

Opinion of the Jesuits

Jesus

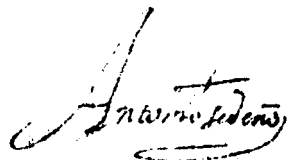
In regard to our right to make war upon the Zambales, the following is our opinion. Granting as true the reports of robberies and murders committed by them, past and present, on both Spaniards and the pacified Indians (who are our allies, and Christians), then it must be ascertained how these crimes have been committed—whether by all their land in common, or one portion of their province, so that by common consent those of one or many villages or the whole province conspire, and the bravest and strongest go forth to rob and kill; whether its head or chief is of one or of many villages or of the entire province, by whose order certain men go out to commit these depredations; or whether it is not really by common consent; or by the authority of the chiefs, but by crowds of ruffians from one or several villages who commit the said injuries.

If these people have a leader, and any go out from the villages or from the province to commit assaults, then this is sufficient cause for war. The same is true, even if they do not go at his order, but if the chiefs allow them to go, and do not punish them; since they have authority and power therefor. If there are no chiefs, then it must be ascertained whether they go out by common consent, to commit assaults, even if all do not go, but only a few. For, if they go by common consent, then war may be made on them all. But war may not be made if they went out as a single band of plunderers, even when they have friends and relatives in the villages, who protect them and supply them with food. It cannot be determined that the latter are accomplices; neither can they be punished, nor be dissuaded from doing it, nor even prohibited from giving them food, etc., because of their being, as is usually the case, women and children, while the former are barbarous and cruel men. In such a case, then, it could only be allowable to seek to apprehend the guilty, as well as one might, and to punish them in conformity with their crimes. But nothing may be done to the others.

But should it be by common consent, according to the first supposition, without any leader, or if they have chiefs who possess authority superior to the others, so that they may punish them as they deserve, but who do not punish these guilty ones or have them punished by their order, then, in these cases, war is allowable against the villages that shall have taken part in the depredation, or against the whole province, or the guilty part; but it must be with the moderation with which our Catholic king has ordered, in such a Christian-like manner, war to be made, with the least bloodshed and injury possible. Those captured shall not be killed, except those who shall have committed individual crimes, who consequently merit death; and the others shall not be reduced to perpetual bondage, but for a limited period only.

However, because of the great danger from this tribe, in order to be sure of peace and to render secure our allies who dwell near the Zambales, whom we are bound to protect, all the children and women and the others may be taken from their land and divided in various parts in small bands, even when their crimes were perpetrated by but a few ruffians. By this method we receive much benefit and security, and they no harm,

but on the contrary much benefit, both spiritual and corporal. But in no case do we think that they may have their ears cut off or be crippled so that they cannot take flight—neither women, nor children, nor those who do not commit any individual crime which may merit such punishment; for this is great cruelty and will engender in all a deadly hatred of our nation and law. Besides, other and gentler means can be used to prevent them from becoming fugitives, such as dispersing them throughout many widely-separated districts, and providing someone to watch over them.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Antonio Sedeño', with a stylized, flowing script.

Antonio Sedeño¹

¹ Ed. note: The opinions of the Dominicans and Franciscans are not reproduced here, as the main arguments have already been presented above.

Document 1592B

Governor Dasmariñas' 1592 letter to the King, dated Manila 31 May 1592

Source: AGI 67-6-18; translated in B&R 8:236-244.

Letter from Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas

Sire:

By two ships which sailed from this port for Mexico at the end of June 1591¹, I wrote your Majesty advising you of everything here, in duplicate, sending a copy in each ship. Afterward, on the 18th of October (same year), by a frigate sailing to Malacca and Eastern India, I wrote later events, and sent the duplicate of the letters. As that route is not considered very safe, I send this, combining both reports, written in fuller detail—fearing lest perchance, on account of the many accidents which have taken place on the sea in these years, all the letters have been lost. I cannot help fearing so because, as I write this, a ship has just arrived from Mexico, by which I have received no letter from your Majesty; nor have I received one since I have been in charge of this government—although, praise be to God, I have had good news of the health of your Majesty. For this I return infinite thanks to God, and pray that it may continue, and that He may give your Majesty complete success in all the new cares and anxieties which may present themselves. I am confident that His Divine Majesty will give long life to your Majesty, in order that everything may be ordered and arranged according to the needs of Christianity.

...

As regards the sailing of the ships on the account of Your Majesty, and not that of private persons, I have already written the weighty reasons, and send herewith a duplicate of the letter in which they are set forth. In fact, when all the expenses are on your Majesty's account, this not only causes no loss whatever to your Majesty's offices and royal treasury, but results in great profit to this state from the charges on the tonnages.

1 Ed. note: The San Felipe, and the ship owned by Captain Solis.

The cost is but half of what it is when the ships sail at the expense of private persons; and, if your Majesty would set the price of the tonnage at the same rate as private persons set it, there would be gained a large sum of money. This is the truth, although in Mexico they try to argue and discuss this point for private ends. Moreover, in this manner deserving soldiers are utilized and occupied, as your Majesty ordains, in these matters of transportation; and the dangers arising from the insufficient number and the vices of those who come from Mexico in these vessels are avoided. There are also deceptions practiced by private persons, and other reasons which I have already stated. Besides, when the ships belong to private persons, their owners will not become citizens of these islands; and, on account of the large amount of money taken away by them, the prices of merchandise are raised, and the land is ruined. I therefore repeat that if your Majesty will set a moderate price for the tonnage on the ship, not only will there be no expense for your Majesty's treasury, but there will be gained more than 20,000 pesos. In accordance therewith will your Majesty please signify your will.

...

May our Lord preserve your Majesty for many long years, with increase of better kingdoms and dominions, as is needed for Christendom.

At Manila, 31 May 1592.

Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas