

Answer the following question.

Nominated topic: The Years of Personal Rule (1629–1640): the Bishops' Wars and the recall of Parliament in 1640

- 1 Study all the following documents and answer all the questions which follow. In evaluating and commenting upon the documents, it is essential to set them alongside, and to make use of, your own contextual knowledge.

A *The Archbishop of York reports on the situation in the Church in the north of England.*

The disrespect that the ministers have shown to the public prayers of the church has bred such irreverence in the people that it is a rare thing in many places to see any upon their knees at the reading of the prayers and at the receiving of the Sacraments. It was scarce found in any place that the communion table was placed in any way whereby it might be at all respected. It was placed where boys and others might sit around it and lean upon it. In many places children were taught in the chancel and the communion table was the place where they wrote their lessons and they even often ate their food from it. Orders have been given to redress such abuses.

Richard Neile, Report on the Province of York, 1634.

B *John Bastwick, an outspoken critic of the Laudian Church, gives his views on bishops.*

I beseech you to look upon the pride of the bishops. There is nothing in this mortal world that they do not possess. Great and mighty are their privileges, and yet they are thankful neither to God nor the King, but would have more. They have the keys of heaven to shut out whom they will. They have the keys of hell to thrust in whom they please. They have the keys of our purses to pick them at their pleasure. They have the keys likewise of all the prisons in the kingdom. William Laud will go in lordly state and great power to Oxford and Cambridge, to subdue those disobedient scholars who will not learn the lesson of conformity. These scholars will not cringe to the altar or turn their faces to the east, or worship the communion table. The church is now as full of ceremonies as a dog is full of fleas.

John Bastwick, *The Litany of John Bastwick*, 1637.

C *The Archbishop of Canterbury defends his position against the charge that he was re-introducing Roman Catholicism, when addressing disgraced Puritans before they were punished by the Court of Star Chamber.*

As to the bishops, I assure myself they cannot be so base as to live as bishops in the Church of England and labour to bring in the superstitions of Rome to their Church. I know of no plot or purpose of altering the established religion. They (the Puritans) say there are great innovations brought in by the bishops, such as tend to the advancing of Popery. One thing sticks much in their stomachs and they call it an innovation as well. That is bowing and doing reverence at our first coming into church or approaching the holy table or altar, call it what you will. They say we worship the holy table. To this I answer that God forbid that we should worship anything but God himself. If to worship God when we enter His house is an innovation, 'tis a very old one for the Bible tells us that Moses acted in the same way.

William Laud, Speech at the Censure of Prynne, Bastwick and Burton, three Puritan gentlemen, who had been tried for seditious libel, found guilty and sentenced, 1637.

- D** *The House of Commons receives a list of the particular evils carried out by the archbishops and bishops.*

The bishops maintain that the Pope is not anti-Christ and that the Church of Rome is a true church. They do not pray for the conversion of our Sovereign Lady the Queen. The similarity of our Church to the Church of Rome has increased in priests' vestments and in ceremonies. The communion table has been turned into an altar with images and crucifixes set above it and candlesticks and books on it and there is bowing or adoring to the altar. There is a clear intention to usher in the Mass. The Lord's Day is profaned by the tolerating of sports on it. The bishops daily excommunicate men, either for doing what is lawful or for trivial matters, such as not paying a fee due to the church. The bishops are so proud they will not be subject to man or to laws, claiming they are only subject to divine law.

The Root and Branch Petition, presented to the House of Commons
by many of King Charles' subjects, December 1640.

- E** *The House of Commons makes wide-ranging accusations against Laud concerning the policies he pursued during the period of the Personal Rule.*

The Archbishop hath traitorously endeavoured to alter and subvert God's true religion by law established in this realm; and instead to set up Popish Superstition and Idolatry. He hath urged and enforced many popish and superstitious ceremonies, without any justification in law. He hath cruelly persecuted those who have opposed these ceremonies by corporal punishment and imprisonment and hath most unjustly vexed others who refused to conform by excommunication, suspending them or depriving them of office, contrary to the law of the kingdom. He hath traitorously and wickedly endeavoured to reconcile the Church of England with the Church of Rome.

Articles of Impeachment presented to the House of Commons, December 1641.

- (a)** How far are the views expressed in Document E about Laud's intentions challenged by Document C? [10]
- (b)** How convincing is the evidence provided by this set of documents for the view that Laud was unjustly criticised by the Puritans?

In making your evaluation, you should refer to contextual knowledge as well as to all the documents in this set (A–E). [20]

Answer one of the following essay questions. *Where appropriate, your essay should make use of any relevant documents you have studied as well as contextual knowledge.*

- 2** What best explains why Charles I enjoyed little backing in 1640 yet had sufficient support to put an army in the field in 1642? [30]
- 3** How far was the failure of the Levellers explained by their narrow base of support? [30]
- 4** 'Charles I's arrogance and stubbornness best explain why, in 1646–47, a political settlement to his conflict with Parliament could not be reached.' Discuss. [30]

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