

ANGLO-SPANISH RELATIONS DURING THE EARLY YEARS
OF ELIZABETH I, 1558-1574

by

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INTRODUCTION

Diplomatic relations between the major European countries underwent a transition about the time of Elizabeth's accession. Diplomats from all countries began to concentrate on conspiracies rather than traditional political responsibilities. The activities of foreign representatives were influenced more by religious controversies than by dynastic objectives. Involvement in internal political affairs alienated foreign representatives and isolated one country from another. Monarchs viewed foreign representatives more as instigators of political intrigues than as peaceful emissaries from neighboring states.

During the reign of Mary Tudor, England and Spain were closely allied in almost every aspect of diplomatic affairs. To assist her husband, Mary committed England to a European war that was against the interests of her country. In addition to their political connection, the two countries were economically inter-related, largely because of mutual trade with the Spanish Netherlands. Catholicism was still strong in England, even at the time of Elizabeth's accession. Despite the close relations between the two countries, within fourteen years they would move so far apart that they would be on the verge of war.

It is the purpose of this paper to reveal the causes of the diplomatic split between England and Spain between 1558 and 1572. Numerous accounts have been written of English foreign policy and, to avoid needless repetition, this paper will concentrate on the Spanish reaction to Elizabeth's diplomacy. By examining the actions of Philip and his resident ambassadors in London, one can perceive the reasons for the transition in Anglo-Spanish relations between 1558 and 1572. Why would Elizabeth repeatedly challenge Philip in foreign affairs, pitting herself against the most powerful state in Europe? Elizabeth's attempts to remove her government from the Spanish sphere of influence, or indeed that of any other European country, appeared to be the central theme of her foreign policy. Philip, having dominated English affairs through his wife Mary, wanted to continue his powerful influence over the English throne. Through his resident ambassadors, Philip tried to maintain this previous relationship between the two countries in which Spanish interests were dominant. But Elizabeth was interested in exerting English interests, without regard for the aims of Philip or Spain.

This conflict of monarchical policies and its effects on Anglo-Spanish affairs will be revealed through an examination of the activities of the three Spanish ambassadors resident in London between 1558 and 1572. This paper will

attempt to break new ground in the area of Anglo-Spanish affairs during Elizabethan England. Too many controversies in Anglo-Spanish relations have been treated simply as religious conflicts without reference to political and economic factors. Hopefully, additional studies will be concerned with this important period of transition in Anglo-Spanish relations.

CHAPTER I

During the reign of Mary Tudor, England was closely allied, economically as well as politically, with Spain. With Mary's marriage to Philip II in 1554, the two countries were united into a powerful force. After the North Sea trade, commercial intercourse with Spain was one of the most important branches of the English economy. Trade increased between the two countries and a community of English merchants established themselves in Seville. At Philip's insistence, Mary discouraged English trading across the Atlantic and supported ventures towards Russia and Eastern Europe. The Russian trade flourished only until 1558, when Ivan IV closed the port of Archangel to English seamen. Not only economically connected, England was also politically influenced by Spain. At her husband's urging, Mary joined in a war against France in 1557, which proved disastrous to the English position in Europe and led to the loss of Calais to Henry II early in 1558.¹

On March 30, 1558, Mary, thinking herself "to be with child," informed Philip of her hopes of providing an heir to

¹James A. Williamson, The Tudor Age (New York: David McKay Co., 1964), p. 233.

maintain Catholicism in England. However, by late October, Mary was diagnosed as suffering from a grave illness and not pregnant after all. Her Councillors pressed her to name her half-sister, Elizabeth, as the heir apparent, which she reluctantly did ten days later. Worried about a possible reversion to Protestantism in England, Philip sent a special envoy, the Count de Feria, to extend his sympathies over Mary's illness and to assess the situation accurately. On November 9, de Feria met with the Queen and found her near death. He conferred with the leading Spanish and English doctors, all of whom agreed that her condition was hopeless. In an attempt to safeguard his master's influence in England, de Feria met immediately with the Privy Council. To the Councillors he revealed Philip's desire to support Elizabeth and the interests of England. De Feria hoped the Councillors would accept the offer and convince Elizabeth of Philip's friendship as well as her need of his assistance. However, many of the Councillors were wary of Philip's offers and listened to de Feria "as if he brought them the bulls of a dead Pope."²

Sensing that Mary was dying, the Spanish King had selected his envoy carefully for this most important task. De Feria was no stranger to England but had been at Mary's

²J. E. Neale, Essays in Elizabethan History (London: Jonathan Cape, 1965), pp. 132-3.

court on numerous occasions. Specifically, Philip considered him to be "persona grata" to Elizabeth, a judgment that proved to be ill-founded, however, because of the ambassador's tendency to meddle in business that did not concern him. On November 10, de Feria visited the heir-apparent at Hatfield to extend his master's greetings and offers of assistance. But he foolishly tried to impress on Elizabeth that her succession to the throne would depend on Philip's aid and that she would require his continued support. Although Elizabeth had indicated to another Spanish envoy several years previously that she hoped to maintain harmonious relations with Philip in the future, she responded angrily to de Feria that it was the English people who "had placed her where she now is," not the King of Spain.³

Shortly before Mary's death, de Feria informed his master of his conversations with Elizabeth, whom he characterized as "a very vain woman but a very acute one."⁴ The ambassador was convinced that she would neither declare herself to be a Catholic nor commit herself to a Spanish alliance. From private sources, de Feria was able to

³For the material related in this paragraph, see J. E. Neale, Queen Elizabeth (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1934), p. 52; and Neale, Essays in Elizabethan History, p. 133.

⁴Conyers Read, Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 117 (Hereinafter cited as Read, Cecil.)

formulate an accurate list of Elizabeth's first Privy Council. Even more important, the ambassador was aware of Elizabeth's efforts to acquire whatever military forces might be necessary to defeat a Catholic plot to prevent her accession. Sir Thomas Parry, Sir John Thynne, and several other ardent supporters had pledged to provide as many as 10,000 men. By the end of October, with promises from several of Mary's Councillors, Elizabeth was ready to fight for the throne, should she be forced to do so. Significantly, the most important Catholic leader in England, Nicholas Heath, Archbishop of York as well as Lord Chancellor, informed an emissary from Elizabeth that he would not support a Catholic uprising against her. That Heath's first loyalty was to the House of Tudor meant that Elizabeth's accession would be a peaceful one.

Shortly after Mary died on November 17, 1558, the archbishop proclaimed to a gathering of Lords in the capital that

God this present morning hath called to His Mercy our late sovereign Lady, Queen Mary, which hap, as it is most heavy and grievous unto us, so have we no less cause another way to rejoice with praise to Almighty God, for that he hath left unto us a true, lawful and right inheritress to the crown . . . which is the Lucky Elizabeth . . . of whose most right and title . . . we need not doubt.⁵

⁵Neale, Essays in Elizabethan History, pp. 137-8.

Elizabeth was declared Queen at Westminster Hall and envoys were sent to inform her of this at Hatfield. Accompanied by more than a thousand nobles, Elizabeth traveled to London to take control of the government.⁶

After her accession to the throne, Elizabeth was confronted with the difficult peace negotiations already underway at Cateau-Cambresis. To represent England at the negotiations, Elizabeth sent Arundel, Howard, Thirlby, and Wotten as her personal representatives. Before they left England, she instructed them to maintain a measure of independence from their Spanish counterparts. England had played only a secondary role in the negotiations between Spain and France before Elizabeth's accession. She was determined to gain a greater voice in international affairs for her country and immediately stressed the need for the restoration of Calais to England before any settlement could be concluded. That her efforts to gain Philip's support succeeded was due in large part to the attitudes of the duke of Alva, who, two weeks before Mary's death, requested Philip not to conclude any agreement with France unless it was acceptable to the English representatives. The greatest general of the age, Alva feared that a separate peace would incline England towards France, and he proposed a possible resumption of the war should that prove necessary to maintain

⁶Ibid., pp. 135-8.

England's friendship. Philip was as anxious as Alva to promote Anglo-Spanish cooperation, which was the only sure way of offsetting the military power of France; and on January 13, 1559, he informed de Feria that he intended to honor his former pledges to assist Elizabeth in the restoration of Calais. If the French refused to give way, Philip was prepared to reopen the war, if England would only agree to participate and share the burden of expenses.⁷

Although Elizabeth was not completely convinced of the need for a close partnership with Spain, she developed a deep suspicion of France during the negotiations, especially when the dauphiness, Mary Queen of Scots, had the English coat-of-arms placed on her standard at the prompting of her father-in-law, Henry II. After the French and Scottish representatives at Cateau-Cambresis indicated that Elizabeth was not the rightful occupant of the English throne, she became fearful of the possibility of armed intervention by France in support of Mary's claims, and this

⁷For the material related in this paragraph, see M.A.S. Hume (ed), Calendar of State Papers relating to English Affairs preserved principally in the Archives at Simancas, I (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1892), p. 23; A. F. Pollard, The Political History of England (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), p. 195; Williamson, The Tudor Age, pp. 255-6; and James A. Froude, History of England (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1881), VII, pp. 30-1.

naturally gave her a new awareness of the value of Spanish support.⁸

In an attempt to detach the English from Spain, Henry II, through an Italian merchant, Guido Cavalcanti, offered to sign a separate peace with Elizabeth. Should she break off diplomatic relations with Spain and agree to marry someone friendly to France, Henry promised to conclude the peace negotiations on a basis favorable to England. Unwisely, perhaps, Elizabeth informed Philip of the French attempt to conclude a separate peace, which infuriated Henry and increased England's dependence on Spain. Even worse, the Spanish King was unable to honor his prior commitments to Elizabeth. His limited financial resources, coupled with the fact that a Turkish fleet was threatening Spanish possessions in the Mediterranean and a Moorish uprising was imminent in Morocco, meant that Philip was naturally preoccupied with the problems closer home. Elizabeth was not satisfied with the final version of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis, signed in April 1559, which left Calais in French hands and marked England's final withdrawal from the continent. Moreover, she interpreted Philip's inability to help her as a clear sign of Spanish weakness.⁹

⁸J. B. Black, The Reign of Elizabeth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 38.

⁹R. B. Wernham, Before the Armada (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1966), p. 245.

After the settlement of the French war, Elizabeth and her Councillors continued to regard Henry II as the most dangerous threat to England. The French King had publicly supported his daughter-in-law, Mary Stuart, as the legitimate occupant of the English throne. With his efforts to regain Italian territory thwarted, Henry turned his imperialistic designs northwards to Scotland and England. Aware of the dangers to the Hapsburg Empire should Henry be successful, Philip instructed his ambassador to assist Elizabeth in defeating the French objectives.

To strengthen the relations between England and Spain, Philip even suggested the possibility of a marriage alliance with Elizabeth. However, he was unsure whether to commit himself or promote a match with one of his cousins. Before Elizabeth's coronation early in 1559, de Feria sounded Elizabeth as to the possibility of a marriage with Philip or a prince favored by him. Previously, the ambassador had informed Philip that "If she decides to marry out of the country she will at once fix her eyes on your Majesty."¹⁰ De Feria emphasized Elizabeth's need for Spanish support, especially if the French decided to support Mary's claims. He warned her that the French had attempted to convince the Pope to excommunicate her and give his blessing to a French crusade against her. On January 10,

¹⁰Neale, Queen Elizabeth, pp. 68-9.

Philip informed de Feria that he still had reservations about whether he himself should marry Elizabeth since he felt this might weaken his authority in his other possessions. Also, he feared the possibility of renewed warfare with France because of Mary's claims.¹¹

In order to strengthen his influence in England, Philip instructed de Feria to offer his proposal of marriage to Elizabeth. In a letter to his ambassador, Philip revealed that

I cannot lose sight of the enormous importance of such a match to Christianity . . . I have decided to place on one side all other considerations which might be argued against it and am resolved to render this service to God, and offer to marry the Queen of England . . .¹²

However, Philip set conditions that Elizabeth must meet before the marriage could take place. She would have to convert to Catholicism for the sake of religious unity and would have to acquire absolution from the Pope. Because Spanish influence in Rome was strong enough to assure the success of any suit made by her, Elizabeth could have accepted Philip's offer. Thus it was not at the papal Curia et seq. but in England that difficulties to the marriage existed. The Marian persecutions, and the agitation of the

¹¹For the material related in this paragraph, see Pollard, The Political History of England, pp. 219-20; and Neale, Queen Elizabeth, p. 69.

¹²Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 22.

returned Marian exiles, had caused a great increase of Protestant feeling throughout England, which the Queen undoubtedly sensed. The time was now past when the monarch, through a subtle, well-framed religious policy, could lead the English people in the direction of either Catholicism or Protestantism. The gentry and middle class were now overwhelmingly Protestant; and they strongly favored the split from Rome and opposed another Anglo-Spanish marriage alliance. Because the Crown needed above all to retain the support of those groups, Elizabeth gave only the slightest and most perfunctory attention to Philip's offer of marriage.¹³

After numerous interviews with Elizabeth concerning the marriage, de Feria grimly informed his master that "I am afraid that one fine day we shall find this woman married and I shall be the last man in the place to know anything about it."¹⁴ Yet Elizabeth was anxious to retain Philip's friendship during the negotiations at Cateau-Cambresis, and she therefore continued the discussions with de Feria, although she refused to commit herself for one

¹³For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 22; and Patrick McGrath, Papists and Puritans Under Elizabeth I (New York: Walker and Company, 1967), pp. 2-6.

¹⁴Neale, Queen Elizabeth, p. 69.

reason or another. Elizabeth did assure the ambassador, however, that if she married anyone, it would be Philip. By March, de Feria was pressing Elizabeth for an answer and she was unable to stall any longer. Consequently, she informed the count that she would need a papal dispensation since her legitimacy and claim to the throne were based on the denial of papal authority. In addition, she felt that her subjects would object to a marriage with Philip since he had previously been Mary's consort. In March 1559 Elizabeth confessed to de Feria that she could not at present marry Philip. Hoping not to offend the Spanish King, she asked his ambassador how, if she should marry her sister's husband, she could avoid bringing disgrace on her father. In a concluding interview Elizabeth rejected Philip's offer on the grounds that she herself was a heretic.¹⁵ De Feria then informed Philip in a blunt communique that "They are all very glad to be free of your Majesty."¹⁶

Although Philip replied to de Feria that "I cannot help being sorry that the affair has not been arranged, as I greatly desired," he continued to hope for England's friendship and instructed his ambassador to inform the Queen

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 69-70.

¹⁶Pollard, The Political History of England, p. 196.

that he would support her government in every way possible.¹⁷ In regard to religious affairs, Philip requested that de Feria use his influence with the leading English Catholics in order to settle their grievances and assist Elizabeth in establishing her regime. De Feria was also instructed

to obstruct and impede, by every way, form and means, any rupture between Catholics and heretics in England, this being the best course for the pacification of the country, and for the welfare of our interests, as it will deprive the French of any excuse for putting their foot in the country.¹⁸

Ironically, both Elizabeth and Cecil developed their early foreign policy on the assumption that neither Spain nor France would permit the other to interfere in English affairs on the basis of religion. To his ambassador, Philip indicated that he wanted no wars of religion and hoped for religious unity in England.¹⁹

Early in Elizabeth's reign, Philip was caught in a quandary over the affairs of the English Catholics. In December 1559 de Feria indicated that despite their dissatisfaction, the Catholics were reluctant to reveal their feelings because of the danger of reprisals. Philip wanted

¹⁷Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 40.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 41.

¹⁹Pollard, The Political History of England, p. 220.

to help them but because of his need of English support in European affairs, he refrained from assisting or even advocating any type of uprising against Elizabeth. Moreover, he used his influence at the papal Curia to block an attempt to have Elizabeth excommunicated, which he felt would lead to additional complications. In March 1559 Philip modified his position towards the English Catholics and informed de Feria that if a revolt should occur in England and

if you see the Catholic side strong and firmly established and the heretics weak, you will not fail to secretly favor the former and supply them underhandedly with money, whilst on the other hand you will give fair words to the heretics to put them off their guard and prevent them from calling in the French.²⁰

Philip concluded by sending de Feria 60,000 ducats which the latter was instructed to use in whatever way he felt most suited to advance the interests of Spain. Also, the King indicated that money was available for the preparation of a fleet in the Netherlands on short notice and that troops were being assembled in case they should be needed.²¹

By this juncture, de Feria's arrogance had offended Elizabeth and many of her Councillors. In addition, his ability to acquire accurate reports of most events made him something of a threat to Elizabeth. In a letter to Philip,

²⁰Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 41.

²¹For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 7 and p. 41; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 26-7.

the ambassador indicated that "I am displeased to see the great care they take to hide from me everything they do, both great and small . . ." ²² Only a month after the Queen's accession, de Feria informed his master that Elizabeth desired his recall but would not publicly make any such announcement. Slowly being ostracized from court affairs, he concentrated on ways to assist the English Catholics, although he did so as quietly as possible, in order not to provoke the Queen's anger. The ambassador warned Philip at one point that if he did not assist the English Catholics, "They would appeal to the French or even the Turks rather than put up with these heretics." ²³ By the spring of 1559 an impasse had developed between Elizabeth and the count, and, as a consequence, Anglo-Spanish relations suffered. De Feria had become disillusioned with the Queen and informed Philip that

In short, what can be said here to your Majesty is only this country after thirty years of a government such as your majesty knows, has fallen into the hands of a woman who is the daughter of the Devil, and the greatest scoundrels and heretics in the land. ²⁴

²² Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 16.

²³ Arnold A. Meyer, England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1967), pp. 34-5.

²⁴ Neale, Queen Elizabeth, p. 71.

Although the ambassador indicated to his master that "I try to keep her pleasant and in good humor," he was actually alienating the Queen more each day.²⁵

Knowing such a situation could not continue, Philip decided on an immediate change of strategy, since it was obvious that attempts to "frighten" Elizabeth into accepting Spanish support for the defense of English interests had failed. On April 15, 1559, Philip informed de Feria that his services were no longer needed in England and that he should return immediately to Brussels. As his new ambassador, Philip turned to Alvaro de la Quadra, Bishop of Aquila, who had already made the journey to London. Because of his ecclesiastical training, de Quadra was well suited to promote Philip's conservative policies at the English court. Moreover, he had obvious diplomatic talents and was described by one of his contemporaries as "a clever and crafty old fox."²⁶ Consequently he was in some ways almost the opposite of de Feria, and his gentleness and cordiality soon appealed to Elizabeth and her leading Councillors, including Cecil. Relations between England and Spain therefore returned to their previous state of mutual friendship.²⁷

²⁵Ibid., p. 71.

²⁶Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. XV.

²⁷For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 54 and p. XV.

De Quadra spent considerable time in acquiring friends and developing good relations with the leading figures at court. He collected an enormous amount of idle talk, much of which he communicated to Philip and the Regent of the Netherlands, Margaret of Parma. A review of his communiqués indicates that the bishop accepted too much of this gossip as fact. Like his predecessor, de Quadra soon became involved in the problems of the English Catholics. In July 1559 he informed his master that Elizabeth was encouraging heresy and causing great unrest among the Catholics. According to the bishop, the English Catholics had asked Henry II of France for assistance but had been rejected. He maintained that it was Philip's responsibility to offer leadership and financial aid to them.²⁸

As other Spanish ambassadors often did, de Quadra took a deep interest in the religious affairs of the English Catholics. Shortly after his arrival in England, he became involved in numerous minor intrigues. De Quadra was unable to confine himself to the functions of an ambassador and soon assumed the role of spiritual leader to the oppressed English Catholics. He attempted to convince English noblemen that Philip wanted to restore Catholicism, removing

²⁸For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 85; and Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 281.

Elizabeth only as a last resort. De Quadra felt that Elizabeth was using religion as a political weapon and reported that "This woman desires to make use of religion in order to excite rebellion in the whole world."²⁹ He feared that "If she had the power today she would sow heresy broadcast in all your Majesty's dominions . . ."³⁰ As a defender of the Catholic Church, de Quadra felt he was entitled to oppose heresy and support those who might assist the English Catholics. Also, to assist in gathering support for the English Catholics, he informed many prominent Europeans of the governmental abuses inflicted on the Catholics. In June 1560 de Quadra notified the Bishop of Arras that "The Catholics are being persecuted more than ever . . ."³¹ De Quadra's letters served their purpose, and Philip soon took an interest in these reported "abuses" towards the English Catholics. In March 1561 he informed de Quadra that he was grieved by the reports and hoped he would assist the English Catholics in any way possible. Such directions could only cause new complications in the future.³²

²⁹Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 53.

³⁰Ibid., p. 53.

³¹Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, pp. 158-9.

³²For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, pp. 184-5; and Wallace MacCaffrey, The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 279.

After the unsatisfactory settlement at Cateau-Cambresis, Elizabeth regarded France, not Spain, as the major threat to England. Failing in Northern Italy, Henry II directed his imperialistic designs towards Scotland. Both Elizabeth and Cecil considered the French domination of Scotland as a great threat to the security of England. The French attempts to acquire papal excommunication of Elizabeth and the use of the English coat-of-arms by Francis II suggested the possibility of renewed warfare. In an effort to defeat the French designs in Scotland, Elizabeth secretly sent large sums of money, most from Flemish loans, to assist the rebellious Scottish lords. By December 1559 the troops of the Scottish rebels had been defeated by the French troops and only open intervention by Elizabeth would halt French successes.³³

Before Admiral Winter sailed north to Scotland, Elizabeth met with de Quadra to explain her reasons for becoming militarily involved in Scotland. She indicated that a fleet of forty ships transporting munitions was preparing to sail from France to support the 8,000 French troops in Scotland. Also the French troops had refortified several non-military installations and had recently violated the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis. Elizabeth told de Quadra that

³³For the material related in this paragraph, see Read, Cecil, pp. 151-2; and Neale, Queen Elizabeth, pp. 87-9.

it was clear the French planned to invade Scotland and then attack England. In her opinion, she had no choice but to fight. Elizabeth expressed her appreciation to de Quadra for informing Philip of her actions and her need for his continued support. To strengthen Philip's resolution to assist her, Elizabeth told the ambassador that she favored a renewal of the marriage negotiations between herself and either the Austrian Archdukes or Prince Carlos. Another gesture by Elizabeth to improve her relations with Spain was the restoration of the crucifix and candles in her private chapel.³⁴

On February 27, 1560, Elizabeth agreed to the Treaty of Berwick and took the Scottish Protestants under her protection which in turn created a problem for Philip. After Elizabeth's rejection of him, he had married Elizabeth of Valois and drawn somewhat closer to France. However, he did not favor a union of Scotland with either France or England, and if war broke out between those two countries, he was convinced France would be victorious. Previously, in an effort to prevent hostilities, Philip requested Elizabeth not to send her forces into Scotland and to withdraw her naval forces. He offered Spanish troops to help

³⁴For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, pp. 117-8; and Read, Cecil, p. 155.

in putting down the Protestant rebels and if necessary, to prevent a possible French invasion.³⁵

In January 1560 Elizabeth sent two special envoys to Philip to reaffirm his offers of assistance. Yet the King was now reluctant to commit himself and refused to reply. Rather he appointed the Seigneur de Glajon, a high ranking noble of the Netherlands, as his special envoy to Elizabeth in hopes of preventing her from sending troops into Scotland. Unfortunately, Elizabeth allowed her northern army to cross the border eight days before Glajon arrived. She criticized Philip's long delay in answering her requests for aid and used this as an excuse for sending her army into Scotland.³⁶

Glajon informed Philip that Elizabeth would suspend military operations if he would give her an assurance that the French would not attack England. To the Queen he indicated that Philip considered the French were in the right but he would support and defend her on the grounds that the French were possibly preparing for war against England. Glajon again mentioned the use of Spanish troops to check the Scottish lords while she might use English troops to defend her own borders. Skillfully Elizabeth avoided any

³⁵Neale, Queen Elizabeth, p. 94.

³⁶Read, Cecil, pp. 164-6.

direct response to Philip's offer of military assistance and repeated her demands for the removal of the French troops. Glajon had several later interviews with Elizabeth and kept Philip well informed as to their proceedings.³⁷

During the Scottish troubles, Philip's ambassador, de Quadra, had little to do with the negotiations between England and Spain. Yet he attempted to influence Cecil and informed Philip that "I have tried hard to win him over, for we are the best of friends, but he is possessed with the chimerical notion of uniting Scotland and England under one creed and government and I might as well talk to a deaf adder as try to move him."³⁸ De Quadra, as a spokesman for his church, saw the Scottish conflict as a struggle between Catholics and heretics, and it was almost inevitable that he would support the French interests. Glajon, however, proved to be more of a politique and interpreted the conflict as a struggle between the Valois and Hapsburg Empires. Philip sided with Glajon, and a special Spanish fleet began to mobilize in the Netherlands. Late in April Glajon met again with Elizabeth and renewed the offers of Spanish assistance. During the interview, Elizabeth indicated that she could not accept the offer but that her

³⁷Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, pp. 142-5.

³⁸Read, Cecil, p. 162.

troops would remain until the French abandoned Scotland.³⁹

Late in May, as the tension was beginning to subside, Elizabeth requested de Quadra to inform Philip of her demands for a settlement of the Scottish problem. Basically, she asked for a suspension of French military operations both in Scotland and towards England and for the removal of the English coat-of-arms from the French standard. In addition, she expressed a desire to meet secretly with Philip to discuss the Scottish difficulties if some suitable time and place could be agreed upon. In June the negotiations to discuss the terms of an Anglo-French settlement began in Scotland. The French, in a weak bargaining position because of internal difficulties, asked Philip to act as mediator in the proceedings. The defeat of the Spanish Mediterranean fleet by the Turks and the death of Mary of Guise, Regent in Scotland, strengthened Elizabeth's position in the negotiations. Secretary Cecil and several of Elizabeth's Councillors represented England during the negotiations. Concluded in June 1560, the Treaty of Edinburgh ended the disputes and provided that: 1) England and France would follow a policy of non-interference towards

³⁹For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 148; and Read, Cecil, p. 162.

Scotland; 2) the government of Scotland would consist of a Scottish Council of twelve members, seven appointed by Mary, Queen of Scots, and five by the Scottish lords; 3) all French troops would be removed, and 4) the fortifications at Leith, Dumbarton and Eyemouth would be dismantled. The Treaty was accepted by both countries and Elizabeth appeared victorious in her first major diplomatic involvement.⁴⁰

By 1560 de Quadra had concluded that Elizabeth was under the complete domination of Cecil, who firmly opposed an Anglo-Spanish alliance. In an attempt to eliminate Cecil's influence, de Quadra offered to secure Philip's support for a marriage between Sir Robert Dudley and Elizabeth. With Elizabeth's permission, Dudley informed de Quadra that if Philip approved, he would marry Elizabeth and restore Catholicism in England. In March Philip wrote that he was aware of the discussions between de Quadra and Sidney in regard to the marriage. In the interests of Spain and the Catholic Church, he instructed de Quadra to continue the talks whenever possible. However, Philip asked to receive something in writing from Elizabeth, since her words were usually untrustworthy, especially in the area of

⁴⁰For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 154; Neale, Queen Elizabeth, pp. 96-9; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 46-7.

marriage affairs. He warned the bishop to be especially cautious during the discussions. Several days later, de Quadra reported to Philip that he had met with Cecil, who assured him that Elizabeth was serious in these discussions. The Secretary pointed out the need for a document indicating Philip's desire for the Queen to marry someone, either a foreigner or an Englishman. Since Elizabeth soon refrained altogether from the discussions, the Spanish King refused to become involved. Elizabeth's pretext for a marriage to Dudley was thus, at least in part, on the same basis as her possible acceptance of the Archduke--a device to insure the maintenance of friendly relations between England and the Catholic powers of Europe.⁴¹

⁴¹For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, pp. 184-7; Wernham, Before the Armada, pp. 260-1; and Pollard, The Political History of England, p. 246.

CHAPTER II

The events that occurred during the years 1562-1567 may be considered as marking a transition in Anglo-Spanish relations. Elizabeth entered this period with a feeling of independence because of the removal of any threats from France or Spain. By 1562 Elizabeth had become aware of her abilities and limitations in respect to Anglo-Spanish affairs. She was confident that Philip would continue to support her. It was evident from communiqués that Philip underestimated Elizabeth's strength and felt he had nothing to fear from England. At the same time, he overestimated the capabilities of France. Elizabeth had established herself on the English throne without depending on Spanish support and made it clear that she would not be subordinate to Philip's desires. Her main concern at the beginning of this period was to block a united effort between the English Catholics and the Spanish government. Elizabeth concentrated on maintaining a division between these two groups. On the other hand, Philip was more concerned with events in the Mediterranean than in England. The increasing wealth from America was invaluable to Philip's plans but rising expenditures restricted their development. During this period the relations between England and Spain became

strained as the two countries began to follow different paths. Both Elizabeth and Philip became increasingly interested in the affairs of the Netherlands, which led in time to a commercial struggle between the Low Countries and England. Also during this phase of Anglo-Spanish relations, both countries were involved in the religious or civil wars in France. However, throughout this period, both Elizabeth and Philip hesitated to take any direct or open action against the other. Both supported minor intrigues against the other but refused to declare open hostilities. Publicly, Elizabeth and Philip pursued a common policy of friendship towards each other as other important affairs required the attention of each monarch.

The first dramatic change that occurred in Anglo-Spanish relations during 1562-1567 was the transition in attitudes towards the warring religious factions in France. As the gulf widened between the Huguenot and Catholic parties, England and Spain gave their support to opposite sides. In France Catherine de Medici, who ruled for her son, Charles IX (1560-1574), attempted to appease the Huguenots, which only stimulated their growth and in turn offended the Catholic majority. Early in 1562 Catherine issued an Edict of Toleration which allowed the Huguenots certain religious privileges. Many of the Catholic nobles refused to accept such a measure, and minor clashes occurred

throughout France. In March 1562 hostilities between the Catholics and Huguenots intensified when supporters of the Duke of Guise massacred a Huguenot congregation at Vassy, which marked the beginning of the first Civil War. Both religious groups continued to arm and sought foreign assistance. Catherine and the Catholics appealed to Spain and Savoy, while the Protestants sought aid from England and the German Protestants.⁴²

Early in April 1562 Throckmorton, Elizabeth's ambassador in France, advised Cecil to take advantage of the religious upheaval in order to recover Calais or capture some other seaport of value. In a letter to the Secretary, Throckmorton stated that

Our friends the protestants must be handled and dandled, that in case the duke of Guise, the constable, the marshall St. André, and that sect bring the king of Spain into France and give him possession of some place and forts, then protestants for their defence, or for their desire of revenge, or affection for the queen, may be moved to give us possession of Calais, Dieppe, or New Haven, perhaps all three.⁴³

In May de Quadra informed Philip that he was still ostracized from the English court but that he had discovered that the Queen was prepared to remove the Guises of France from power at all costs. He speculated that Elizabeth

⁴²J. E. Neale, The Age of Catherine de Medici (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), pp. 63-5.

⁴³Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 56.

feared the French would renew their support of Mary, Queen of Scots, as the legitimate heir to the English throne. He also reported that munitions and large guns were being transported to several ports. Early the next month Philip responded to de Quadra that he had committed himself to assist Catherine during these difficulties, which the ambassador was directed to reveal to Elizabeth. De Quadra hastily informed his master that a considerable number of English ships were well-stocked and prepared to sail. However, he felt they would remain in port until a French base was acquired for England's use. For once de Quadra accurately but prematurely guessed the preparations that were being made in England and forwarded valuable information to Philip. Though no Privy Council records exist, commissions were ordered for the preparation of ten vessels and the appointment of officers for an army of 10,000 men. Clearly, Elizabeth and her ministers were preparing to intervene in the religious conflict in France.⁴⁴

Before the Queen committed herself to open hostilities, English privateers in the Channel were jeopardizing Anglo-Spanish relations by creating a potentially dangerous situation. English privateers were attacking all Catholic

⁴⁴For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, pp. 236-9; and Read, Cecil, p. 248.

shipping from French ports, regardless of nationality. Neutral ships, especially those of Spain and Flanders, were fair game for the privateers. Soon the privateering developed into open piracy, and several naval and religious atrocities occurred. Thomas Cobham, brother of an English peer, seized a Spanish ship in the Bay of Biscay and publicly executed a Catholic friar aboard. Even the Spanish King suffered personal losses with the seizure of several ships transporting property from the Netherlands to Spain. Privateering all but destroyed the possibility of maintaining friendly relations between England and Spain.⁴⁵

While making final preparations for intervention in France, Elizabeth attempted to maintain friendly relations with both Catherine and Philip. In August the Queen met secretly with Vidame de Chartres, commander of Le Havré, and discussed the possibility of direct aid by the English. By September Elizabeth was aware that Catherine had engaged Catholic levies from the German states and that Philip was concentrating his forces in the Pyrennees. In an attempt to avoid open conflict, Elizabeth sent Sir Thomas Smith to France with an offer of mediation in the French troubles. Catherine respectfully declined the English offer and called on Philip for assistance. On September 20, 1562, Elizabeth

⁴⁵Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 281.

came to terms with the Huguenot party and agreed to the secret Treaty of Richmond, in which Le Havré was placed under English protection as security for a loan of £140,000. In addition, Elizabeth agreed to supply 3,000 troops to fortify Le Havré and an additional 3,000 to assist the Prince of Conde, a prominent Huguenot leader, in the defense of Dieppe. Once hostilities ended, Calais was to be restored to England in return for Elizabeth's assistance.⁴⁶

On his master's behalf, de Quadra lodged a formal complaint with the Queen for her "invasion" of France. Elizabeth quickly replied to Philip that if his ambassador did not refrain from becoming involved in domestic intrigues, she would demand his recall. To her subjects, the Queen justified English intervention in France on religious grounds. Her fear was that the Guises would be successful in France, and that in league with the other Catholic powers, they would become active in other countries to suppress Protestantism. Elizabeth hoped her actions would limit the fighting to within France itself. However, Elizabeth presented a different justification to Philip for England's intervention. To the Spanish King she claimed that England was not at war with Charles IX but with the dukes of Guise. She stated that her chief desire was to safeguard England's

⁴⁶Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 57-8.

rights to Calais and when this was accomplished, she would recall all her troops from France.⁴⁷

Philip soon saw that he was caught between two sides demanding opposite things of one another. As a devout Catholic and supporter of the Pope, he was anxious to eliminate heresy wherever possible. To assist the French Catholics he had offered his services as soon as hostilities broke out. By July Spanish troops had been assembled along the French border in the Netherlands, where Margaret of Parma was organizing an army. Worried about armed intervention, Philip faced two imminent problems. To maintain his control over the Netherlands, he relied heavily on English friendship to keep the Channel open to naval traffic. In addition, Philip was beginning to have internal troubles in the Netherlands, especially in regard to religious unity. These difficulties caused him to refrain from active participation in the French Wars. Several of Philip's advisors urged him to assist Elizabeth in the recovery of Calais, which they felt would indirectly help the Catholics in France and prevent future problems in the Netherlands.⁴⁸

⁴⁷For the material related in this paragraph, see Read, Cecil, pp. 253-4; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 58-9.

⁴⁸Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 59-60.

To many historians, Elizabeth's entry into the French War was the greatest mistake of her entire reign. Her attempt to assist the Huguenots and recover Calais was not as successful as her involvement in Scotland. However, Elizabeth also had much to gain and felt that the risks were well worth taking. The French War was important to Elizabeth in that it clearly revealed Philip's troubles and the current weakness of Spain. Once Philip's conflict of interest was apparent, Elizabeth was able to maneuver without fear of Spanish reprisals. With France divided on so many issues and Philip heavily involved in attempting to maintain his Empire, England was able to dissociate himself from Spain's sphere of political influence. In an attempt to limit England's dependence on other European countries, Elizabeth began to promote new methods which would make England both economically and politically self sufficient.

During the early months of the French War, de Quadra died and his secretary took over his duties until a new ambassador arrived. The last months of de Quadra's life were hectic, since he was in financial straits and out of communication with Spain. Philip hesitated on all his requests for money and instructions, as he had done with so many of his envoys before. De Quadra felt that the faith of the English Catholics in Philip was declining as the slowness of communications intensified. Many interpreted

Philip's actions as an attempt to promote his personal gain while symbolically supporting the Catholic cause.⁴⁹

During these years, Antwerp was the center of Europe for technological skills and accumulated wealth. It was also the principal market for English exports and loans to the government. Until 1563 a majority of the English cloth exported to the continent was sold in Antwerp. Cloth was the major English export of the period and there was a great European demand for it. In an attempt to establish England's independence of the Flemish markets, Elizabeth promoted restrictions on Flemish merchants to create an advantage for her subjects. Customs duties and other import charges on Flemish products were increased to assist in developing Flemish industries in England, which Elizabeth hoped would be able to compete with those of the Netherlands. In addition, some items from the Netherlands were completely restricted from entry. Flemish merchants in England found themselves confronted with further restrictions, including a requirement to spend all their profits on English products. In retaliation against these restrictions, the Spanish government in the Netherlands enacted similar trading regulations against English merchants. By 1563 governmental intervention in England and the Netherlands had led

⁴⁹Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. XXXIX.

to an economic impasse. For two years trade languished and all but disappeared between the two countries.⁵⁰

Representatives from England and the Netherlands were soon meeting in an effort to restore commercial activity. The interim between the death of de Quadra and the arrival of his successor delayed any serious negotiations for several months. In order to promote economic growth, Elizabeth attempted to develop markets to other areas, such as France and the German states. To assure profits to the cloth industry, commercial treaties were signed with Embden, which now became the staple for distribution of English cloth in Europe. In addition, Elizabeth removed taxes on exports to any other country except the Netherlands. The development of new areas for English goods strengthened Elizabeth's foreign policy and kept England from becoming economically dependent on any particular country. It also demonstrated to Philip that he would need to maintain an ambassador in England who was capable of handling similar situations.⁵¹ Any fears of a Spanish threat to England were decreasing as the internal weaknesses of Philip's

⁵⁰For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. L; Charles Wilson, Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt of the Netherlands (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), pp. 17-9; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 126.

⁵¹Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. L-Li.

empire became visible. With both France and Spain internally divided, Elizabeth was ready to increase her efforts to establish England's self sufficiency.

As the difficulties between the Netherlands and England mounted, Philip seemed aware of the need of a resident ambassador in England. Instead of sending another religiously-minded representative, he chose an individual with oratorical as well as diplomatic talents. In January 1564 Philip nominated Don Diego Guzman de Silva as his ordinary Ambassador to England. De Silva's primary task was to seek an agreement terminating the commercial difficulties between England and the Netherlands. Unlike his predecessors, de Silva did not attempt to force a pro-Spanish settlement but proposed a policy of mutual concessions. Difficulties in the Mediterranean, Spain, and the Netherlands had compelled Philip to change his policies towards Elizabeth and England. In addition to commercial agreements, de Silva was instructed to acquire English assistance in eliminating privateering from the Channel. In regard to English affairs, he was to continue the policy of assisting the English Catholics in any way possible, and hopefully he would acquire the confidence of Sir Robert Dudley and other Councillors. De Silva was also directed to forward to Philip all information regarding Spanish heretics in England and

the Netherlands so they might be dealt with by the Inquisition.⁵²

De Silva, a canon of Toledo Cathedral, was a well educated man with valuable experience in foreign affairs. He was not inclined to involve himself in English intrigues and soon gained the friendship of Elizabeth and many other Englishmen. After his arrival in London, de Silva asked for a renewal of the commercial negotiations between England and the Netherlands. On January 1, 1565, trade was resumed on a mutual but temporary basis until a formal agreement could be negotiated. Meanwhile representatives were selected for a conference to be held in Bruges. Elizabeth approved of the negotiations and told de Silva that she expected the commissioners to reach a suitable agreement. The commission would continue for a year in an effort to reach an agreement. Trade was to be resumed as before, and an additional commission was to be established within three years to complete the negotiations. With the end of the first French War in 1564 and the opening of ports in competition with Antwerp, Elizabeth enjoyed a favorable position during the negotiations.⁵³

⁵²Ibid., pp. 349-55.

⁵³For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 417; and Read, Cecil, pp. 292-4.

Another area in which Elizabeth was beginning to direct her attention was overseas commercial activity, especially with the Spanish Americas. The "great empire in America" had been established and promoted by the Crown of Castile, which strictly regulated all commerce with the colonies. With Mexico, Peru, Chile, and the major islands, none but Spanish merchants were allowed to trade unless they obtained a royal grant. In addition to commercial profits, the Americas provided Spain each year with a large shipment of gold and silver. However, Spanish shipping was too limited to accommodate the needs of the colonies, and this inevitably restricted commercial activity in the Americas and created dissatisfaction among the colonists. To develop and safeguard their interests, the colonists were usually willing to trade with foreigners, especially for slaves, even though this was forbidden.⁵⁴

John Hawkins, son of William Hawkins of Plymouth, one of the first Englishmen to trade with Guinea and Brazil, had traded for years with the residents of the Canary Islands and had a keen knowledge of Spanish customs and trading. In the early 1560's Hawkins proposed to develop English trade with the New World by trading Negro slaves with the Spanish colonists. Hawkins hoped to obtain

⁵⁴G. R. Elton, England and the Tudors (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1960), pp. 339-40.

Philip's approval for his efforts in this regard. In return for the right to trade with the Spanish colonies, he offered his services to Philip against the Turks in the Mediterranean and French privateers in the Caribbean. Hawkins hoped to improve Anglo-Spanish relations by means of mutual cooperation in trading with the Spanish colonies. Unfortunately he launched the first expedition without prior approval from Philip, who was firmly against foreign trade with the colonies. The Spanish King considered English trading to be an "infringement of his sovereignty and menace of the spread of heresy," and he soon reissued his command for no trade with foreign merchants.⁵⁵

In 1562 Hawkins made his first voyage to Hispaniola by way of the African coast. He returned with several vessels loaded with gold, silver, pearls, hides and sugar, and the expedition brought large profits to its promoters. The Spanish officials and colonists had attempted to respect Philip's prohibitions but economic necessity, resulting from the paucity of Spanish shipping, caused them to resort to any pretext to trade. After the completion of the voyage, Hawkins still considered himself a loyal servant of Philip; and while trading in the colonies he "received certificates from authorities pertaining to his

⁵⁵Williamson, The Tudor Age, pp. 275-7.

good behavior and honourable intentions."⁵⁶ To demonstrate his intention of cooperating with the Spanish authorities, Hawkins sent the first fully-loaded vessel home by way of Seville as required by the Spanish government. But when it arrived at Seville, the ship was immediately seized and its crew imprisoned. Hawkins followed up his first voyage with another in 1564, for which Elizabeth provided two ships. Before Hawkins sailed, de Silva informed his master of the preparations being made for the expedition. De Silva had requested the Queen to ascertain Hawkins' intentions and give an assurance that he would not be allowed to sail. After receiving the dispatch from his ambassador, Philip issued specific instructions to the colonies not to trade with Hawkins. Once the expedition began, de Silva was able to acquire information regarding the colonies with which Hawkins traded and how he acquired licenses from the Spanish governors. By resorting to mild threats Hawkins was able to trade with the Spanish colonists, and this expedition was even more successful than the first venture.⁵⁷

⁵⁶Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 123-4.

⁵⁷For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 370 and p. 488; Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 277; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 123-4.

After Hawkins returned to England in November, de Silva sent Philip a complete account of the expedition. In a meeting with Hawkins, he learned that the expedition had returned a 60% profit. The ambassador warned his master that high profits would stimulate English merchants to invest in future voyages. During a discussion with Benedict Spinola, an agent for several Geneose bankers, de Silva was able to confirm his suspicions that many high government officials were involved in Hawkins' voyages.⁵⁸

In February 1566 Hawkins offered his services to de Silva in hopes of acquiring the King of Spain's friendship. In return for the recovery of property detained in Seville, he would assist Philip against the Turkish fleet. In August de Silva reported to his master that Hawkins was outfitting his ships ostensibly to assist Spain in the Mediterranean. He also indicated that Hawkins' offer might be a diversion while he prepared for another voyage to the Americas. In a later dispatch, de Silva reported that he had met with Elizabeth and discussed Hawkins' recent voyage and possible future ones. The Queen informed him that she was aware that some of her Councillors had invested in Hawkins' voyage and that he was not supposed to trade with places forbidden by Philip. Elizabeth informed de Silva that her

⁵⁸Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, pp. 502-4.

subjects did not know the places with which trade was prohibited and asked Philip to supply a list. To fulfill her request, de Silva presented the principal secretary a list enumerating the places where trade was restricted to license holders only. Yet Cecil and the Council were unsure as to which places were prohibited and told de Silva that they would consider the matter. The Queen hoped to avoid any direct confrontation with Philip or his ambassador in regard to overseas commerce.⁵⁹

De Silva informed the King that Hawkins was preparing nine ships, four of which belonged to Elizabeth, for another expedition. From interviews, de Silva acquired assurances from the Queen that Hawkins would not trade at those places prohibited by Philip. In 1567 Hawkins began to prepare for his third voyage to the Americas. Again Philip knew in advance of the proposed expedition, and he took steps to prevent Hawkins from reaching the colonies. With Elizabeth's permission, Hawkins sailed on his third voyage with seven well-armed vessels. In an interview with de Silva the Queen acknowledged that two of her vessels were accompanying Hawkins but only to protect the expedition from French privateers. Again she confirmed to the ambassador

⁵⁹For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 525, p. 570, and pp. 585-8.

that Hawkins would not trade with the Spanish colonies. However, de Silva informed his master that he was convinced Hawkins planned to sail for America.⁶⁰

Following Philip's instructions to stop Hawkins, de Waachen, the Flemish Admiral, attempted to prevent the expedition from leaving Plymouth, but he was unsuccessful because of bad weather. Later, at Tenerieffe, the Spanish Governor tried to lure the English expedition within range of the guns in the coastal forts, but Hawkins was too cautious to be tricked. When he reached America, Hawkins found the Spanish colonies closed to him and his trading attempts. At Rio de la Hacha, the English ships fired on the Treasurer's house, and Hawkins' men fought a brief skirmish with the Spanish troops garrisoned there before trading could be conducted. In September 1568 Hawkins sailed into San Juan de Ulloa, the port for Mexico City, to prepare for the long journey back to England. Three days later the annual plate fleet arrived under the command of the new Viceroy of Mexico, Don Martin Enriquez. The Spanish fleet remained outside the harbor, since Hawkins controlled the surrounding fortresses and his fleet occupied the bay. Unable to sail away, however, Hawkins struck an agreement with the Viceroy and allowed the Spanish fleet to

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 656-60.

enter the port and anchor next to the English fleet. Don Enriquez deceived Hawkins altogether, for when the Spanish fleet entered the harbor, the Spanish ships fired on the English vessels. Also, Don Enriquez had secretly brought up troops from Vera Cruz to secure the harbor defenses from the English defenders. Following the battle, only Hawkins aboard the Minion and Drake aboard the Judith were able to escape and return to England.⁶¹

Hawkins was only the first of many English adventurers who risked their lives and fortunes in trading with the American colonies. Elizabeth and Cecil were both financially involved in Hawkins' expeditions. Aware of the possible profits, merchants became deeply involved, and it soon appeared as though Hawkins' expeditions were a national venture.⁶² Early in her reign, Elizabeth and Cecil had favored commercial activity with Africa, especially Guinea. In June 1560 she directed the Lord Admiral to lend four vessels from the Royal Navy, which she later claimed to have sold, to a group of merchants trading with Guinea. With the advent of Hawkins, a "silent war" between England and Spain developed. Spanish ambassadors abroad were constantly

⁶¹Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 124-5.

⁶²A. L. Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), pp. 159-61.

informing Philip of expeditions sailing to Africa or America. In 1561 de Quadra reported an expedition which he feared might establish a permanent trading post in Guinea. Later, in 1567, Hawkins proposed the same idea as a method of improving English commerce with the American colonies.⁶³ By her approval and financial participation, Elizabeth gave a strong impetus to overseas commercial expansion, which provided an additional area of resources for the growing English economy. The wealth brought back from the American colonies stimulated the economy when it was most needed and assisted the financial concerns of the government.

While the commerce with Philip's American colonies was beneficial, the invasion of English adventurers into a Spanish monopoly began to widen the gap in Anglo-Spanish relations. To Philip, the loss of royal revenues from America was a serious matter, especially while his empire was threatened by internal difficulties. The development of overseas commerce added much to the division between England and Spain. When Hawkins made his first voyage, relations between the two countries was friendly. But when he returned from his third voyage, England and Spain were on the verge of armed conflict.

⁶³ John W. Blake, European Beginnings in West Africa, 1454-1578 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 164-75.

Between 1562-1567 piracy in the Channel was also a concern of both England and Spain, but especially the latter. During the French War, Elizabeth allowed English merchants to arm their ships and take part in privateering.⁶⁴ After the war, many of the privateers continued by harassing the Spanish or Flemish vessels. Regardless of national origin, a majority of the privateers harbored on the English side of the Channel because of the numerous bays and inlets. In an effort to end this menace to commerce, Philip requested that Elizabeth assist with its removal. According to the minutes of the Privy Council (1564-1566), action was taken against the privateers but the problem persisted.⁶⁵ In a series of reports, de Silva indicated that the English government was in fact attempting to alleviate the problem. The chief difficulty, as de Silva reported, was that "the judges do not consider the evidence strong enough for them to condemn their own countrymen."⁶⁶ In 1565 de Silva informed Philip that Elizabeth had sent her own ships to sea in hopes of capturing some of the privateers. Action was also taken to seize privateers anchored in English ports or as they entered. De Silva

⁶⁴Read, Cecil, p. 289.

⁶⁵Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 126-7.

⁶⁶Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 373.

concluded that it was almost impossible to control privateering because so many of Elizabeth's Councillors were involved in the activity.⁶⁷ This issue continued to be a problem throughout the period, and neither country was successful in controlling it. Subsequently, privateering became an even greater problem as the Dutch and French Huguenots used it as a form of political weapon against the Spanish and French governments, respectively.

In October 1567 Philip met with Francis Yaxley, a representative of Mary, Queen of Scots, who requested financial assistance for the Scottish government. Philip agreed to the request and sent an agent to Antwerp to arrange the transaction.⁶⁸ In November Yaxley met with de Silva in order to prepare a code so that secret communications could be maintained between Mary's partisans in England and Scotland. After the details were worked out, Yaxley left for Antwerp to receive the money from Philip. In a previous communiqué, Philip informed de Silva that he intended to send Mary 20,000 ducats. Both hoped to remain in contact with Mary while she remained on the throne. Previously Elizabeth had accused Philip of sending "munitions, arms,

⁶⁷For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 402 and p. 486.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. XXVI.

and other things to the queen of Scotland."⁶⁹ For as long as it was feasible, Philip hoped to maintain Mary in Scotland, for she was the heir apparent to the English throne and probably the last chance of restoring Catholicism in England.⁷⁰

With the tension mounting between England and Spain, Philip began to alter his policies in the Netherlands. He replaced his half-sister, Margaret of Parma, as Regent with the Duke of Alva, a seasoned military commander. In addition, Philip gave Alva an elite corps of 10,000 men for use in the Netherlands. The new Governor-General was also supported by several thousand Walloons from the Belgian provinces as well as German mercenaries. Philip had now decided to eliminate Protestantism from the Low Countries by force. Although Alva's policies soon led to civil war, which ruined England's trade with the Netherlands, he appealed to the English Catholics, who he felt might support his cause. Alva expanded his forces to 40,000 men, which meant that the main body of the Spanish army had been shifted to the Netherlands. Suddenly Spanish military power was firmly established less than a hundred miles from England. Elizabeth became fearful that if Alva succeeded in the Nether-

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 476.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 498-508.

lands he might turn his ambitions towards England. The Spanish in the Netherlands seemed to be as dangerous a threat as the French had been in Scotland. Elizabeth faced the problem of eliminating a large Spanish force in the Netherlands without open assistance or hostilities. To make matters more difficult, the Queen had no fondness for the Calvinists in the Netherlands nor did she trust the Flemish rebels.⁷¹

In January 1567 de Silva complained to Elizabeth that the Dutch Protestants were receiving aid from English noblemen. The Queen replied hotly that "if any of her Council were to dare to advise her to such a wicked course she would hang him as a traitor."⁷² Elizabeth had been informed by the French Ambassador that Philip would soon sail to the Netherlands to put down the rebellion. Possibly out of fright, the Queen was willing to agree to de Silva's demands. Elizabeth refrained from any open participation in the Flemish disturbance on the grounds that it was merely a rebellion and not a religious conflict. However, she did allow support to the Dutch rebels unofficially in the form

⁷¹For the material related in this paragraph, see Williamson, The Tudor Age, pp. 291-2; Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 128; and Wernham, Before the Armada, pp. 291-3.

⁷²Read, Cecil, p. 424.

of money and volunteers from England. In addition, Flemish privateers were allowed to use English ports for trading and the purchase of munitions. In July 1567 de Silva protested to the Queen that Flemish refugees in England were sending aid to the rebels. To prove her neutrality, Elizabeth declared that no aid was to be sent to the Dutch, nor were any armed ships to leave English ports. However, the order was never published and therefore had almost no effect.⁷³

The outbreak of the civil war in the Low Countries caused a severe crisis in Anglo-Spanish relations. From the Privy Council to the general public, there was a strong anti-Spanish sentiment developing throughout England.⁷⁴ Elizabeth had learned her lesson about supporting religious rebels in France and was reluctant to commit herself openly. However, the tension between England and Spain was at a fever pitch and any unexpected incident, however small, might be sufficient to provoke open hostilities between the two countries.

⁷³For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), I, p. 626 and p. 610; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 128.

⁷⁴Read, Cecil, pp. 424-5.

CHAPTER III

Before 1568 Elizabeth and Philip both refrained from taking any overt action against one another. Since the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, numerous events had occurred that could have been used by either monarch as a pretext for hostilities. Before 1568, whenever conflict between England and Spain appeared imminent, one of the monarchs backed off and made offers of continued friendship. However, by 1568 the tension in Anglo-Spanish affairs was intense, having reached a point where any spark might cause an explosion. Throughout England there was strong anti-Spanish sentiment, which was brought to a boiling point with Philip's dismissal of Dr. Man, Elizabeth's ambassador to Spain. In April 1568 the King informed de Silva that Man had "conspicuously and frequently overstepped his bounds."⁷⁵ At a public dinner Man had allegedly stated that Philip "was the only one who defended the papal sect . . . and that the Pope was nothing but a canting monk . . ."⁷⁶ The King notified his ambassador in London that

⁷⁵M.A.S. Hume (ed), Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English Affairs, preserved principally in the Archives at Simancas, II (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1894), pp. 18-9.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 18-9.

he would no longer grant interviews to Man and then had him removed from the capital.

Philip's explanation for his dislike of Man was probably truthful since earlier in 1567, Cecil had been informed by a secret agent that the ambassador should be recalled because of his lack of ability and diplomatic skill. De Silva immediately complained to Elizabeth of Man's behavior. After an interview with Elizabeth, de Silva informed Philip that "she greatly regretted that her ambassador should have said or done anything to offend your Majesty," but if the report proved correct, she would punish Man upon his return to England.⁷⁷ De Silva indicated that Elizabeth wanted to continue friendly relations with Philip.⁷⁸

During the previous February, Man had informed Elizabeth that he was being denied certain privileges that had been granted to former ambassadors, and because of this the Queen refrained from condemning him until he was able to present his version of the incident. Before Man could inform Elizabeth of the events that had occurred, Philip had various charges, subsequently confirmed by English Catholics

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 30-1.

⁷⁸For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 18-9 and pp. 30-1.

in Madrid, brought against him. De Silva suggested to Elizabeth that another ambassador who was "modest and respectful to the Catholic Church, might be appointed."⁷⁹ Some of the charges against Man may have been fictitious, however, in order to secure his recall. In March 1568 John Huggins, an English spy in Spain, informed Cecil that he had been coerced into testifying against Man. According to Huggins, the former Spanish ambassador to London, de Feria, now an advisor to Philip, was the main force behind Man's dismissal. In June de Silva reported to Philip that Elizabeth had ordered the immediate recall of Man as a way of showing her desire for friendly relations. However, she also indicated to de Silva that she considered the fault to lie with de Feria and not with Man.⁸⁰

At the height of the crisis Philip allowed de Silva to resign his post as ambassador to England, at just the time he was most needed. Yet somewhat earlier de Silva had requested that Philip recall him because of poor health and financial difficulties. In June Philip informed de Silva that he would be transferred to Venice as the resident ambassador there and that Don Guerau de Spes would assume

⁷⁹Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. VIII.

⁸⁰For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. VII-VIII and pp. 40-1.

his duties in England. Before his departure de Silva met on numerous occasions with Elizabeth to discuss the question of England's assistance to the Flemish rebels. De Silva complained to Elizabeth that the rebels and their English sympathizers were outfitting vessels in England and were preparing to sail to the Netherlands in order to precipitate open warfare. The Spanish ambassador requested that Elizabeth stop such activities in England and prevent any aid from being sent to the rebels. During an interview in July, Elizabeth told de Silva that she had ordered Cecil to take steps to prevent armed vessels from sailing from English ports. But from reliable sources de Silva learned that no such order was published, nor were the activities of the rebels ever curtailed. De Silva warned Elizabeth that if she took no action to forbid rebel activity in England, this would be considered an unfriendly act by Spain. De Silva reported to Philip that he had been informed that a secret subsidy was being collected from a tax on religious incomes which was intended for the aid of William of Orange, the leader of the resistance to Philip's government in the Low Countries. De Silva later confirmed his report of an ecclesiastical subsidy and an additional subsidy from laymen.⁸¹

⁸¹For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. XII, pp. 44-5, pp. 52-5, and pp. 60-1.

In August de Silva left England, to the Queen's regret. She and her Councillors had maintained cordial relations with him, largely because he had refrained from involvement in minor intrigues. As the tension increased, England and Spain moved farther apart, and the lack of skilled diplomatic representation between the two countries became more and more evident.⁸²

In August 1568 Don Guerau de Spes, the new Spanish Ambassador, arrived. He had been sent to England to settle the controversy over the recall of Man. However, he was an ardent Catholic and considered his real mission to be of a higher nature, namely that he must do everything in his power to assist the English Catholics. In July, while in transit from Spain, de Spes met with two representatives of Mary, Queen of Scots, in Paris where he told them "that I have orders on my arrival to do what I can for her."⁸³ After his arrival in London, he indicated to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Mary's Ambassador to Elizabeth, that his mission in England was to assist Mary in any way he could. After only a few weeks at court, he met several supporters of Mary whom he informed that it would not be difficult to

⁸²For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 64-5; and Read, Cecil, pp. 424-6.

⁸³Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. XVII.

free Mary from her imprisonment in northern England and possibly "even raise a revolt against this queen," referring of course to Elizabeth.⁸⁴

In October de Spes informed Philip that "I am of opinion that this would be a good opportunity of handling successfully Scottish affairs and restoring this country to the Catholic religion . . ."⁸⁵ On November 6 de Spes reported that "it appears as if the time was approaching when this country may be made to return to the Catholic Church, the Queen being in such straits and short of money. I have already informed your Majesty of the offer made by Viscount Montague's brother-in-law on condition that they may hope for protection from your Majesty."⁸⁶

De Spes quickly became involved in minor intrigues, much to the dismay of Philip. According to his instructions from the King, de Spes was primarily responsible for maintaining friendly relations between England and Spain, his major concern being to give Elizabeth a detailed account of the Man incident. In addition, he was to keep Alva informed of English purchases of arms and gunpowder from the Netherlands in the hope of curtailing this activity. Philip

⁸⁴Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 129-30.

⁸⁵Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 81.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. XVIII.

maintained contact with Mary through Alva rather than his ambassador in England in order not to give offense to Elizabeth. By late 1568 Philip had become especially dependent on Alva's advice pertaining to Scottish and English affairs.⁸⁷

In mid-November 1568 five unescorted Spanish ships, beleaguered by French pirates, sought refuge in the coastal waters of southern England. Four of the Spanish vessels slipped into Plymouth for protection from privateers from La Rochelle, who remained outside the port. The fifth vessel anchored at Southampton after being restricted by bad weather. The five ships were carrying an assortment of cargo as well as 155 chests of money. Of these 155 chests, 41 belonged to Spanish citizens who were attempting to smuggle the contents out of Spain. But the other 114 chests were carrying funds borrowed from bankers in Genoa to help pay the operating expenses of the Spanish army in the Netherlands. When he sent Alva to the Low Countries in 1567, Philip had hoped that he would be able to collect sufficient taxes there to pay for his troops and administrative costs. But this had proved impossible; so in 1568 the Spanish King borrowed 450,000 ducats, or about £100,000, from the bankers of Genoa. It was this money, intended for

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 66-8.

Alva, that was aboard the ships forced to take refuge at Plymouth and Southampton.⁸⁸

On November 29 de Spes, upon learning that the Spanish ships were in port, requested protection for them from the English Government. The ambassador asked Elizabeth to provide an escort for the Spanish ships to Antwerp. Elizabeth replied that Admiral Winter had already assisted the Spanish vessels by protecting them from the French privateers. Regarding the request for an armed escort to Antwerp, Elizabeth felt that the continued threat from the French privateers would require the use of the English navy at considerable expense to her. She told de Spes that she would consider the request and inform him later of her decision.⁸⁹

On December 3 William Hawkins was wrongly informed that his brother, John, had been killed by the Spaniards at San Juan de Ulloa. Hawkins in turn suggested to Cecil that he "advertise the queen's majesty there of, to the end there might be some stay made of king Philip's treasure here

⁸⁸For the material related in this paragraph, see Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 297; Wernham, Before the Armada, p. 296; Conyers Read, "Queen Elizabeth's Seizure of the Duke of Alva's Pay-Ships." The Journal of Modern History (Vol. V, no. 4, December, 1933), p. 443 (Hereinafter cited as Read, Modern History); and Frederick C. Dietz, English Public Finance (London: Frank Cass & Co., LTD., 1964), p. 15.

⁸⁹MacCaffrey, The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime, p. 280.

in these ports till there be sufficient recompense made for the great wrong offered, and also other wrongs done long before this."⁹⁰ Hawkins also informed Cecil that the Count Palatine had earlier confiscated 200,000 crowns being transported down the Rhine to Alva. Cecil appears to have been swayed by Hawkins and suggested the course proposed by him to Elizabeth.⁹¹

On December 12 de Spes informed Philip that he had received promises from Elizabeth to provide protection for the Spanish vessels. He reported that the French privateers had ten ships with approximately 1,200 men aboard and there was a possibility that seven additional ships would soon arrive. He was also aware that several Councillors, including the Vice-Admiral, Sir Arthur Champernowne, were attempting to convince Elizabeth that she should seize the money. If such action occurred, de Spes suggested to Philip that Spain and France together impose a trade embargo on England, which he felt would be sufficient to force Elizabeth to compromise.⁹²

When French privateers subsequently attempted to bribe the officials in charge of safeguarding the Spanish

⁹⁰Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 129.

⁹¹Pollard, The Political History of England, pp. 284-5.

⁹²Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 84-5.

vessels, the English government directed that the money be transferred from the ships to facilities on shore. At Southampton the Spanish captain opened one of the chests to pay some of the expenses he had incurred, and it was then discovered by the English authorities that the money was not yet the legal property of Philip but still of the Genoese bankers. In Plymouth Sir Arthur Champernowne suggested that he might personally acquire the treasure and secretly deliver it to the Queen, while publicly receiving her displeasure. Cecil considered such action foolhardy, since the London bankers had informed him that the money would remain the property of the Genoese bankers until it reached Antwerp. The Secretary immediately contacted Genoese representatives in Antwerp, who informed him that they were willing to lend the money to Elizabeth at a fair rate of interest. Probably Benedict Spinola, an English agent for the Genoese bankers, suggested to Cecil that Elizabeth might retain the money as a loan. According to the French Ambassador, the Genoese bankers considered Elizabeth a better credit risk than Philip. After being informed by Cecil of the ownership of the money, the Queen decided that she would retain the money as a loan from the Genoese bankers. Actually Elizabeth maintained that she was borrowing the money since Antwerp was beginning to decline as the chief money market of northern Europe and she

could use the money to bolster her own finances. The Genoese bankers were relieved by Elizabeth's decision to keep the money as a loan, rather than allow it to leave England for Antwerp unprotected and at the mercy of the French privateers. All these plans for retaining the money were decided on in secret, and the Spanish Ambassador, unaware of what was happening, informed Philip that the money was secure in England and would soon be transported to Brussels.⁹³

By December 21 de Spes had learned of the difficulties over the ownership of the money. He assumed that the Queen intended to keep the money and hastily informed Alva in the Netherlands of the situation. De Spes emphatically proposed that the general confiscate all English property and ships in the Low Countries in retaliation for the seizure of the money.⁹⁴ On December 29 Elizabeth held a conference with de Spes during which she informed him that the money did not belong to Philip but to the Genoese bankers, who had offered to lend it to her. Elizabeth also told him that she would make her final decision in this regard in four or five days. De Spes then informed Alva

⁹³For the material related in this paragraph, see Read, Modern History, p. 445; Read, Cecil, pp. 432-3; and Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 298.

⁹⁴Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 90-1.

that Elizabeth now definitely intended to keep the money, "saying that God has sent it to defend His gospel."⁹⁵ De Spes was convinced that Elizabeth was waiting to see what action Alva would take before taking irrevocable action. De Spes felt that the Queen would refrain from taking the money if Alva made a show of force. In addition, if she did return it, he felt it would not be difficult to restore the confiscated English property.⁹⁶ Alva was convinced by de Spes that he should seize the English ships and property in the Low Countries, which he did almost at once. On January 3 Elizabeth was informed of what had transpired, and four days later she reacted by confiscating all Flemish property in England. Elizabeth regarded Alva's actions as a personal insult, since she was still considering the possibility of escorting the Spanish ships to Antwerp. For his part in the affair, de Spes was immediately placed under house arrest.⁹⁷

On January 8 de Spes informed his master that Elizabeth had officially decided to retain possession of the

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 90.

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 90-2.

⁹⁷ For the material related in this paragraph, see MacCaffrey, The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime, pp. 280-1; and Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 298.

Genoese money.⁹⁸ De Spes considered the major reason for her action as being that "Elizabeth had no credit in Antwerp or Frankfort to aid her friends."⁹⁹ Since the arrival of Alva in the Low Countries, the money market in Antwerp had collapsed and the Queen had had to resort to other methods of raising revenue, such as state lotteries and forced loans. Yet the return of John Hawkins' expedition early in January and the events that had befallen it certainly affected Elizabeth's decision. Possibly Elizabeth wished to restrain Alva's activities in the Netherlands, which would have to be curtailed if he failed to receive the money to pay his troops. Later, in February, Spain placed an embargo on trade with England and either retained or arrested all English property and subjects in its dominions. England reacted by seizing all Spanish property, which was considerably more valuable than the amount of English goods lost in Spain.¹⁰⁰

On January 6 Elizabeth issued a proclamation justifying her actions towards Alva and the Netherlands. She explained that the transfer of the money from the Spanish vessels to coastal facilities was due to the threats of the

⁹⁸Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 95.

⁹⁹Read, Modern History, p. 447.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 447.

French privateers. During the transfer, she had been informed that the money belonged not to Philip but to several Genoese bankers. Because of her efforts to protect the money, she felt that she was entitled to negotiate with the owners about the possibility of retaining it as a loan. While the money's true ownership was being established, Elizabeth became aware of Alva's seizure of English property in Antwerp and concluded that she had no alternative but to take similar measures. However, de Spes subsequently issued a document in which he blamed Elizabeth for the entire affair. According to his account, Elizabeth had issued on December 12 a passport to provide security for the transfer of the money from England to Antwerp. Contrary to Elizabeth's orders, royal officials had ordered the money transferred from the Spanish ships. De Spes defended Alva's actions on the grounds that Elizabeth intended from the beginning to retain the money.¹⁰¹

Alva had recognized the problem of reacting prematurely to the suggestions from de Spes before Elizabeth had taken any action herself and he hoped to start negotiations to restore trade as quickly as possible. Elizabeth also favored restoration and considered sending an envoy to Spain to begin talks for a settlement. Alva sent one of his

¹⁰¹Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 98-104.

Councillors, D'Assonleville, who had visited England on numerous occasions, to negotiate with Elizabeth over the restoration of trade and the money. Upon arriving in England, D'Assonleville was restricted from traveling or seeing either de Spes or Elizabeth. Elizabeth sent four of her Councillors, Cecil, Northampton, Clinton, and Mildmay, to consider the validity of his intentions. D'Assonleville was interrogated as to the reasons for Alva's seizures of English property. Finally, D'Assonleville was informed that Elizabeth would negotiate only with an official envoy from Philip, who should be authorized to negotiate not only concerning the immediate crisis but in regard to numerous other grievances. It was evident to Alva that the Queen had no intention of returning the money. However, Elizabeth, through Sir Thomas Gresham, informed Alva that England would remain at peace with Spain.¹⁰²

Philip considered the possibility of war in response to the seizure of the money, but Alva was able to convince him to renew the negotiations. Alva had already overextended himself in the affairs of the Netherlands and was in no position to assume military operations against England.

¹⁰²For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 104-5 and pp. 122-32; Read, Cecil, pp. 433-4; and MacCaffrey, The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime, pp. 283-4.

The seizures of English property in the Netherlands and Spain were far below the value of Spanish and Flemish property confiscated in England. The value of Spanish goods seized in England was estimated at £102,957 while English losses was considerably less. With a hostile England, moreover, the Channel would be unsafe for traffic between the Low Countries and Spain. Alva felt that some domestic disturbance would provide a better opportunity for Spain to go to war with England.¹⁰³

On February 18, 1569, Philip replied to Alva that de Spes felt the time was ripe for a religious uprising against Elizabeth. De Spes believed it would be easy to remove Elizabeth and replace her with Mary, who would quickly gain the support of the Catholics. Philip requested that Alva inquire into the possibility of such a venture and "if there is anything in it, I should be glad to carry it out."¹⁰⁴ But in May, Philip gave up all thought of assisting English intrigues and returned to a policy of official friendliness towards Elizabeth. Other concerns, such as the threat of the Turks in the Mediterranean,

¹⁰³For the material related in this paragraph, see Dietz, English Public Finance, p. 16; and Read, Modern History, p. 451.

¹⁰⁴Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 103.

prompted Philip to reconsider his attitude towards Elizabeth and England.¹⁰⁵

Because of the success of the seizure of the Spanish money, Cecil had a greater influence than ever over Elizabeth in regard to foreign policy. The Secretary felt that the security of England was threatened not by Spain but by a possible united Catholic alliance. To support his fears and to convince Elizabeth of the possibilities, he wrote A Short Memorial of the State of the Realm, a pamphlet of about eight folio pages. Briefly, Cecil felt that Alva and his policies would be successful in the Netherlands, which in turn, would lead to a Catholic alliance between France and Spain in order to restore Catholicism throughout Europe. Against a united effort of France and Spain, Cecil considered England hopelessly weak; and he wrote that "The realm is become so feeble by long peace as it were a fearful thing to imagine, if the enemies were at hand, of what force the resistance would be."¹⁰⁶ To strengthen its defenses, he proposed that England form a Protestant alliance

¹⁰⁵For the material related in this paragraph, see Conyers Read, Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 18 (Hereinafter cited as Read, Burghley); and MacCaffrey, The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime, pp. 284-5.

¹⁰⁶Wernham, Before the Armada, p. 298.

with Denmark, Scotland, Sweden and the German princes to resist the likely Catholic alliance. Cecil also supported assistance to all Protestants and the rebels in the Netherlands, but not by means of the direct use of English troops, however.¹⁰⁷

Cecil's growing influence over Elizabeth caused considerable discontent among many nobles, especially Norfolk, Arundel, Pembroke, Sussex and Leicester. Norfolk felt that Cecil was becoming too important for someone from a middle-class background, and he felt that only the aristocracy should have such influence with the Crown. Cecil's refusal to recognize Mary's claim to the English throne and his other policies with their pro-Protestant rather than their pro-Spanish orientation were also extremely unpopular among the nobles. Norfolk and several others wanted to reverse Cecil's policies, which they felt to be dangerous to the safety of England. Norfolk and Arundel became involved in political discussions with the ambassadors of both Spain and France. In February de Spes informed Philip that he had met with Roberto Ridolfi, a spokesman for both the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Arundel. Ridolfi requested Spanish assistance from de Spes at what the nobles considered the most opportune time to remove Cecil and reestablish

¹⁰⁷For the material related in this paragraph, see Read, Cecil, pp. 437-8; and Wernham, Before the Armada, p. 299.

Catholicism. Both Norfolk and Arundel blamed Cecil for the anti-Spanish foreign policy, but they insisted on rallying support from the other discontented nobles before challenging Cecil's policies. They assured de Spes that they would soon receive sufficient promises and, after removing Cecil, they would reinstate a pro-Spanish policy with complete restitution of seized property.¹⁰⁸

De Spes, who personally disliked Cecil, suggested that with French assistance an embargo could be imposed on England until Elizabeth removed Cecil and announced her conversion to Catholicism. The French ambassador refused to commit himself to such a project.¹⁰⁹ De Spes considered that if Philip placed an economic blockade on England, it would cause unemployment and create a crisis among the people. He noted to Philip that "If they cannot work or there is any obstacle to the disposal of their goods, they usually take up arms."¹¹⁰

In France religious disputes had led to another civil war, in which English sympathies were generally on

¹⁰⁸For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 110-3 and p. XXIV; Williamson, The Tudor Age, pp. 302-3; and Wernham, Before the Armada, p. 299.

¹⁰⁹MacCaffrey, The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime, p. 314.

¹¹⁰Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 129-30.

the side of the Protestants. Officially, Elizabeth claimed that England was neutral, but she did little to stop her subjects from supporting the Protestants with munitions and money. In addition several groups of English volunteers, commanded by several western peers, went to La Rochelle to assist the French Huguenots. In the Channel all shipping was hindered by the Protestant privateers, who were assisted by their English counterparts. On January 15, 1569, in retaliation for commercial losses in the Channel, Charles IX commanded the confiscation of all English property at Rouen. Elizabeth now faced two separate problems from the major Catholic powers of Europe. De Spes naturally hoped for a joint Franco-Spanish venture to overthrow the Queen. In March the French ambassador, La Mothe Fenelon, delivered a statement from Charles IX containing numerous complaints against Elizabeth and demanded an official reply within fifteen days; otherwise France would declare war.¹¹¹

In April Charles sent the Cardinal of Guise to Spain to discuss the possibility of a combined Franco-Spanish effort against England. De Spes, hopeful of joint action, suggested that Alva capture the annual English cloth fleet and prepare to land his troops in England. The Spanish

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 131-2.

ambassador was confident that there would be an uprising, which would be successful if the French assisted in the venture. However, de Spes underestimated one obstacle to Franco-Spanish cooperation, namely the lack of mutual trust between the two largest Catholic powers. Also, Philip believed that the English Catholics, who were once his subjects, were still loyal to him and he had no intention of allowing the French an opportunity to assist them.¹¹²

In February 1569 Philip informed Alva of the possibility of armed intervention in England if the opportunity presented itself. Yet Philip indicated that he would depend on Alva's judgement before committing himself to any proposals. Alva, hindered by financial difficulties and rising discontent in the Netherlands, advised his master that the use of Spanish troops to invade England would be impossible. He told Philip that he was against war with England and questioned the information from de Spes. In Alva's words, "It was undesirable to embark upon a war with the Queen, as however great the damage we may do her, she will not by this means restore what she has taken."¹¹³

In April Alva wrote Philip concerning the information de Spes had received from Norfolk and Arundel and stated his

¹¹²Wernham, Before the Armada, p. 300.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 301.

belief that "notwithstanding what Don Guerau writes, I am not yet convinced that they are not deceiving him."¹¹⁴

Under pressure from Spanish merchants to reestablish trade and settle the question of the seized property, Philip informed Alva that he wished to renew friendly relations with Elizabeth. In Mid-May the general requested that Philip make some effort to resume trade with England before the temporary split between the two countries became permanent. Philip replied that his Councillors were against armed intervention and that he wanted to begin negotiations for settling the differences with Elizabeth. In addition he reiterated that relations with Elizabeth should remain friendly, but firm enough to indicate Spain's desire for restitution.¹¹⁵

In April de Spes notified Philip that Norfolk and Arundel had developed a strong faction and, after receiving some guarantee of Spanish support, they would take steps to prove their intentions. De Spes continued to report that a large number of English Catholics were waiting for a Spanish invasion before revolting against the Queen. He also warned that while Elizabeth and Cecil retained control of England,

¹¹⁴ Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 141.

¹¹⁵ For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 150-1; and Wernham, Before the Armada, pp. 300-1.

the Netherlands would continue to be a trouble spot for Philip. After further communications with the discontented nobles, de Spes concluded that within a month the government of England would be toppled and replaced by one friendlier towards Spain.¹¹⁶

By May de Spes suspected that Norfolk and Arundel were not serious in their attempt to overthrow Cecil but were merely interested in receiving payments from Philip. Later he mentioned that he had "over-emphasized" Norfolk's influence. In June Alva advised Philip that "I cannot gather much light about English affairs from what Don Guerau writes, . . ." ¹¹⁷ He emphasized the need for restitution of Spanish property in advance of armed conflict; and he pointed out the danger of a Huguenot victory in France and the consequences it might have on Spain's position in the Netherlands. Alva favored renewed negotiations with Elizabeth for the restoration of the seized property since this would be more beneficial than involvement in any English intrigues. He was prepared to send a new commissioner, Thomas Fiesco, to reopen the discussions. Fiesco, a Genoese merchant, was on good terms with Benedict Spinola, whom Alva suspected of instigating the seizures.

¹¹⁶ Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 138-42.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 159.

According to Alva, Fiesco would seek to bribe Cecil and his associates with between 15,000 and 20,000 ducats in order to recover the detained property. Alva believed the plan had some merit with little risk, so he proceeded without informing Philip. In July, to insure the continuance of the negotiations, Alva requested de Spes to refrain from any activity against Elizabeth or her Councillors. Because of reports sent by Fiesco, Alva was aware that other individuals were attempting to arrange restoration of certain goods. He informed de Spes that Cecil appeared interested in the discussions, probably because of the influence exerted by Spinola.¹¹⁸

In July de Spes was released from confinement and allowed to return to his residence at Winchester House. The ambassador immediately ordered all Spanish subjects residing in England to refrain from any negotiations over seized property or face sure punishment when they returned to Spain. But Alva soon felt constrained to warn de Spes that "the queen of Scotland is being utterly ruined by the plotting of her servants with you . . . This might cost the Queen her life, and I am not sure that yours would be safe . . ."¹¹⁹ In August Alva informed Philip that de Spes

¹¹⁸For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 159-63; Read, Modern History, p. 454; and Read, Cecil, p. 443.

¹¹⁹Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 171-5.

was being completely deceived by the English Catholics and his actions were making continued negotiations extremely difficult.

During the fall of 1569 the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland took up arms in an open revolt against Elizabeth. No other event during this period created so much confusion. To many, the Northern uprising was the result of Spanish efforts to overthrow the government of England. However, the reasons for the uprising were best explained in a document released by the rebels in Durham. The earls were not in rebellion against Elizabeth, but against those "divers evil disposed persons about the queen" who "have overthrown the catholic religion, abused the queen, dishonoured the realm, and seek the destruction of the nobility."¹²⁰ The Northern earls wanted Elizabeth to restore their previous customs and liberties, "lest if we do it not ourselves strangers will do it to the great hazard of the estate of our country."¹²¹

In addition to religion, a fundamental reason for the uprising in the north was the dissatisfaction with the Tudor policy of increasingly centralized government. The Northern earls were basically feudal in outlook and

¹²⁰ Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 139.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 139.

resented the elimination of the old nobility from key positions in the government. Only with the lower classes was religion a major factor in the uprising. Later, after efforts to secure assistance from other parts of England failed, the leaders used religion to gain popular support. Elizabeth did not view the uprising as a religious conflict and appeared to have grasped the reasons for the revolt of the Northern earls. The showdown with them would have occurred sooner or later, and it was probably to Elizabeth's advantage that it came when her popularity was especially strong among her subjects.¹²²

The Northern earls appealed to Scotland, France, and Spain for assistance. Northumberland procured a letter promising Spanish assistance from de Spes, but Philip was too involved with internal matters to be of much help. As a result Spanish involvement in the Northern uprising was largely confined to de Spes' machinations and small amounts of financial assistance. In January 1569 de Spes met secretly with the earl of Northumberland, who committed himself to Philip's service. Later, in May, Northumberland informed the ambassador that he supported the aims of Norfolk and Arundel and would publicly announce his

¹²²For the material related in this paragraph, see Pollard, The Political History of England, pp. 293-6; and Read, Cecil, pp. 465-6.

allegiance to Catholicism when Philip approved their actions. In a letter to Philip, de Spes described Northumberland as "a very worthy gentleman," whom he trusted implicitly.¹²³ In June de Spes informed Philip that Norfolk, Arundel and Lord Lumley were considering steps to reestablish Catholicism. Their actions would be supported by Lords North, Derby, Cumberland, Dacre, and other Catholics from the North, Wales and Cornwall. Lord Dacre wrote directly to de Spes and informed him that if Philip should undertake an invasion of England, he would supply him with an army of 15,000 men. In June Alva notified Philip that he had sent 6,000 crowns for distribution among the discontented nobles.¹²⁴

In September a representative of Northumberland informed de Spes that his master and other Northern lords had decided to free Mary, Queen of Scots, and restore Catholicism in the North. Northumberland wanted Philip's approval before any action was taken, so as not to offend Philip or interfere with other plans. During the interval between Norfolk's arrest and the outbreak of hostilities, Northumberland remained in communication with de Spes,

¹²³Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 147.

¹²⁴For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 96 and pp. 167-8.

informing him of the plotters' decision to use force to free the Queen. He also requested aid from Philip in the form of arms, mainly arquebusiers. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, Alva sent a new emissary, Chapin Viteli, to England in an attempt to renew negotiations for restoration of seized property. The timing of the attempts to renew negotiations, the selection of Viteli, an able military commander, as Alva's agent, and the large number of advisors including some of a military nature, caused Cecil and the Queen to consider Alva's actions as an attempt to assist Norfolk and the Northern earls. Cecil immediately forbade Viteli to bring his large group of advisors to London from Dover. Because it did not appear that the revolt of the North would succeed, Viteli suggested to Alva that he himself assassinate Elizabeth. On December 4 Alva acknowledged his desire to assist the English Catholics but ordered Viteli to refrain from any murderous designs so as to allow for the reopening of negotiations.¹²⁵

On August 8, 1570, John Felton nailed a copy of the Bull of Excommunication and Deposition against Elizabeth to the door of the palace of the Bishop of London. Felton had

¹²⁵For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 195-9; and Read, Modern History, pp. 455-6.

obtained the document from Ridolfi, who in turn had acquired it from de Spes. Felton was later caught and executed for high treason. When the Bull was issued, there was no mention of its enforcement by any particular Catholic rulers. Pope Pius V had not made preparations to distribute the Bull in England, but it was posted throughout the major ports of France and the Netherlands, where it could easily be carried over to England. Pius was so preoccupied with the spiritual problem that he neglected to inform the "temporal sovereigns" of the proceedings. Evidently, he purposefully forgot to notify Philip, since his nuncio in Madrid was in constant communication with Rome. Philip had previously used his influence to prevent any action to excommunicate Elizabeth, but now he felt that only the Pope should rule on such issues. It appears that Pius was not concerned whether the Bull would be displeasing to Philip. France, which at one point attempted to get the Pope to excommunicate Elizabeth, had been kept informed of the proceedings, and this more than any other factor caused Philip to disapprove of the Bull. Philip felt he was the leading foreign authority on English affairs during these years and that he should have been consulted before any such action was taken. Philip maintained to Pius that he was upset by "this sudden and unexpected step," the very words spoken by the Emperor Ferdinand seven years earlier

at the Council of Trent. Emperor Maximilian II agreed with Philip's protests and informed both the Pope and Elizabeth of his disapproval. As a favor to Elizabeth, Maximilian asked Pius to retract the Bull or prevent it from being published. Pius replied that he did not understand Elizabeth's reaction. If she accepted the Bull, why did she not return to the Catholic Church, and if she did not accept it, why did it upset her so much?¹²⁶

To de Spes, Philip reported that "His Holiness has taken this step without communicating with me in any way, which certainly has greatly surprised me, because my knowledge of English affairs is such that I believe I could give a better opinion on them . . . his Holiness allowed himself to be carried away by his zeal . . ." ¹²⁷ Giovanni Castango (later Pope Urban VII), who at this time was the papal nuncio in Madrid, requested Philip to enforce the Bull by placing an economic blockade around England. In England itself, the Bull had little, if any, effect. Yet it provided Cecil, now Lord Burghley, with an opportunity to strengthen anti-Catholic measures. On July 1, 1571,

¹²⁶For the material related in this paragraph, see Pollard, The Political History of England, p. 297; McGrath, Papists and Puritans under Elizabeth I, pp. 70-1; and Meyer, England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth, pp. 73-8.

¹²⁷Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 254.

Parliament passed an act stipulating that it was illegal for anyone to bring into England a Bull from the "Prince of Rome."¹²⁸

During the summer of 1570, Philip had chosen a third wife, Anne of Austria; and Alva was now making preparations in the Netherlands to transport Philip's bride through the Channel to Spain. All England, and particularly the capital, went into a panic, as many concluded that Alva was preparing to invade England. In July Elizabeth ordered the military defenses reinforced, and the English fleet was placed on alert at Rochester, under the command of Clinton. Coastal defenses were improved during August, but it was not until after October that the country perceived the danger as being past.¹²⁹ During the summer of 1570, Elizabeth had given her permission for John Hawkins to attack the Spanish plate fleet returning from America. However, the danger of a possible Spanish invasion prevented him from sailing. Hawkins had become a wealthy man through privateering and had established his own independent commercial fleet, consisting of sixteen ships of varying sizes. Elizabeth approved of his private fleet since it helped her keep the expenses of the Royal

¹²⁸Meyer, England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth, pp. 79-80.

¹²⁹Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 145-6.

Navy down.

In September de Spes continued his involvement in minor intrigues among the discontented nobles. To representatives from Derby, Lancaster, and the Western counties, he held out the hope of support from Philip in an effort to counteract offers of French aid. De Spes also had several interviews with Elizabeth, in which he demanded royal action against privateers availing themselves of English facilities. In November Elizabeth issued an Edict which gave fair warning to individuals engaged in illegal activities and encouraged her subjects to arrest all violators. De Spes informed Philip that Elizabeth's real intentions were to continue assisting the rebels in the Netherlands. In March 1571 Elizabeth ordered the seizure of all privateers in English ports and the arrest of any individual who aided the privateers in any way. De Spes contended, however, that Elizabeth's actions were really to the contrary and that the seizure of Spanish and Flemish vessels was continuing unhindered.¹³⁰

Roberto Ridolfi, a Florentine banker in London, had been arrested in 1569 on the assumption that he was forwarding money to the Northern earls. Ridolfi was later

¹³⁰For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 277-85 and p. 296.

released and returned to Italy, where he became an agent for the Pope, his mission being to organize a plot to overthrow Elizabeth and Cecil. On his return to England, he secured an interview with de Spes, who immediately agreed to the possibility of a revolt against Elizabeth. De Spes and Ridolfi felt that Alva should land an army of 10,000 troops on the coast of Norfolk; Elizabeth should be arrested or assassinated, and Mary would be released. To meet the needs of the English nobles, Philip would be requested to furnish 6,000 arquebusiers at Harwich or Portsmouth, with an additional 4,000 arquebusiers, 2,000 corslates, 25 pieces of artillery, and sufficient munitions. In addition he would be expected to provide money for the expenses of an army of 4,000 men.¹³¹ Ridolfi visited Mary at Tutbury and discussed the plans. The Queen of Scots agreed to the scheme in February and gave Ridolfi letters of introduction to Alva and Philip. In March 1571 Ridolfi approached Norfolk about the project. Norfolk personally disliked Ridolfi and did not trust him. The Duke was afraid that the plans were not confidential enough, and he wanted a guarantee of assistance from Spain. Ridolfi and the Bishop of Ross eventually convinced Norfolk to participate, and they agreed that he should marry the Queen of

¹³¹Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 396-7.

Scots after her release. On March 25, 1571, de Spes informed Philip that Ridolfi would travel to Spain to offer the services of Mary and the Duke of Norfolk in hope of gaining his support.¹³²

In April Ridolfi went to the Netherlands to gain the support of Alva, who considered Ridolfi a fool and maintained that his plan would only lead to Mary's death or execution. Alva was more concerned with the problem of the Netherlands and the restoration of trade between the two countries. However, the Governor-General was also a Catholic and not unopposed to the overthrow of Elizabeth. He insisted on one condition before he would land an army in England, namely that Norfolk maintain an army in the field for at least forty days. Alva was doubtful of Ridolfi's information and considered him as unreliable as de Spes. He advised Philip of the proposal and warned him of the dangers of involvement. If the plot failed, Alva was fearful that England would move towards an alliance with France, which would strengthen the possibility of French intervention in the Netherlands. In addition, failure would bring an end to the Catholic cause in England.

¹³²For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 300; Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 150; and Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 308.

Philip wisely accepted Alva's advice and refrained from committing himself to Ridolfi's plans.¹³³ Moreover, he instructed de Spes to proceed with caution even though "Roberto Ridolfi has not arrived here, and if particulars of his errand have got wind it is greatly to be feared that it will be the death blow for the queen of Scotland and the duke of Norfolk . . ." ¹³⁴

Cecil had long been suspicious of Ridolfi, and he ordered that de Spes, Norfolk and the Bishop of Ross be kept under close surveillance. With Elizabeth's approval, the Secretary sent Hawkins to pose as a traitor to de Spes and offer his assistance to Philip in order to amend for his wrongdoings of the past. Hawkins was represented by George Fitzwilliams, a cousin of the Duchess of Feria, who was about to go to Madrid to appeal for the release of English sailors held in Spanish prisons. De Spes considered both Hawkins and Fitzwilliams to be good Catholics, and he believed Hawkins' ambition was the main reason for his support of Philip. De Spes recognized Hawkins' importance and sent him secretly to Spain to see Philip and de Feria. On his arrival in Spain, Hawkins agreed to

¹³³For the material related in this paragraph, see Williamson, The Tudor Age, pp. 308-9; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 150-1.

¹³⁴Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 318-9.

protect the invasion force from the Netherlands to the coast of Norfolk with his fleet in return for a large sum of money, the release of his men captured at San Juan de Ulloa, a patent of nobility, and a general pardon for his past wrongdoings. Ridolfi's plan gained support in Spain because of Hawkins' offer to assist Philip.¹³⁵

In August Philip informed his ambassador that he approved of Ridolfi's plan and that he had previously directed Alva to begin preparations to assist the English Catholics. De Spes was also directed to continue discussions with Hawkins, whose ships would be most useful to Spain. In October the ambassador commented to Philip that the more he met with Hawkins, "the more convinced I am of his faithfulness in your Majesty's interests."¹³⁶ However, Philip warned de Spes that

Notwithstanding what you say of the proposals made by John Hawkins through George Fitzwilliams, yet there is some suspicion about it, because both of them have communicated with Secretary Cecil. We agreed that the affair should be listened to, because we know that Hawkins with his ships might be of great service in the principal business, if he acted straight forwardly . . .¹³⁷

¹³⁵For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 317-22; and Williamson, The Tudor Age, pp. 310-12.

¹³⁶Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 333-46.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 333.

In April 1571 Charles Baily, an agent for the Bishop of Ross, was apprehended at Dover for attempting to smuggle illegal books and several secret letters into England. Lord Cobham, Warden of the Cinque Ports, sent the illegal books to Cecil but withheld the letters. De Spes reported to Philip that

It was a most extraordinary piece of good fortune to save the packet taken by Carlos, the bishop of Ross' servant, which Ridolfi unsuspectingly entrusted to him at Brussels . . . All of this was recovered through me by the good services and help of Thomas Cobham before Lord Burleigh heard of it, and another packet was made up with the same cipher characters; Burleigh has had a secretary at work upon it for days and has sent copies to France and Italy, but without effect for there is nothing in it . . .¹³⁸

Cecil directed that Baily be imprisoned with William Herle, a cousin of the Countess of Northumberland, who was actually an agent for Cecil. Baily told Herle that he had been carrying secret letters to Ross. The Secretary learned that Cobham had taken the letters, and he subsequently retrieved the originals, which were addressed to Ross as well as to "30" and "40". Baily confessed that "30" and "40" were Englishmen involved in a plot with Philip, Alva, and the Pope "to cause war in this realm and to have a force of strangers enter the realm."¹³⁹ Cecil immediately

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 332.

¹³⁹ Read, Burghley, pp. 38-9.

suspected Norfolk, but Elizabeth forbade the duke's arrest without adequate proof. Later, when an envoy from Norfolk was arrested for attempting to transport gold to Mary's supporters in Scotland, Cecil had the duke's house searched and his secretary, Higford, arrested. Higford was racked until he confessed that Norfolk had been sending money to Mary's supporters. He also revealed the secret of the cipher to the letters and its location. When confronted with this, Norfolk confessed to aiding Mary's supporters and sending letters to the Queen of Scots herself. He told Cecil and his aid, Sir Ralph Sadler, everything he knew about the Ridolfi plot but said he had seen the latter only once and had not agreed to the plans. By October the Bishop of Ross had been deeply implicated, and before a special commission of the Council, he confessed to being involved in the plot. Shortly thereafter de Spes reported to Philip that Cecil had had Norfolk arrested for high treason and might soon make similar charges against Mary. Philip ordered the duke of Medina-Celi, who was proceeding to the Netherlands to replace Alva, to be ready for action against England in case any charges were made against the Queen of Scots. He provided Medina-Celi with 200,000 crowns in gold and silver to insure successful preparations in the Low Countries.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. 348-50.

With Norfolk in the Tower, the Ridolfi plot disintegrated, and Philip and Alva gave up all thought of launching an invasion. Elizabeth delayed Norfolk's trial as long as she could, and it was not until January 1572 that the proceedings against him began. The duke was tried by a group of his fellow peers, who naturally found him guilty of high treason. For the sentence to be carried out, Elizabeth had to give her consent. On June 2 she finally gave her approval, and England's only living duke was publicly executed.¹⁴¹

Several months earlier de Spes had been informed by Burghley that the Queen desired his recall for his involvement in the intrigues against the English government. Specifically, he was charged with attempting to promote war between England and Spain and with assisting the Northern earls and their associates. De Spes requested a copy of the charges against him but Burghley refused to comply on the grounds that Dr. Man had been denied the opportunity to exonerate himself. Finally, Burghley informed de Spes that he had three days in which to make any final arrangements before leaving the country. The ambassador contended that he could not leave until he notified

¹⁴¹For the material related in this paragraph, see Williamson, The Tudor Age, pp. 312-3; and Read, Burghley, pp. 42-8.

Alva and received money for the payment of his current expenses. Alva responded that de Spes, if requested to leave again, should depart immediately for the Netherlands rather than stir up trouble and risk upsetting the renewed trade negotiations. De Spes left England shortly after the arrival of Alva's communiqué, and he was the last ordinary Spanish ambassador posted to England for five years. Alva designated Antonio de Guarau, a Spanish merchant, to serve as his unofficial representative in London.¹⁴²

Because of the serious decline in Spanish commerce, Alva was able to convince Philip of the need to restore trade with England. Alva had sent several emissaries to Elizabeth in an attempt to begin negotiations, but the Queen had refused to participate without an official envoy from Philip. In addition, the Northern uprising, the Ridolfi plot and the rumor that Philip was assisting a renegade English pirate, Thomas Stukely, in an attempt to invade Ireland, helped perpetuate the break between England and Spain. For three years, Alva had tried to restore trade but Elizabeth wanted to settle all outstanding problems between England and Spain. Cecil suggested to

¹⁴²For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, p. 333 and pp. 356-63.

Elizabeth that there was a need for cooperation with Spain, and perhaps the best way to improve relations would be to resume trade. With the ports of the Netherlands closed, many English exports had been redirected to France, where English merchants received "ill treatment" and coastal facilities were poor.¹⁴³

Elizabeth had stopped all discussions of restoration when she dismissed Alva's representatives, Fiesco and Zweveghem, at the time de Spes was ordered to leave. The reduction in the cloth trade and the protests of the Eastern weavers caused Elizabeth to think of renewing trade with the rich markets of Antwerp and Bruges. In March 1572 Cecil informed Guaras that Elizabeth was willing to negotiate the seizures and consider the restoration of trade with Spain. To demonstrate her good intentions, Elizabeth ordered the expulsion of all Dutch privateers from English ports. Philip and Alva favored the discussions on a possible settlement and especially the removal of the Dutch privateers. England was presently in an economic depression because of a poor harvest, and needed to restore trade to improve her economy. Negotiations were initiated by Cecil and Guaras, and by April 1573 a settle-

¹⁴³For the material related in this paragraph, see Wernham, Before the Armada, pp. 307-8; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, pp. 163-4.

ment had been concluded on behalf of Elizabeth and Alva. The informal agreement restored trade between England and the Netherlands, and it was soon followed by renewed trade with Spain. A commission was established to assess the damages occasioned by the seizures; and unless an agreement was reached in two years, trade would be suspended again until a settlement was negotiated. In July 1574 Bernardino de Mendoza arrived in England as Philip's envoy to settle the assessment of damages. On August 28 the Treaty of Bristol was signed, which stated the damages for seized property as £89,076 for Spain and £68,076 for England. Under the treaty, England was to reimburse Spain £21,000 for damages, but actually the value of the goods seized by England was almost four times the amount repaid. By March 1575 England and Spain had resumed friendly relations and trade had been restored to its previous level.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴For the material related in this paragraph, see Calendar of State Papers (Simancas), II, pp. XXXVIII-IX; Wernham, Before the Armada, p. 317; Williamson, The Tudor Age, p. 318; and Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 164.

CONCLUSION

By 1574 trade had been restored between England and Spain and normal diplomatic relations reinstated. But the political relationship between the two countries was not the same in 1574 as it had been at Elizabeth's accession. In fifteen years a transition in English foreign policy had occurred. English rather than Spanish interests were dominant in the aims and objectives of Elizabeth's policies. By 1574 she was firmly established in England and clearly capable of handling foreign affairs. In regard to Spain, she fully understood the implications of Philip's hesitancy to take any action against her. By overestimating the potential threat from France, Philip failed to recognize the change in Elizabeth and her foreign policy. Much to his later regret, all the Spanish ambassadors to England, with the exception of de Silva, sent so much false information to him that it was almost impossible to comprehend the political atmosphere in England. One area of Anglo-Spanish relations that was continually exaggerated were the affairs of the English Catholics. The resident ambassadors were deeply involved in Catholic intrigues and gave falsified reports of discontent towards Elizabeth. The ambassadors would have done better to develop and strengthen

Anglo-Spanish relationships, especially in the economic realm. Because of the immaturity of his foreign service, Philip was generally unaware of the real activities of his resident ambassadors. The resident ambassadors did largely as they chose, especially because communications with Madrid were slow. Between 1558 and 1572, Philip found himself more concerned with the Turkish threat in the Mediterranean than with the affairs of Europe. Only later did he become alarmed about English trade with his Latin American colonies and English assistance to the rebellion in the Low Countries.

Under Elizabeth's direction, England moved away from Spain's sphere of influence and established herself as a power among the states of Europe. By 1572 Philip had almost no influence over English affairs, even those of the English Catholics. To Elizabeth's benefit Philip had lost whatever chance he had of assisting the English Catholics in overthrowing her government. That Philip turned a deaf ear to earlier appeals for aid alienated all but a few fanatical Catholics from Spain. The reports by the resident ambassadors of the Catholic silent majority were nothing short of illusory. After 1572 a majority of the English Catholics accepted Elizabeth as their rightful sovereign and rejected all ideas of rebellion. Philip and his ambassadors failed to understand how the Catholics could be loyal

to both England and the Catholic Church.

With the advent of Philip's repressive policies, the economy of the Low Countries declined rapidly. To avoid economic dependence on a single country, Elizabeth encouraged overseas activity to the African coast and the Americas in order to develop broader market possibilities. The English economy was expanding during this period, and overseas involvement provided the necessary stimulus to insure development and success. To promote overseas activity, Elizabeth had to ignore previous understandings with Philip concerning the prohibition of trade with specified areas. A healthy and growing economy was of course beneficial to England and Elizabeth, who received a larger income from the increase in customs duties and taxation.

Early in her reign the Queen consciously decided not to be dominated by any individual or country. She therefore terminated Philip's voice in English affairs. Yet throughout this period, whenever her interests might be served, she let it appear that she was still influenced by Philip's views. Both Philip and his resident ambassadors were deceived by Elizabeth and her diplomatic maneuvers. During a period when women dominated several European governments, the Spanish King often misjudged the real intentions of Elizabeth and her actions. His preoccupation with affairs elsewhere, and his blind acceptance of Elizabeth's

friendship, revealed his failure to grasp the transition taking place in Anglo-Spanish relations.

Whether the resident ambassadors in England were responsible for the division between England and Spain is doubtful. It appears that Elizabeth's attitude towards foreign affairs was already set by the time of her coronation. Nevertheless, most of the individuals selected by Philip to serve as resident ambassadors were remarkably poor choices. Both de Quadra and de Spes were religiously-minded and more concerned with the affairs of the Church than the state. Philip's representatives should have concentrated on developing a firm political and economic relationship between the two countries instead of involving themselves in minor intrigues. But even if the King had been better served it is still likely that underlying factors would have caused the two countries to drift away from one another, although perhaps not quite so rapidly as they did.

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ANGLO-SPANISH RELATIONS DURING THE EARLY YEARS

OF ELIZABETH I, 1558-1574

by

Walter Kevin Hunt

(ABSTRACT)

It is the purpose of this paper to reveal the causes of the diplomatic division between England and Spain between 1558 and 1572.

By examining the actions of Philip and his ambassadors in London, one can perceive the reasons for the transition in Anglo-Spanish relations. The conflict of monarchical policies and its affects on Anglo-Spanish affairs is revealed through an examination of the activities of the three Spanish ambassadors resident in London.

This paper is an attempt to break new ground in the area of Anglo-Spanish affairs during Elizabethan England, since many of the controversies previously have been regarded as religious conflicts without reference to political and economic factors.