

summoned out to Gascony. The offers of help were, therefore, made conditional on whether the king of Castile actually did come, yet help was offered. Matthew Paris acknowledged that Richard de Clare was convinced of the danger. The earls and barons accordingly promised they would gather at Westminster on 3 May and then march to Portsmouth to embark for Gascony. (The invasion was now expected not in April but in the summer.) Richard of Cornwall pledged to go too with a contingent for which, he said, his brother would be eternally grateful. All tenants-in-chief holding land worth at least £20 a year were also ordered to muster. Several bishops, led by the archbishop of Canterbury, likewise said they would embark, while others promised financial aid.

There was, however, difficulty with the government's financial demands. The bishops said they could not consent on behalf of the lower clergy to a tax of a tenth on their incomes. The latter must give their own consent, which itself might hinge on the pope remitting part of the tax for Henry's crusade. The queen and Richard of Cornwall accordingly asked for assemblies to be convened where such assent might be forthcoming. As for the tax to be paid by the laity, since the earls, barons and other tenants-in-chief who were going in person would be exempt, it was felt that, in this case too, those who would have to pay must give their consent. The sheriffs were thus ordered to bring before the council on 26 April two knights from each county, elected in the county court, to say 'on behalf of all and everyone of the county' what tax they were prepared to give. This was to be after listening to the sheriffs explaining the king's urgent needs. The explanation cannot have been helped by the sheriffs also being told, in threatening terms, to collect all the money owed the king by Easter.⁷⁶

Considerable constitutional significance has been attached to this summons of knights to what is elsewhere described as a parliament. It was probably the first such summons and is thus a landmark in parliamentary history. While the routine summons of tenants-in-chief to parliament had always meant knights were in attendance (for many lesser tenants-in-chief were of knightly status), they had come for themselves. Now knights were to come as representatives of their counties, a very different proposition.⁷⁷ To be sure, the circumstances were exceptional, given this was not a tax involving the bulk of the king's tenants-in-chief. Had they been involved, they would probably have answered for the realm in the traditional way. Nonetheless, the summons pointed to the future. During the period of reform and rebellion, and in the last years of the reign, knights representing the counties and burgesses the towns were to be summoned to parliament with increasing frequency.

The idea for the summons in 1254 was surely Richard of Cornwall's and shows how fertile he was in expedients and how sensitive to the national

⁷⁶ *CR* 1253-4, 114-5; Paris, vi, 286-7.

⁷⁷ For a full discussion, see Maddicott, *Origins of the English Parliament*, 212-18.

mood.⁷⁸ He was equally sensitive in the letters trying to rally support for the expedition. These suggested that everyone would suffer from Gascony's loss. Indeed, a Castilian invasion of England and Ireland might follow. The letters also appealed to national pride. The kingdom, amongst all worldly dominions, had been famed for the strength of its people and it would be terrible for it to fail now through the powerlessness and laziness of its men. Although the king could recruit troops abroad, he trusted far more in his own men than in aliens. In explaining the results of the parliament to Henry, Richard warned that no tax would be forthcoming unless the king caused Magna Carta to be proclaimed and observed by all the sheriffs. Thus Henry's failure to broadcast his 1253 confirmation of the Charters was to be remedied. 'Many complain that the charters are not observed by your sheriffs and other bailiffs as they ought to be,' Richard concluded.⁷⁹ Henry had been told.

While Henry awaited the results of his appeal, he stayed at Bazas. Indeed, he was there for the whole period from 19 November 1253 to 26 February 1254. He thus stamped his authority on this former rebel town and had a more central base than that provided by Bordeaux. Early in February the fears, which had prompted his appeal, seemed well justified, for Gaston de Béarn, aided by an Alfonsonist faction in the town, attempted to seize Bayonne. Fortunately, the insurgents were captured and sent to Bordeaux, where Henry, doubtless remembering Rostand de Solers's death in Montfort's custody, ordered them to be treated 'courteously' and not loaded down with irons. After this success, there were more negotiations with Gaston, La Réole and the Solers, but they led nowhere. With nothing from England since October, Henry was becoming desperately short of money. He took out loans and received 2,000 marks from Bordeaux for a charter of liberties, but he still had to pay castle garrisons from stores of wine, cloth and food. One group of sergeants-at-arms, Henry lamented, had been forced to pawn their armour, and would soon have to leave his service. In a desperate expedient to raise cash Henry told Peter Chaceporc to acquire wine at Bordeaux on credit and then sell it even at half price.⁸⁰

Henry also had to face discontent within his army. On 8 January 1254 he dictated an angry letter to the home government about the northern baron Peter de Maulay, son of the notorious henchman of Peter des Roches. Maulay had come out late to Gascony, tried to persuade others to go home, and been rude to Henry's face. Placed in charge of the royal bodyguard of fifty knights, he had gone off without permission, leaving

⁷⁸ The writ as copied by Matthew Paris only has the queen as a witness (Paris, vi, 114-15), but the copy on the close rolls is 'witnessed as above', the 'above' being a writ attested by both queen and earl; *CR* 1253-4, 113-15.

⁷⁹ *CR* 1253-4, 114-16; *RL*, ii, 101-2; Paris, vi, 286-7.

⁸⁰ *CR* 1253-4, 213-5, 217, 234; *RG*, i, no. 2602 (*CPR* 1247-58, 294).

Henry alone and in great danger. In fact Henry never sent the letter and soon restored Peter to favour, but more trouble was to follow.⁸¹ A contingent of Welsh soldiers in the army went on an unlicensed pillaging expedition and were punished by the bishop of Hereford, Peter de Aigueblanche, and the king's Lusignan half-brothers. This offended Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, who as hereditary constable claimed jurisdiction over such matters. Henry, who generally got on well with Bohun, soon apologized and granted Bohun's son, another Humphrey, 80 marks a year to sustain him in royal service.⁸² The earl, however, decided to go home, and is last found at court on 9 February.

THE CASTILIAN AGREEMENT

The earls of Norfolk and Hereford, who had come with Henry, had both now departed. While Henry still had English magnates with him they were not of the first rank. The only earl in attendance was the Norman John de Plessis, earl of Warwick in right of his wife. The king's foreign relatives on the other hand had remained at Henry's side: Peter of Savoy, Bishop Aigueblanche and the king's half-brothers Geoffrey de Lusignan and William de Valence. One reason for Henry attaching himself to the Lusignans was so they could help in Gascony. At last they were showing their worth.

It was this very foreign-dominated court which now, in February 1254, took momentous decisions affecting the future of England, Gascony, the crusade and the kingdom of Sicily. John Mansel had arrived at Bazas in late January, bearing Alfonso's demanding terms. Henry took a big gulp and accepted them. In return for a renunciation of the Castilian claim to Gascony, he agreed to make good the damage done to Gaston and Alfonso's other supporters, make war on Navarre and ask the pope to change his crusade to the Holy Land into one to North Africa and Morocco. Henry also, as demanded, agreed to give his son Edward an endowment worthy of his marriage to Alfonso's sister, the marriage being the centrepiece of the treaty. The charter in Edward's favour, issued on 14 February, was witnessed by the bishop of Hereford, the earl of Warwick, Geoffrey de Lusignan, William de Valence, Peter of Savoy and not a single English magnate.⁸³ It gave Edward £10,000 a year made up of Gascony, the lordship of Ireland, the county of Chester, the king's conquests in North Wales, the city of Bristol and various other possessions in England.⁸⁴

⁸¹ *CR* 1253-4, 295. Peter had inherited the Fossard barony in Yorkshire, acquired by his father through marriage.

⁸² Paris, v, 442-3.

⁸³ *F*, 296-7 (*CPR* 1247-58, 269-71).

⁸⁴ Paris, v, 488, 510. See below, 657, n. 238.