
Document 1621C

Letter from Gerónimo de Silva to the King, dated Manila 1 August 1621

Sources: AGI 67-6-20; translated in B&R 20: 106-114.

Letter to Philip III

Sire:

A detailed relation of the condition and affairs of these islands having been sent to your Majesty in the vessels despatched to New Spain in August of last year [1620], God was pleased that, after some months of navigation, the *almiranta* should put back in distress on 13 November, mastless and the bad weather that it met on the high seas. That was a most severe loss for this city, since the chief sinew of its support at present is nothing but the trade of those two ships; for as the times go, there is now no other recourse. It is considered as certain that the flagship [**San Andrés**] made the voyage, although there is no more certainty than trust that God has taken it to safety; for since it was already so late, and the monsoon of the *vendavals* had set in, it has not as yet returned from New Spain, nor has any other advice come. That is no little cause for anxiety to this wretched city, in addition to the ravages of enemies and other disasters that ordinarily afflict it. May God in His mercy ordain what is most advisable for His holy service.

Governor Don Alonso Fajardo, having despatched the vessels of Castilla¹, began to undertake the aid for Ternate; he attempted to send it earlier than formerly, in order to guard against the enemy, who continually await the ship at the entrance of those forts.

...

When I was about to seal this packet, news reached this city of the happy arrival at these islands of the ship **San Andrés**, which was expected from New Spain. That news has caused a quite universal happiness to this wretched community. The ship has

¹ Ed. note: Sic. The ships were waiting in Mindoro for a last-minute packet of letters, including this one.

anchored in the province of Ilocos, 80 leagues from here, as the weather does not permit it to come to this port. Your Majesty's letters have not reached this port, and, as the vessels which are being despatched are on the point of sailing, it will not be possible to answer them, as the Governor will more fully inform your Majesty—whose Catholic and royal person may our Lord preserve for many years, as is necessary to Christendom, etc.

Manila, 1 August 1621.

Your Majesty's humble servant,
Don Hieronymo de Silva