

For the eyes of Sylvia Cabreyra di Tassato

These documents are the property of the Regario Dossier seat, and information contained within is distributed at the discretion of the seat.

In each case, reports are composed by local agent-handler (per code name) and dispatched by winged messenger. They are compiled and presented to the Seat via an agent based in Tassato, known by the code-name Agent Catazar.

Following hiatus reports are expected seasonally or bi-seasonally and will be compiled and presented to Regario Dossier seat.

Enclosed documents

Report from Agent Couros, Nemoria (Asavean Archipelago)

Report from Agent Umshalla, Sarcophan Delves (Sarcophan)

Report from Agent Vassa, Zemeh (Sumaah Republic)

Report from Agent Scorrero, City of Jarm (Jarmish Principalities)

Report from Agent Gancio, Port-city of Leerdam (Commonwealth)

Additional report from Agent Catazar regarding potential courses of actions with regard to piracy

Replace the Brass Coast guy with a League guy, replace all references to civil service with references to this guy. Agent Catazaar.

For the eyes of Sylvia Cabreyra di Tassato

Report compiled by Agent Catazar

Introduction

It is clear that the Empire is experiencing a period of increased piracy against foreign nations. It is important to note that piracy against foreigners – as opposed to raids against barbarians – is a crime under Imperial Law, and with good reason.

The Suumah Republic, the Commonwealth, the Principalities of Jarm, the Asavean Archipelago and even the Sarcophan Delves represent nations whose power rivals that of our own. While the distances between us make conventional warfare almost impossible this does not mean that we can ignore our neighbours on the 'world stage'. While we are unlikely to see an Asavean or Sarcophan navy in the Bay of Catazaar, or a Sumaah Crusade at the gates of Sarvos, this does not mean that these foreign nations cannot harm us.

Restriction of trade is an obvious repercussion of deteriorated diplomatic relations. As trade is embargoed, as ports are closed, so these nations will assign more vessels of war to patrolling their national waters – and even the corsairs whose piratical antics have created this situation find their profits impacted.

More dangerously, there have been incidents in the past where angry foreign nations have given assistance to our more proximate enemies. Ships, weapons and resources can all be given to barbarian tribes relatively easily. Magical rituals can be used to support of the Empire. Preferential trades can be offered to our rivals. All of these damage us indirectly – but the damage is not lessened by being indirect.

Dealing with Piracy – Legal solutions

Of possible interest to the Regario Dossier are details of a project briefly enacted by Empress Giselle in 338YE during a similar period of unrestrained predation on our foreign trading partners. Concerned about the damage being done by pirates and corsairs to foreign trade, the Senate passed into law a motion making it illegal for any vessel leaving an Imperial port to do so without a civil service observer on board.

This reduced incidents of both piracy against foreign nations (and coincidentally illegal trade with barbarian nations) to effectively zero within six weeks, but after nine months the law was abrogated as an "unnecessary drain on the Imperial treasury."

The project required no additional infrastructure, but estimated costs of 50 Thrones each season to the Imperial treasury were required to pay for the upkeep of the observers, co-ordinate their assignment, and reassigning other civil servants to cover for them.

Dealing with Piracy – Magical solutions

Following the abrogation of the civil service observers, the Senate fell back on Imperial Conclave resources which were *somewhat* successful at using ritual

magic to identify pirates but ultimately proved quite expensive except in cases where there was already suspicion of guilt.

The realm of Day, and the realm of Autumn, both lend themselves to discovering how a specific individual has ordered their fleet. The problem is that the ritual must be performed on the suspect directly, in their presence, which means it is generally only useful when there is already evidence of wrongdoing.

There is also note of a ritual or rituals called variously *The Testament of Birds*, *The Witnessing Wind*, *The Eye of the Deep* and *The Wake of Siakah*. This ritual – or possibly these rituals – can be used to establish a breakdown of how many fleets within a given nation have undertaken trade or piracy in the previous season, and against which overseas nations. It seems to lack the finesse needed to identify the specific fleets involved, however.

Dealing with Piracy – Economic solutions

Finally, at several points since the Regario Dossier was established during the reign of Emperor Frederick, the Senate has voted additional powers to the Seat. Specifically, it is possible for direct Senate funding to empower the agents overseen by the Seat in more in-depth information gathering to attempt to uncover the identities of traders and pirates in specific foreign ports. I was unable to track down any specific historical powers, but there were several notes that – as with the law passed in the reign of Empress Giselle – the costs involved were considered unpalatable by the Senate.

I did discover a note that the civil service during the reign of Empress Barabbas that suggested it might be as much as 5 thrones per foreign nation each season to allow for additional agents and bribes to local officials (etc.), permitting the Regario Dossier agents to provide a breakdown of trading and pirating with those ports by Imperial Nation.

Asavean Archipelago Report

Trading and Piracy comparisons, 377-378YE

After Spring Equinox 377

2 pirates, 10 traders. One sixth Imperial fleets in Asavean waters engaged in criminal activity.

After Summer Solstice 377

1 pirate, 12 traders. Just under a tenth of Imperial fleets in Asavean waters engaged in criminal activity

After Autumn Equinox 377

2 pirates, 9 traders. About fifth of Imperial fleets in Asavean waters engaged in criminal activity

After Winter solstice 377

3 pirates, 7 traders. About a third of Imperial fleets in Asavean waters engaged in criminal activity

After Spring equinox 378

5 pirates, 7 traders. Nearly half of Imperial fleets in Asavean waters engaged in criminal activity

Synopsis

Piracy against Asavean fleets has reached levels unacceptable to the Asavean Plenum.

Result

The Plenum has dispatched an Ambassador to the Empire with a list of demands.

Commentary

Asavea is a naval nation and prides itself on its fleets and trade. Imperial vessels have damaged that pride, sunk numerous ships, seriously damaged others and stolen valuable cargoes which in turn has damaged the prosperity of Plenum families and their standing with foreign trade partners.

The Plenum as a body is angry. Heated discussions are tending towards extreme action. Existence of embassy is possibly only thing preventing major diplomatic and military incident. The embassy suggests the Empire is still interested in diplomacy, which is why an Ambassador has been dispatched rather than simply severing ties and declaring war.

Course of action

Damage to shipping is estimated by advisors to around fifty wains of weirwood equivalent. This agent strongly advises a gift approaching that amount to the Plenum - do not present it as a bribe. Less than the estimated fifty may still mollify the Plenum but it is uncertain; more will improve their attitude proportionately.

At the same time, pirate actions against Asavea must be significantly reduced - preferably reduced to zero.

Repercussions

If anger of Plenum is not mollified, it is very likely in the current situation that they will sever ties with the Empire, close Nemoria to Imperial shipping, reassign war-ships to protect Asavean vessels, and sink Imperial ships encountered in Asavean waters. Simultaneously, they are likely to seek to harm the Empire. While open warfare is effectively impossible over the distances involved, even for a naval power like Asavea, they can still harm us by offering support to Imperial enemies (especially the Grendel), and encouraging sanctions against Empire by other nations.

Report compiled by Agent Couros Nemoria Asavean Archipelago 378 YE

Sumaah Republic Report

General

Weather remains hot and wet.

Morale is as usual - moderately low.

Pride Assembly continues slow conquest of everything within marching distance.

The House of the People has passed several more laws relating to farm surpluses and issued another condemnation of Asavean militarism.

More relevantly, the House of the People has *also* issued a severe condemnation of the Empire. There is a judgement before the Assembly of Prosperity to suggest the House of the People close Zemeh to Imperial traffic and seize any Imperial ship found in Sumaah waters.

To be clear, the situation is deteriorating by the day. A rough breakdown of Imperial ships in Sumaah waters follows which will help illustrate the problem.

Breakdown of Imperial Activity in Sumaah National Waters

Numbers represent estimates of fleets. Figures from the Assemblies of Prosperity, Wisdom and Vigilance are easy to get hold of, a matter of public record. They are also reasonably reliable - whenever an agent has found a discrepancy it has always turned out to be a genuine error rather than an attempt at misrepresentation.

Spring 377YE - 6 merchants, 0 corsairs

Summer 377YE - 5 merchants, 2 corsairs

Autumn 377YE - 4 merchants, 1 corsair

Spring through Autumn 377YE trading fleets to Zemeh slowly declined, while acts of piracy

against Sumaah shipping slowly increased.

Winter 377YE - 2 merchants, 5 corsairs

Then over winter the number of merchants declines even further and we have two-and-a-half times as many thieves attacking Sumaah shipping as we have merchants visiting Zemeh for prosperous trade.

Spring 378YE - 4 merchants, 7 corsairs

Over the last few months the ratio has improved slightly, but the sheer number of vessels attacking Sumaah ships has only grown. There's still nearly twice as many Imperial fleets here engaging in blatant theft and destruction of property as there are people actually trading with the Republic.

Recommendations

First, there's the actual theft. This is the Sumaah Republic - they take the admonitions of Prosperity to *Förakta den tjuvaktiga stråtrövaren* very seriously indeed. In fact I've had *Förakta den tjuvaktiga skitstöveln* growled at me more than once this last month or two. They're comparing the Empire - unfavourably - to the Asaveans and they are at *war* with Asavea. If the situation is to be salvaged, we need more trade and a *damn* sight less piracy.

Second, there's the diplomatic failure. There seems to be an assumption that the Empire is actively snubbing the Republic. If there's an actual Imperial trade envoy to Sumaah at the moment, they've made no effort to contact the Censor of Wood, Metal and Stone. The Sumaah won't make the first move because they're the Sumaah.

There's also a rumour circulating at the moment that the Empire has built an embassy for the Asavean Archipelago and has been persuaded by allies in their Plenum to covert warfare against the Republic. If the situation is to be salvaged, official contact from an Imperial empowered to speak on behalf of the Empire is an absolute requirement and you may wish to advise the Senate to look at an Embassy for Sumaah.

Request

I've been interviewed three times this month by agents of the Assembly of Vigilance. It has been reasonably friendly so far, but their patience is clearly deteriorating. Further, I do not like being called a *skitstöveln* by strangers in the street. If the situation doesn't improve, I'd like to request reassignment to somewhere with a nicer climate that isn't on the verge of religious war with the Empire.

Report compiled by Agent Vassa, Zemeh, Republic of Sumaah 378YE

Agent Catazar notes that Agent Vassa has requested reassignment at least twice a year for the duration of their tenure in Zemeh – which has lasted a little over eleven years.

Sarcophan Delves Report

Trading Report, 377YE

Spring three trading fleets
Summer eight trading fleets
Autumn three trading fleets
Winter four trading fleets

Piracy Report, 377YE

Preliminary Trading Report, 378YE

Spring eight trading fleets

Spring no piracy confirmed

Summer no piracy confirmed

Autumn three pirate fleets in Sarcophan waters

Winter five pirate fleets in Sarcophan waters

Preliminary Piracy Report, 378YE

Spring four pirate fleets in Sarcophan waters

The Bedelaar Huisbaas tolerate a degree of 'rough and tumble' among fleets in Sarcophan waters. Where the number of Imperial fleets engaged in piract rises to match the number actually trading, the Bedelaar Huisbaas take notice. When the pirates *exceed* the traders, they take a *great deal of notice*.

At the last feast in the Tower of Crows, there was a heated conversation about not only closing the Delves to Imperial shipping, but actively pirating Imperial ships in Sarcophan waters. Some of the Beggar Kings are viewing direct action as a route to reclaiming some of the profits they have lost to pirated cargo, damaged vessels and murdered crew. Bedelaar Huisbaas Annike, who advises the great table on matters of foreign trade was described by an agent as "deep in her cups, complaining to anyone who would listen that the real problem is that the Empire does not consider Sarcophan worthy of her notice." While envoys have allegedly been established with several other nations, there has been no effort to contact Annike by Imperial diplomats.

Without contact, the situation here can only deteriorate. Even given the upsurge of trade with the Delves through Spring, all this means is that a third of all Imperial ships in Sarcophan are raiders, thieves and murderers. The Bedelaar Huisbaas may take a relaxed attitude to theft, but that relaxed attitude ends at the very moment it threatens the tomb bounty of one of the families at the great tables.

Two other matters of note, peripherally connected to the situation in Sarcophan.

Firstly, there has been an increase in the number of black-sailed ships out of Axos over the last six months. Over Winter there was an Axou diplomat from one of their citadels at the great feast, having paid an undisclosed amount to purchase the 'guest seat' at the festivities. The conversation touched on certain similarities between the Axou faith and the faith of the Delves, but is reported as mostly having been an attempt to secure trade concessions. While the Axos ambassador did not openly attack the Empire, there was some discussion of the Empire's arrogant attitude to other nations that did not cast our diplomates in a good light.

There is also a report from a reliable agent that some of the Bedelaar Husibaas - those whose shipping has been most damaged by Imperial piracy - are discussing covert aid to the enemies of the Empire if they can establish channels. While a handful of disgruntled beggar kings are unlikely to have too much impact on our security, if enough of them threw covert support behind (for example) the Grendel or the Druj, then it could go very badly indeed for Imperial forces.

Report compiled by agent Umshalla The Delves Sarcophan 378YE

Principalities of Jarm Report

Piracy and Trading figures for 377YE

Spring 377YE

Southern Principalities, port of Vezak - four confirmed pirates, fifteen trading fleets

Northern Principalities, port of Kavor - one confirmed pirate, twelve trading fleets

Summer 377YE

Southern Principalities, port of Vezak - four confirmed pirates, sixteen trading fleets
Northern Principalities, port of Kavor - no confirmed piracy, fourteen trading fleets

Autumn 377YE

Southern Principalities, port of Vezak - seven confirmed pirates, fourteen trading fleets
Northern Principalities, port of Kavor - four confirmed pirates, eleven trading fleets

Winter 377YE

Southern Principalities, port of Vezak - four confirmed pirates, fourteen trading fleets
Northern Principalities, port of Kavor - three confirmed pirates, ten trading fleets

Preliminary Piracy and Trading figures for 378YE

Spring 378YE

Southern Principalities, port of Vezak - three confirmed pirates, seven trading fleets
Northern Principalities, port of Kavor - two confirmed pirates, three trading fleets

In each case, these figures cover the period from the end of one solstice or equinox to the start of the next - thus Spring 377YE covers the period following the Spring Equinox in the Empire until the start of the Summer Solstice.

Comments

The Magician-Princes are notoriously fractious, but it is becoming apparent that there is an undercurrent of disapproval of the Empire. The Magician-Princes of the northern principalities are especially livid. Not only has trade declined but there have been numerous egregious incidents of piracy in the waters around the port-city of Kavor.

The situation as of the past season is very serious. At the same time that the Senate is voting to create an embassy to the Jarmish Princes, a third of all Imperial vessels in their waters are engaging in acts of war.

As the piracy begins to impact the prosperity of the Magician-Princes, the House of Princes begins to demand action. For most of 377, the Princes profiting from Imperial trade were a more vociferous lobby than those being harmed by piracy – but recent developments have seen a shift in the balance of power.

A power-play by an alliance of eastern principalities, apparently made with support from Imperial citizens, and the rise of the port-city of Rigia to prominence, are further complicating Jarmish attitudes to the Empire. Piracy directed against fleets out of Vezak and Kavor directly benefits the Princes of the Eastern faction – and the fact that piracy against Rigia is effectively impossible at this time is seen as being neither here nor there. Some Princes are calling for an investigation into covert Imperial involvement in Jarmish politics.

A three-way struggle for influence appears inevitable in Jarm, but Lord Magister Anton Trescher of the Hidden Hook (trade advisor to the Princes) has cautiously announced to the House that the Empire has so far declined to take sides in conflict. Unfortunately this has simply lead the more paranoid Princes within each faction to believe that the Empire is secretly planning to offer support to one or both of the other factions. Given that in Jarm the more paranoid princes are often the most influential, this may well end badly for us.

There is a saying here that I find quite apposite. It goes something like (and my grammar is atrocious I warn you!) "Jesli nie jestes moim przyjacielem, moze i nie jestes moim wrogiem - ale wiem na pewno ze nie jestes moim przyjacielem." Translated into Imperial it roughly means *If you are not my friend, you may not be my enemy - but I know for sure you are not*

my friend."

Postscript

If I might be so bold, I would suggest that the Senate be appraised of the declining standing of the Empire in the Principalities before some paranoid Magician-Prince take some extreme action to protect the shipping interests of their family.

As with political power, the more paranoid the Magician-Prince, the more they seem to be in possession of devastating magical resources. If those resources were to be used directly to express displeasure or - worse - put at the disposal of a Thule Dragon or Grendel Warlord, the outcome for the Empire could be disaster.

**Report compiled by Agent Scorrero, City of Jarm, Jarmish Principalities,
378YE**

Commonwealth Report

Breakdown

A breakdown over the previous year shows that the piracy problem has waxed and waned, but is generally getting worse. These figures are not exhaustive, but I am confident the ratios represented are reasonably constant based on observations of our agents and documents from die Ratgeberin der Handelsbotschaft.

Port of Leerdam

After Spring Equinox 377YE; four trading fleets, no confirmed Imperial piracy.

After Summer Solstice 377YE; eight trading fleets, nine confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy.

After Autumn Equinox 377YE; three trading fleets, five confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy. Extensive public discussions about applying special taxes to Imperial vessels to pay for damage to Commonwealth ships.

After Winter Solstice 377YE; two trading fleets, five confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy. First formal discussions in Leerdam about ending access to the port for Imperial fleets.

Early figures since Spring Equinox 378YE cautiously estimate four trading fleets and only one confirmed incident of an Imperial pirate. Circumstantial evidence suggests this piratical fleet most likely hails from a Freeborn port, although further identification has proved impossible.

Port of Volkavaar

After Spring Equinox 377YE; twenty-three trading fleets, one confirmed Imperial fleet engaged in piracy.

After Summer Solstice 377YE; twenty-one trading fleets, five confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy.

After Autumn Equinox 377YE; fifteen trading fleets, five confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy. Questions asked in broadsheets about value of diplomatic contact with Empire.

After Winter Solstice 377YE; nineteen trading fleets, seven confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy. Public demonstration against Imperial vessels in Commonwealth ports.

Early figures since Spring Equinox 378YE estimate twenty-one trading fleets and six incidents of confirmed piracy by Imperial vessels. Commonwealth observers are a little unclear on the differences between nations but it seems around half the attacks have come from fleets of Marcher, Wintermark or possibly Varushkan origin.

Commonwealth as a whole

After Spring Equinox 377YE; twenty-seven trading fleets, one confirmed Imperial fleet engaged in piracy. Effectively no piracy.

After Summer Solstice 377YE; twenty-nine trading fleets, fourteen confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy. Nearly half of Imperial fleets are engaged in piracy.

After Autumn Equinox 377YE; eighteen trading fleets, ten confirmed Imperial fleets engaged in piracy. Over a third of Imperial fleets engaged in piracy.

Following Winter Solstice 377YE; twenty-one trading fleets, twelve confirmed Imperial

fleets engaged in piracy. Over a third of Imperial fleets engaged in piracy.

Summary

The Commonwealth is seething - shipping out of Leerdam has been *repeatedly* raided by Imperial pirates. The Commonwealth takes theft *exceptionally* seriously; there have been calls for the resignation of Erda Elessa, ministeriale Ratgeberin der Handelsbotschaft des Commonwealths, for her inability to stem the tide of Imperial piracy.

While the citizens of Leerdam are clearly angry, those of Volkavaar are not far behind. It has not gone unnoticed that trade is declining as acts of piracy increase.

The damage done to the reputation of the Empire by these corsairs should not be underestimated. As the ratio between honest traders and pirates declines, the practical rational mathematics that the Commonwealth uses to plot it's course are pointing towards an obvious conclusion - severing ties with the Empire. They may even go so far as to declare war.

While the Commonwealth is not a great naval power, they seem to have almost unlimited supplies of raw materials, facilities to craft them into weapons and armour, and the will to do so. If the Commonwealth were to support the Empire's enemies, and commit to supplying them with the tools of war, this would likely have a significant impact on their ability to harm Imperial citizens.

Report compiled by Agent Gancio, Port-city of Leerdam, Commonwealth