

1749: ARRANGEMENTS FOR LA BAYE, AND A POST AMONG THE SIOUX; FORT AT TORONTO

[Letter from La Jonquière and Bigot to the French minister. Source, same as preceding document, but fol. 42.]

QUEBEC, October 9, 1749.

MONSEIGNEUR—Monsieur the Marquis de la Galissoniere told us, previous to his departure, that he had promised the savage nations in the Neighborhood of the post of la Baye des puants, that the said post should not be farmed out any longer and that it should be exploited by means of licenses. He gave this promise upon those savages representing to him that the farmers of the said post took advantage of their needs, and made them pay very dear for the goods they required, and, as we learned that this compelled them to carry their furs to the English who do everything in their power to induce them to do so, we deemed it our duty to carry out that promise.

The Sieur Marin, the elder, told us that the Sioux had urgently asked him that a post be established in their country. He observed to us that those Savages are very powerful, and that, as they have a great inclination for the French, it would be advisable to grant their request, to secure them to our alliance, And, moreover, that by means of that establishment we might push our discoveries much farther Toward the West.⁴⁹ We considered that our Zeal for the King's Service should lead us to adopt this suggestion, and we are making arrangements to give the said Sieur Marin the assistance he needs for founding that establishment, which he has undertaken, as he knows

⁴⁹ The post among the Sioux had always been considered useful as a starting point for Western discovery. Perrot's Fort Antoine (1689) was the scene of taking possession of the West in the name of the French King; see *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xi, pp. 35, 36. Fort Beauharnois (1727-29) was built as part of the project of a search for the Sea of the West; see *Id.*, xvii, pp. 22-28. This post was re-occupied from 1732-37, and for the fourth time was rebuilt in 1750, only to be abandoned six years later, when the French and Indian War caused the withdrawal of the garrison.—Ed.