

Answered with number 483.

Neither current policy nor the deplorable condition that these provinces were in when I received command of them and in which they remain--to be exact, they are more and more on the decline every day--nor their great distance from this station allows opportune means to be taken to bring about a quick and effective remedy for the complex of adversities that have taken place in that province and that put into a worse light the inconsiderate and disloyal actions of the friendly northern Indians to which [actions] Your Lordship refers in letter number 370 of April 19 last. But if these circumstances cause Your Lordship consternation, and if the strength and the talent to resist them fail you, what shall I--the superior that is accountable and that sees, hears of, and finds out about ^{lv}// greater adversities, lamentable situations, and difficulties than occur in Texas--say? I shall always say that the king deigned to commit them to my care; that I, profoundly obliged by this honor, have devoted my feeble efforts, to the extent of their compass, toward the preservation and the welfare of these dominions; and that, inasmuch as the pious royal will does not demand the attainment of impossible things, I shall abide contented at this station for as long as it shall be his sovereign wish, making a joyous and faithful

sacrifice of my own wishes and of the ardency with which I devote myself to the royal service--although that ardency is inadequate to remedy the chronic maladies of the provinces.

I have made several representations to His Majesty for the benefit of the province under Your Lordship's command, and I am going to dispatch [to him] the particular report of which I am enclosing copy number 1. I enclose it in order that Your Lordship, aware of the genuineness with which I submit my //² notices concerning the previous and present condition of that province and of the sentiments, concern, and affection I hold for you, might inform me, with the same genuineness, what Your Lordship might wish to add to my statement--at the same time letting me know of any mistake you might note therein; for, far from wondering at such mistakes, I shall be particularly pleased that Your Lordship make them known to me in order that I may execute succeeding reports with my characteristic frankness and with the most honest desires of better serving the king.

In paragraph [MS: one word omitted] of my above-mentioned report, Your Lordship will note the measures that I think are conducive to the well-being of that province and to the resolution of the difficulties that hinder the attainment of that well-being. I should like to

facilitate those measures and [I should like] that the case not arrive whereby what I speak of in paragraph 40 forward come about, for its not occurring would represent the best sign that the province was quite distant from the desolation that threatens it. But however // ^{2v} the mission of Don Nicolás la Mathe may fall through and the possible avenues to commerce or treta with the northern tribes become closed, the result will be the greatest trouble with these Indians; furthermore, the war with the Comanches will be exacerbated, and the Carancahuazes and Lipanes will take advantage of the opportunity to perform their treachery with impunity. I find no other means capable of heading off and counteracting future detriments than that of consolidating, in S[a]n Antonio de Béxar and its missions, the forces of the province, abandoning the unsettled population of Bucareli--which we cannot support--and the detachment on Cíbolo Creek and the useless presidio of La Bahía de Esp[í]ritu S[an]to.

To best explain the utility of this consolidation, I enclose, under numbers 2 and 3, copies of opinions put forward about that province and the above-named presidio by the Señor Brigadier Don Pedro de Rivera and the Most Excellent // ³ Señor Marquis de Rubí. But since this matter is of the greatest seriousness it is necessary that my decisions be preceded by the clearest and most up-to-date

reports from Your Lordship, said reports having been reduced to the points set forth in paper number 4, albeit without their necessarily conforming to the order in which I present the points: Your Lordship can prepose or postpose those which you judge to be conducive to their best exposition, adding those you deem necessary in presenting your statements. To the conclusion and possible early dispatch of this report Your Lordship will devote yourself, giving it preference over all other matters.

In the meantime, although I am aware of the great risk in which Don Nicolás la Mathe finds himself, I caution that only Divine Pity and the measures that Your Lordship might be able to take can deliver him, since whatever measures I might dispose // ^{3v} from this capital would not arrive opportunely.

Nor are the evil consequences that will ensue with the unsettled population of Bucareli hidden from me, nor [am I unaware] that the hostilities of the Comanches will intensify in the province. And although a certain fleeting hope could be derived from the skirmish which these Indians had with the Taguacanas, Yscanias, Vidaais, Flechas, and Texas-- [all of whom were] aided by troops of ours who were escorting them--that hope is removed in the first place by the stealing perpetrated by these same friendly Indians and in the second place by our scanty forces in the province, given

the dispersion of said forces.

I find no remedy more effective than that of consolidating our forces. And since this is the only remedy that I can authorize at this time, Your Lordship is the one who must propose the best way of effecting the consolidation in order that // ⁴ I may advise you of my decisions and afford whatever assistance is possible.

God protect Your Lordship many years. Arispe, June 13, 1781.

El Cav[alle]ro de Croix
[Rubric]

Señor Don Domingo Cavello [addressee]

// ^{4v} [Blank] . [L.S., 1-4 pp., 6/13/1781]