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## Document 1590A

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# Instructions given to the new Governor, Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas

*Source: AGI 105-2-11, lib. I, folios 171b-195a, part 2; translated in B&R 7:141-172.*

## Instructions issued by the Council of the Indies in August 1589

The King:

To Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas<sup>1</sup>, knight of the Order of Santiago, whom I have appointed as my Governor and Captain General of the Philippines.

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18. In place of the third office of my royal treasury, namely, the office of factor, which is to be suppressed, they petition for a ship purveyor, in order that the vessels may leave better equipped and more promptly; for the other two officials are so busy that they cannot attend to it. As it would be advisable to place this in charge of the factor whom I am having appointed, you shall have care to see that he attends to it, as far as may be necessary, so that there may be no grievance or lack in this matter.

19. In regard to the trade of the said islands, on which their growth likewise depends, the said Father Alonso Sanchez<sup>2</sup> relates that the large consignments of money sent there by wealthy people of Mexico, who do not quit their homes, is one of the things which has ruined the country; for great injuries result from it. The first is that all Chinese goods are bought by wholesale and are becoming dearer, so that the poor and common people of the said islands cannot buy them, or must buy them at extremely high rates. The second is that, as the said consignments are many and large, and the vessels few in

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1 Ed. note: He was corregidor of Murcia and Cartagena in Spain before being appointed. He arrived at the Philippines in May 1590. In October 1593, while he was aboard a galley on the way to the Moluccas, he was treacherously killed in his bed by mutinous Chinese rowers. His son took over the interim governorship.

2 Ed. note: This Jesuit had returned to Spain to report on the situation in the Philippines on behalf of the colonists. He remained in Spain until his death.

number—being at times, and in fact generally, not more than one; and, by this one being quite laden and filled with goods for Mexicans, there is no space left for the citizens and common people to embark their goods.

They have petitioned me that, as a remedy for the above wrongs, I forbid the sending of consignments of money from Mexico, or the maintenance of agents or companies in the said islands for any person of New Spain; that only the inhabitants of the islands be allowed to buy and export domestic and foreign goods to the said New Spain; and that, if anyone else wishes to trade and traffic, it must be on consideration of his becoming a citizen and residing there for at least ten years, and of not trading with the property of another, under penalty of its confiscation, besides that of his other personal effects. Since, by this method, some goods would still be sent to Mexico, the money now taken by the Chinese would not be withdrawn from the country, and goods would be bought more cheaply and in exchange for products of the islands.

Now, because I am desirous of the advancement of the said islands, and the best interests of their inhabitants, I have therefore granted them by one of my decrees that, for the space of six years, only the said inhabitants may trade in China and in the said New Spain. You shall observe the said decree, and shall not allow anything to be done in any wise contrary to its tenor.

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25. The said islands, as I am told, need stallions, mares, cows, and other domestic animals. In order that they may be bred there in numbers, I am writing to the Viceroy of New Spain to send to the said islands 12 mares, 2 stallions, 24 cows, and 2 bulls. You shall ask him for these as you pass there, and shall take them with you in your vessels as you go upon your voyage; and whatever you think needful for the animals can be brought from China and Japan. You shall order those farmers who are about to go to the said islands, and the chiefs, to tame and breed buffaloes, so that with all these animals there may be a sufficiency to carry on the farming, and for other needful services.

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46. Beyond and beside the said provinces which are here and there disaffected among the Spaniards and the Indians already converted, are others, which although not so near, owing to their remoteness and the nature of their inhabitants, still cannot be called new discoveries; because they have been visited and known already. These are the Babuyanes, the island of Hermosa [i.e. Taiwan], the island of Caballos, Lequios [i.e. Riu-Kiu], the island of Ayncio [=Honshu?], the Javas, Burney [i.e. Borneo], Paca [=Palawan?], Guan [i.e. Guam], Calamianes, Mindanao, Siao [north of Celebes], the Moluccas, and many others. Because it has been reported that they are falling into a worse condition daily, and having been advised that their welfare and the safety of the Spaniards demand their pacification, and that delay might render it difficult, you shall ascertain the manner and method with which the said pacification and subjection can be best and most quickly brought about, and you shall execute it, as seems best to you.

47. Since it seems advisable that you, from whom I expect so much, should have authority and power to make all the said entrances and pacifications at the cost of my

royal estate, in respect to which if you were constrained to await a reply from here, in a land so distant, important occasions and opportunities might be lost, I have resolved to give you authorization for this. Accordingly I grant it to you, and order the officials of my royal estate of the said islands that, in all matters under your control, they shall honor and pay all the orders that you present to them for the said purpose. But you shall observe that you are to use the said authority only in the most important matter which shall arise, after consulting about matters of law with the ecclesiastics and the lawyers, and those of action with the captains and men of experience and conscience, and taking account of all other necessary conditions, so that the expense may be no greater than can be avoided, and profitable.

48. In order that you may accomplish them better and avoid expense, I authorize you to covenant and bargain with captains, encomenderos, and any others, in respect to the said entrances and pacifications, to make them wholly or partly at their own cost, as seems advisable to you; and to give them title, for a limited time, as governors of the islands or provinces that they explore or pacify, and as captains and masters-of-camp, provided you do not give them title of *adelantado* or marshall. You shall advise me of it, when anyone undertakes this, reporting the services, capacity, and merit of such person. The said covenant and agreement which you shall make may be kept in force until I approve them, because time will be saved thus—but with the condition of sending them to me, so that I may confirm them. You shall bind the parties to the said confirmations, to some brief period, such as you may assign for it.

49. I have been told that, although a few of the encomenderos of the said islands, who fear God and their consciences, are trying to establish ministers of religious instruction in their encomiendas, others are not doing this, and refuse to do it as they are obliged, and as is advisable, notwithstanding that there are plenty of the said ministers; that there are encomiendas which have been paying tribute peacefully for 15, 20, or 25 years, without the Indians of them ever having seen a minister or heard a word of Christian instruction; and that also many other encomiendas pay tribute by pure force of soldiers and arquebuses, who rebel and revolt because of the oppression and severity with which they are treated, without knowing the reason why they should pay it, since they have no instruction.

Since, besides the obligation to procure the welfare of those souls, their conversion, instruction, and teaching, which should be the chief constraining force; and since even for temporal affairs, for the peace and tranquility of the country, so that those pacified should not revolt, and so that those in revolt should be subdued, the best method is that of instruction—for which the common treatment, mildness, upright life, and counsels of the religious and ministers of the Gospel incline and regulate their minds; therefore, I charge you that, after consulting with the bishop you shall, in my name, provide what is advisable in this, so that the necessary instruction may be furnished, that my conscience, and his, and your own may be relieved.

...

You shall attend to all of the above with the care and close attention that I expect from your character and prudence, and from your earnest zeal in affairs touching my service.

San Lorenzo, 9 August 1589.

I, the King.

By order of the King, our sovereign:

Juan de Ibarra

Countersigned by the Council.