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OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE NAVY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Personal. MANILA, 26 September, 1898.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY,
REAR-ADMIRAL DEWEY.

My dear Sir:

With all my consideration and special respect, I present my earnest thanks for the amiable reply which you took occasion to send to my letter in your communication of the 24th ultimo, regretting also that the circumstances in which we find ourselves do not permit me to convey my feelings by conversation.

Being called to Madrid to make answer to the charges which may be made against me, principally for going to Subic and for the loss of my squadron at Cavite, I have to defend myself from the calumny which may be raised against me; for this purpose it would be of the greatest utility and much force if I were able to offer the highly valuable testimony of the authorized opinion of yourself, the distinguished Commander-in-Chief of the squadron which I had the honor of engaging.

For this purpose I am compelled to put on record:

1. That the port of Subic was without shore fortifications or submarine torpedoes at its entrance.
2. That the destruction of my squadron, given the superiority of yours, would have been far more complete at Subic than at Cavite because the depth of water being much greater in the former port, ships and men would have sunk, causing great loss of life.
3. That you did not find us unready at the entrance of Manila Bay and still less so at Cavite, and if fortune did not

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I favor the Spaniards it was not for lack of valor but principally because we had poor ships.

I know that my temerity in making this request of you is very great; but invoking the fact that we belong to the same profession and remembering that you have more than once had the kindness to praise my conduct, I force myself to believe that this will be well received.

The affair has an immense importance for me since it is closely related to my honor and personal reputation.

I have another request to make of you, and that is in favor of Captain Del Rio, old and sick, late naval commandant at Subic, and the officers, sailors and soldiers who are with him in the power of the insurgents, and very badly treated. If you would consent to arrange for their transfer to Manila, continuing as prisoners, they would be satisfied.

For my part, after begging your pardon a thousand times for the liberty which I am taking, I hope that you will kindly grant my request, for which your faithful servant will be eternally grateful.

PATRICIO MONTOJO.

REAR-ADMIRAL MONTOJO,
Manila.

My dear Sir:

It gives me pleasure, replying to your letter of the 26th instant, to record my testimony in favor of a gallant foe.

1. In regard to the port of Subic, it was carefully reconnoitred on the 30th of April by three of my ships, two of which made the complete circuit of the bay without finding anything to oppose them.
2. Your statement as to the probability of greater loss of life in a deep bay like that of Subic than in shoal water as at Cavite, appears to me to be incontrovertible.
3. Although without accurate knowledge as to the condition of your ships, I have no hesitation in saying to you what I have already had the honor to report to my government, that your defense at Cavite was gallant in the extreme. The fighting of your flagship, which was singled out for attack, was es-

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pecially worthy of a place in the traditions of valor of your nation.

In conclusion, I beg to assure you that I very much regret that calumnies have been cast at you, and am confident that your honor cannot be dimmed by them.

With assurances of my highest consideration,

Very sincerely,

GEORGE DEWEY,

Rear-Admiral, U. S. N., Comdg. Asiatic Station.

Exchange of letters between Admiral George Dewey, USN and Almirante Patricio Montojo.

From Autobiography of George Dewey – Admiral of the Navy (NY: Scribner, 1913)