

*A Private Report to the Privy Council of the Archduchy of Canberry, Emperor of the South
From Sir Reginald Variani-Mortorose, OMD Duke of Mortorose in the Grand Principality of Korflokh
upon Khamista and Counselour unto his Awful Magnificence, the Despot of Korflokh*

Your Imperial Majesty and noble lords and ladies:

Firstly congratulations upon your elevation and the uniting of your people with those of your lady.

Secondly I wished to follow up on my prior missive.

Korlockian agents have now reported to the Despot and his council, of which I am a member, that a steady stream of Sytrian partisans from all over are slowly gathering at Holy Cortose. While this is being done in as quiet a manner as possible, our agents nearest the city report that they believe the overall strength of the soldiers now encamped within or around Holy Cortose to be in the neighborhood of 12 Field Armies, not including chivalry numbering approximately 2000. Other sources tell us that several dragons have settled into the mountains near Holy Cortose.

While it is possible, given the mountainous nature of the surround of the city that the dragons came there as part of a natural migration, it seems odd as they have not been seen in such numbers gathered in the region before. To be fair they are not of species normally known to favor Law or Light, but nevertheless...

While obviously we would not assign nefarious purposes to the Patriarch of Sytry or his immediate counsellors, nevertheless it is not only the Despot who, despite our distance from the Holy See of Sytry and our similar faiths is strengthening our borders and preparing our small (extremely small really) air navy, but also other nations West of the city. The White Mountains has drawn in its outer garrisons and strengthened inner, more defensible fortifications, the Holy See of Paranswarm has begun stockpiling supplies for a siege and the Protector and Defender of the Faith of Paranswarm, who is, it is to be remembered, also the regent for the heir of the Grand Duchy of Ergmoth, which "hosts" the holy see, has brought troops out of her own homeland, the Archbarony of Mandrath, to strengthen the defenses there, and smaller, less potent kingdoms, having seen what Sytry did to the Lar Menan Hills are bracing for disaster.

The one power that does not seem to be concerned is the one that historically has been the target of Sytry's most strident hatred, the Empire of Krashmere. Of course, what are 12 field armies and 2000 knights, compared to defenses in those mountains that have been built and strengthened again and again over all the ages of existence? When the uruks and orcs and Orog's pour out of every hole to defend their homeland, they have been uniformly successful through history; just as they have regularly failed to expand its borders when they have adventured abroad. Further, should they strike at either of the major gateways into Krashmere that are easily accessible to them- The Twin Cities of the Gates of Death or the Necropoli

of Pain – they would face, not orcs, uruks and ologs, but disciplined ranks of Drowan troops, commanded by Shadow Elf officers, or if they were deemed enough threat, Nolder Lords and Ladies.

No, if they intend conquest, they will turn West.

I understand that this is not a matter with which you have any influence, but I felt your Majesty that given your importance within the hierarchy of Light, and my prior missive to you, that I should continue to keep you informed at this time.

Respectful regards,

Sir Reginald Variani-Mortorose