

# SIX LETTERS BY ANGEL RUTTER, ENGLISH CONSUL IN MALTA

by

**Victor Mallia-Milanes**

During his first years in office, the Venetian Minister in Malta, Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga (1), had very often complained of "the frequent reprisals practised by the English on French shipping" in the central Mediterranean (2), of the inconvenience and annoyance caused by the "strange behaviour" (3) of English corsairs and shipowners who, "on conducting prizes to this Port, are solicited by the bad intention of their Consul here" (4), and of "the nuisance of English Captains" on the island (5). Such a precarious situation was ill-conducive to a peaceful pursuance of trade and unpleasant to members of the merchant community in Malta. It need hardly be said that the lawless John Dodsworth (6), the

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A.O.M. = Archives of the Order of Malta, Royal Public Library, Malta

A.S.V. = Archivio di Stato, Venice

F.O. = Foreign Office, Public Record Office, London

S.P. = State Papers, Public Record Office, London

1. See my forthcoming paper "Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's Correspondence to the Venetian Magistracy of Trade 1754-1776. A Source for an Economic History of Eighteenth Century Malta".
2. "Le notizie che in oggi rileviamo [sono] assai disgustose; essendo arivati certi riscontri delle repressaglie praticate dalli Inglesi sopra bastimenti Francesi anco in questi mari: son pochi giorni che nè fù prese uno carico d'Oglio partito dà questo Porto, e fù condoto in Trapani per la vendita, ed altro proveniente dà Marsilia con effetti per quest'Isola, e molti passeggeri Maltesi furono trasportati à Porto Maone di dove se nè anno le notizie." A.S.V., *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, prima serie, busta 601*, "Lettere del Commendatore di Malta Massimiliano Buzzaccarini Gonzaga", 1st December, 1755.
3. "Li Corsari Inglesi seguono ad inquietarci con le loro stranezze, per altro praticate consimili in Livorno, Genova, ed anco in Napoli." *Ibid.*, 30th January, 1756 M.V.
4. "Frequenti sono li disturbi che noi soffriamo degli Armatori Inglesi quali trasportano Prede à questo Porto, venendo anco solecitati dal mal pensamento di codesto loro Console; però vengono tenuti à dovere, e posti li migliori provvedimenti, acciò non abbino à recare alcun inconveniente à quest' Isola." *Ibid.*, 2nd December, 1756.
5. "Ora siamo liberi dalle Molestie de' Capitani Inglesi, i quali tutti sono partiti." *Ibid.*, 15th March, 1757.
6. Buzzaccarini Gonzaga's correspondence provides ample evidence of what Harrison defined in a letter to the Right Hon. Lord Halifax as Dodsworth's "own misconduct". S.P. 86, *Foreign, Malta* 4, f.9. The following is an example: "Credo per mio dovere il rendere intese l'EE. Vostre d'un fatto accaduto nè scorsi giorni per la male condotta di questo Console Britannico; il quale sempre ha procurato disturbare la quiete di questa Religione ed inviluparla in dispiacere. Notto è, che negli anni scorsi scorevano per il Mediterraneo più bastimenti in Corso con la Bandiera di

English consul to whom the Venetian Minister was referring, was unsuitable for the exacting task with which he had been entrusted.

S.M. il Re di Prussia, e che più Imperiali e Toscani soffrirono la sventura di restare loro Preda. Molti furono condotti à questo Porto, e raccomandati à questo Console Britannico; fra quali un Toscano sopra il quale imbarcato s'aveva 'l Alb. D. Nicolò Malatesta suddito Veneto il quale passava à Smirne, che spogliato fù di tutti li suoi effetti ed in particolare di molte Gioie attinenti à Mercadanti Veneziani; parte delle quali mi riuscì in allora ricuperare; e che consegnate ho à codesto Magistrato Eccellentissimo al mio arrivo in Venezia, restando ancora altre à riaversi.

Li Ministri delle SS.MM. Imperiali e Reggie qui residenti fecero le loro proteste, e volero il sequestro di tutti l'Effetti depredati sino à causa decisa: le sentenze furono à Toscani favorevoli, e lo stesso Re di Prussia esborsò in Constantino-poli qualche somma di denaro che à Sudditi della Porta apparteneva, e ordinò che risarciti fossero li Toscani. Il Console Britannico con ricercati protesti mai ha eseguito; per ciò Sua Maestà Prussiana con il consenso dell'Ammiragliato Britannico prese la risoluzione di ricorrere à questo Gran Maestro, acciò obbligar volesse il Console à consegnare gli Effetti tutti depredati per il risarcimento; e se fosse necessario usare della forza per ciò, questa addoperasse riservando però la Persona. Fece il Gran Maestro rendere il Console di tal Ordine, ed ordinògli la consegna degli Effetti conservate in mani di Soggetti da lui destinati e ricusò Egli con mala forma d'obbedire, dicendo non riconosceva altri comandi, che quelli che dati li venivano dalla Sua Corte; onde ordinato fù di aprirsi li Magazzini tutti con l'intervento della Giustizia, ed inventariati furono tutti li Effetti ritrovati: furono ricervati poi le scritture attinenti à Prussiani, li Manifesti e Giornali de Bastimenti quali ricusò consegnare; e dubitando d'una Visita alla propria Casa, di notte tempo innalborò sopra la Porta della Casa l'Armi Brittaniche, cosa che risvegliò del rumore nella nostra Gioventù, che aquietata poi vene da soggetti di più matura riflessione, mentre inusitato è da Consoli il tener l'Armi, essendo questi nominati dal Gran Maestro per antica prerogativa accordatagli da Sovrani. Fù fatta seria riflessione al fatto, nè volendo il Gran Maestro, nè la Religione incontrare dispiacere con alcuno de Principi, vene dal parere del suo Consiglio alla determinazione di sospendere per ora il Console dal Impiego; e nominare altro soggetto ad esercitarlo; e perchè rispettate fossero le Armi Brittaniche, e garantite da qualunque supposto malizioso attentato, che per parte del Console si potesse pretendere, fù ordinato alla Custodia della Casa un Pichetto di Soldati per custodirle: destinò pure il Consiglio di spedire in Inghilterra un Cavaliere che informato fosse della male condotta del Console sempre tenuta in disseminare discordie ed interrompere la quiete della Religione.....". A.S.V., *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, prima serie, busta 601*, "Lettere del Commendatore di Malta.....", 19th May, 1762. In February of the next year, Buzzaccarini Gonzaga wrote again to Venice on the same subject: "Con mia umilissima lettera 19 Maggio del scaduto anno, ragualia l'EE. Vostre di quanto accaduto era per la male direzione di questo Console Inglese, e li disturbi à quali soggiacere poteva la Religione, per un Uomo così stravagante; il quale à nulla si persuadeva, e che dispregava lo stesso Governo di questa Religione; così significai Loro pure la violente risoluzione presa dal Consale, d'espore di notte tempo le Armi Brittaniche sopra la sua Casa, per esimersi dal dare li douti Conti à Propretarj derubati da Corsari Prussiani, à quali per sentenze della Corte di Berlino, tenuto era dare tutte le soddisfazioni; determinò la Religione di spedire prestatamente à Londra il Cavaliere Masini per rendere intesa quella Corte della Condotta del suo Console e della irregolarità del medesimo sempre usate con le riserve che costì tenuto s'avevano in tutte le circostanze. Questo Cavaliere seppe riuscire nella sua commissione appresso quella Corte, avendosi, con li ultimi Dispacci, riceuta la risoluzione, che il detto Console non era per tale riconosciuto dalla Corte, e che non riconoscevasi pure per Nazionale, per il che poteva la Religione disporre del medesimo, come credeva necessario. Con tali riscontri fù determinato di fare calare le Armi della Casa del Console con la maggior circospezione,

Dodsworth was succeeded by Angel Rutter, whose consulship (1763-87) marks an important phase in Anglo-Maltese relations even though it has been hitherto only exiguously defined by interested historians (7). These, in my view, have erred in underestimating Rutter, charging him of incompetence and assigning to his consulship a minor role in restoring confidence in British trade with Malta. To take what I assume to be an unimpeachable source, Buzzaccarini Gonzaga, a few weeks after Dodsworth's dismissal (8), in a despatch to the Venetian Magistracy of Trade (9), wrote: "Now, with the newly instituted consul, the English are conducting themselves at this Port much more differently than previous'y, paying deference and calling more frequently" (10).

Son of British-born Thomas Rutter (11), the new consul was described by Commodore Harrison as "a person of good character, and proper qualifications, to discharge the Duty of British Vice-Consul at Malta" (12). Unlike his predecessor, he was always ready to act disinterestedly on behalf of English merchants, seamen and travellers sojourning on the island. On one occasion, he had to spend about 890 *scudi* to maintain sixty-four English prisoners-of-war in Malta for six weeks, losing 10% of that amount on reimbursement (13). On another, in February 1780, a

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ed essendo dopo entrata la Giustizia fù Egli arestato con tutti della sua Famiglia, e condoto ad un Castello, ove viene guardato à vista, e la famiglia parte in Monastero, ed altra in luogo opportuno; furono posti li Bolli alla sua Casa, à quali volero fosse Egli presente, e la Casa viene guardata dà soldati, sino à che nè venghino formati l'Inventarj. Ora li Creditori potranno aggire contro il Medesimo secondo le Leggi, ad essere risarciti dè loro danni; sè però vi saranno Effetti sufficienti, i quali dubito molto sieno stati in gran parte anticipatamente trafugati.....". *Ibid.*, 7th February, 1762 M.V.

For this episode in Anglo-Maltese relations see: R. Cavaliero, "John Dodsworth, a Consul in Malta", *Mariners' Mirror* (November 1957), pp. 306-321; and J. Galea, "English privateers at Malta and a British Consul's misfortunes in the Eighteenth Century", *Revue de l'Ordre Souverain Militaire de Malte XVI* (1958), pp. 218-227.

7. See, for example, A. Mifsud, *Knights Hospitallers of the Venerable Tongue of England in Malta*, Malta, 1914; R. Cavaliero, *The Last of the Crusaders*, London, 1960.
8. He was dismissed on 5th May, 1762. R. Cavaliero, "John Dodsworth.....", p.317.
9. A.S.V., *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, prima serie, busta 601*, "Lettere del Commendatore di Malta.....", 15th June, 1762.
10. "Ora, con il nuovo istituito Console, gli Inglesi si diportano in questo Porto molto diversamente dà prima usando attenzione e frequentano.....". *Ibid.*
11. "Il Gran Maestro..... ha commesso il servizio della Nazione [Brittanica] ad Angelo Rutter il di cui Padre nato Inglese esercitò lo stesso Impiego." S.P. 86, *Foreign, Malta* 4, f.24. Thomas Rutter was appointed consul for England, Holland and the Low Countries on 26th June, 1706. For the list of English consuls in Malta during the Order's stay on the island (1530-1798) see: V. Mallia-Milanes, "English Merchants' Initial Contacts with Malta: A Reconsideration", *Melita Historica* VI, 4 (1975), p. 361.
12. S.P. 86, *Foreign, Malta* 4, f. 81.
13. See Rutter's letter to the "Illustrissimo Signor Cavaliere Stranier Porter — Londra", dated 25th August, 1781, in F.O. 49/1, ff. 15-16.

French frigate conducted the English cutter *Bogg*, master George Fagg, to the Maltese harbour; on board were eighty-six Englishmen. For nine days Rutter had to provide them with shelter, food and clothing, and one of them, Richard Rutcliff, with hospitalization (14). This time Rutter spent over 1000 *scudi*, claiming a loss of 11% (15).

Angel Rutter was appointed British consul in Malta by Grandmaster Pinto on 18th April, 1763 (16), but due to the nature and practice of the Order's consular system (17), he could never enjoy official recognition of his post from London. Reporting to the Grandmaster on the occasion of Rutter's appointment, Fra Giorgio di Masino, a Piedmontese Knight of St John, quoted Lord Egremont's observation that "it was not possible for His Brittanic Majesty to recognise him as His Consul or anyone who would not be nominated by him; nor could he be submitted to the Laws of Parliament, whose Ordinances were against such procedures, and also because it would not be consistent with Royal Dignity to recognise similar employees who were not appointed by the King himself" (18). However, the hesitancy of London to give clear and formal recognition was only a theoretical assertion of a high-sounding principle.

In practice the British Government adopted a much more liberal and positive attitude. The presence of an English consul in central Mediterranean Malta was to play a determining factor in regulating British Mediterranean policy. As Rutter's letters explicitly imply, official correspondence, despatches and detailed instructions from London flowed in regularly to his office, even on such matters as governmental policy and international relations. The following letter, addressed to "Mr Rutter"

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14. "Nel Mese di Febbraio 1780," wrote Rutter to Porter, "è venuta in questo Porto una Fregata Francese dà Guerra nominata il *Serio*, e condusse seco 86 Prigionieri del *Cotter* armato in Londra, nominato il *Bogg* Capitano Giorgio Fagg, ed avendo trattenuto à bordo il Capitano e Pilota, fui similmente obligato ricevere 85 Prigionieri, ed uno nell'Ospedale ferito con rottura di ossi nel calcagno sinistro; Fui obligato alcuni vestirli ordinariamente, perchè erano quasi ignudi, e dimandandoci perchè così nudi, mi risposero, che erano raccolti nella faccia del mare. Mentre che il Bastimento stava annegandosi, li hò mantenuti qui per nove giorni, si trovò un Bastimento, che andava in Livorno, gli hò fatto le loro spese di provisioni, e gli hò speso Scudi 968 di Malta, come comparisce dalla copia del conto qui incluso, quale benchè ascende à Scudi 968 assicuro à Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, che mi costa più di mille.....". *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, encl. "Expences made by me for the use of the 86 English Prisoners belonging to Capt. George Fugg, debarok'd here in Malta out of the Frigate of His Most Christian Majesty the *Serius*.", ff.13-14.
16. A.O.M. 6429, *sub* "Nazione Inglese".
17. For a detailed study of the consular system in Malta during the Order's stay, see: V. Mallia-Milanes, "Malta and Venice in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Consular Relations", *Studi Veneziani* XVII-XVIII (1975-6), pp.265-320.
18. S.P. 86, *Foreign, Malta* 4, f.26.

and dated "St James's, 15th September 1769", is an example (19).

Sir,

As the Empress of Russia has lately communicated her Intentions of sending a Fleet into the Mediterranean, I am commanded to signify to you the King's pleasure, that you do conform yourself to the strict Rules of that exact Neutra'ity, which His Majesty professes to observe upon this occasion: that at the same time that you give to each of the Belligerent Powers, those marks of Friendship which they have a right to expect you discourage in every proper manner any of His Majesty's subjects from entering into any Engagements of any kind, which may look like taking a part in the present unhappy War between Russia and the Porte, which it is His Majesty's wish may be of as short a Duration as possible.

I am etc.

Weymouth.

The six letters, published here for the first time and reproduced in the original, are to be found in *State Papers 86, Foreign, Malta 4*, at the Public Record Office, London.

#### THE LETTERS

##### Letter I

[S.P. 86, Foreign, Malta 4, f.170]

To His Excellency Duke of Richmond, [Secretary of State for Southern Department] — London.

My Lord,

The Letter Your Excellence was pleased to honor me with, of the 23th May was duely remitted me, by Mr Serminean Consul of Naples. My zeal for the defence of His Majestys rights and interets of his subjects prompts me to take the freedom of representing to Your Excellence the agreeable harmony, which now so perfectly subsist, betwixt the Court of Britain and this place, and the constant civilitys the British Subjects now meet with here; as likewise to assure Your Excellence of my diligence and attention in promoting an uninterrupted continuation of the same, both of which I believe can be well attested by Severall English Gentlemen, now residing in London, who have received undoubted proofs thereof these last four years.

Permitt me likewise to affirm, that whatever commands Your Excellence is pleased to honor me with, shall be observ'd with the outmost cheerfulness and punctuality, during all the time that I have the honor to be employ'd in His Majestys service; and also to beg, I may be excused this freedom, upon the account of the motive, it only proceeds from which is no other, than a sincere desire of proving the perfect attachment, submission and profound respect wherewith I have the honor to remain

My Lord

Your Excellence's

Malta the 6th July 1766

Most Obedient and most Devoted  
Most humble Servant  
Angel Rutter.

**Letter II**

[S.P. 86, Foreign, Malta 4, f.172]

To His Excellence the Earl of Shelburne, [Secretary of State for Southern Department]—  
Whitehall

My Lord,

I hope the freedom I here take, of writing an answer to the letter Your Excellence was pleased to honor me with, 9 of August, will not be imputed to presumption, but rather to its true motive, which I can safely affirm are no other, than a sincere desire, that Your Excellence and the other Ministers should remain perfectly satisfy'd, with regard to the good affections of this Venerable Order, towards His Majestys Person Government and Interests; to give assurances that no disorders shall happen, during the time I shall have the honor to continue in this office, if they can be prevented by an unexception diligence and attention in the exercise of it, seeing nothing will be able to afford me greater honor and satisfaction, than to have frequent oportunitys furnish'd me of giving undoubted proofs of the same, and of discovering the zeal attatchment and duty wherewith I have the honor to remain

Your Excellences  
Malta the 4th of Novb.er 1766

Most devoted most Obedient  
Most Humble Servant  
Angel Rutter.

**Letter III**

[S.P. 86, Foreign, Malta 4, f.174]

My Lord,

I have the particular honor of Your Eccelence's two letters of the 30th Sept. and 3rd October 1766; the agreable contents of which have caus'd an universal Joy in this place, Tho' in a more sensible manner to his Eminence the Grandmaster, which at same time prov'd to me the sincere satisfaction he felt, from having had the Glory of restoring to his Order, an Alliance which it had allways known how to possess and value; which had been so unnaturally and unexpectedly interrupted, and wherof the continu'd enjoyment will certainly be a principal object of his desires and Labours. At the same time he expressed a real concern for the prosperity of His Majestys Reign, and that the Sovereign Bounty might render the latter part of it, as glorious as it had done the preceeding.

Whatever depends upon my weak abilitys, for promoting such desirable purpose, as likewise the interests of His Majestys Subjects here, will alone depend upon the commands Your Excellence may be pleased to honor me with seeing my only ambition is a punctual execution of them, and to be esteemed in the truest manner.

My Lord  
Malta the 9th of December 1766

Your Excellence's  
Most Obedient and most Dutyfull  
humble Servant  
Angel Rutter.

**Letter IV**

[S.P. 86, Foreign, Malta 4, ff.176-7v]

To His Excellence the Earl of Shelburne, [Secretary of State for Southern Department]—  
Whitehall

My Lord,

Along with the occasion of acknowledging the honor of Your Excellence's Letter of 25th Novb.r the contents wherof, were here receiv'd with universal satisfaction, accompany'd with hearty desires for the prosperity of that important alliance; I take the

freedom to inform, that Capt. James Merryfield, and Mr John Dodsworth have obtained their Liberty after five years imprisonment, by orders from the King of Prussia, to this Government. The latter departed yesterday, with four of his children for Alicant, from whence, he intends to go at London, after having received from this Government £35 for his passage, with another sum for his further expences, the extent of which, I don't know. The Capt. and his Consort, who had departed for Naples some weeks before, did not meet with the same fortune, occasioned meerly from their unaccountable conduct, having had the imprudence, to insult the Grand Master, in the presence of his Cavaliers, his Wife discharging upon him much injurious and abusive Language; Whereupon they were embarqu'd the same evening, with four soldiers on board a ship bound for Messina, with which he had before agreed for his passage, and had shipp'd his baggage. The expences of their passage fell to my share, after having disburs'd for them upwards of forty guineas during the time of his imprisonment, without the hopes of recovering a shilling of it. Both of them propose going to London.

It is also proper Your Excellence should be informed, that this affair is not regarded here, as one that has the least connection with the Court of Great Britain, but merely with that of Prussia, under whose colours, and in virtue of whose patents the Prizes were made; and by whose Laws the disputes are to be decided, agreeable to the tenour of the contracts here produced; In consequence of which, the King forms his claim of 15,000 Dollars, which his Ambassador at the Porte, had been oblig'd to disburse for the value of the losses, which the Turkis subjects had sustain'd, from the depredations made by the said Capt. Merryfield. The same has been declared Mr Dodsworth creditor in Scuds 13,000 this current Maltese money; who has nothing left to pay them. All that remained of the said Prussian effects, after the restitution of several goods belonging to Livornese Merchants by the same Orders, amounted to no more than 5,000 Scuds; and was remitted to Mr Motta Agent in Naples to His Prussian Majesty; whose orders, are here most punctually observed, to preserve the Commendums which this Order of Malta possess in Silesia which upon the smallest disobedience, would be sequestered, the force of which reasons, neither Capt. Merryfield, nor his Spouse have ever inclined to understand.

If they had followed my advice, and behav'd with civility and patience, it must have at last obtained them what they desired; they have only themselves to blame, that it did not, which however could cause to them no greater uneasiness, than it did to me, from seeing so much trouble expense and toyl suffered with such patience, meerly from a view of procuring them a happy accomodation, all at once frustrated by one step of imprudence, made without any just cause. Tho' what helps to console me, on the other hand, is the satisfaction I feel from knowing that all the other British Subjects, of whatever rank or quality, who have been in this Island, these last five years, have left it, perfectly well pleased, with the treatment they met with, in it. This much I thought my duty to acquaint Your Excellence with, flattering myself that the singularity of the circumstances, may help to attone the prolixity used in relating them. Wherewith I again have the honour of declaring myself, with the most sincere and profound respect.

My Lord

Your Excellence's

Malta the 12th of June 1767

Most Devoted and  
Most Obedient Humble Servant  
Angel Rutter.

**Letter V**[S.P. 86, *Foreign, Malta 4, f.178r*]

My Lord,

Se la Lettera delli 29 Settembre, con la quale si compiacque Vostra Eccellenza onorarmi, mi rinovò nel cuore l'amaro cordoglio per la morte di Sua Altezza Reale Duca d'Yorck, della quale eravamo qui già informati; l'altra lettera delli 3 Novembre, con la quale Vostra Eccellenza mi ha onorato mi rasserendò, e mi riempi di consolatione, come a tutti che del suo contenuto furon ragguagliati, sentendo li effetti della Divina Beneditione sù la Real Famiglia del Degnissimo Nostro Sovrano, quali priego la Divina Bontà voler sempre moltiplicare.

In quest'Isola devo ragguagliar Vostra Eccellenza che li Bastimenti Nationali che passano, li vedo partir contentissimi, essendo stimati e riguardati con invidia d'altre Nationi. Verso li 20 Dicembre p.p. passò da questo porto Mr Andrew Turnbull con due bastimenti di Porto Mahone, veniva dall'Arcipelago, da dove aveva arrollato circa 60 persone, quali assieme con 80 che sono già in Porto Mahone, intende trasportarli nella Florida, per maggiormente popolare e coltivare quella Provincia. Mi ordinò detto Mr Turnbull da Siracusa una commissione, quale mi disse dover servire per Vostra Eccellenza, del più perfetto l'ho eseguita; Se questa piacerà e comanderà esser servita ogn' anno di consimile, o' altro che desidera da queste parti, stimerò mio grandissimo onore e fortuna ricever di lei stimatissimi comandi; Mentre desidero esser col più profondo ossequio,  
Dell'Eccellenza Vostra  
Malta li 9 Gennaro 1768

Humilissimo Obedientis.mo et  
Obligatis. Servid.e  
Angelo Rutter.

**Letter VI**[S.P. 86, *Foreign, Malta 4, f.182*]*To Viscount Weymouth, [Secretary of State for Southern Department]*

My Lord,

M'è pervenuta la Stimatissima Lettera di Vostra Eccellenza dell 15 Settembre ultimo scorso, con la quale m'ha onorato; alla quale puntualmente m'uniformerò, e persuaderò à Bastimenti nostri Nationali, acciò non dassero in quest'occasione il minimo motivo di Lamento alla Porta Ottomana; E venendo in questi Mari l'accennata Flotta Russiana, mi darò l'onore informare à Vostra Eccellenza tutto quello succederà di particolare; E primieramente posso accennare, che tutta la sudetta Flotta non sarà ammessa nelli Porti di questa Isola: ma soli sei Navi per volta, per rinfrescarsi ò accommodarsi, e non gli sarà permesso far depositi qui, di Magazzini con Provigioni e munitioni; questi essendo li Ordini delle Corti di Parigi e Napoli, alli quali questo Governo è obligato uniformarsi: Come ciò un amico di confidenza segretamente m'ha suggerito. Mi rallegro in tanto sentir Vostra Eccellenza da Sua Maestà amabilissimo Nostro Sovrano scelta in un tal Grado: Perciò la supplico onorarmi con suoi riveritissimi comandi, per darmi occasione di dimostrare che sono col più profondo et ossequioso rispetto e stima.

Di Vostra Eccellenza  
Malta li 4 Novembre 1769

Humilissimo Devotissimo e  
Obedientissimo Servidore  
Angelo Rutter.