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National Cipher Challenge Challenge 6 part A, 11/4/08 4:55

Major George Scovell to the office of the Duke of Wellington.

My Lord,

The enclosed message confirms much that we had already surmised. The French armies of the peninsula are in some disarray, their leadership under question, even by Napoleon himself, and under pressure of time to effect a victory. The orders therein threaten to disperse their northern armies as they hunt the guerillas, and to divert their forces from the forts at Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo.

The sophistication of their field cyphers has increased, and the use of padding to disguise signatures and salutations reduces the effectiveness of two of our most effective weapons. The further introduction of additional characters to encode the more familiar letters disguised the distribution of the more common letters, and forced us to a more sophisticated analysis of the text.

I remain confident that even with the introduction of their forthcoming grand chiffre, there is hope that we will continue to break their cyphers, but this work is increasingly hard, and will require greater resources than I currently have at my disposal.

I remain etc., Major Scovell

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National Cipher Challenge Challenge 6 part B, 11/4/08 4:55

From the office of General Berthier

Your Majesty, the Emperor wishes it to be known that he is displeased and surprised that a severely weakened British army continues to tie up the superior forces under your command. It is his desire that the following orders should be immediately effected.

First, Marshal Marmont is to send six thousand troops to reinforce the southern brigades and to bring the lamentable siege of Valencia to a swift close.

Second, the northernmost division of the Army of Portugal is to assist in the assault on the guerilla army there, and to stamp out local resistance.

Third, the armies of the peninsula are placed under your full control, with Marshal Jourdan hereby appointed chief of staff to your court. He will advise you in all matters military.

Fourth, Maret will furnish the court and the armies under your command with a grand chiffre adapted from the one already in use elsewhere.

Fifth, the Imperial Guard will return immediately to France to prepare for the invasion of Russia.

General Clarke, Duke of Feltre, will, as Minister of War act as Paris liaison.

General Berthier