

King that they sell instead of giving to the savages. The war, rendering merchandise dear, has made these posts worth little or nothing; but as the proprietor or merchant is also a commanding officer, one must suppose that they fabricate a supply of certificates for expenses incurred in behalf of the savages. The excess of these has been enormous. This year there appeared eleven thousand livres<sup>58</sup> of expense at Michilimackina. Monsieur le marquis de Vaudreuil has not yet been willing to sign for more than one hundred thousand écus;<sup>59</sup> that is far too much, but it will be obtained. At the post of la baie which belongs to Monsieur de Rigaud his brother, and is exploited by his lieutenant, Monsieur de Couteret, nephew of the said Monsieur de Rigaud, although this post has produced fifty thousand écus worth in peltries and the cost has not been more than thirty thousand livres, that officer has presented five hundred thousand livres of certificates that the marquis de Vaudreuil has signed. The intendant, accustomed, moreover, to pass all, has protested, and has wished to give only forty thousand livres in letters of exchange for the first term. Finally, after urgent solicitations, this matter has been arranged at two hundred thousand livres of certificates for imaginary expenses. The Sieur de Couteret has produced letters of Monsieur Rigaud, authorizing him to make a great quantity of certificates. Legal proof of these facts is impossible; the signature of the two King's officers covers all; but the facts are publicly stated. Never have theft and license gone so far.

<sup>58</sup> This should be eleven hundred thousand livres. See preceding document.—ED.

<sup>59</sup> An écu was a silver coin, worth at this period, six livres. A livre was worth within a small fraction of what equals the modern franc. The purchasing power of money was, however, much greater at that period than at present, so that this sum was equivalent to between five and six hundred thousand dollars of the American currency of today.—ED.