

Bartolomé de Las Casas DBQ

Background: The Spanish colonists started farms called **haciendas** to make money. They forced natives to work on farms and in mines. Many natives died from overwork and bad treatment. A priest, Bartolomé de las Casas, spoke out against this bad treatment.

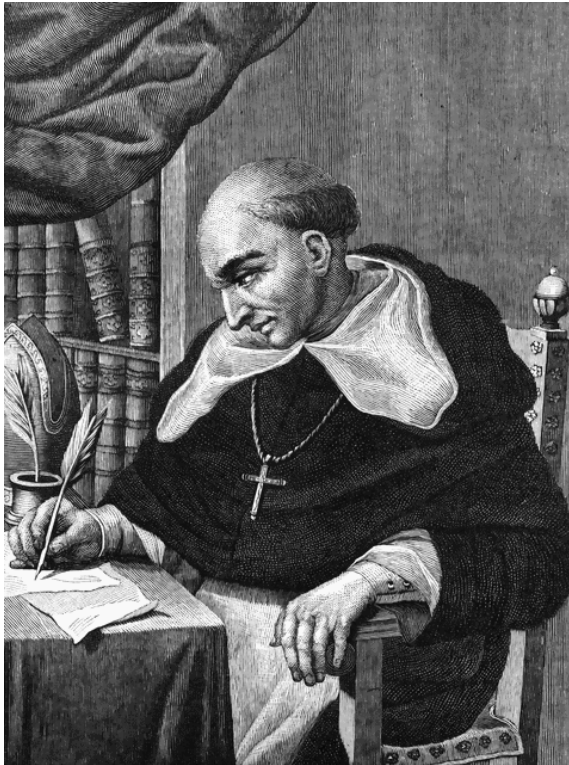
Document 1

... The West Indian experience from the time of Columbus' first voyage was one of Indian labor for Spanish masters. When this labor was not given "voluntarily" it was extracted by force. As Spaniards arrived in increasing numbers, the need for labor became more pressing, and the burden upon Indian manpower progressively more severe. Spaniards raided Indian communities, took captives, and, in order to prevent escape or to ensure the full measure of work, practiced large-scale enslavement. Columbus, at first, appears to have made some attempt to regulate this forced labor, but without appreciable [noticeable] success. In general the first Spanish contacts with the natives of America followed the precedent of European contact with the natives of Africa, and the practicality and legitimacy of enslavement were everywhere assumed....

Source: Charles Gibson, *Spain in America*, Harper Torchbooks (adapted)

1. According to Charles Gibson, what was **one** problem faced by the West Indian native population during Spanish colonization?
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Document 2a



Bartolomé de Las Casas

Source: Keen and Haynes, *A History of Latin America*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Document 2b

... Las Casas interrupted work on the book [A History of the Indies] only to send to the Council of the Indies in Madrid three long letters (in 1531, 1534, and 1535), in which he accused persons and institutions of the sin of oppressing the Indian, particularly through the encomienda system. After various adventures in Central America, where his ideas on the treatment of the natives invariably [regularly] brought him into conflict with the Spanish authorities, Las Casas wrote *De único modo* (1537; "Concerning the Only Way of Drawing All Peoples to the True Religion"), in which he set forth the doctrine of peaceful evangelization of the Indian. Together with the Dominicans, he then employed this new type of evangelization in a "land of war" (a territory of still-unconquered Indians) — Tuzutlan, near the Golfo Dulce (Sweet Gulf) in presentday Costa Rica. Encouraged by the favourable outcome of this experiment, Las Casas set out for Spain late in 1539, arriving there in 1540....

Source: "Bartolomé de Las Casas," *The History Channel* website

2. Based on these documents, state **one** action Bartolomé de Las Casas took to address the problems faced by Native Americans.
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Document 3

During the reigns of Charles V and his successors, the Spanish monarchy reacted to Bartolomé de Las Casas in different ways.

... In response to both his fear and conscience, Charles promulgated [instituted] the New Laws in 1542. They forbade the enslavement of the Indians, their compulsory personal service, the granting of new encomiendas, and the inheritance of encomiendas. More positively they declared the Indians to be free persons, vassals of the crown, and possessed of their own free will. The colonists protested vehemently [passionately]. Rebellion threatened Mexico; in Peru encomenderos [holders of encomiendas] rose up to defy the law. Once again under extreme pressure, the monarch modified some of the laws and revoked others. Still, although the encomienda would continue for some time in parts of the sprawling American empire, the king had checked [limited] it. After the mid-sixteenth century the institution waned [faded away]. The state [Spanish monarchy] exerted even greater control over the declining Indian population....

Source: E. Bradford Burns, *Latin America: A Concise Interpretive History*, Prentice Hall (adapted)

3a. According to E. Bradford Burns, what was *one* way the New Laws addressed the problem Bartolomé de Las Casas had identified?

3b. According to E. Bradford Burns, what was a response of the Spanish monarch when the Spanish colonists protested against the New Laws?

DBQ Writing Task

Historical Context: Throughout history, problems emerged that individuals wanted to address. Individuals such as Bartolomé de Las Casas took actions in an attempt to address a problem. His actions were met with varying degrees of success.

Task: Respond to the following in at least one paragraph using evidence from all three documents.

- Describe a problem Bartolomé de Las Casas addresses
- Describe how Bartolomé de Las Casas attempted to address the problem
- Discuss whether Bartolomé de Las Casas was successful or unsuccessful in solving the problem

Remember to cite the documents! For example: According to E. Bradford Burns, the king reacted to Las Casas by ... (Doc 3).

Category	Exceeds Expectations (4 points)	Meets Expectations (3 points)	Needs Improvement (2 points)	Inadequate (1 point)
Organization, thesis/topic sentence	Paragraph is well developed and consistently demonstrates a clear plan of organization and has a clearly stated thesis or topic sentence.	Paragraph is well developed and demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization. Thesis or topic sentence is stated.	Paragraph is minimally developed demonstrating a general plan of organization. Thesis or topic sentence is not clearly developed.	Paragraph is poorly organized and lacks focus. Thesis or topic sentence is not present.
Content: Evidence	Richly supports response with relevant facts, examples, details, and/or quotes from documents and outside knowledge. Skillfully uses at least 3 documents into paragraph.	Supports response with relevant facts, examples, details, and/or quotes from documents and outside knowledge. Uses at least 3 documents into paragraph.	Incorporates limited or vague evidence from documents and outside knowledge. May use fewer than 3 documents.	Presents few or no facts from documents and outside knowledge. Uses fewer than 2 documents.
Content: Analysis	Every fact presented is supported by analysis that explains the significance of the evidence presented.	Most facts presented are supported by analysis that explains the significance of the evidence presented.	Some analysis is evident by the paragraph relies more on description, or the analysis is weak or inaccurate.	Analysis is not provided.

Total: