace is concluded. The Belgians with 4 Millions of People have scarce an army at all. The smaller Nation then at present threatens to conquer the larger one, which is out of reason and cannot last; in looking then to permanent arrangements we must recollect that in the long Run the Danger of attack will be from the Belgians against the Dutch, and not from the Dutch against the Belgians.

(Short reference to the Reform Bill.)

Yrs etc,

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1355

F.O.

October 3 1831

My dear Granville,

Prince Talleyrand informed me today that he has received an instruction from Count Sebastiani dated the 1st Instant, enjoining him to sign nothing with respect to the arrangement between Belgium and Holland without previous reference to Paris. If this instruction is to be enforced, we must bid adieu to all hopes of settling this question within any assignable time; and the difficulty of any arrangement, and the chances of war, will be infinitely increased.

If one Member of the Conference is obliged to refer

home to his Court at every step of our progress, others will require the same privilege, and references will be made to Berlin and perhaps to Vienna. The loss of time which all this would occasion is sufficiently obvious; but that would not be the only evil. The two Parties would each become acquainted with all the details of our Plans, and their objectives would increase with the delay; and those adverse influences which the King of the Netherlands could set to work, would operate with much more advantage at Berlin and Vienna than in London. Pray therefore entreat the French Government to release Prince Talleyrand from the shackle they have imposed upon him, if they really wish, as we are sure they do, for an early settlement of this question. You will do well to communicate on this subject with the Representatives of the other Three Powers, and suggest to them the expediency of their making similar remonstrances to the French Government.

With respect to the District on the left Bank of the Scheldt which the French Govt wish to give to Belgium, it cannot be obtained. It contains four Strong Holds, and two smaller Forts, which are essential for the defence of Zealand and the adjacent Islands. The Dutch would never give up this small tract of their own free will, and the Conference would never agree to compel them to do so. But the object for which this cession is asked for, might be sufficiently attained by other means; and stipulations such as those of the Treaty of Fontainebleau in 1785 might suffice to protect Belgium against any inundation in that quarter. That which Belgium indispensably requires, is a secure inlet for her Commerce on the sea side, and an equally secure outlet for it on the side of Germany, and this we must try to obtain for her, and I think we shall succeed. Prussia makes a great point of giving to Holland the right Bank of the Meuse. But if Belgium has, guaranteed to her, the free use of two roads the one through ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Maestricht, the other through [Sittart ?], I think her commercial outlets will be well enough provided for.

We have not yet had an answer from the Hague to our application for an extension of the armistice, but I have no doubt that the answer will be affirmative and satisfactory. The day before the Conference made the application, I had an interview with Zuylen for the purpose of explaining to him very clearly and distinctly that if Holland made a second attack, she would have to do with England, at all

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events, whatever the other Powers might determine upon, and I know that he made that very night to his Government a report of what I had said to him, and which was calculated to dispel all illusion from the minds of Verstolk and the Dutch King.

(Short para. about the Reform Bill.)

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1356

Foreign Office
14 Oct 1831.

My dear Granville,

We are very near the end of our labours on the Conference and I trust I shall finish tonight. It is now half after ten and we are just going to meet for the purpose of endeavouring to settle every article of the proposed Treaty before we separate. We have given ? to Belgium as the French Govt wished so now at least you have one sacrifice to quote to Sebastiani. We shall probably protogue Parlt on Monday or Tuesday & when that is done & the Conference over & I have only as much Business to do as can be got through in the day it will seem quite extraordinary.

If we finish tonight we shall also consider in what manner we are to communicate our decisions to the two parties. I expect both sides to be very angry & to protest against our arrangements but if all Five Powers are determined to enforce these decisions there can be no doubt that they will be submitted to. If Holland is convinced that Russia & Prussia will not support her on resistance she will not be mad enough to make war and if the Belgians are quite sure that the French will not countenance [? ?] allow any Faction in France to assist them in standing out against the Treaty they also will submit. But I have reason to believe that even at this moment the King of the Netherlands hasnot quite abandoned the fancy that some how or other he may regain the Crown of Belgium even although that Country be separated from Holland. I shall send you a Messenger tomorrow with the result of our last deliberations.

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

October 15 1831

My dear Granville,

I send you tonight our Treaty complete, and I hope the French Government will do their best to persuade the Belgians to accept it. France can do what she likes on this point. Van de Weyer says he has no authority to sign, and must refer the Treaty to his Court: I tell him he had much better go to Brussels himself, because he would be able to give by word of mouth many explanations which could not be given in a letter; and having been here, and having had intercourse with the other Members of the Conference, he could usefully convey to the Belgian Government the considerations which make the settlement of this question absolutely necessary. Upon the whole, I think our arrangement fair between the parties. I should myself not have given Belgium more than eight Million of the Debt. But I yielded the odd 400,000 Florins because I saw that the doing so would probably obtain the assent of Holland, if any concession to which we could agree would do so. The territorial arrangement is upon European principles quite right and proper; a Belgian or Frenchman might have wished some modification on the Right Bank of the Meuse; and I should have preferred giving Belgium a little more of Luxembourg; but then we have taken good care of the commercial interests of Belgium, and have secured to her almost every privilege on that score which her Plenipotentiaries ever asked for. Zuylen cannot sign, any more than Van de Weyer, and both therefore refer home. The three Eastern Powers are all sincerely resolved to compel the King of the Netherlands to acquiesce, and if their means of persuasion are fully brought to bear, I have no doubt of their succeeding. Where you have to deal with one man, you know what to do; but where you have to act upon two popular Assemblies, the case is different; and different means of influence must be employed. I suspect the great difficulty will be Belgium, and there the French can help us by their organs De Celles and LeHon. The debt is a point on which the Belgians will feel sore; but they should recollect that the Interest of the aggregate Debt of the United Kingdom, sinking Fund included, was 28 Million of Florins; and that of this 8,400,000 is the Share awarded to Belgium, leaving 19,600,000 to Holland. It is true that this sum includes 2,500,000 Sinking Fund, but still that leaves 16,800,000 of actual Interest of Debt being twice the amount of that which is given to Belgium; and Holland cannot give up her Sinking

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Fund, because she has a large amount of deferred Debt, which is annually converted into Debt bearing Interest, or Dette active, to the extent of the Amount of the Dette active which is annually redeemed by the Sinking Fund. Either therefore Holland must go on redeeming active Debt, and filling up the gap by portions of deferred Debt, or else she must declare herself Bankrupt as to the deferred Debt. The latter she cannot do; and consequently she must stick to the former. But the amount of deferred debt is so great, that it would take about 80 years to convert it all into Debt bearing Interest by the operation of the Sinking Fund; so that she has no chance of any diminution of burthen by the abandonment of the Sinking Fund.

I shall get Van de Weyer to go off tomorrow night; Zuylen has some objection to go; but I think he will be persuaded. We must consider what we shall do, if either or both Parties refuse, and either begins hostilities. The three Powers are ready to recognize Leopold the moment he accepts, whether the Dutchman does so or not.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

My dear Granville,

I think we ^{are} pretty sure of the Dutch acceptance, except as far as there is no relying upon the King himself, who may demur when the moment arrives for actually resigning the Belgian Crown. But the terms are sufficiently advantageous to Holland to make it the interest of the Nation that they should be accepted. I fear we may have more difficulty in Belgium, not because I think the terms such as the Belgians ought to be dissatisfied with, but because they are the most unreasonable of men and think that though unable to defend themselves, they yet have a right to give the law to all Europe, and to cut and carve the territories of their neighbours for endowing their own state just in the manner most agreeable to themselves. Besides all their leading Men have talked so big when these matters have been debated, and have pitched their pretensions so high that they will all be embarrassed how to acquiesce in an arrangement which falls undoubtedly far short of their interpretations of the 18 Articles of July. The French Government may do much in Brussels on this occasion, and if their influence is honestly exerted it cannot fail to have a powerful effect. What they have to do, is to convince the Belgians that France will not support them in resistance, but will on the contrary unite in compelling them to acquiesce, and if this is well and distinctly explained, it will have a marvellous effect upon Belgian understandings.

As long as the Belgians think that by standing out they can extract from the Conference a Fourth Set of Articles, they will refuse acceptance, but whenever they are convinced that there are no more last words coming, they will have sagacity enough to discover that this arrangement secures to them all that is necessary for their prosperous existence. Some of the French & Talleyrand among the rest would not be sorry that this arrangement shall fail and Leopold be turned out, because, after this they would hope for partition as the only remaining arrangement, but I trust Perier, at least, is sincere in wishing to uphold Leopold, and if he is he must feel that the best way of doing so, is to make Leopold and his Ministers understand the absolute necessity of submitting to the arrangement.

My dear Granville,
Yours sincerely
Palmerston.

GC/GR/1359

Foreign Office
21 Oct 1831

(Letter dealing with commercial relations between
France and Britain.)

GC/GR/1360

Foreign Office
21 Oct 1831

(Letter about suppression of Slave Trade.)

GC/GR/1361

Foreign Office
Oct 28 1831

(Letter about Greek affairs.)

GC/GR/1362

Foreign Office
31 Oct 1831

(Short Letter concerning Anglo-French commerce.)

GC/GR/1363

Foreign Office
1 Nov 1831

(Letter deals with Greek Succession, Riots in Bristol
etc.)

GC/GR/1364

Foreign Office
Nov 3 1831

(Short Note regarding Canning & Gordon.)

GC/GR/1365

For. Office
4 Nov 1831

(Letter dealing with unrest in England, Cholera
outbreak, etc.)

GC/GR/1366

For. Office Nov 8th 1831

(Letter deals with Right of Search, Cholera, Slave
Trade, etc.)

Nov 11th 1831

My dear Granville,

Van de Weyer is come, and has brought Leopold's acceptance, simple and unconditional; but he has been instructed before communicating it, to ascertain whether the Three Powers will acknowledge Leopold.

I have prevailed upon him somewhat to alter his mode of proceeding and to communicate at once the acceptance accompanying it by a note in which he should express the request of Leopold that the Articles instead of being simply signed and thereby receiving the force of a Convention according to the terms of one of the Articles themselves, may be turned into a Regular Treaty; to have thereby a more formal sanction, and in order that Leopold and his State may thereby at once take their Place among the Powers of Europe.

We had settled yesterday in Conference that we would pursue this course; as we plainly saw by a conversation with Zakok & Zuylen, that it would tend materially to bring the King of the Netherlands to acceptance. It is obvious that he fancies that until he acknowledges Leopold, Austria, Prussia & Russia will not do so, and that thus he has the key of the whole affair in his own hands. When he learns that we have broken through his Cobweb perhaps he may take a more Rational view of his own Interests. I expect therefore that tomorrow, or next day at latest, we shall have signed a Treaty between the five Powers and King Leopold; and when we have done that we may say we have got into smooth water. I have no time to say more.

Yrs etc

Palmerston.

16 Nov 1831

My dear Granville,

We have done a good job but it has required some hard work latterly to bring it all to bear. We have sat up till three in the Morning twice, and it was at that hour this morning that we separated, after signing all our Treaties.

It is an immense thing done to have got Austria, Russia & Prussia to sign a formal Treaty of Friendship and guarantee with Leopold. Belgium is thus placed out of all danger, and the sulky silence of the Dutch King becomes at once a matter of little or no importance to any Body but himself.

I have no doubt however that this Treaty will decide him, as it deprives him of his secret hope of recovering the Crown for himself, or of making an additional Bargain for his formal abdication. The latter indeed was his real object as Zuylen himself admitted saying that certainly his Master had hoped to have got a slice more of Territory, or to have got rid of some more of the Debt in Exchange for his acknowledgement of Leopold.

We must now give him ten days or a fortnight to think of it, and if he does nothing by that time, we ought then to think about the situation in which Antwerp is placed.

We have not communicated to Talleyrand what we have done about the Fortresses because we say it is only Provisional seeing that Van de Weyer has not got his Instructions on that Point, but we must stick to the selection we have made, and the French must be content with it. Mons and Menin are the two Places which really may be said to threaten France, and they will both come down. Charleroi is important for the defence of Belgium, connected as it is with Namur and [?] and Liege, and the little Citadel of Tournay is too great a Bijou to part with, being besides quite a small place, incapable of becoming offensive, but commanding one of the Great Roads to Brussels and therefore useful to ~~xxxx~~ be kept. Phillippeville & Marienberg may be said to be hostile in their character, from their closeness to the French Frontier, and at all events they are not essential as Defensive Works, and the former is a largish place and requires a considerable garrison. The French will be annoyed at the demolition of these two, for a reason they cannot avow, namely their secret Intention to have them for themselves some day or other, and that is one main reason which has induced us to resolve to demolish them.

(Rest deals with Canning's visit to Constantinople, Greece, Portugal, & cholera epidemic.)

Yrs etc

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1369

Foreign Office
22d Nov 1831

My dear Granville,

You will have found out why the Messenger who left London this day week came to you empty handed. We were too busy that night sealing and signing to think of writing letters.

I am glad to hear the French Govt are so well pleased with the idea of the Treaty, and hope they will not be less satisfied now they have got it. It is a great point gained to have obtained the Recognition of Leopold by Austria, Prussia & Russia, and their guarantee of the Existence and Independence of Belgium. If the King of Holland does not show any signs of life within a decent time after hearing of our Treaty we must consider what steps will best be calculated to bring him to terms, but I reckon much upon the Effect of the Treaty.

(Passage regarding Right of Search, & brief reference to Lord Grey wishing to have one of his sons attached to a foreign mission.)

Goblet arrived to make the arrangement about the fortresses but he left Brussels a few hours before the arrival of the Messenger with our draft of a convention; so we can do nothing with him till we hear further. Talleyrand is gone to Brighton for a week; he was very inquisitive about the Fortress arrangement, but I presume that when the French hear the explosions at Mons, Menin, Ath and Phillippeville and Marienberg they will begin to be satisfied; especially those among them who would rather that all Fortresses had been kept.

(Paras. about Cholera, meeting of Parliament, Russia and Poland.)

Yours etc

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1370

Foreign Office
Nov 23 1831

(Letter about Slave Trade, Russia, Polish Constitution.)

GC/GR/1371

F.O.

25 Nov 1831

(Letter devoted to Spanish & Portuguese affairs, etc.)

GC/GR/1372

F. Office

Dec 6 1831

My dear Granville,

(First para. deals with Palmerston's speech in Parliament, touching on Slave Trade, Portugal, etc.)

Bagot tells me that it is thought, that the Chambers will give the King a loan of 15 Millions instead of 25, and say that that will last him until Easter, before which time they hope ~~max~~ He will have no further occasion for Warlike Preparations.

Buelow yesterday told me that Freuhsess ? had received an Instruction by which he was yesterday to tell the King of the Netherlands that the King of Prussia is very sorry that he was obliged to sign the Treaty without waiting for Holland. That he will however delay the Ratification till that of Russia & Austria arrive, not that he has not determined to ratify, but because he wishes thus to afford the Dutch King an opportunity of signing in the meanwhile and ratifying at the same time.

I do not believe there is the slightest chance of the Dutch resuming Hostilities whatever they may say to the contrary at Brussles.

Yours sincerely

Palmerston.

I am glad to hear from Talleyrand that Orleans & Soult entered Lyons on Saturday.

GC/GR/1373

Foreign Office

Dec 8 1831

(Short Letter about Spain & Portugal.)

GC/GR/1374

Foreign Office
Dec 9 1831

My dear Granville,

Ouvrard is doing a great deal of mischief at the Hague and encouraging the King in his Resistance by every means which Intrigue & Lies afford, but I suppose the French Govt are fully aware of this and probably have no hold upon him & no Power of checking him.

Prussia has declared to the Dutch King that she will Ratify, but will delay till the last in order to enable him to sign in the meanwhile & ratify at the same time as the Rest.

I rather expect the King to strike in the Beginning of January, but we shall see. Hewill not gain much by Aberdeen's Motion, for now the Treaty is signed with Belgium, we may speak out if driven to do so,

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1375

For. Office
Dec 15 1831

My dear Granville,

We have signed the Fortress Convention and it was sent off last night to Leopold for his Ratification. The Fortresses to be demolished are Menin, Ath, Mons, Phillippeville, Marienberg. Talleyrand has been hunting us all for the last week in order to find out what we were about & assailing us with questions whenever he met us, but as we knew he would object to what we were going to do, we thought it better to say nothing to him about it till it was done.

We had indeed meant to keep it from him for another day, in order that Leopold might be able to ratify before he could have any further trouble from Paris, but unluckily I told the Cabinet last night what we had done, without warning them not to tell Talleyrand, forgetting at the

Moment that he is every Evening at Holland's elbow, so home went Holland & before Midnight Talleyrand knew that Tournay was to be kept and Phillippeville & Marienberg dismantled.

All this day he has been attacking Goblet & Lieven & Buelow & myself, but we have made good Fight and he has grown calmer, but he has begged me to write to you to enable you to give to Sebastiani the explanations which I have given to him (Talleyrand).

In the first place, I said, that we contend that there is a Matter to be settled between the Four Powers and Belgium & that France has acquiesced in this View of the affair, as it was stated in the note given in by the Four Powers to France.

That however we have good reason to complain that France endeavoured to anticipate our Deliberations and [?] us and in Fact to dictate to us by trying to bind Leopold by a Separate Treaty with France, before he began his Negotiation with us, a Proceeding entirely unfair.

This Talleyrand fully admitted & said that provided we would stick to the Fortresses mentioned in [Meulin . . ?] Paper, we might even in Parliament speak of this Manoeuvre of the French Government in any Terms we pleased.

Next I asserted that [Meulin . . ?] Paper was no Engagement except to the Principle of Demolition and that even Sebastiani had admitted to you that it left Leopold free to change the Places for dismantling if upon Communication with us he should think it expedient to do so.

Then comes the Question which the Fortresses to be demolished should be [Sic], I said that it had been agreed on all hands that Charleroi should be maintained as indeed I understand from Goblet that Belliard himself admitted the Propriety of keeping it.

As to the Citadel of Tournay, it is a small Place which does not require a garrison larger than Belgium will have the means of putting into it, and which from its size & character never could be considered as aggression against France, it is a purely defensive Position & therefore must be excluded from the List by the Rules upon which the Selection is to be made. Talleyrand fought very hard about Tournay but I said we had settled to keep it. But as I expected he was furious at the demolition of Phillippeville & Marienberg, though he was hard driven to find out an assignable reason for objecting to it. He said it would be considered as an Affront to France because it implied a Suspicion; I said that those who asserted it implied a Suspicion, thereby justified the entertaining a Suspicion,

but I denied that any Suspicion could justly be imputed from the mere Fact of demolishing these Fortresses & said that I thought the matter susceptible of being placed in another Point of View, more agreeable to France.

France, it was well known, and to none better than to him had wished to gain Possession of these Places. The arrangements made about Belgium had rendered that impossible, & France had very handsomely given up any pretension to these Places; but surely if she was not to have these Fortresses herself, the very next best thing for her was that nobody else should have them, and that they should be destroyed.

She wished for them because they [run ?] into her Territory, interpose inconveniently between [?] & Givet and might serve for offensive operations against her.

If they cannot be hers, & seem as Part of her defensive Line, surely it is advantageous for her that they should be levelled so as never to be capable of being turned into a means of annoyance and the French Govt instead of complaining of their Destruction ought rather to boast that although the Manner in which Belgium has been settled & the self-denying Engagement entered into by France have prevented these Fortresses from becoming French, at least they will cease to exist & cannot become the Basis of hostile operations against France.

If we cannot have a body of one's own Troops upon one's Frontier one would rather there should be none, than that the Ground should be occupied by a Force belonging to another Power.

Talleyrand could not help feeling the Force of this Argument, though he said it was only an ingenious way of defending a bad Position.

The fact is we laid it down as a Rule that we would demolish these Fortresses which were beyond the Military & pecuniary means of Belgium, and which from their Position were not necessary for its defence, and might by us be thought liable to fall into the hands of France, & by the French to be useful chiefly for Purposes of Aggression against them. These Fortresses were those upon the French Frontier and to none does this Rule apply with more Force than to Phillippeville & Marienberg which are ~~not~~ out of the way, of little use for Defences and if serviceable at all, would be so, for Purposes of Attack. I dare say you will easily succeed in persuading Sebastiani & Perier to

GC/GR/1375

take this view of the Matter; and if they choose to adopt it, they may make out a very good case for themselves. They ought to feel however that an Arrangement which removes a future subject of possible Contention tends to the preservation of Peace & is therefore in strict conformity with the Principles which govern their Policy.

Goblet took another line with Talleyrand, he said that there is no General in the French Service who would not claim to be suspected of having Designs not upon a corner of Belgium, but upon the whole of it; and that so far from being affronted at such a Suspicion, they would rather be angry with any one who endeavoured to acquit them from it.

I send this by special Messenger because it is possible that Talleyrand may write to Sebastiani tonight and it is well that you should know all that has passed.

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

Talleyrand asked Buelow what he supposed would be said upon this subject in Paris. Why, said Buelow, in a fortnight they will have entirely forgot it.

GC/GR/1376

For. Off.

Dec 16 1831

My dear Granville,

I send you a Copy of the Note which the Dutch Government have sent to Talek & Zuylen to deliver to the Conference and of which Copies have we fancy been sent to Vienna, Berlin & Petersburg.

We shall preface an Answer which will contain a Refutation of the misstatement & Misrepresentations of the Note and will express our Hope that such Explanations on our Part will remove all objections which can prevent the King from signing the Treaty. We consider this note as written to gain Time, to create a false Impression in Holland and perhaps to induce the three Courts to disapprove of the Acts of their Plenipotentiaries in London. We trust it will only succeed in the first of these Objects.

The Russian Plenipotentiaries are however evidently anxious & uneasy, as to whether the Emperor will ratify or not, still I think he will. It is reported at Frankfort that the King of the Netherlands is going to break the Engagement entered into at Mayence about the Navigation of the Rhine and to impose higher Duties than the Convention of last Spring authorises.

This would be convenient for us at the present moment, as such an Attempt would set every body against him.

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1377

Foreign Office

Dec 26 1831

My dear Granville,

It is indeed extremely provoking when we thought the whole of the Belgian Affair settled, as far as the Five Powers are concerned there should arise two new Difficulties; the one from a Doubt as to the Ratification of Russia, the other from the perverse Conduct of the French Government as to the Fortresses.

[Matuszewic ?] told me yesterday that he and Lieven have had Despatches from Moscow, by which it appears that the Emperor fully adopts the View taken of the 24 Articles

in doing so, because, as he justly observes, to prove that the Dutch Govt are entirely wrong in their objection is to prove that his own Court which supports these objections is not exactly in the Right. He is however to occupy himself in preparing a Draft & to bring it to me tomorrow.

He says, he must however in Conformity with his Instructions, propose some Modifications of the 24 Articles; & Buelow, Wessenburg, & I, agree that in that case all we shall have to do will be to decline acceding to his Propositions.

In the mean time the Dutch Court are highly elated at this almost unlooked for Succour. But Talek & Zuylen have written to Verstolk to beg that the Dutch Govt will not let themselves be run away with, by exaggerated Expectations, & will remember, that Russia distinctly declares that she will give Holland no Military Assistance, & will not Quarrel with her Allies, for the sake of Holland.

I trust that Prussia will hold good to her Intention of Ratifying, & that Austria will ratify also; but it is not wholly impossible that the Refusal of Russia may have some effect upon them.

This being the State of Things with regard to the Treaty, can it be worth while for the French Govt, if they sincerely wish for a Settlement or for the maintenance of Peace, to be endeavouring to pick a Quarrel with us all, about the Belgian Fortresses ?

I see Sebastiani gives up the Point about Phillippeville & Marienberg, upon which Talleyrand laid so much Stress. Indeed the answer to that objection seems unanswerable. France must be held to be sincere & in good Faith when she acknowledges & guarantees the Neutrality, Independence, & Integrity of Belgium. But if she is, she must have given up all Views & Intentions of getting Possession of these two Places. If she has, she ought to be pleased at their Demolition; since the next best thing to having a Place oneself, is, that it should be held by no one else, & should not be capable of being turned against one. If then, France is honest about these Places, & about the Treaty, she ought to feel that the Demolition of these Places wipes away any little humiliation, which she may fancy is attaching to their Separation from the Territory of France.

Sebastiani indeed in a Conversation with Pozzo, reported in a Dispatch which Lieven showed me, admits that this Argument is conclusive, & that we are in the Right, as far as the Question, as to which Fortresses, are to be demolished. But then, after thus having thrown Talleyrand overboard, he takes another and quite a new ground, & objects

by the Prince of Orange & the Dutch King - thinks the Complaint of Holland well founded, & instructs his P.P. to support in Conference all the Applications of Holland for Alterations in these Articles; but orders them not to intimate that he is prepared to give to Holland any Military Assistance, or to Quarrel with his Allies to the Extent of making war in his support.

[Matuszewic ?] also told me, in Confidence, that [?] added in a private Letter, that if he and Lieven should have signed a Protocol or a Treaty, in Conformity with the Articles, they would infallibly be disavowed.

This account is not cheering. I remarked to [Matuszewic] the great Difference between the Situation in which the Emperor was, when he had only received the Articles, which had been communicated by the Conference to the Two Parties, & that in which he would find himself, when he received the Treaty signed by all Five Powers with Belgium, accompanied as it would be, by the Convention with Leopold about the Fortresses, & that with us, about the Continued Payment of the Russian Dutch Debt. That in the former Case, he might naturally express strong opinions and endeavour to help Holland in obtaining Modifications of an Arrangement which he might think still open to Change.

But in the latter Case he would feel, that by refusing his Ratification he separated himself from his Allies upon a great European Question, without any reasonable Prospect of producing any material Effect upon the transaction itself; because if France, England & Prussia, who are in contact with Belgium & Holland, and if Austria also, all concur in ratifying the Treaty with Leopold, neither the Non-Ratification of Russia, nor the Resistance of Holland can prevent the Execution of an Arrangement which these Four Powers will have guaranteed. Holland could not long be permitted to hold Antwerp, she would be compelled to make that Exchange of Antwerp for Venloo to which she had consented a Twelve-month ago, & while she herself would be unable to resist Russia would find some difficulty in bringing her effectual & Timely assistance even if she were disposed to break with the Four Powers for the purpose of doing so.

[Matuszewic] admitted that all this was perfectly true, and unanswerable if his Govt acted upon Motives of State Policy. But, he said, in Russia the Politics of the Govt, are the personal feelings of the Emperor, and Nicholas has taken up a high minded Notion, that his Brother in Law has been ill used, and that he must not abandon him; & [Matuszewic] considers it as almost certain, that the Ratification will not be given.

In the meantime we have proposed to him, to concur in answering the last Dutch Note. He feels some Difficulty

to the fourth Art. of the Convention, which stipulates that Leopold shall maintain & keep in good repair, the other Fortresses; contending that this implies the Exercise, on the Part of the Four Powers, of a continued Military Superintendence in Belgium, inconsistent with her new Condition of Neutrality.

Now to this I answer, that the Principle contained in the 4th Art. has been long ago declared to France, & has never till now, been disputed by her; & that her previous acquiescence precludes her from now objecting.

In the first place, let us clearly establish what the 4th Article does do. It gives no Military Superintendence whatever to the Four Powers; it only says that these Fortresses which the Four Powers have laid out so much Money in constructing, or improving, shall not be demolished without their Consent; I can see nothing in this, inconsistent with the Neutrality & Independence of Belgium; here is no right of Garrison, no Infringement of Sovereignty, except as far as the Engagement not to pull down that which others at their own Expense have built up.

But what said the Protocol of April 17th 1831 ? That the Four Powers would negotiate with the King of Belgium for the purpose of determining which of these Fortresses shall be demolished. Does not this directly imply that they were also to determine which should remain standing ? Does not the one determination necessarily imply the other ?

But by what Right were these Four Powers to take this Determination, with respect to Fortresses in a Country, which they had already by the Protocol of January, declared, should be invested with a perpetual Neutrality ? Only by the Right which they had acquired in consequence of the Circumstances under which, these Fortresses were built.

This Protocol then, I contend implied the Right, to which Sebastiani now objects, just as decidedly as the 4th Art. of the late Convention. But did France object to that Protocol ? On the contrary, Talleyrand who knew its Existence, & its Substance, begged & entreated us, by Desire of his Govt, to communicate it officially to him for their Satisfaction. We did so, as a Favour, and as a Mark of Confidence & Regard. As a favour Talleyrand received it, & so far from finding Fault with it because it implied that the Four Powers were to retain certain Rights over the Belgian Fortresses, after there should be in Neutral Belgium, a Sovereign recognized by all the Five Powers, He, Talleyrand, accepted the Protocol from my hands in full Conference, with grateful Acknowledgements.

What did the French Govt thereupon ? They made indeed a vapouring Speech from the King, but they did not cavil

at our Protocol.

They however set up a claim to be admitted as a Party in the Negotiation which was to take place for the Selection of the Fortresses to be destroyed. To this the Four Powers objected, & we drew up on the 29th of August a Protocol, which you communicated to the French Govt in which a Passage is found, declaring that "Le nouveau Souverain de la Belgique est place a cet [Regard ?] (that is with respect to the Fortresses) dans la meme Position [ou ?] etait le Roy des Pays Bas."

Did the French Govt object to this ? They never said a word about it. Then was the Time to have declared, if they could do so with justice, that the new Sovereign of Belgium could not stand in the same Position towards the Four Powers, with regard to the Fortresses, as the King of the Netherlands; because his Neutrality changed his relative Situation.

But they never said anything of the kind. Nay more, even the unhandsome Trick which they tried to play us, by sending Latour Maubourg to tie up Leopold's hands, before we began our Negotiation with him, was an admission of our Right; because they wanted Leopold to bind himself before hand, as to what he would consent to in a Negotiation about to be begun with the Four Powers; but why should he negotiate with them, if they had no Right over the Fortresses, which were to be the subject Matter of Negotiation ?

Our Right is founded upon a Principle enuntiated in a Protocol signed by Talleyrand, & never questioned by his Govt. I mean the 19th dated Feb 19 1831. In this Protocol it is declared that [short French quotation indecipherable] and this Principle has also been acted upon, in that Article of the Treaty of Separation, which declares that Antwerp shall only be a Port of Commerce; that being a Stipulation applicable to Antwerp while Part of the United Netherlands, & from which it could not be released by the Separation of Belgium from Holland. Here then it is proved by a Chain of Evidence, that France has for many Months been aware of our Claim of Right; that she has had it formally announced to her; has at one Time answered it with Thanks; at another time heard it with a Murmur, and by what Right then can she now pretend to dispute it, or make it the Ground for Quarrel. She cannot say that she is entitled to complain that the Convention was not communicated to her before it was concluded, because to have communicated it, would have been to have made her a Party to the Negotiation and we distinctly told her that we could not so admit her.

But stripping this objection of all Disguises under which its true Character is attempted to be concealed, what is its

real Nature. Why simply this. They boasted in the King's Speech that all the Fortresses built since 1815 would be demolished & the 4th Art. provides that none but those named in the Convention shall be demolished.

Here their Vanity is wounded. Next, notwithstanding their Agreement to the Treaty & the Arrangement which it executes, they still maintain the unavowed Expectation that somehow or other, Belgium will fall into their Hands, and they feel that the Chance of such an Event, would be much increased if all its Defences were thrown down and the Country laid completely open to their Arms; here their Desire of Aggrandisement is thwarted; lastly they know that many of the Fortresses which are to remain are as much a Protection to Germany & Holland as to Belgium; that if they were away Prussia would be left defenceless on that Side, and would be protected from an Inroad on that Quarter, turning all her Position of Cologne and Coblentz, only by the Respect which a French Govt might be disposed to pay to the Moral Sanction of a Treaty.

Here their Military Ambition is checked. Here are the true foundations of their objections. If Leopold was left free to pull down the rest of the Fortresses as he chose, another Latour Maubourg might by and bye visit Brussels and the Belgian Govt might be threatened or cajoled into an Engagement with France, by which all the Fortresses erected at so much Expense by the Four Powers, more for their own Protection than that of the Country in which they stand, would be forthwith dismantled; & this Notion Talleyrand unguardedly let out in a Conversation with me the other day, in which he stated that the Four or Five Places now to be dismantled, whichever they were, could only be considered as a beginning & that Liege & Namur & all the rest must very soon follow.

It is not true as Sebastiani asserts, that we retain a Military Surveillance over these Fortresses, which is inconsistent with the Neutrality and Independence of Belgium.

We stipulated that they shall be kept up, and in good repair, but we ask for no Right of Garrison, nor for any Interference with them, at variance with the Rights of their Sovereign. As long as France respects the Neutrality of Belgium, we shall do so too, and it is immaterial to her whether these Fortresses exist or not. If ever a future Govt of France should violate that Neutrality, we should be no longer bound to respect it, and in that Case it might be very material to us that those Fortresses should be in existence.

The French Govt cannot say that this implies a Suspicion inconsistent with our present friendly Relations & unfounded on any first Grounds. They themselves tell us every six

weeks that they are going to resign & every body expects that if they do, they will be succeeded by the War Party, breathing the Spirit of Universal Aggression and Outbreak. How then, can they expect that we should frame Arrangements, which we mean to be permanent, & which must be suited to resist the Buffet of all future Contingencies, by adapting them solely & entirely to the present state of things, which for aught we know may not be of three months Duration.

It would be setting out to cross the Atlantic in a sailing Boat, because it was safe on the Thames, & this is an Answer to them, when they ask us to make Sacrifices for the purpose of keeping them in. Their Ministry cannot, by any Sacrifices which we could make, become Immortal and we might pay too dearly even for the advantages, great as we feel & admit them to be, of prolonging its Continuance if we purchased these temporary Advantages by permanent Sacrifices, of which the Evils would be severely felt and irretrievably, in other Times and Circumstances. Now I presume none of the present Govt will deny that the Conquest of Belgium is an object which the French Nation still keep in view - Sebastiani, I think I have heard state as much, & [Flahhaut ?] when he was over here last, frankly & plainly told me, that whatever Arrangement we might now make, Belgium sooner or later must belong to France. If then we should think that these Fortresses may at some future Period become useful for the Defence of Belgium, such an Opinion does not imply a Suspicion for which no Foundation can be traced & which can be denounced as purely Chimerical. But then they will say, why stipulate for Neutrality if you consider it as nothing. I reply, we do not consider it as nothing; we think it a great Security & I believe it will generally be respected; but occasions will happen when no Moral Sanction can restrain Men, who are bent upon some Purpose, & moreover Moral Sanctions are not the less likely to be regarded, when they are assisted by some Physical Support.

For these Reasons therefore we do not choose entirely to abandon the Line of Defence, which it has cost us so much Money to erect. The French may say that their wish to demolish those places is a proof of their Good Faith, since if they had designs upon Belgium, they ought rather to wish to preserve Places which would be weak when attacked by them, but strong after they had got them in their hands; & they may say that this is the Language of [Manguin & Lamargue ?]. This however is a Question of Opinion. They may think they should walk into those Towns without more than a Summons, we may fancy that they would not so easily fall into their hands; if they are right and we

wrong, so much the better for them, and so much the worse for us; but it a Reason at least, why they should not object to the keeping up of those Fortresses; if we are right we have a good Reason for objecting to any further Demolition.

We have today had a Cabinet to consider fully this Question and we came to the Decision, that no Change can be made by us in the List of the Fortresses to be demolished and that it is impossible for us to give way, as to Leopold's obligation to maintain & keep in repair the rest of the Fortresses. We feel our interest and our honour to be too deeply concerned in this matter, to admit of any retraction on our Part, & whatever may be the inconveniences of abiding by what we have done, those inconveniences we shall be prepared to face.

I wish you without delay to make this decision known to the French Govt as well as our deliberate Conviction that we are fully justified by Right in the Course we are pursuing. The other Three Powers are equally agreed that it is impossible to give way. It is then for the French Govt to consider the course which they may choose to pursue, & the nature of the Demand which they are making. They require, that out of Deference to their wishes & feelings Five Independent States should cancel an Article in a Treaty, to which France is not a Party and which does not apply to any French Territory, nor affect any French Interest & they threaten us all with War, if we do not obey their orders. Now this is something like attempting to give Law to Europe and is it likely that Europe could consent to receive it? But if they declare war, what will be the declared object for which they will wage it?

Will it be for the immediate destruction of the Masses of brick and Mortar of which the Fortifications consist, or will it be to erase from certain pieces of Paper at London, Vienna, Berlin & Petersburg a certain number of Words? The first might not be easy of accomplishment, the second would surpass any of Don Quixotes undertakings. In any point of view the Question is too narrow & Minute & too much of a Subtlety to form an intelligible of War; ~~and~~ when the Merchants of Havre & Bordeau and Marseilles come to complain of their long list of captured vessels, when the Chambers found a Sinking Revenue to meet an increased Expenditure, would the Nation feel that all those Evils were a cheap price for the advantage of knowing (if by that price that advantage could be purchased) that the Sovereign of Belgium would be at liberty to destroy certain Fortresses

in Belgium if he should be inclined to do so.

And at what Time is the French Govt about to enter into so childish a Quarrel ? Why at the very moment when it has become doubtful whether Russia will ratify the Treaty. When all the Moral influence of the strictest Union between the other Four Powers may be [?] to prevent Russia from detaching herself from the Alliance; to control the pertinacious Obstinacy of the King of Holland; & to secure to Europe these benefits of Peace, of the value of which the French Govt must be so sensible & in the attainment of which they have hitherto borne so distinguished & important a Part.

when If Russia hesitates to ratify when the two Treaties are presented to her together, how certain it is that she would seize with Avidity as a pretext for refusing the one, any alteration which we might make in the other, especially ~~on~~ the Signature of that latter by the Belgian Plenipotentiaries was the condition upon which the P.P's of the Three Powers agreed to sign the former. Can France [repent ?] her of the Belgian Treaty ? Can she wish to see that arrangement cancelled; the commencement of Order thrown back into Confusion; the work of a laborious Year undone; & the Peace of Europe again brought into jeopardy by a renewal of that Conflict of Interests & Passions which we hoped was now well nigh a prosperous Termination. If the Ministers mean to go out, this would certainly be the way to bring on a Necessity for their Retirement, but if they choose to withdraw from Posts too irksome and laborious, do they think that their Retreat would be rendered more honourable by bequeathing to their Successors a general War ? They have prided themselves & justly upon maintaining Peace, while in Power, would they pull down the Edifice at the moment when they retire.

I find that they are all very angry with Leopold because they think that in some way or other he has deceived them, or has not acted fair. Now pray assure Sebastiani, that the Suspicions which have been excited by Talleyrand, are quite unfounded. Leopold has originated nothing. Whatever he has agreed to, has been at our Suggestion and earnest Request, and as the Condition of Acknowledgement. The choice of Places, the wording of the Convention, & the mode of Proceeding were all ours & not his; & it is not handsome or just in them to try to frighten & bully him, in order, through him, to work upon us.

If they feel unconvinced by what you will state in consequence of this letter, let them explain their feelings & Objections to the Conference, & we will give them an Answer, but do not let them go, on writing threatening letters to Leopold.

You say that Talleyrand has a Note to deliver to the Conference, but as yet I have had no Communication from him on the Subject, though I returned to Town the night before last.

I shall send for him tomorrow & tell him the Decision of the Cabinet & then see whether he has any Communication to make.

I still believe that the Irritation of the French Govt has been excited by him. His anger was roused by the Selection of Phillippeville & Marienberg, he has communicated his Fever, but in Sebastiani it has settled on another Part, & fixed itself on the 4th Article.

My dear Granville

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

Foreign Office
Dec 27 1831

My dear Granville,

I have had today a long Conversation with Talleyrand who detailed to me the Substance of a Dispatch he has had from Sebastiani about these Fortresses & in which Sebastiani particularly complains that our Conversation is a Revival of the Holy Alliance. I informed Talleyrand of the Decision which the Cabinet came to yesterday & went briefly through the principal Arguments contained in my letter of yesterday to you. With respect to the Holy Alliance, I told him that I could hardly listen to that Complaint with becoming Gravity, since nothing could well be less like the whole of our Proceedings about Belgium than the Engagements & Plans of the Holy Alliance.

In the first place the Holy Alliance was a Treaty concluded in 1818 to which France acceded and England did not. In the next place its object was, that a League of Sovereigns should overbear the Will of their People & that a Combination of Armies should support Monarchical Authority. Now the result of our Labours with respect to Belgium has been to Crown Revolt with Success, to ~~impose~~ interpose between a

Sovereign and his people & to prevent the Arms of the former from controlling the will of the latter.

But probably when the French Govt talk of the Holy Alliance they mean by that Expression to denote a Confederacy for Purposes hostile to France.

Now you may with Truth assume Sebastiani, that there never was an English Ministry more friendly to France than the Present nor less likely to engage in any Combination for purposes of Hostility to France, unless the French should themselves drive us to do so, which so long as the present French Ministry continues in Power, we are quite sure will not be the case. Entreat them then to banish Suspicions which have no foundation & to take a longer view of the present State of Europe.

This Fortress Question, as I told Talleyrand, is just what the French Govt choose to make it; if they like to swell it into magnitude, they certainly have the power to do so, because any Govt may create an Excitement if it pleases; but if they are content to treat it as a Trifle which it really is, it is in their own Power so to consider it.

There are great Questions proceeding in Europe and others coming on, with Respect to which the Interests of Civilization require that France and England should be united; let not the French Govt deprive those Principles which they profess, of the advantage & support which our Union must afford them merely to gratify some little personal feeling about a few words in a Convention.

I pressed upon Talleyrand this Argument & he could give me no Answer; that is to say, by our Protocol of April we said that we should determine in concert with the King of Belgium, which Fortresses should be demolished; now this implied that we had some Right over all the Fortresses, because if we had no Right that Protocol would have been a gross Piece of Impertinence on our Part. What would be said if the Four Powers should resolve that as soon as Ferdinand of Spain shall be dead of the Dropsy they will determine in Concert with Don Carlos which of the Spanish Fortresses shall be dismantled ?

This Protocol then contained an assertion of Right and a Right over all the Fortresses to which it related, because we mean to pick out those which should be dismantled and by deciding which should come down, we necessarily determined also, which should stand, but this Protocol was formally communicated to the French Govt in August last, and so far from taking any Objection to the Assertion of Right, they expressed themselves greatly pleased with the Announcement of the Manner in which that Right was to be exercised.

GC/GR/1378

Talleyrand said he should write tonight to Sebastiani; urge good Humour & Conciliation and beg him to consider that these Fortresses which remain, will remain for the purpose of guarding our joint [Creation ?] against all and every attack from whatsoever Quarter it may come.

My dear Granville

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1379

Foreign Office
28 Dec 1831

My dear Granville,

(First para. refers to illness of Sebastiani.)

Our news from the East is disagreeable; I send you Chad's Dispatches received this Morning. I have no communication from Lieven upon the subject of the Emperor's Intentions as to the Treaty, but I conclude I shall hear from him tomorrow. Ancillon's new Doctrine as to the effect of the Refusal of one of the Five Powers to ratify & that it renders the Treaty null & void & that consequently there is now no Treaty left to Ratify cannot for a moment be listened to. It is besides entirely inconsistent with Ancillon's own Declarations at recent Periods.

We declared to Chad as you will see by referring to some of his late dispatches, that Prussia undoubtedly would ratify, though she will delay her Ratification in hopes thereby to persuade Austria & Russia to do the same. What was this but declaring that she did not consider the ultimate Refusal of Russia & Austria as any Impediment to her own Ratification and consequently at that time, about a fortnight or 3 weeks ago, Ancillon did not conceive that the Refusal of one of the Parties cancelled the Treaty.

Besides independently of the gross absurdity of such a Doctrine it is at variance with recent Transactions in Europe. Spain would not for two years sign or ratify the Treaty of Vienna though she appears in the Preamble as one of the Contracting Parties, but will Prussia say that on

that account there is no such Instrument in existence as the Treaty of Vienna. Pray tell Wurther & beg him to make it known to his Court, that nothing can equal our Astonishment & Indignation at this Communication from Ancillon, except our Surprise that any statesman should endeavour to shelter the Violation of a positive Engagement behind so wretched an excuse. We are to have a Cabinet on Friday to consider the Course which we ought to pursue on this unexampled Occurrence & we shall then determine what shall be the nature of our Communications to Berlin, Vienna & Petersburg. The Probability is that from Prussia we shall claim the punctual fulfilment of the Promise repeatedly made that she would ratify before the 15th of Jan. That we shall tell her that whether she & the other two do so or not, we shall not thereby think ourselves absolved from our Engagement.

That if France & England ratify, the Treaty will be carried into Effect notwithstanding the breach of Faith on the Part of Prussia & Austria; but the Quintuple Alliance will be dissolved and upon Prussia will be the Responsibility of any Inconvenience present or future which that Dissolution may bring upon her. M. Ancillon we well know, is a great Disciple of the Ultra School of Politics, but he ought well to consider whether his Subserviency on this occasion to Russia may not split Europe into Two Parties. The Three Eastern Powers on the one side & the two Western on the other & whether the inevitable Conflict of these two Parties when once so arrayed against each other, is likely to be favourable to those Principles & that System which he would wish to protect. There will be no harm in betraying my Reflections to Wurther & in letting him understand that, to use the Paris Phrase, this affair is très grave.

Austria has never made any Promise to us & therefore to her we can only urge general considerations of European Policy; the certainty of War if she follows in the train of Russia, and the obligation under which every Government is, to assign very strong and adequate Reasons for refusing to Ratify the Art. of a Plenipotentiary.

There will be no Difficulty in proving that the 24 Articles are perfectly consistent with the Bases de Separation accepted by Holland & with Subsequent Communications made to us by the Dutch Govt & that consequently we are entitled to claim the Dutch King's assent to them & the Treaty is nothing but the Articles. By the bye I cannot understand Ancillon's Proposal that the Conference should frame a Treaty for Holland & Belgium founded upon the 24 Articles & then impose it upon the two Parties, this is precisely what we have done, & what Prussia it seems now demurs to abide by. But the Honour of the Powers is committed. They cannot now retract, & there is nothing left for it but to ratify & Execute the Treaty or to tear Treaty,

Protocols & all; break up the Conference, and give the Signal for a General Scramble; and I should like to know how Prussia would come off out of the Scuffle. She might reply upon it we would not help her, whoever else we might assist.

I wish you would also talk seriously to Appony upon the incalculable Mischief which will come from his Court & Prussia refusing to ratify.

The Affair has gone too far for such a Retraction now & unless the Treaty is carried promptly into Execution, it is next to impossible that a General War can be avoided; and a War in which England will certainly not be with the Three Powers.

But will Russia whose passionate Policy will have drawn them into the War, be able effectually to assist them in it; could she in her present state of Exhaustion send Armies to the Rhine; if she could, would her Polish & Lithuanian Provinces in the rear of her Armies be perfectly safe & tranquil? What would be the effect of any Military reverse upon all that great Mass of Discontent & would Austria wish to see fresh Disturbances spring up behind her.

In such a War & so occasioned would Austria depend upon the Co-operation of the smaller German States in her Front. Would that Constitutional Spirit which even now alarms her Cabinet and which her Government are labouring Night and Day to find the means of Suppressing, be more likely to range itself on her Side or on that of France, when England, France & Belgium are contending on one Hand and Austria, Russia & Prussia and the King of the Netherlands on the other. Their little Luxembourg Jealousy would soon be absorbed in deeper seated feelings.

What would be the Effect in Italy of a War of Principle between Austria & France. Austria has declared to the King of Holland her Intention to ratify, though she has not thought fit to make any Communication upon that Subject to us. That Declaration is well known & she would therefore if she retracted, prove herself to be only a Satellite of Russia instead of a great & leading European Power.

There will be no harm in putting these Considerations strongly to Appony for the benefit of his Government. Metternich is jealous of Wessenbourg & would be glad to have an opportunity of throwing him over besides that he does not like the Treaty, or the general Arrangement to which he feels the objection which is shared by all the Three Powers, namely, that it sanctions Revolt.

But that being the Feeling of Metternich, we must use every means to counteract it and to work upon him by opposite Considerations.

GC/GR/1379

As to Russia, any little we can do with her, must be effected at Petersburg.

My dear Granville

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

GC/GR/1380

For. Office

30 Dec 1831

My dear Granville,

I think by Talleyrand's Tone & by what he says to me that we may consider the Fortress dispute as good as settled. He wishes the Four Powers to communicate it to France by a note containing some Civil Expressions, & some Assurances that it means nothing hostile to France, and to that we can have no Objection, & we shall prepare such a Communication. You will see by the Copies I send you that we have thought it right to send off to Berlin & Vienna to press for the Ratifications of these two Courts and I still hope we shall get them.

Lieven tells me today that he has nothing from his Court that bears out Ancillon's Assertion that the Emperor has positively refused to ratify: nay, Lieven's expectation is that he will end by doing so.

He says that unluckily the 24 Articles reached Moscow before [Nessch. . ?] arrival there & that the Emperor's opinion then was therefore formed upon personal feelings and without his Ministers' advice; and unluckily [Nessch. ?] had left Moscow to return to Petersburg a day or two before the Arrival of the Messenger who brought the Emperor the Treaty so that a second Time the Emperor was left at an important Moment to his own Impressions. But he thinks that when Nicholas returns to Petersburg he will be induced to take a sounder View of the Treaty & of the, utmost, Necessity which led his Plenipotentiaries to sign it.

I have settled with Talleyrand that as it is important for us to know before Parliament meets again, how we stand

as to Ratification, he will so arrange it, that the Strasburg Telegraph shall transmit to Paris and Calais any short Dispatch which Forbes & Chad may send, to announce whether Austria & Prussia will or will not Ratify.

You may communicate Confidentially to Perier my dispatches to Chad & Forbes, omitting perhaps the Sentence in Chad's which mentions the peculiar degree of Co-operation between England & Prussia in the Conference, lest it should inspire him with some Jealousy. I shall show or rather read them to Talleyrand.

Yrs sincerely

Palmerston.

I have read both Dispatches to Buelow, Esterhazy & Wessenbourg, who came to me this Evening all three together so you may show them or not to their Colleagues at Paris as you may think best.