

Letter from Alistair to his vassals

[Salutation as appropriate]

As Emperor of Southern Drucien, we take most seriously our responsibility to guarantee and safeguard the security and peace of our vassals. As such, we request and require that you apprise us of the threats and concerns that touch on your domain and the parts of our realm that are without your domain but that affect its well being.

We specifically request that you apprise us of the following issues:

Military threats and aspects of military security.

Matters of succession—do you and your principal vassals have stable successions? Are there lineages that depend on a single heir-apparent, or worse have no potential heir at all, that could lead to conflict and bloodshed? Are there successions that would fall on ones unworthy?

Arcane matters—are there strange doings or events of concern, or matters of magic that we should be aware of, or known threats or prophecies of peril.

Religious matters of the Holy Faiths that we permit and encourage within our realms—The traditional established Faiths of all of our lands are of course recognized and preserved. In areas of the Empire that are not within our vassals' dominions, the Holy Church of Glor'diadel, Lord of Light, shall be established as the faith of the Emperors and Empresses of Southern Drucien, as it has since ancient times been in the Archduchy of Canberry. All of the Faiths that are members of the Ecumenical Council are licit and permitted throughout the Empire, subject only to limitations on proselytization of non-established faiths in dominions with an established faith. Beyond the Faiths of the Ecumenical Council, the faiths of the various gods that remain neutral in the struggle between good and evil, such as Namadon, Manumist, and Balansar are tolerated. Among the licit faiths, are there any signs of corruption, or conflicts among the faiths? Is there anything unusual or heterodox about the clergy of your established Faith, or of other Faiths of the Ecumenical Council? Are there matters that concern you about whether the temples can serve the needs of the people?

Illicit religions—The following cults and foul worships are hereby proscribed: the veneration of Borsh'tro or his minions, of Arthranax, of Berta except with an article of faith that she has renounced her alliance with Borsh'tro and Arthranax, of demon lords and princes excepting servitors of Morgroth venerated according to the terms of Morgroth's faith, of Lloth specifically excepting as followed by Drow who publicly, openly, and acceptably are permitted to travel in the Empire for diplomatic or trade purposes or with the permission of the Empire, of the Abomination of Shurr and its allies, or of the Pariah Deities, those who are called the Unspeakable, the

Goddess of the Pale Bone and the One Other and the One Beside. These last are condemned in the strongest terms—we require all of our vassals to act against them and their followers, to report their followers' activities to us, and if possible to take prisoners for interrogation. Further, the sacrifice of humans or of other sentient people is proscribed throughout the Empire, except when the sacrifices are prisoners condemned for a secular crime, sacrificed by and according to the requirements of a religion that is part of the Ecumenical Council, in a dominion in which that religion is the established religion. Are you aware of efforts or activities of the various forbidden cults? Have you found their followers or their supernatural minions in your lands? Have you seen any evidence or signs of illicit sacrifice of humans, elves, or other sentient people?

Mistreatment of the various different peoples—we view the kidnapping or assault of elves, the fey, the hobbits, gnomes, those of their blood, or any other peoples based on their kinship to be a grave crime. We also know that it is a tool that is used by the vilest cults. We require that it be prevented and reported when it happens.

Food security—is there adequate food to feed your people? Are there concerns related to that?

Other matters of trade and craft—if you have shortages of needed goods, we would know that we might see those shortages remedied through trade. Likewise, if you have goods going to waste, we would see them used well.

On slavery—we detest the practice of slavery, serfdom, peonage, and the holding of people as property in any form, and consider it an abomination. We forbid any of our vassals whose lands do not permit slavery to permit it in the future. While we recognize that it is not within our present purview to forbid it in lands where it remains legal, we limit it to its traditional usages, and forbid the trade of slaves away from the lands where they have been bound. We would be greatly pleased would any of our vassals choose to ban slavery. Moreover, we command that any slavetaking or trade, or changes in the way slavery has traditionally been practiced be reported.

On those with the gifts of psionic powers or of the sight—we greatly value our vassals and followers who have psionic powers, the true sight, or other unique gifts. We command that our vassals either encourage and privilege those with these gifts, that they may serve the Empire's safety through your domains, or that they be sent to Canberry with appropriate letters, that they may be honored and serve the Empire directly. In no event are those with these gifts to be treated as shameful or unworthy of ordinary family life, though in some cases their gifts are difficult for those around them, and the Empire will make available support and treasure for the families of those with these gifts.

All those throughout the Empire with gifts of psionic powers, the sight, skill in wizardry, sorcerous power, musical gifts, or alchemical wisdom are welcome to

attend the great schools that the Emperor has established to study these matters in the City of Canberry.

We value and prize all of our vassals and reiterate our oath to preserve your safety. We command your attention to these matters, that we may be best equipped to protect against all threats, known and unknown.

Alistair

Emperor of Southern Drucien,
King of the South Kingdoms,
Archduke of Canberry, et c.

[Great Seal]