

From: King Philip IV of Spain

To: His Subjects

Date: May 12, 1643

Spanish Laws

This document is a royal decree establishing certain levies, for a two-year period, to be applied to the expenses of maintaining the armed forces.

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For Dispatch of Official Domestic Affairs
Fourth Seal of the Year Sixteen Hundred and Forty Two

The King.

Due to [numerous] events that [have been] experienced, it is most [advisable] that there should be good quality cavalry within my armed forces [for] the defense of my kingdoms. In fact, this has been the case with regard to the long [duration] of the militia of the Order of Santiago, Calatrava. Likewise, the militia of [Alcantara] has served in such campaigns during the past few years. Therefore, considering the value of military defense, and for its conservation and maintenance, I have resolved to implement various measures, which includes the collection of a tax for the next two years [there being a war in these kingdoms]. This measure will call for the deduction of a real from every ducat paid out of my Royal property to all of my ministers and servants in Spain, Italy and the West Indies. This tax will function as payment for service in and maintenance of the cavalries in the aforementioned Orders. Additionally, the juntas of these cavalries will derive benefit from this tax because they will receive payments. Based on the foregoing, I am forwarding this decree to my ministers who are in charge of my Royal property and Royal accounts in all of the West Indies for the purpose of extracting payments from all other ministers who may be serving in the various districts. This tax consisting of a real from every ducat will be collected from [those] salaries for a period of two years beginning in sixteen hundred and forty three. For purposes of adjusting these [accounts], the currency used for the payment of salaries in those Provinces will need to be exchanged so that nine and [eight] [reals] will be converted into ducats containing 11 reals. [Under] a separate account, the proceeds from this tax will then be submitted directly to the junta's General Secretary of the cavalry of the orders, who will subsequently send certification to the ministers of each district in order to provide them with a record of the amount of money collected.

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In a similar manner, I hereby order the viceroys, presidents and governors of the West Indies to assist with the careful execution of this useful decree. This decree represents my will and, therefore, the

accountants in the Royal Counsel in the West Indies should register those individuals that have already made a contribution for the purpose of maintaining the cavalry. Madrid. May 12, 1643.

Signed by King [Philip IV]

By order of Our King

Signed by Mr. Gabriel de Ocaña y Alarcon

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Therefore, one real will be extracted from every ducat constituting the salaries and wages paid to the ministers that are presently serving your Majesty in the West Indies, the proceeds of which will be used to maintain the cavalry of the Military Orders.

[Top left half of Page 3] Official Seal of Sixteen Forty Three

Please provide me with the rationale for [illegible words?].

[Unknown date due to ink erosion]

Signed by [?]

[Top right half of Page 3] Official Seal of Sixteen Forty Three

Please provide me with the rationale for the endowment on behalf of the cavalry.

Signed by Gregorio de [?]

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For Dispatch of Official Domestic Affairs

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