10 Sept 1770

Tovar to Viceroy Bucareli?

Document 3 (441-444)

My Lord, in the morning of August 12th, between midnight and 3:00 am, I was notified by the Sargent, who patrols the area where the horses are located, of canon blasts that he heard over the coast. Without hesitation I responded two [blasts], and sent a subaltern with eight soldiers on reconnaissance mission to the Southeast. On the 16th there were no news, we found out nothing. On the 3rd of this month fugitive Indians from Mision del Rosario were brought, and thanks to the minister of this Presidio, I was able to inform the Copanes [type of ship], that the blasts did happen, that an English ship was at the port for a few days, docked, from which a small boat was used to survey the bay and cays, and that they spoke with the Indians, and they told them that they came looking for a ship that went lost on February 1769; said boat came and went twice to the ship. It is unknown to me why they were on such a mission. Said port is about 30 to 40 leagues toward the Orient on one side, on the other side is the Guadalupe Island, Vergantin Island, to the Southeast, about 20 leagues or so. Bahía de las Ánimas, name that I chose, lays about 15 leagues after the bay, which is where the ship went down. What I want Your Excellency to consider is that I believe they are trying to stablish (continues page 442) port on Isla del Puerto, otherwise known as Culebra, which is where the Carancahuaz and Cuxanes inhabit; there they come and go as they please, and bring back, as far as I am concerned, stuff like bottles, pieces of cloth, and sometimes a rifle.

I do not take part in asking the Indians be inspected, or punishment for their breakaways, in which they take off with stolen horses and mares, because I do not wish to engage in disputes with the priests, and though I have been trying to avoid that, I have not been able to free myself from other matters of importance, such as accounting for wood for a room of mine, for there is none elsewhere, but at 10 or 12 very dangerous leagues away; for safety, all the land next to and around rivers shores should be cleared of trees, for that is the area where the runaway Indians seek refuge, and carry out their misdeeds, given how suitable that area is for such acts.

Another issue is that each of them possesses cattle, and since fields are open, there are no divisions or boundaries that prevent their cattle from joining that of other Misions: from here stems the willingness to solicit something incredible, intolerable even, I reckon it to be just to defend against the vexation and damages in which these people incur, since they lack civilization and justice, I shall not allow as the priests solicit, and the contrary shall never be seen around this Royal Chapter, only perfect populations and the work of the land, which I want to bring to Your Excellency’s immediate consideration.

New Letter

Page 444

Sir. It was stablished that the Governor of this province will ship your documents to the provinces of the interior right away, and that this company shall be relieved of the monthly fish hunting imposed by the Governor, which multiplied the work by four, and for that I thank You profusely: the soldiers are already busy enough working the coasts, and the Company is not capable, with the small number of effectives, to tend to so many coves, cays and estuaries.