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## Documents 1669E

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# Letters from Governor de León to the Queen in 1670

*Note: Master-of-camp Manuel de León y Saravia was born in Paredes de Nava, and was a valiant soldier from his youth in the countries of Flanders, Galicia, and other parts. The first battle he fought in was that of Lutzen in 1632, in which King Gustav Adolf of Sweden died. He also fought in the Battle of Nordlingen in 1634 where the Swedes were defeated. By 1660, he was fighting at the frontier between Galicia and Portugal. After a short stint as Governor of Munzón and Valencia in Galicia, he went to Madrid on a visit, and was recruited there by the Queen Mother, given the habit of Santiago and sent to the Philippines as Governor.*

## E1. Letter dated Manila 25 January 1670

*Source: AGI Fil. 10-1-1, pp. 1-4.*

### Original text in Spanish.

*El Governador de Philipinas da quenta a V.M. de su llegada al Puerto de Palapa. Da quenta de su llegada a Manila, y de los informes que tuvo de lo suzedido sobre el gobierno de las armas. Da quenta de la arrivada de los Navios que se avian despachado a la Nueva España.*

*Señora*

*Haviendo llegado al Puerto de Palapa como en otra tenido dado quenta a V.M. tuve notiçia como el Oydor D. Juan Manuel de la Peña despachava dos navios a la Nueva España que estaban ya para salir con cuya ocassion escrivi a V.M. para que en uno de los dos fuesse la notiçia de aver llegado à aquel puerto, y assido mi poca fortuna y la destas Islas tal que el uno en que iba presso por el Sancto Officio el Maestro de Campo D. Diego de Salçedo arrivó al Puerto de Lampon en 11 de Noviembre del año passado, y el otro al Puerto de Isla de Tablas en 24 de Diciembre del despues de 4 meses de navegacion sucesso mas sensible por no esperado. Pues no ay exemplar en estas Islas que despachandose dos Naos ayan arrivato ambas, y viendolo afligidas que se hallan por esta desgracia, y la dilacion tan grande para que venga socorro, y las circunstancias tan dignas de remedio que ha avido despues de la prission de D. Diego de Salçedo me a parecido precisso anticipar a V.M. estas noticias despachando a este efecto por la via*

*de Sian al Padre fray Juan Garcia Razimo del Orden de S. Francisco para que con vista dellas resuelva V.M. y su Real Consejo de las Indias lo que fuere de su mayor servicio.*

*Da quenta de su llegada a Manila, y de los informes que tuvo de lo sucedido sobre el gobierno de las armas.*

*Desde el Puerto de Palapa por no permitir los tiempos contrarios proseguir el viaje en el Galeon que vine abenturado el socorro que para estas Islas traya, y que experimentase alguno de los malos sucessos que repetidos vezes ha auido por aquel tiempo, y parajes sali del con embarcaciones menores, y tierra à tierra conduje la plata, y infanteria hasta esta Ciudad, donde tome la posesion del Gobierno a 24 de Septiembre del año passado[.] halle en ella Governando lo militar al Oydor D. Juan Manuel de la Peña Bonifas, y con el lo politico Don Francisco Coloma por aver muerto D. Francisco Pasqual de Pano, y el fiscal D. Diego de Corbera...*

[There follows the details of how former Governor Salcedo got arrested by the Inquisition, and the disputes between the members of the Audiencia regarding who should govern in his place. The new Governor was then prosecuting them of their actions.]

*Da quenta de la arrivada de dos navios que se avian depachado a la Nueva España. En este estado con pocos dias de diferencia me llegaron las noticias de aver arrivado al Puerto de Lampon el Navio en que iba D. Diego de Salcedo, y el Galeon **Nuestra Señora del Buen Socorro** al de Isla de Tablas recreciendo al desconsuelo con que yo me hallava por el corto socorro de 75,000 pesos que truje este que es de mas sensible calidad por no poderme venir este año ni hasta fin del que viene socorro de la Nueva España que era en el que yo me fiava para que supliese lo tenue del que vino conmigo, y hallar estas Provincias tan lastimadas, y afligidas, assi por la cortedad de los socorros antecedentes. Pues el del año passado fue solo de 40,000 pesos como por los repetidos trabajos que de quatro años a esta parte an padecido de pestes, y vientos tormentosos de que son continuamente infestados que no les ha dejado coxer el fruto de sus sementeras ni casas en que vivir ni embarcaciones en que tragar particularmente los dos meses antecedentes de que con harta lastima he sido testigo sin que estas Provincias puedan no solo acudir a la paga de los Reales tributos pero ni aun al del corte sustento suyo que se compone de una limitada racion de arroz causas todas que me obligan a anticipar la noticia dellas a V.M. para que en su consideracion, y con la de los gastos tan grandes que precisamente sean recrecido con la arrivada destos dos navios, y la imbernada de el con que yo vine que todo sale de las Reales Cajas como el del socorro de la Infanteria que cada mes importa mas de 5,000 pesos paga inexcusable por que los soldados no tienen otro recurso que el de dos pesos cada mes para su sustento. Y el de los Ministros de la Audiencia y Prevendados de la Catedral, y los que continuamente se esta haziendo en la fabrica, y aderezos de navios, y embarcaciones menores que son precisamente necessarias para los viajes de Nueva España, y tragino de estas costas hallandome yo con estas obligaciones, van a la vista y con el desconsuelo de considerar el remedio tan lejos obligado a ponerlo en el Real conoçimiento de*

*V.M. para que se sirva de anticipar orden al Virrey de Nueva España adelante los imbios quanto lo sea posible, y ordenarle que el socorro que este año deja de venir por falta de Nao le embie con el socorro juntamente del año siguiente. Señalandole la cantidad fija de 200,000 pesos cada año...*

*Guarde Dios la Catholica, y Real Persona de V.M. como la Christiandad a menester.*

*Manila 25 de Henero 1670.*

*Manuel de Leon*

### Translation.

The Governor of the Philippines informs Y.M. of his arrival at the port of Palapa. He informs of his arrival at Manila, and of the reports that he got regarding the management of weapons. He informs of the returns of ships that had been despatched to New Spain.

Madam:

Having arrived at the port of Palapa as I have informed Y.M. in a previous letter, I received news that Judge Juan Manuel de la Peña was despatching two ships to New Spain<sup>1</sup> and that they were about to leave; on that occasion I wrote to Y.M. so that one of the two ships would carry the news of my arrival at that port. It has been my bad luck and the bad luck of these Islands, as one of them, the one aboard which Master-of-camp Diego de Salcedo went as prisoner of the Holy Office, turned back to the port of Lampon on 11 November of last year; the other one turned up at the port of the Island of Tablas on 24 December, after 4 months of navigation, an outcome that was as painful as it was unexpected. Indeed, there is no precedent in these Islands for two galleons to be despatched and have them both turn back.<sup>2</sup> When I saw how afflicted these Islands were on account of this mishap, and the great delay in the coming of succor, and the circumstances so worthy of remedy that followed the imprisonment of Don Diego de Salcedo, it seemed to me necessary that I should hasten to inform Y.M., by despatching to this effect by way of Siam Father fray Juan García Racimo of the Order of St. Francis, so that, in view of this, Y.M. and royal Council of the Indies may decide what would be of your greater service.

He informs of his arrival at Manila, and of the reports that he got regarding the management of weapons.

From the port of Palapa, as contrary winds did not allow the continuation of the voyage with the galleon at the mercy of which the succor for these Islands came, and we were going through one of the bad outcomes that occurred many times on account of that weather in those parts, I left that port with two small vessels, and coasting from

1 Ed. note: The Buen Socorro and the San Diego.

2 Ed. note: The people in Manila seemed to have short memories. Two such galleons had turned back as recently as 1655 (see Appendix E).

port to port, I conducted the silver, and the infantry as far as this City, where I took possession of the Government on 24 September of last year. I found the military side of the Government to be in the hands of Judge Juan Manuel de la Peña Bonifaz, and the political side in those of Don Francisco Coloma, following the death of Don Francisco Pascual de Pano, and the Fiscal Don Diego de Corbera...

[There follows the details of how former Governor Salcedo got arrested by the Inquisition, and the disputes between the members of the Audiencia regarding who should govern in his place. The new Governor was then prosecuting them for their actions.]

He informs of the returns of ships that had been despatched to New Spain.

In the midst of this, within a few days more or less, I received news that the ship carrying Don Diego de Salcedo had turned back accidentally to the port of Lampon, and that of the galleon **Nuestra Señora del Buen Socorro** having arrived the same way at the Island of Tablas. My disconsolateness increased, as I came with the short subsidy of 75,000 pesos, and now, it is much more worrisome because the subsidy is not coming this year, not before the end of the year will there be succor from New Spain, and I had relied upon it to make up for the tenuous succor that came with me. The provinces are in pitiful states, and also afflicted, on account of the shortage of previous succors. Indeed, that of last year was only 40,000 pesos. On account of the repeated hardships over the last 4 years the people overhere have suffered from epidemics, and stormy weather that have prevented them from picking up the harvests, left them homeless, and without boats with which to carry out commerce, specially during the two previous months, of which I was a witness, much to my sorrow. The result has been that the provinces are unable, not only to pay the royal tributes but not even look after their own short food maintainance, which consists of a limited ration of rice. All these reasons oblige me to rush the news of them to Y.M., so that, thanks to your consideration, and given the huge expenses that will be further increased with the returns of these two ships and the wintering of the one in which I came—all of which comes out of the Royal Treasury, for instance, the succor of the Infantry which amounts to 5,000 pesos per month, as it is indispensable that the soldiers get their 2 pesos each month for their food, as they have no other resources. The same can be said of the salary of the Ministers of the Audiencia, the Prebendaries of the Cathedral, and the continuous expenditures made in the construction and outfitting of ships, and minor vessels which are precisely necessary for the voyages to New Spain, and the commerce of these coasts. As I see myself with these obligations, they are always before me, and therefore I am left disconsolate in seeing the remedy so far away, and can only inform Y.M., so that you may be pleased to rush an order to the Viceroy of New Spain, for him to send in advance as much as possible, and to order him that the succor that does not come this year for lack of galleon be sent together with the succor of next year, pointing out to him that the fixed quantity of the subsidy is 200,000 pesos per year...

May God keep the Catholic and Royal Person of Y.M., as Christendom needs.

Manila, 25 January 1670.

Manuel de León

## E2. Letter of 10 June 1670 regarding the Marianas

*Sources: AGI Fil. 10-1-2, pp. 1-4 (formerly 67-6-10); copy in Colección Pastells, Fil. 15, fol. 295-295v.*

*Note: The latter letter was received at the Council of the Indies on 4 May 1671.*

### Original text in Spanish.

*En 7 de Julio del año passado, di quentta a V.M. haver passado por las Islas nombradas hasta aora de los Ladrones donde vi a los Padres Missioneros de la Compañia de Jesus que de orden de su Magd. vinieron el año passado de 1668 a la conversion de sus naturales, y me noticiaron del copioso fruto de su Mission, y que aunque los naturales de aquellos Indios muestran docilidad, y poca contradicion a la Doctrina evangelica todavia se podia temer flaqueasen en la constancia no teniendo algun freno que los sugette, y haga espaldas a aquellos religioso[s] que estan desconfiados, y aunque me pidieron alguna gente, y armas no me determinare a hazerlo sin orden de V.M. aunque me parece conveniente aviendo de subsistir obra tan del servicio de nuestro Señor como el desta Mission sobre que me mandara V.M. lo que fuere de su maior servicio.*

*Tambien me noticiaron aquellos religiosos que de los dos Galeones que se perdieron mas ha de treinta años, el uno en la Isla de la Zarpana Grande y el otro en la de Buena Vista [rather Rota] parece la maior parte de la Artilleria dellos em quatro brazas de fondo, y que con fazilidad se podria sacar aunque para conseguirlo sera preciso embiar alguna gente con armas. Pues sin ellas no lo an de permitir los Indios, y siendo la maior parte desta artilleria de bronce siempre me parecera conviniente recogerla por su mucho valor.*

*Con la mala fortuna de la arrivada de los dos navios es preciso esten aquellos religiosos con todo desconsuelo, porque no tienen de donde socorrerse este año. Hasta la buelta de los que aora van, cuya consideracion me obliga a supplicar a V.M. se sirva de que se tome en este particular la resolucion que è de executar.*

*Guarde Dios la C.R.P. de V.M. como la Christiandad ha menester.*

*Manila y Junio 10 de 1670 años.*

*Manuel de Leon*

### Translation.

On 7th of July of last year, I informed Y.M. that I had passed by the Islands named until now the Ladrones, where I saw the Father Missionaries of the Society of Jesus who, by order of Your Majesty, came the past year of 1668 to the conversion of their natives. The informed me of the copious fruit of their Mission, and, although the natives of those Indians [rather Islands] show docility and little contradiction to the Gospel doctrine so far, it could be feared that their constancy might slacken, as there is no curb to restrain them, and they might turn their backs on those Religious who are distrustful. Although I was asked for some men, and weapons, I could not decide to do it without an order from Y.M., although it seems to me convenient for the continuation

of a work of such service to our Lord as that of this Mission. Y.M. will order me [to do] what is for your greater service.

Also, those Religious told me something about the two galleons that were lost over 30 years ago: one at the Island of Big Zarpana [i.e. Saipan] and the other at the Island of Buena Vista [rather Rota]. Most of their cannon seem to be in water 4 fathoms deep, and they could easily be salvaged, although in order to achieve it, it will be necessary to send a few men with weapons. Indeed, without weapons, the Indians will not permit it, and, given that most of these cannon are made of bronze, it will always seem to me to be worthwhile to salvage them on account of their high value.

With the bad luck of the return in distress of the two ships, those Religious must be disconsolate, because they have no way of getting help this year, not until the return of the ships that are going now. This consideration obliges me to beg Y.M. to please have the necessary decision taken regarding this specific matter.<sup>1</sup>

May God keep the C.R.P. of Y.M., as Christendom needs.

Manila, 10 June 1670.

Manuel de León

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1 Ed. note: The Council foresaw that the apparently innocuous request for armed men was an effort to create a garrison, which would result in a considerable burden on the royal treasury.