

[cross]

No. 799

The governor of the province of Texas encloses for Your Lordship the original of the letter of reply to him from the captain of Camargo on construction of canoes and [the letter] which [that captain] sent [the governor] for Your Lordship in reply to the one you wrote him on the same matter. The governor discloses what has previously occurred with the ship carpenter that Monsieur [Nicolás de] la Mathé took to search for wood for [the canoes], and other [facts] that it has seemed appropriate for him to submit for Your Lordship's high consideration.

My dear sir:

Since Don Nicolás de la Mathé has returned from the villaj of Camargo, I received the reply, given to me by Captain Don Joseph Ant[onilo] de la Garza Falcón, the lieutenant governor there, the original of which I am sending to Your Lordship with [the letter] I enclose, ~~the~~ which also replies to Your Lordship.

As for the content of mine, Your Lordship will see ^{lv} // the difficulties occurring in bringing to effect what has been planned by Don Nicolás de la Mathé. It remains to be seen what will be stated by the cavaller governor of the

province of Louisiana on what I have written to him in connection with this matter--the providing of paddlers and hunters as proposed by the said [de] la Mathé.

When the latter departed for Camargo, as ~~I-informed-Your-Lordship~~ I have informed Your Lordship in my official letters numbered 678 and 700, he took with him a good ship carpenter, who is residing at this presidio, named Monsieur La Foré, a native of the villla of New Orleans, very knowledgeable about making every kind of canoe. [De la Mathé's] intention [was] for him to search for ²// any timber there might be on the coast there, in order to construct the canoes suggested in paragraphs 53 to 56 of his plan. And since I was instrumental in the said La Foré's going to make this survey, it seemed appropriate to question him to see what he [would] state on the matter. ~~In~~ And when I did so he assured me that he had seen no [usable timber], and that even from three pieces no canoe capable of transporting 20 men could be constructed. And [he said that] those [canoes] mentioned by the captain of Camargo and found in the place called El Chiguite, which Monsieur [de] la Mathé has pronounced tolerable, are old and unfit for the purpose. The said master ship ^{2v}carpenter made a complete and well-substantiated // criticism of the entire idea of Monsieur [de] la Mathé concerning said expedition. [He did] so from his familiarity with things of the sea [and] from what he heard said in the settlements of Camargo, Rebilla, El Cantaro, Reynosa, and Mier, which he passed through on his way to the coast. Desirous for my part that there should be no steps not undertaken, whereby Your Lordship might be convinced that I am not losing sight of your superior charges, I enquired of the said La Foré the means by which ~~he-would~~ [MS: one word blotted out] to provide us canoes to transport the two hundred men necessary to make the attack against the

Carancaguazes on the islands where they are located. To this // ³
 he replied to me that 8 canoes of three pieces each would be needed to
 carry 25 armed men [each] and [a total of] eight paddlers. [Also
 needed would be] six more smaller [canoes] ~~in-which~~ that would be
 guided by four men, for transferring as many as ten when they get to
 the shores of the islands, to facilitate by this assistance their
 disembarkation on [the islands], since the large canoes cannot go
 ashore. [The carpenter stated] that at the disembogement of the
 Guadalupe River into the sea there is wood quite sufficient for
 construction [of the canoes], to which end he has made available an
 Irishman by the name of Mister Guadalupe, who has settled at this
 presidio, and another [man], a Frenchman named Monsieur Boután, who
 dwells // ^{3v} at the presidio of La Bahía [del Espíritu Santo], both of
 them ship carpenters. With them and six axmen to cut and ~~shape-the~~
~~legs~~ shape the wood, [La Foré says he] will be able to complete them
 and their respective oars in six months at least. When I asked him
 the price for which he would make them for me he replied that he would
 undertake each of the large ones for 75 pesos, and for the small ones
 [he would charge] 37. At that [rate], drawing up an account of their
 prices, the 8 large ones amount to 600 pesos and the 6 small ones, to
 222 pesos, so that the two sums total 822 [pesos].

This is not all; he says that unless he is given at least twenty
 men in escort he will not undertake the work for the amount of money
 he mentions. For since // ⁴ the Carancaguazes already know of the
 expedition being planned against them, and [since] the place where
 said canoes are to be constructed is in an area that will be easy for

them to find, he is convinced they are sure to stake everything on attacking those who are building [the canoes], as occurred in the year 1778 at the presidio of La Bahía del [Espíritu Santo. When Captain Don Luis Cazorla [MS: two words blotted out] had decided to construct some [canoes] for the same purpose at the disemboguing of the Salin Antónilo River into the sea, the Carancaguazes came forth and killed Julián Martel and Francisco Días, the carpenters who were building them. This misfortune [I] attribute to the said captain's not having wished to give them an escort to protect them from that attack.

With what has been said and because ^{4v} // there will not be any salaried rowers, I leave to Your Lordship's consideration the cost that will be involved in this expedition, which would be much greater if the rowers and hunters were to come from Louisiana. Thus Your Lordship can see ~~that this~~ the difference there is [between La Foré's alternative and] the one proposed by Don Nicolás de la Mathé.

I have delivered to the latter [the letter] which Your Lordship enclosed for me. ~~for the in the~~ For this reason and [because of] his [late] return from Camargo he has given me only the slightest word on what happened during his trip, of which I am sure he will apprise Your Lordship, decrying whatever the captain of that settlement [says to] contradict his plan. For ⁵ // [de la Mathé] is well informed thereon, from [MS: several words blotted out] all of which Your Lordship will form the opinion [you are] quite pleased [to make].

May Our Lord protect Your Lordship's life many years. [San Antonio de] Béxar, March 1, 1784.

Your Lordship's most attentive
and true servant
kisses your hand.

Lord Commandant General }
Don Phe[lliple de Nebe }

Dom[inglo Cabello

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[A.L.S., 1-5 pp., 3/1/1784]