



Supporting Question 3

Featured Source

Source C: John Easton, an account of Metacom describing Native American complaints about the English Settlers, *A Relation of the Indian War* (excerpts), 1675

NOTE: Metacom, also known as King Philip, leader of the Wampanoag near Plymouth colony, led many other Native Americans into a widespread revolt against the colonists of southern New England in 1675. The conflict had been brewing for some time over a set of longstanding grievances between Europeans and Native Americans. In that tense atmosphere, John Easton, attorney general of the Rhode Island colony, met King Philip in June 1675 in an effort to negotiate a settlement. Easton recorded King Philip's complaints, including the steady loss of Wampanoag land to the Europeans, the English colonists' growing herds of cattle and their destruction of Native American crops, and the unequal justice Native Americans received in the English courts. This meeting between Easton and Metacom proved futile, however, and the war (which became the bloodiest in US history relative to the size of the population) began late that month.

Easton text

In the winter in the year 1674 an Indian was found dead, and by a Coroner's inquest of Plymouth Colony judged murdered. He was found dead in a hole through ice broken in a pond, with his gun and some fowl by him. Some English supposed him thrown in. Some Indians that I judged intelligible and impartial in that case did think he fell in, and was so drowned and that the ice did hurt his throat, as the English said it was cut; but they acknowledged that sometimes naughty Indians would kill others but not, as ever they heard, to obscure it, as if the dead Indian was not murdered....And the report came, that the three Indians had confessed and accused Philip so to employ them, and that the English would hang Philip, so the Indians were afraid, and reported that the English had flattered them (or by threats) to belie Philip that they might kill him to have his Land; and that if Philip had done it, it was their Law so to execute whomever their kings judged deserved it, and that he had no cause to hide it. ...

Then to endeavor to prevent [war], we sent a man to Philip to say that if he would come to the ferry, we would come over to speak with him,...Philip called his council and agreed to come to us; he came himself unarmed and about 40 of his men armed....The Indians owned that fighting was the worst way; then they propounded how right might take place.... They said they had been the first in doing good to the English, and the English the first in doing wrong; they said when the English first came, their king's father was as a great man and the English as a little child. He constrained other Indians from wronging the English and gave them corn and showed them how to plant and was free to do them any good and had let them have a 100 times more land than now the king had for his own people. But [Metacom's] brother, when he was king, came miserably to die by being forced into court and, as they judged, poisoned. And another grievance was if 20 of their honest Indians testified that a Englishman had done them wrong, it was as nothing; and if but one of their worst Indians testified against any Indian or their king when it pleased the English, that was sufficient. Another grievance was when their kings sold land the English would say it was more than they agreed to and a writing must be proof against all them, and some of their kings had done wrong to sell so much that he left his people none, and some being given to drunkenness, the English made them drunk and then cheated them in bargains, but now their kings were forewarned not to part with land for nothing in comparison to the value thereof....Another grievance was that the English cattle and horses still increased so that when they removed 30 miles from where the English had anything to do, they could not keep their corn from being spoiled, they never being used to fence, and thought that when the English bought land of them that they would have kept their cattle upon their own land. Another grievance was that the English were so eager to sell the Indians liquors that most of the Indians spent all in drunkenness and then ravened upon the sober Indians and, they did believe, often did hurt the English cattle, and their kings could not prevent it....In this time some Indians fell to pilfering some houses that the English had left, and an old man and a lad going to one of those houses did see 3

Indians run out thereof. The old man bid the young man shoot, so he did, and an Indian fell down but got away again. It is reported that then some Indians came to the garrison and asked why they shot the Indian. They asked whether he was dead. The Indians said yea. An English lad said it was no matter. The men endeavored to inform them it was but an idle lad's words, but the Indians in haste went away and did not harken to them. The next day the lad that shot the Indian and his father and five more English were killed; so the war began with Philip....But I am confident it would be best for English and Indians that a peace were made upon honest terms for each to have a due propriety and to enjoy it without oppression or usurpation by one to the other. But the English dare not trust the Indians' promises; neither the Indians to the English's promises; and each has great cause therefore.

Open access. John Easton and Paul Royster (editor). "A Relation of the Indian War, by Mr. Easton, of Rhode Island, 1675," *Faculty Publications, UNL Library*, Paper 33: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1036&context=libraryscience>.