
Documents 1568C

Royal communications to Legazpi regarding the Ladrones, dated 1568 and 1569

Sources: For documents 1-5 below, AGI Audiencia de Filipinas (1568-1605):105-2-11 (and other places in some cases, if indicated below); translated in B&R 34:235-255.

C1. Reply to Miguel López de Legazpi

[From] The King,

[To] Miguel López de Legazpi, my Governor and Captain General of the Islands of the West:

I have received your two letters dated 15 and 23 June [i.e. July] of the past year 1567 and I have taken note of the detailed account which you gave of the events of your expedition, and of what you have done in it; and it is what has been expected from your loyalty and goodness. In regard to what you say of the islands that have been discovered, and which are being discovered daily, and your sensible policy in not waging war, you have done very well, and we charge and order you to continue the same, striving by all good means to attract the natives to the service of God our Lord and mine, and to the love and friendship which they ought to have with you and with the Spaniards who reside with you. You shall so carry yourself that you may not come to blows with them nor with any other persons unless you should be provoked, and in your own defence.

In regard to your statement that some galleys are needed for the trade and commerce of those islands, we have ordered the matter to be discussed, but as yet no resolution has been taken by which we can advise you concerning our will.

Your son, Melchor de Legazpi, and Juan de la Isla have asked for certain things necessary for the solid colonization of that land and for your defence and safety. You will see what we have provided in the warrant taken by Juan de la Isla, and by what our officials in New Spain will send you. The balance of what is yet to be furnished will be sent in the first fleet that leaves for New Spain. You will watch over everything in your charge as we expect from your person; and you shall have special care in furthering the



Philip II of Spain had blond hair and blue eyes. His armies were victorious against the Dutch, the French, the Italians, the Moors, the Turks, and (without bloodshed) the Portuguese. (From a painting by Sanchez Coello)

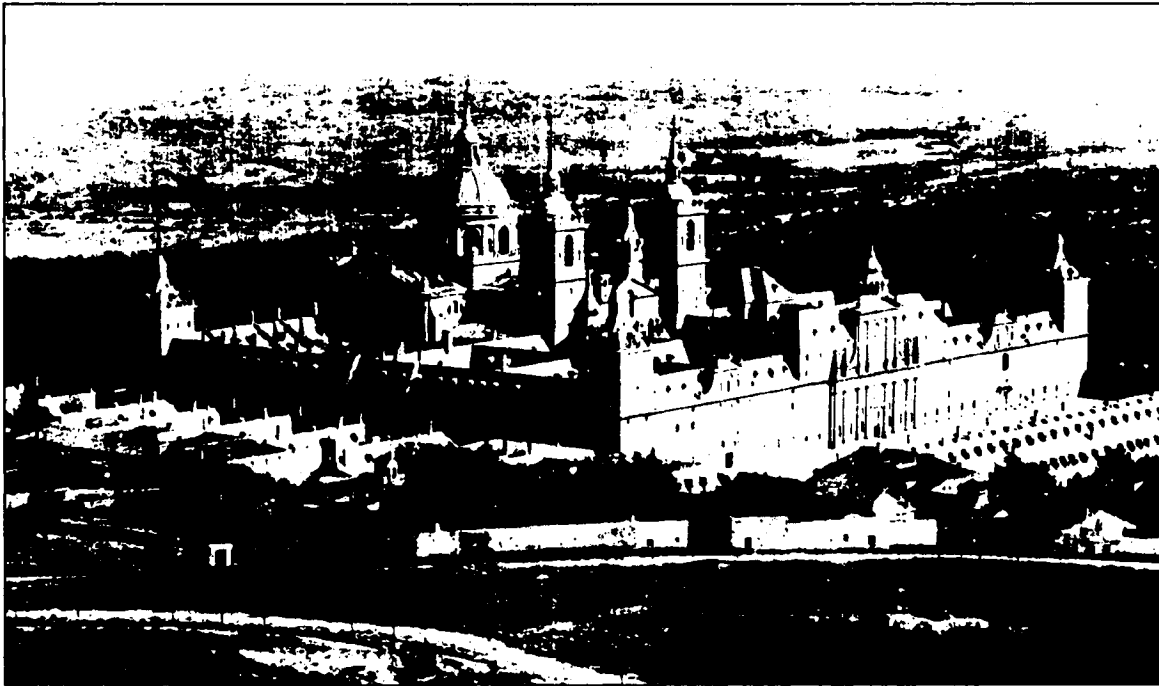
conversion of the Indian natives of that country to our holy Catholic faith, and their good treatment; for that is most important to the service of God our Lord and mine. Since it is so important you shall obtain it by all possible good means.

You shall assign and allot the villages of those islands which may be reduced to our service as you think best, according to the law of the succession of the Indians; provided that you do not assign or allot the capitals, seaports, or places settled by Spaniards, for these must be left for our royal crown, and we order that they be so left.

We have also been petitioned in your name that, in consideration of the fact that there are islands inhabited by Moros in

that land, and that they come to trade and traffic, thus hindering the preaching of the holy gospel, and disturbing you, we grant you permission to enslave such Moros, and to seize their possessions. You must take note that if such Moros are Moros by birth and nation and come for the purpose of spreading their cursed Mahometan worship, or to make war on you or on the Indians subject to us and to our royal service, then you can enslave them. But you shall under no consideration whatever enslave those who were Indians who may have adopted the worship of Mahomet; but you shall endeavor to convert them and to persuade them to accept our holy Catholic faith by good and legitimate means.

Report has been made me on behalf of the conquerors of that country that many slaves have been made there by the natives of those islands. I have been entreated to grant permission to those conquerors to purchase them and hold them as slaves in the same manner as the said natives hold them. Inasmuch as I desire to be informed of the custom in this matter and of what it is advisable to do, I order you to submit a report of the causes why slaves are made in that country—whether slaves are made mutually among the natives themselves; whether the Moros who wage war upon the said natives are made slaves; or whether these are various sects among them, so that they wage and



The palace and monastery of El Escorial northwest of Madrid. It symbolizes Spain's golden century. Its construction began at the time Legazpi sailed for the Islands of the West and was completed in 1584.

maintain mutual warfare among themselves and make slaves mutually of one another. You shall report on the other characteristics of that race in so far as they touch this matter; and where the said report is ready you shall send it to our Council of the Indies, so that, after they have examined it, the most advisable measures may be taken in accordance with justice.

If there are any Portuguese or foreigners of these kingdoms who have gone with you or who shall have gone afterward, or who should be in the ships sailing from New Spain to those islands, you shall order them to return to these kingdoms, even if such Portuguese or foreigners be those who are allowed to be in those districts in accordance with my laws, ordinances, and decrees. You must attend to this matter with the greatest possible haste, for you know how dangerous it will be to the welfare, peace, and quiet of the land and to the service of our Lord and mine.

The Escorial, 16 November 1568.

I, the King.

Countersigned by Eraso, and signed by Luis Quejada, Vasquez, Don Gomez Zapata, Muñoz, Molina, Salas, Aguilera, Villafañe, and Votello.

C2. Title of Governor of the Ladrone Islands

Sources: AGI Fil. 339-28 (ref. Col. Ultramar, v. 17, p. 147); B&R 34:241-246.

Don Felipe, etc.

Inasmuch as report has been made me on behalf of you, Miguel López de Legazpi, our Governor of the Islands of the West, that a certain fleet having been prepared at our order in the Port of Navidad in New Spain for the purpose of the discovery of the said islands, our former Viceroy, Don Luis de Velasco, appointed and named you by our commission through the satisfaction which he had in your person, to be the Captain General of it and our Governor of the said islands. We have heard that you, having gone in search of them, in order to attain the end desired, and having spent a considerable sum of gold pesos from your own property, discovered the said islands and took possession of them in our royal name with the ceremonies requisite in such cases; and made a settlement in the island of Çubu where you are at present with the men whom you took. In that place you have heard of other islands in that vicinity called the Ladrone Islands and of their fertility and wealth. You have desired to explore and colonize them at your own cost and expense, and petition has been made us to have permission given you therefor, as well as the title of Governor and Captain General of the said islands, in consideration of the many expenses that you have incurred in their discovery, and the hardships that you have endured. We, respecting the said your services because of the wide knowledge of them, and because of those which we expect that you shall perform from this time on, and having discussed it with our royal person, have considered it fitting. Therefore by the present we grant licence and permission to you, the said Miguel López de Legazpi, so that you are empowered to make for us in our name and at your own cost—and you shall make—the exploration and colonization of the said Ladrone Islands. You shall take and seize possession of them in the said name with the ceremony that is requisite in such cases; provided that you observe and cause to be observed *in toto* the instructions and provisions which have been issued by us in regard to the course to be followed in the said colonizations and explorations. It is our wish and intention to make you our Governor and Captain General of the said Ladrone Islands and of all the villages that you shall settle therein for the rest of your life. You shall hold and exercise our civil and criminal justice with the offices of justice which shall be in the said Islands of the West. By this our letter, we order councils, justices, regidors, knights, squires, officials, and good men of all the cities, towns, and villages that shall exist in the said islands, land, and colony, and those that shall be colonized, and our officials and other persons who shall reside therein—and each one of them—that, as soon as they shall be summoned by this order, they shall take and receive from you, the said Miguel López de Legazpi, the oath and ceremony



Legazpi, Governor and Captain General of the Ladrones. (*From La Ilustración Filipina, Manila, 14 September 1892*)

that is requisite in such cases, and that you ought to give, without any further delay or procrastination, and without informing us any farther, or consulting, awaiting, or expecting another order or command from me, or a second or third decree.¹

After you have thus given the oath, you shall be considered and received as our Governor and Captain General of the said islands, and their coast, land, and settlements all the days of your life. They shall allow and permit you freely to exercise and enjoy the said offices and to perform and execute our justice therein through yourself or through your subordinates whom you have power to appoint and may appoint to the said offices of Governor and Captain General, constables, and other offices annexed to or pertaining to the said government. You may remove and set aside any of such officials when it is for our service and the execution of our justice. You may appoint and substitute others in their place; and you may try, despatch, and sentence all the suits and causes, both civil and criminal, which shall arise and occur in the said islands, coast, land, and village that you shall settle, and that you shall have settled, both among the men who went to colonize, and among the other natives of it. You and the said your mayors and subordinates shall receive the fees annexed to and pertaining to the said offices. You may make any examinations in the cases of justice, premises, and all the other things pertaining to and annexed to the said offices. You and your subordinates shall attend to that which is advisable for our service, the execution of our justice, and the colonization and government of the said islands, coast, land, and towns that shall be established. In order that you may exercise and enjoy the said offices, and perform and execute our justice, all men shall be in harmony with you as to their persons and property, and shall give and cause to be given to you all the protection and aid that you may ask from them and that shall be necessary to you. They shall respect you in all things, and shall obey and perform your orders or those of your subordinates. They shall place no obstacle or opposition to your orders or any part of them, nor allow any to be placed.

Therefore by this present, we do receive you and consider you received in the said offices and in the exercise and enjoyment of them. We grant you full power to enjoy and exercise, and to perform and execute, the said our justice in the said islands, coasts, land, and villages that you shall colonize and in the cities, towns and villages of the said islands and their limits, either through yourself or through your subordinates as above-said. In case that you are not received by them or by any of them into the said offices, we do, by this our letter, order any person or persons who shall exercise the authority of our justice in the villages of the said islands, coast, and land, to deliver and surrender, and use such offices no longer without our licence and express mandate whenever they shall be summoned by you, the said Miguel López de Legazpi, under the penalties incurred and suffered by those private persons who exercise public and royal offices for

1 Ed. note: Procrastination there was, as it took the Spanish in the Philippines 100 years to obey this order to colonize the Ladrões. The excuse was that this decree applied first to the main Islands of the West, not just the Ladrões.

which they have no authority or licence. Such persons we do by the present suspend and consider as suspended.

Furthermore, the fines pertaining to our exchequer and treasury to which you and your mayors and subordinates shall condemn any persons, shall be executed by you, and you shall cause them to be executed, and shall have the fines given and delivered to our treasurer of the said islands. Furthermore, we order that if you, the said Miguel López de Legazpi, consider it fitting for our service and the execution of our justice, that any persons now in, or who may in the future be in, the said islands, coast, and land, be banished and enter them no more or live in them, and that they come to present themselves before us, you may order it in our name and cause them to leave in accordance with the ordinance regarding that matter. You shall give to the person thus exiled the reason for his exile; but if you deem it advisable that the matter be kept secret, you shall give the reason under lock and seal, and you shall on your part send us another person, so that we may be informed of it. But you are to take notice that when you have to exile anyone, it must be only for a very urgent cause.

For the abovesaid, and so that you may exercise the said offices as our Governor and Captain General of the said islands, coast, land, and villages that you shall colonize, so that you may perform and exercise our justice therein, we delegate you full authority by this our letter, with all their incidences, dependencies, emergencies, annexes, and rights; and it is our will and we order that you receive and be paid the annual salary, together with the said offices, of 2,000 ducats (a sum equivalent to 750,000 maravedis).¹ You shall enjoy them from the day on which you shall set sail to pursue your voyage, and thenceforth for the time that you shall maintain the said government. If that sum is not had during the said time, we shall not be obliged to pay you any part of it. A receipt shall be taken from you, with which any with the copy of this our provision signed by the notary-public, we order that the said 2,000 ducats be received by you and placed on your account. Neither you nor any one else shall act contrary to this under any consideration, under penalty of losing our favor and 1,000 castellanos in gold to be paid to our exchequer and treasury.

Given in Madrid, 14 August 1569.

I, the King.

Countersigned by Eraso, and signed by Luis Quejada, Doctor Vazquez, Licentiate Don Gomez Zapata, Doctor Luis de Molina, Doctor Aguilera, and Doctor Francisco de Villafañe.

1 Ed. note: In the days of Magellan, this salary would have been worth about 750,000 US dollars in modern terms, but inflation had probably reduced its value to 150,000 dollars.

C3. Title of Adelantado [Military Governor] of the Ladrone Islands

Sources: AGI Fil. 339-30 (ref. Col. Ultramar, v. 17, p. 147); B&R 34:246-248.

Don Felipe, etc.

Inasmuch as we have granted licence and authority to you, Miguel López de Legazpi, our Governor of the Islands of the West, so that you may explore and colonize the said islands of the West for us and in our name, and at your own expense; and because of the expenses which you have incurred in it, and those which you shall incur in the exploration and colonization of the said islands of the Ladrones; and because we have you and your said services in mind constantly, and in order that you and your descendants may be more honored: therefore, having reflected upon the matter in our royal person, I have considered it fitting to bestow upon you the title of *adelantado* of the said Ladrone Islands for yourself and for your heirs and successors forever. Therefore, it is our intention and will by this present that you be now and henceforth forever, our *adelantado* of the said Ladrone Islands, as well shall inherit your house. As such our *adelantado*, you may exercise—and you shall exercise—the said office in all cases and matters annexed to and concerning it, in the same manner in which they are enjoyed by our *adelantados* of our kingdoms of Castile and of the said Indies.

In regard to the enjoyment and exercise of the said office and in the payment of the fees pertaining to it, you shall observe and your heirs shall be obliged to observe the laws and ordinances of these our kingdoms imposed in regard to it. All the honors, favors, and rewards, licences, liberties, exemptions, preeminences, prerogatives, immunities, and everything else—and each one of them singly—which because of being our *adelantado*, you ought to have and enjoy, and which ought to be kept for you, shall be kept for you. You shall have and receive the fees, salaries, and other matters belonging and pertaining to the said office of *adelantado*. We do, by this our letter, order councils, justices, regidores, knights, squires, officials, and good men of all the cities, towns, and villages of the said islands of the Ladrones to hold, receive, and consider you and your heirs as our *adelantado* and to extend to you and to them the said office and all causes and things annexed to and concerning it. They shall keep for you and cause to be kept for you, all the honors, favors, rewards, licences, liberties, preeminences, prerogatives, immunities, and all the other things—and each one of them singly—that you ought to have and enjoy by reason of the said office, and which must be kept for you. They shall pay, and cause to be paid, to you, all the fees and salaries owing and belonging to the said office of *adelantado* up to their complete value, so that you may suffer no lack in anything, according to and in the manner in which it has been enjoyed and paid, and as it must be enjoyed, paid, and kept for the other *adelantados* who have been and are in these our kingdoms of Castile and in the said Indies. They shall place no obstacle or opposition to you in this matter or in any part of it or allow such to be placed. Therefore, we do, by this present, receive and hold you as received into the said

office, and to its enjoyment and exercise. We grant you authority and licence to enjoy and exercise it; and in case that you are not received in that office by them or any of them, we order you to give this our letter signed by our hand and countersigned by our secretary mentioned below.

Given at Madrid, 14 August 1569.

I, the King.

I, Francisco de Eraso, Secretary of his Majesty, had this written by his command.

Countersigned by Luis Quejada, Doctor Vazquez, Licentiate Don Gomez Zapata, Doctor Luis de Molina, Licentiate Salas, Doctor Aguilera, and Doctor Francisco de Villafañe.

C4. Instructions given to Legazpi regarding the Ladrone

Sources: Besides AGI 105-2-11, there is a copy of the original ms. in the Newberry Library in Chicago, Ayer ms. #1391, folios 36-45.

The King.

That which you, Miguel López de Legazpi, our Governor and Captain General in the Islands of the West, are to do and observe in the government, exploration, and colonization of the Ladrone Islands which we charge to you, is as follows:

1. First, after the said islands are explored, you shall select sites and locations for colonization, taking care that the land be healthful and fertile, and abounding in wood, water and good pasturage for cattle. You shall see that the land be apportioned to the colonists, but you shall not occupy or take possession of any private property of the Indians. In order that this may be better performed, you shall for the present, make the said settlement somewhat distant from the districts and locations where the Indians may have their settlements, pastures, and fields so that all the abovesaid may be done without harming them at all. On the contrary, thorough good treatment must be shown them.

2. The site of the place where the settlement is to be made having been chosen, you shall order the colonists to build their houses, making in them a sort of stronghold, where they may defend themselves and their flocks if necessary, in case that the Indians try to attack them.

3. You shall see that the colonists who settle in this way, endeavor to obtain peace and friendship with the Indians who dwell in that land. They shall treat the latter well, and shall endeavor (for such is my will) to have the Indians live near them in villages, and shall defend them and help them to defend themselves against those who try to harm them. They shall reduce the Indians to a civilized life, and shall endeavor to separate them from their vices, sins, and evil customs. They shall endeavor to reduce them

and convert them willingly to our holy Catholic faith and the Christian religion by means of religious and other good men.

4. If there shall be any persons among the said Indians who oppose and refuse to listen to our instruction, and convert or mistreat those who do listen to it, you shall endeavor by all good means possible to you to prevent it, so that the preaching of the gospel may not cease for that reason. You shall proceed in this with all manner of discretion, kindness, and moderation.

5. Further, you shall endeavor to have the Indians persuaded to adopt our holy Catholic faith willingly, and to render submission to us. If they do so you shall order that they be exempt from tribute for ten years.

6. Item: You shall order that the Spaniards, who shall settle later in the villages thus established, rule and govern in peace and quiet, and that they shall not molest or injure anyone. They shall appoint their ministers of justice, regidors, and necessary officials, for the meanwhile and until we provide otherwise.

7. Some *repartimientos* [grants] of Indians shall be made to those persons who shall go to make the said settlement, in accordance with their services and the quality of the persons to whom they are made. The chief capitals and the seaports shall be assigned to us, although first and foremost the appraisal of the said tributes of such *repartimientos* shall have been made. This is understood to be allowed after the expiration of the ten years in which they are to be exempt and free from tribute as abovesaid.

8. You shall also assign salaries to regidors and ministers of justice, and to the seculars and religious. You shall instruct each one in his privileges and duties so that he may know what he has to do, and that those who have charge of the offices shall be obliged to give account for the disorders and excesses that our men commit both against the Indians and the latter among themselves.

9. You shall order that after the abovesaid has been done, the people endeavor to open trade in their districts. You shall provide the Indians with the articles that they need, and shall endeavor also to get from the Indians the things that are needed from them.

10. You shall send religious and other good persons to instruct and persuade the Indians to receive our faith. You shall see to it that if they be sufficient, they endeavor to collect the Indians in villages so that they may be instructed better.

11. You shall always instruct those persons whom you send to survey the land always to consider where they might find fitting and commodious sites for the new settlements, without any resulting harm to the Indians in accordance with the provision of Article 1.

12. You shall provide that after the houses have been built and the fields sown, the people try to discover minerals and other things in which they will be benefitted. They shall cultivate the land and enrich it with new plants of vines and fruit trees for its support and gain.

13. Item: If the natives endeavor to prevent the said settlement, they must be told that the men are not trying to settle there in order to do them any harm or wrong, or

to seize their possessions, but only to have friendship with them and teach them to live in a civilized manner and recognize God, and to expound to them the law of Jesus Christ by which they will be saved. After that message and warning has been given (which must be made three times as shall seem best to the person appointed by you after consulting with the religious who shall go to such settlement and by the tongue of the religious who shall tell and declare it), then if notwithstanding the abovesaid, the natives refuse to consent to the colony, the colonists shall endeavor to settle and shall defend themselves from the said natives without doing them other injury than that necessary for their defence and for making the said settlement. All the mildness and moderation possible shall be observed in the said defence.

14. Further, after having made such village and settlement you shall see to it that the citizens and religious who shall be there, try to trade and communicate with the natives and to make friends with them, and to make them understand the abovesaid.

15. If the said natives and inhabitants located near the said colony should become friends because of such good efforts and persuasions, so that they give the religious permission to enter to teach them and to preach to them the law of Christ, you shall see that they do it. The religious shall endeavor to convert them and allure them to the faith, and to have them recognize us as sovereign king and lord.

16. Further, if the said natives and the rulers of the Indians refuse to admit the religious preachers, after the announcement of their purpose as above said, and after the natives shall have been petitioned many times to allow the religious to enter to preach and to expound the word of God, you shall make a report of it and send it to our Council with the most justifiable testimony that you have of what has been done, in order that we may have you ordered as to what course you are to pursue. Meanwhile you shall endeavor to retain their friendship and trade, and shall treat them well. You shall endeavor by all possible means to bring them to a knowledge of our Lord.

17. If any of the officials appointed by us die, you shall appoint in each island those who may be lacking, so that in accordance with the instruction and order given them, they may administer our finances and attend to the other things that are entrusted to the other officials of the other provinces of the Indies. You shall make such appointments until we provide for it, and you shall immediately advise us of it so that we may have the proper measures taken.

18. The persons and our officials who shall be entrusted with duties, shall be paid their salaries from the fruits of the land by our treasurer, in accordance with a list made out and signed by the said officials and signed by the Governor of the province.

19. Item: You shall endeavor to take the most virtuous and Christian people possible, and those who shall be best fitted for the said colonization.

20. Item: You shall take four of the religious at present in the said islands, and if you do not have them, you shall take two seculars who must be persons of good life and morals, fit to give the instruction, and to administer the holy sacraments.

21. Item: You shall endeavor with great care to see that the Spaniards do no harm and show no force to the Indians, and that they do not wound them or do them any

other evil or harm, or deprive them of their possessions, but they shall show them the utmost good treatment. In any of the men offend the Indians, then you and your captains shall punish him rigorously and shall warn him not to continue such actions. If he be careless and negligent in this, then you shall have him punished with great rigor; for this is a matter whose fulfilment we desire greatly, and if this be not obeyed we shall consider ourselves greatly disserved.

22. Item: Upon your arrival at the land you shall report to us the events of your expedition and the manner in which you shall be received, also what you ascertain and discover of the said land, and everything else of which you think we should be advised. You shall accompany it with your opinion of what you think ought to be done, so that we may better order what is necessary for the service of God and our own service; and you shall do the same whenever you deem it necessary.

We charge and order you to observe and perform the above without fail, for if the contrary be done we shall consider ourselves disserved.

Given in Madrid, 28 August 1569.

C5. Concession of 2,000 ducats to Legazpi

Sources: AGI Fil. 339-35 (Ref. Col. Ultramar, v. 17); B&R 34:255.

[From] the King.

[To] our officials in the Islands of the West whose colonization we have entrusted to General Miguel López de Legazpi:

Know that in consideration of the services of the said Miguel López, past and present, in his expedition, and the loss that he has received to his property in a ship which sunk, I have after consultation with the members of my Council of the Indies, considered it fitting to concede to him, for one time, as I do by this present, a gift of 2,000 ducats (a sum equivalent to 750,000 maravedis). I therefore order you that from whatever gold or silver or any other kind of property you may have in your possession and which may be in charge of you our treasurer, you give and pay to the said Miguel López de Legazpi, or to whomever shall have his powers of attorney, the said 2,000 ducats of which we thus make him a concession for this one time for the abovesaid reason. Deliver and pay them to him, and make his receipt, with which and with this my decree, I order that the said 2,000 ducats be received from you and placed on your accounts.

Given at Madrid, 29 August 1570.¹

I, the King.

1 Ed. note: The correct year may very well be 1569.

