

VON DOBELN



LEUTENANT-GENERAL G. K. VON DOBELN was born in Finland in 1758, and died in 1820. He served in the war between Russia and Sweden in 1788, and when hostilities again broke out in 1808 he was appointed lieutenant-general of the Finnish wing of the Swedish army, and was deemed one of its ablest and most skillful officers. In 1809, he retired to private life after the treaty of peace between the two countries was consummated.

ADDRESS TO THE FINNISH TROOPS, OCTOBER 8, 1809

SOLDIERS! I have mustered the army to inform you that a preliminary treaty of peace was made on the seventeenth of September between the Swedish and Russian powers. These glad tidings of peace end the horrors of a disastrous war. It is welcome news, as Sweden's exhausted resources do not permit a continuance of a warfare entered into through a political mistake and which for two years has undermined her strength and prestige. But Finland passes away from Sweden; henceforth Tornea River will be the boundary line. Finns! with the conclusion of peace one third of the domain of the Swedish crown is lost, Sweden must part forever with the proud Finnish nation, her mightiest support; yet that is not all, the Swedish army is stripped of the essential wing of its fighting power. Our motherland is crushed, drowned in sorrow and sadness over the irreparable sacrifice, but Almighty God, in his wisdom, has sealed our fate and we must accept it with patience and submission.

Soldiers, comrades, brothers! you who during the late war

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with so much faithfulness and unflinching courage fought the enemy, despite his numerical strength and boastfulness, and defeated him on a score of battle-fields, you who, unaided, recaptured half of Finland, you who fought afterward with perseverance for the soil of your motherland, Sweden, you who have gathered here are a precious remnant of the proud Finnish nation and its gallant warriors! To you I extend, and I do so with deep emotion, most sincere thanks from the king, the estates of the realm, the Swedish people, the Swedish army, my superior officers, my comrades, myself; yes, from all. The king's pleasure, the good will of the estates, the admiration of the Swedish people, the esteem of the Swedish army, recognition from my brothers, my own affection for you, are the offerings consecrated to you, and which I lay down upon the altar. Finns and brothers! your achievements are great, and the gratitude which I extend to you in behalf of all is in proportion thereto. Its proper interpretation requires the best efforts of an orator, and I am a soldier. Soldier! what proud distinction to receive that title from you, share it with you and bear it for your sake. Accept, therefore, the thanks of a heart affected with emotion.


And to the Swedish troops assembled on this touching occasion. You are the living witnesses to our motherland's boundless gratitude. Swedes! pride yourselves that you have seen these fragments of the Finnish army. Remember them, honor them; behold their emaciated forms, their pale faces. These are the signs of their faithful, although vain, efforts to liberate their native soil in years gone by.

And now, a closing word to the Finlanders. When you return to your homes tell your nation of the thankfulness of the Swedish people. Bear in mind that though you

return in ragged clothes, with pierced bodies or amputated limbs, you carry with you, nevertheless, the pride of the true soldier. You can never become enemies toward Sweden, your motherland, I am sure, but will remain its friends forever. We shall, from generation to generation, bless you and honor you. One thing I ask of you, that when you approach the battle-fields where we defeated our enemies, and when you see the countless sand-hills which cover our fallen comrades, send up a sigh for blessing over their remains; they died heroes, and honor stands guard over their ashes. You know the vagaries of the human heart, its readiness to adopt an object of affection which it believes it can never forget, yet ere a few weeks have gone by it has made another choice. Time transforms everything, and with its flight all is forgotten. Nevertheless, I assure you, as you also will realize, that the bond of friendship between warriors tried in battle, in danger, in blood and death, can never break. Thus you and I are assured of continual love for each other. Finlanders and brothers, could tears of blood from my eyes seal these words, they would flow in streams, every drop an assurance of my respect and friendship.

[Special translation by Charles E. Hurd.]

WILLIAM PITT

 WILLIAM PITT, distinguished Whig statesman and orator, and "greatest master of the whole art of parliamentary government," as Macaulay termed him, was born in Kent, England, May 28, 1759, and died at Putney, on the Thames, Jan. 23, 1806. He was the second son of the famous first Earl of Chatham, and was educated under private tutorship and at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he became a proficient classic, with a passion also for mathematics, which was of use to him in Parliament when he twice filled the post of chancellor of the exchequer. In 1780, he was called to the Bar, and in the following year entered the House of Commons, where he allied himself with the Shelburne opposition to Lord North, and early in his career delivered a masterly speech in favor of Burke's scheme of economical reform. When only in his twenty-fourth year, he was appointed chancellor of the exchequer in Lord Shelburne's brief ministry and became leader in the popular chamber. In 1783, on the overthrow of the coalition government of North and Fox, Pitt became prime minister, and after an appeal to the country he held this commanding position of the premiership continuously for seventeen years. During this period, he was all-powerful in Parliament, and was the idol of his country, owing to his great abilities, high disinterestedness as a statesman, and his lofty patriotism. His administration was remarkable for the manner in which it steered safely through the troubles and complexities of a strenuous time, while Pitt especially deserves credit for his desire to preserve peace with France, to conciliate Ireland and bring her into the union, and for his abounding sympathy with every measure tending to promote civil and religious liberty. His fame somewhat pales after 1793, when war with France broke out, with its defeats to English arms, though Pitt ever bore a brave front whatever the national adversities of the time, and however powerful was the opposition, led by Burke, Fox, and Sheridan, against him and his government. In 1801, he was compelled to resign the premiership, being specially foiled in his design to raise Catholics and Dissenters alike to perfect equality of civil rights. He reappeared, however, in Parliament in 1803, when he made a powerful speech in favor of the war with France, and in May, 1804, his brief second administration began. Though French invasion was frustrated by Nelson, English arms suffered defeat at Ulm and Austerlitz, and this brought the great statesman to his grave. While peace was maintained, Pitt did much for his country's commerce, while he also sought to raise statesmanship to a higher plane, to purge politics of corruption, and to secure reforms both in and out of Parliament. It has been said of Pitt, that "he was the first English Minister who really grasped the part which industry was to play in promoting the welfare of the world." The saying is true and cannot be gainsaid, by those, at least, who are familiar with Pitt's general industrial policy and with his labors in behalf of financial reform; while great credit is due him for his efforts to maintain the English nation at peace, at a time when, as it was said, "all governments were its enemies," and when but for his courageous and astute pilotage at an era of grave and complex disturbance in Europe, Britain might herself have fallen into the swoon and welter of the time.

SPEECH ON REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE

[This was the most elaborate oration ever delivered by Mr. Pitt, and as a parliamentary discourse designed at once to inform and inspire it has probably never been surpassed. It was delivered before the House of Commons, February 3, 1800. Of the vast variety of facts brought forward or referred to, very few have ever been disputed; they are arranged in luminous order, and grow out of each other in regular succession; they present a vivid and horrible picture of the miseries inflicted upon Europe by revolutionary France, while the provocations of her enemies are thrown entirely into the background.]

I WILL enlarge no further on the origin of the war. I have read and detailed to you a system which was in itself a declaration of war against all nations, which was so intended, and which has been so applied, which has been exemplified in the extreme peril and hazard of almost all who for a moment have trusted to treaty and which has not at this hour overwhelmed Europe in one indiscriminate mass of ruin, only because we have not indulged, to a fatal extremity, that disposition which we have, however, indulged too far; because we have not consented to trust to profession and compromise, rather than to our own valor and exertion, for security against a system from which we never shall be delivered till either the principle is extinguished or its strength is exhausted.

I might, sir, if I found it necessary, enter into much detail upon this part of the subject. You cannot look at the map of Europe and lay your hand upon that country against which France has not either declared an open and aggressive war, or violated some positive treaty, or broken some recognized principle of the law of nations.

This subject may be divided into various periods. There were some acts of hostility committed previous to the war with this country, and very little, indeed, subsequent to that declaration, which abjured the love of conquest. The attack

upon the papal state, by the seizure of Avignon, in 1791, was accompanied with specimens of all the vile arts and perfidy that ever disgraced a revolution. Avignon was separated from its lawful sovereign, with whom not even the pretence of quarrel existed, and forcibly incorporated in the tyranny of one and indivisible France. The same system led, in the same year, to an aggression against the whole German empire, by the seizure of Porentrui, part of the dominions of the bishop of Basle.

Afterward, in 1792, unpreceded by any declaration of war or any cause of hostility, and in direct violation of the solemn pledge to abstain from conquest, they made war against the king of Sardinia, by the seizure of Savoy, for the purpose of incorporating it in like manner with France. In the same year they had proceeded to the declaration of war against Austria, against Prussia, and against the German empire, in which they have been justified only on the ground of a rooted hostility, combination, and league of sovereigns for the dismemberment of France.

I say that some of the documents brought to support this defence are spurious and false.

I say that even in those that are not so there is not one word to prove the charge principally relied upon, that of an intention to effect the dismemberment of France or to impose upon it, by force, any particular constitution. I say that, as far as we have been able to trace what passed at Pilnitz, the declaration there signed referred to the imprisonment of Louis XVI; its immediate view was to effect his deliverance if a concert sufficiently extensive could be formed with other sovereigns for that purpose. It left the internal state of France to be decided by the king restored to his liberty, with the free consent of the states of his kingdom, and

it did not contain one word relative to the dismemberment of France.

In the subsequent discussions which took place in 1792, and which embraced at the same time all the other points of jealousy which had arisen between the two countries, the declaration of Pilnitz was referred to, and explained on the part of Austria in a manner precisely conformable to what I have now stated. The amicable explanations which took place, both on this subject and on all the matters in dispute, will be found in the official correspondence between the two courts, which has been made public; and it will be found, also, that as long as the negotiation continued to be conducted through M. Delessart, then minister for foreign affairs, there was a great prospect that those discussions would be amicably terminated; but it is notorious, and has since been clearly proved on the authority of Brissot himself, that the violent party in France considered such an issue of the negotiation as likely to be fatal to their projects, and thought, to use his own words, that "war was necessary to consolidate the Revolution."

For the express purpose of producing the war they excited a popular tumult in Paris; they insisted upon and obtained the dismissal of M. Delessart. A new minister was appointed in his room; the tone of the negotiation was immediately changed, and an ultimatum was sent to the Emperor, similar to that which was afterward sent to this country, affording him no satisfaction on his just grounds of complaint, and requiring him, under those circumstances, to disarm. The first events of the contest proved how much more France was prepared for war than Austria, and afford a strong confirmation of the proposition which I maintain, that no offensive intention was entertained on the part of the latter power.

War was then declared against Austria, a war which I state to be a war of aggression on the part of France. The king of Prussia had declared that he should consider war against the Emperor or empire as war against himself. He had declared that as a co-estate of the empire he was determined to defend their rights; that as an ally to the Emperor he would support him to the utmost against any attack; and that for the sake of his own dominions he felt himself called upon to resist the progress of French principles and to maintain the balance of power in Europe. With this notice before them, France declared war upon the Emperor, and the war with Prussia was the necessary consequence of this aggression, both against the Emperor and the empire.

The war against the king of Sardinia follows next. The declaration of that war was the seizure of Savoy by an invading army—and on what ground? On that which has been stated already. They had found out, by some light of nature, that the Rhine and the Alps were the natural limits of France. Upon that ground Savoy was seized; and Savoy was also incorporated with France.

Here finishes the history of the wars in which France was engaged antecedent to the war with Great Britain, with Holland, and with Spain. With respect to Spain, we have seen nothing which leads us to suspect that either attachment to religion, or the ties of consanguinity, or regard to the ancient system of Europe, was likely to induce that court to connect itself in offensive war against France. The war was evidently and incontestably begun by France against Spain.

The case of Holland is so fresh in every man's recollection, and so connected with the immediate causes of the war with this country, that it cannot require one word of observation. What shall I say, then, on the case of Portugal? I cannot,

indeed, say that France ever declared war against that country. I can hardly say even that she ever made war, but she required them to make a treaty of peace as if they had been at war; she obliged them to purchase that treaty; she broke it as soon as it was purchased; and she had originally no other ground of complaint than this, that Portugal had performed, though inadequately, the engagements of its ancient defensive alliance with this country in the character of an auxiliary—a conduct which cannot of itself make any power a principal in a war.

I have now enumerated all the nations at war at that period, with the exception only of Naples. It can hardly be necessary to call to the recollection of the House the characteristic feature of revolutionary principles which was shown, even at this early period, in the personal insult offered to the king of Naples by the commander of a French squadron riding uncontrolled in the Mediterranean, and (while our fleets were yet unarmed) threatening destruction to all the coast of Italy.

It was not till a considerably later period that almost all the other nations of Europe found themselves equally involved in actual hostility; but it is not a little material to the whole of my argument, compared with the statement of the learned gentleman and with that contained in the French note, to examine at what period this hostility extended itself. It extended itself, in the course of 1796, to the states of Italy which had hitherto been exempted from it. In 1797 it had ended in the destruction of most of them; it had ended in the virtual deposition of the king of Sardinia; it had ended in the conversion of Genoa and Tuscany into democratic republics; it had ended in the revolution of Venice, in the violation of treaties with the new Venetian

republic; and, finally, in transferring that very republic, the creature and vassal of France, to the dominion of Austria.

I observe from the gestures of some honorable gentlemen that they think we are precluded from the use of any argument founded on this last transaction. I already hear them saying that it was as criminal in Austria to receive as it was in France to give. I am far from defending or palliating the conduct of Austria upon this occasion. But because Austria, unable at last to contend with the arms of France, was forced to accept an unjust and insufficient indemnification for the conquests France had made from it, are we to be debarred from stating what, on the part of France, was not merely an unjust acquisition, but an act of the grossest and most aggravated perfidy and cruelty, and one of the most striking specimens of that system which has been uniformly and indiscriminately applied to all the countries which France has had within its grasp?

This only can be said in vindication of France (and it is still more a vindication of Austria), that, practically speaking, if there is any part of this transaction for which Venice itself has reason to be grateful, it can only be for the permission to exchange the embraces of French fraternity for what is called the despotism of Vienna.

Let these facts and these dates be compared with what we have heard. The honorable gentleman has told us, and the author of the note from France has told us also, that all the French conquests were produced by the operations of the allies. It was when they were pressed on all sides, when their own territory was in danger, when their own independence was in question, when the confederacy appeared too strong, it was then they used the means with which their

power and their courage furnished them, and, "attacked upon all sides, they carried everywhere their defensive arms."

I do not wish to misrepresent the learned gentleman, but I understood him to speak of this sentiment with approbation. The sentiment itself is this, that if a nation is unjustly attacked in any one quarter by others, she cannot stop to consider by whom, but must find means of strength in other quarters, no matter where; and is justified in attacking, in her turn, those with whom she is at peace, and from whom she has received no species of provocation.

Sir, I hope I have already proved, in a great measure, that no such attack was made upon France; but, if it was made, I maintain that the whole ground on which that argument is founded cannot be tolerated. In the name of the laws of nature and nations, in the name of everything that is sacred and honorable, I demur to that plea; and I tell that honorable and learned gentleman that he would do well to look again into the law of nations before he ventures to come to this House to give the sanction of his authority to so dreadful and execrable a system.

I certainly understood this to be distinctly the tenor of the learned gentleman's argument, but as he tells me he did not use it, I take it for granted he did not intend to use it. I rejoice that he did not; but at least, then, I have a right to expect that the learned gentleman should now transfer to the French note some of the indignation which he has hitherto lavished upon the declarations of this country.

This principle, which the learned gentleman disclaims, the French note avows; and I contend, without the fear of contradiction, it is the principle upon which France has uniformly acted. But while the learned gentleman disclaims this proposition, he certainly will admit that he has himself

asserted, and maintained in the whole course of his argument, that the pressure of the war upon France imposed upon her the necessity of those exertions which produced most of the enormities of the revolution, and most of the enormities practised against the other countries of Europe. The House will recollect that in the year 1796, when all these horrors in Italy were beginning, which are the strongest illustrations of the general character of the French revolution, we had begun that negotiation to which the learned gentleman has referred.

England then possessed numerous conquests. England, though not having at that time had the advantage of three of her most splendid victories, England even then appeared undisputed mistress of the sea.

England, having then engrossed the whole wealth of the colonial world; England, having lost nothing of its original possessions; England then comes forward, proposing a general peace, and offering—what? offering the surrender of all that it had acquired, in order to obtain—what? Not the dismemberment, not the partition of ancient France, but the return of a part of those conquests, no one of which could be retained, but in direct contradiction to that original and solemn pledge which is now referred to as the proof of the just and moderate disposition of the French republic. Yet even this offer was not sufficient to procure peace or to arrest the progress of France in her defensive operations against other unoffending countries!

From the pages, however, of the learned gentleman's pamphlet (which, after all its editions, is now fresher in his memory than in that of any other person in this House or in the country), he is furnished with an argument, on the result of the negotiations, on which he appears confidently to rely. He maintains that the single point on which the negotiation