

Never ask for anything in half-hearted fashion. Rather, have the air of exacting it. If anyone fail you, reserve your vengeance until the moment when you can get complete satisfaction, and, above all, do not fear reprisals. Your glory will never suffer from them; so much the worse for your subjects upon whom these reprisals will fall. But here is the real point. All your subjects should be convinced that you suspect nothing and that nothing can astonish you.

Above all, endeavor to pass with them for a dangerous man who knows no other principles but those that lead to glory. Act in such a manner that they will certainly feel that you would rather lose two kingdoms than not to play a rôle for posterity. As these sentiments demand an uncommon soul, they strike, they bewilder the greater part of men, and it is this which constitutes the greatest monarch in this world.

If a stranger should come to your court, shower civilities upon him, and especially endeavor to have him always near you; this is the true means of concealing from him the vices of your government. If he is a soldier, make your regiment of guards manœuvre before him, and let it be yourself who is in command. If he is a wit who has composed a work, let him see it lying on your table and talk with him of his talents. If he is a merchant, listen to him with kindness, flatter him and try to get him to establish himself in your country.¹

The number of troops maintained by a State must be in proportion to the troops of its enemies; . . . it may be said perhaps that the prince must rely upon the help of his allies . . .; this would be true if the allies were what they should be; but their zeal is but lukewarmness, and we are certainly deceiving ourselves if we rely upon other than ourselves. . . .²

I give you a problem to solve. When one has the advantage, should he or should he not avail himself of it? I am ready with my troops and all else; if I do not make use of them, I hold within my hands a good thing which I fail to use; if I do make use of them, it will be said that I have the skill to avail myself of the superiority which I have over my neighbors.³

The politics of invasion has established as its principle that the first step for the conquest of a country is to get a footing upon it,

¹ *Les Matinées Royales*, pp. 33-35.

² *Essai sur les formes de gouvernement—Œuvres philosophiques*, tome ii, p. 203; *Œuvres de Frédéric le Grand*, tome ix.

³ *Politische Correspondenz Friedrichs des Grossen*, vol. I, p. 84.

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¹ *Considérations philosophiques*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Exposition des Œuvres de Frédéric le Grand*

⁴ *Histoire de Frédéric le Grand*, tome