

Robert Petrone: Christopher Columbus is the greatest hero of the 15th & 16th centuries (pt. VIII): The Final Voyage to Freedom

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Christopher Columbus was none of the epithets with which his detractors repeatedly characterize him — and all of the historical resources show this unequivocally. Part eight in a series of eight.

With great gratitude to the readers who have persisted throughout the long and complicated history of the settlement of the West Indies to this, the final installment of the *1492 Project*, I commend you. You have done what the cultural majoritarians (such as the splenetic “Mr. Coarse” I mentioned in my first article) had hoped you would not: you have examined the content recounted in the primary sources in great detail; learned the intricate story of the West Indies; and seen the falsehood of the broad-brushed, bumper-sticker-ready, meme-driven, revisionist, conflated version of events pushed by the cultural majoritarians, Marxists, race-baiters, hate-mongers and other detractors of the man who was, in fact, the first civil rights activist of the Americas, Christopher Columbus.

And the hate-mongering cultural majoritarians and their ilk have themselves noticed. You may have observed that since the publication of this serial exposé, the anti-Western polemicists have dialed back their vitriolic rhetoric. No longer have they been claiming that Columbus was an evildoer; rather, they have noticeably backpedalled, claiming merely that his statues and memorials should be razed because he is “a symbol of oppression.” But now you, dear reader, know the truth: to call him a symbol of the very things he fought against is akin to calling Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King a “symbol of racism,” or calling Ghandi a “symbol of

violence.” It is the kind of inversive wordplay the hate-mongers have always employed to sow dissension and foment internecine violence and destruction.

You have seen — and the cultural majoritarians can no longer deny — that the primary sources unequivocally establish that Christopher Columbus succeeded in a nigh-impossible trans-Atlantic voyage that no one thought possible with nary a nautical instrument at his disposal; provided Jews with crew positions that allowed them to flee the Spanish Inquisition; brought to light to the rest of the world the existence of the Americas; established peaceful first contact with the islanders (both the friendly and otherwise); freed Taino slaves from cannibalistic Carib captors in the first Underground Railroad of the Americas; brought Christianity to the willing; created the first permanent European settlements in the Americas; forged lifelong friendships with Taino chieftains; protected the islanders from enslavement by the *hidalgos* (low, landed nobles) who wanted to enforce Spain’s feudal *encomienda* system on them; defeated all the slander levied against him by the resentful *hidalgos* in a court of law; defeated multiple rebellions by the *hidalgos* using arbitration rather than armaments; brought a *Pax Columbiana* to the West Indies in which “things were calm, the land was rich and everyone lived in peace;” unseated the villainous Viceroy Bobadilla who unleashed a reign of terror on the West Indies; and successfully lobbied for the first civil rights legislation of the Americas ensuring that “all the Indians of Hispaniola were to be left free, not subject to servitude, unmolested and unharmed and allowed to live like free vassals under law just like any other vassal in the Kingdom of Castile.” And Admiral Columbus still had one voyage to the Indies left before his story ended. That story is the subject of this article.

Although Christopher Columbus was no villain — much less the racist, rapist, maimer, murderer and genocidal maniac that the anti-Western cultural majoritarians would like you to believe he is — Viceroy Francisco de Bobadilla, knight of the *Reconquista*, was all of those things. Fortunately, Christopher Columbus ensured that Bobadilla’s reign of terror was short-lived. Unfortunately, once he secured Bobadilla’s removal from office, Columbus no longer wished to return to the governorship over the “dissolute [*hidalgos*,] full of vice and malice,” so the crown appointed Nicolás Ovando, another military knight like Bobadilla, to replace Bobadilla (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Books I, II & III, *passim*; *Digest of Columbus’s Log Book* and collective epistles of Christopher Columbus, *passim*; Hernando Colón, *The Life of the Admiral*, *passim*).

Ovando was no better than Bobadilla. In many ways, he was even worse. This time, Christopher Columbus had ensured that legislation was in place to protect the Tainos and other tribal islanders from harm, but Ovando largely ignored the legislation, in defiance of both divine and Spanish law. While Christopher Columbus was far away in Castile, Ovando

availed himself of the lack of supervision and accountability that Columbus's presence had always ensured. Like Bobadilla, Ovando took the opportunity to murder and enslave the tribal islanders, including their chieftains and their families, but to a greater degree and for a longer period of time than Bobadilla had (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Books II & III, *passim*; *Digest of Columbus's Log Book* and collective epistles of Christopher Columbus, *passim*; Hernando Colón, *The Life of the Admiral*, *passim*).

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Columbus seethed in Spain over Ovando's misdeeds, not the least of which included ignoring of the civil rights legislation for which he had so persistently fought and the atrocities Ovando continued to inflict upon the tribes. Chomping at the proverbial bit to return to the West Indies, Admiral Columbus negotiated yet another contract with the Crown of Spain for his Fourth Voyage. In the wake of Christopher Columbus's hard-earned success in lobbying for the legislation protecting the tribal islanders, the Crown was well aware of his attachment to them, and his feelings about Ovando's oppressive reign. Ovando, however, had at least satisfied the complaints of the recalcitrant *hidalgos* (by giving them free rein to exploit the islanders) and that was one headache of which the Crown was glad to relieve themselves (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Books II & III, *passim*; *Digest of Columbus's Log Book* and collective epistles of Christopher Columbus, *passim*; Letter of the Crown of Spain, dated March 14, 1502; Hernando Colón, *The Life of the Admiral*, *passim*).

On March 14, 1502, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella personally wrote Christopher Columbus a letter of apology for the treatment he sustained at the hands of Bobadilla urged him to press on with another Caribbean expedition. They knew the idealistic Admiral Columbus once again would want to free any slaves he found in the Caribbean, as he did on his Second Voyage, and bring them back to Spain for Baptism (because Baptized people could not be enslaved in Catholic Europe), but they knew his doing so would stir up Ovando and the *hidalgos* again. They commanded Admiral Columbus to bring none of the *hidalgos'* slaves, or those of any Portuguese slavers, back to Spain for liberation. In fact, the Crown gave Columbus explicit instructions to avoid Ovando altogether — not even to land on the island of Hispaniola, the seat of Ovando's court. Rather, they instructed the Admiral to sail in further exploration of the Caribbean *only*. The monarchs wanted no more trouble in the West Indies

(Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapter 4; Letter of the Crown of Spain, dated March 14, 1502; Hernando Colón, *The Life of the Admiral*, Chapter 87).

But Christopher Columbus was destined to protect the tribes of the Caribbean, and a higher monarch saw to it that he had one last chance to manifest that destiny. Columbus set sail to the West Indies for the last time on March 14, 1502, with a flotilla of only four ships — a drastic departure from the seventeen the Crown provided him on his Second Voyage — crewed by a total of only 150 men, including his thirteen-year-old son Hernando (who would grow to be an historian and biographer), Christopher's brother Bartolomeo (who was resistant to taking the voyage) and the less-than-loyal Captain Francisco de Porras (as a favor to Porras's brother-in-law, Royal Treasurer Alonso de Morales).

Despite harsh vernal winds and storms in the Caribbean, Admiral Columbus explored extensively, begrudgingly obeying the Crown's mandate to stay away from Ovando's court in Hispaniola. He made first landfall in Cariay (now the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua). The islanders received him warmly, regaling him with stories of fields of gold in nearby Veragua (now Veraguas, Paraguay), and escorting him to their chieftain. The chieftain, perhaps in an act genuinely-intended, if misplaced, generosity, perhaps with evil intent, sent to the Admiral's cabin "two magnificently attired girls, the elder of whom could not have been more than eleven [years old] and the other seven." They "had magic powders concealed about them" — narcotics — and attempted to drug and seduce the Admiral with behavior "so shameless that they might have been whores." Columbus was immediately horrified and sent them away. So as not to offend them — as Columbus understood that the tribal islanders had vastly different mores than the Europeans, he "ordered that they should be given some of [the ship's] trinkets and send them back to land immediately" (Christopher Columbus's Letter to the Sovereigns of Spain, dated July 7, 1503).

Christopher Columbus was no debaucher. After his first wife, Filipa Moniz Perestrelo, died giving birth to their first (and, for her, *only*) son Diego, the widowed Columbus began canvassing Europe, with his young son in tow, looking for a patron to fund his First Voyage, eventually winning over the Crown of Spain. In the nearly eight years he spent in that country pitching his expedition to the monarchs, he met a noblewoman of the Castilian Court, Beatriz Enríquez de Arana. Though he never married Beatriz — she was a noble and he was not — she did bear him a son, Hernando, who had accompanied the Admiral on the Fourth Voyage. Columbus, a devout Catholic, strove to practice — and demanded his sailors strive to practice — the three "counsels of perfection" of Christianity: obedience, poverty and chastity (though the roughneck sailors were far less adherent than he). He obeyed the moral code of the Bible, he sought not riches (in fact, he died devastatingly in debt to the Crown for failing to mine

enough gold to slake the insatiable greed of the monarchs), and he remained faithful to the mother of his new child. While many Spanish settlers contracted syphilis (among many other diseases the Europeans had never encountered) from the islander women who, unfettered by European mores, willingly engaged in coitus indiscriminately, Columbus did not contract any sexually-transmitted diseases. This encounter in Cariay demonstrates why, and demonstrates his upstanding moral character.

Admiral Columbus made the second landfall of his Fourth Voyage in Ciguare (now Guatemala), home of ancient Mayan cities. There, as always, he established peaceful first contact and trade with the tribal occupants (Christopher Columbus's Letter to the Sovereigns of Spain, dated July 7, 1503).

Admiral Columbus made his third landfall on the Epiphany, January 6, 1503, in Veragua (Veraguas, Panama). There, the Admiral encountered diverse tribes, two of which were tribes of cannibals who frequently attacked other tribes. As always, the Admiral established peaceful first contact with the *quibian* (chieftain) of one of these warlike tribes, though the *quibian* proved somewhat mercurial. The *quibian's* son acted belligerently and even threatened to kill the leader of the landing party, Captain Diego Mendez. Nevertheless, Mendez, a trusted emissary of the insightful Columbus, won over the young warrior, "and [they] ate and drank in love and camaraderie and remained friends" thereafter. Nevertheless, the *quibian* launched a "thousand warriors" unprovoked against the flotilla at the Yebra River (now the Belén River), as Captain Mendez described it, to "burn our ships and kill us all." Admiral Columbus did not act rashly — and never aggressively — "but discussed with [Mendez] how [to] make certain of these people's intentions." The *quibian* made them known: in Columbus's absence — the Admiral was always a pacifying influence — the *quibian* sent four hundred warriors to attack the landing party unprovoked, and Mendez and his men fought defensively only, ending the conflict after only seven to ten fatalities on each side. Admiral Columbus "was quite delighted to hear" that the matter was resolved with such celerity and relatively little loss of life. Despite the unprovoked attack by the *quibian*, Admiral Columbus wrote a letter to the Crown in July of that year counseling the monarchs against the "seiz[ure]" or "plunder" of the Veraguan tribe that attacked him, but rather urged "fair dealings" with the Veraguans. Once again, Christopher Columbus demonstrated his love of the tribal islanders, going as far as to turn the proverbial cheek to even their unprovoked hostilities (*Id.*; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536).

Christopher Columbus's persistent tenderness and altruism toward even the most hostile of islander tribes stemmed not only from his unwavering devotion to the divine mandates of Catholicism. He also had a much more terrene motivation: he had hoped the Spanish settlements he established "would be an example to others" from Spain and other nations who might follow. He lamented that Bobadilla and Ovando had perverted his vision into such "a bad example, detrimental to both trade and justice in the world" (Christopher Columbus's Letter to the Sovereigns of Spain, dated July 7, 1503).

By April 1503, the ships of the flotilla were so worm-ridden and unseaworthy, Admiral Columbus had to retire two of them, halving his flotilla. By May, he had restrained himself enough, and finally set sail for Hispaniola to confront Viceroy Nicolás de Ovando in his own court. Just as in the previous year, the springtime Caribbean tides again tossed his remaining ships for over a month, stripping them of rigging and framework and filling their holds with seawater. The Admiral decided on a desperate and dangerous tack that would require a great display seamanship, and he rose to the occasion: with the tides and the winds against him, in late June of 1503, Admiral Columbus "safely grounded" the two ships on the nearest island, Jamaica. Once again, without exception, he established peaceful and friendly first contact with the islanders. Three tribes on that island fed and traded with his crew, though eventually the food ran short and the Admiral and his crew began to starve (*Id.*, Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapters 30 ff.; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536).

To make matters worse, Columbus refused to let his sailors leave their ships for fear they would molest the women of the island. He kept personal watch over his men. Starving for food and fornication, the concupiscent Captain Francisco de Porras led not one but two mutinies, attempting to kidnap and enslave several islanders in the process. Admiral Columbus and those crewman still loyal to him — including the valorous Captain Mendez — defeated the mutineers, arrested them and put an end to their plot. Once again Christopher Columbus demonstrated his wise leadership at great cost and hardship to himself. Admiral Columbus later admitted "he had never expected to leave Jamaica alive." Once again, Christopher Columbus had suffered personally, to near death, to protect the islanders of the Caribbean (Letter of Christopher Columbus, July 7, 1503; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536) (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapters 30 ff.; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536).

Captain Mendez then volunteered to take a death-defying canoe journey to Hispaniola to inform Viceroy Ovando of the shipwreck of the flotilla in Jamaica. Mendez's adventures on this trip are worthy of their own chapter in this series, but beyond the scope of this one. Suffice it to say, that after great peril, including an unprovoked attack by tribal sea raiders and starvation from depletion of provisions, Captain Mendez ultimately arrived alive in Hispaniola and gained an audience with the Viceroy. Undoubtedly fearful that Admiral Columbus would unseat him for his treachery as the Admiral had done to former-Viceroy Bobadilla, Ovando let more than a year pass in delay, keeping the Admiral languishing and starving on Jamaica, plainly in the hopes he would perish there. While he waited, Admiral Columbus penned a letter to the Crown calling for them to "punish" Ovando for his many misdeeds, adding persuasively, "It would be a most virtuous deed and a famous example if you were to do this, and would leave to Spain a glorious memory of your Highnesses as grateful and just princes" (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapters 30 ff.; Letter of Christopher Columbus, July 7, 1503; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536).

Though Viceroy Ovando "kept [Captain Mendez] with him for seven months" while he waged a murderous war against the tribes of Jaragua (the westernmost chiefdoms of Hispaniola), Mendez spread the word to the locals and the clergy of Admiral Columbus's plight. The priests exerted their spiritual influence to overcome the Viceroy's nefarious political machinations. Ovando "finally relented only because people were talking in Santo Domingo and missionaries there were beginning to reprehend in in their sermons" (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapter 36; Letter of Christopher Columbus, July 7, 1503; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536).

Help finally arrived on June 27, 1504. Ships from Hispaniola shuttled Columbus, his crew and the arrested mutineers not to Santo Domingo, the seat of the Viceroy's court, but to "the small island we call Beata, not far from Hispaniola." The trip was perilous. "Unfavorable winds and currents made the navigation arduous." The murderous Ovando was not above selecting the least favorable time of year for sailing to reduce the chances that Admiral Columbus would arrive alive. But Ovando's constant skullduggeries were no match for Christopher Columbus. Once in Beata, Admiral Columbus waited for the strength of the currents to subside and personally sailed to Hispaniola against the mandate of the Crown and their Viceroy (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapter 36; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536).

Christopher Columbus confronted Nicolás Ovando in the Viceroy's own court with a long list of grievances, not the least of which involved Ovando's continued mistreatment of the tribal peoples in the face of the civil rights legislation for which Columbus had successfully petitioned the Crown. Ovando put on a show of welcoming the Admiral with "a false smile and a pretense of friendship" but gave him no quarter. Ovando "released Porras," the mutineer and "tried to punish those who had been responsible for his imprisonment" — to wit, Admiral Columbus and his still-loyal crewmen. Ovando and his *hidalgo* minions mocked Christopher Columbus behind his back, pretending not to understand his speech due to his Genoan accent. Columbus accomplished little in this, his last sojourn to Hispaniola, but headed back to Spain with a civil rights mission (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Chapter 36; Letter of Christopher Columbus, July 7, 1503; Testament of Diego Mendez, dated June 6, 1536).

Christopher Columbus was less than two years away from death when he departed Hispaniola for the last time on September 12, 1504. In his own words to the Crown, "I came to serve at the age of twenty-eight and today I have not a hair on my head that is not gray. My body is sick and wasted." He spent most of his last return voyage to Spain "confined to his bed by gout." However, even in his winter years, he proved himself an indomitable sailor. The ship hit "a most violent storm" a third of the way across the Atlantic, stripping its rigging and breaking the mast into four pieces. Despite the pain of his gout, he jerry-rigged a sail "with material from the forecastles undone for that purpose. Later, another storm broke the mizzenmast." In the words of historian and Protector of the Indians Bartolomé de las Casas, "indeed it seemed the Fates were against the Admiral, pursuing him relentlessly throughout his life with hardship and affliction. He navigated this way another 700 leagues until God willed he reach the port [of Spain] whence he went to Seville to rest a few days" (Letter of Christopher Columbus, July 7, 1503; Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Chapter 36).

“ Christopher Columbus made his final voyage in 1506, not to the Caribbean, but to his celestial resting place among the stars that had guided his navigation in life

In Seville, Admiral Columbus learned to his great grief that Queen Isabella, his most ardent supporter, had died that same month. As he had returned to his benefactors, she had returned to her Maker. The widowed King Ferdinand, always jealous of Columbus, paid little attention to the Genoan mariner thereafter. But Columbus spent the last two years of his life persistently reporting to the King in epistolary memoranda the many misdeeds of Ovando, including reports of the Viceroy's constant murder and other mistreatment of the tribal peoples of the Caribbean (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapter 37; Hernando Colon, *The Life of the Admiral*, Chapter 108).

Columbus condemned the Spanish slavers who subverted his own efforts to aid the tribal peoples of the Caribbean. He explained to the King that he gave passage to the islanders from Hispaniola to Castile “for the purpose of instructing them in our Faith, our customs, crafts and trades, after which [Columbus] intended to reclaim them and return them to their lands so they could instruct others.” He complained that the Spaniards, instead, “sold” the people into servitude. “[B]ut either [King Ferdinand] did not believe [Columbus] or had other important things to attend to; the fact is that he paid no attention” (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapters 37 ff.).

Though, to his dying day, Christopher Columbus hounded the King with these epistles, he did not live to see the eventual unseating of Ovando. De las Casas writes that “the Admiral’s gout grew worse from the vigors of winter, aggravated by the mental state of desolation” at the insouciant King’s disregard. Ferdinand’s abdication of his throne to his son-in-law Philip I of Burgundy did little to sooth Columbus’s soul; though King Philip proved less dismissive than his predecessor, Philip survived Columbus by only four months. De las Casas writes, “I believe that had the Admiral and King Philip lived longer, justice would have been done.” Christopher Columbus made his final voyage in 1506, not to the Caribbean, but to his celestial resting place among the stars that had guided his navigation in life. De las Casas reported of the Admiral, “He devotedly received the holy sacraments, for he was a good Christian, and died in Valladolid, on the day of the Ascension, the twentieth of May, 1506, pronouncing his last words: ‘Into Thy hands, oh God, I commend my soul,’” the final words, too, of the crucified Christ. Though King Philip gave Christopher Columbus a hero’s burial in the Cathedral of Seville, de las Casas noted that the Admiral “died dispossessed of the status and fame he had won at the cost of incredible pain, dispossessed ignominiously and unjustly imprisoned without due process, judged by people seemingly acting as if they lacked reason, as if they were mad, stupid and absurd and worse than barbaric brutes” (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapter 38; Hernando Colon, *The Life of the Admiral*, Chapter 108). It seems, quite evidently, that history repeats itself today.

Yet terrestrial death did not terminate Christopher Columbus’s civil activism. In his will, he bequeathed his estate to his sons and brothers on the stipulation “that his heir increase the value of his estate and use the income thereof to serve the King and for the propagation of the Christian religion, setting aside ten percent of it as charity for the poor” (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book II, Chapter 38).

More importantly, Christopher Columbus's lifetime of civil rights activism inspired one young man, who grew up in the Spanish settlements of Hispaniola under Governor Columbus's benevolent administration and would later take the vows of a Dominican friar, assume the official mantle of "Protector of the Indians" conferred to him by the Church and Crown, and eventually pen the decades-long history of the settlement of the Caribbean in his three-volume *Historia de las Indias*: Friar Bartolomé de las Casas. Pope Julius II sent Dominican friars to establish churches in the West Indies; they, like Columbus, spoke out against the *encomienda* system and the enslavement and oppression of the tribal peoples. Unlike Governor Columbus, however, who held and used his gubernatorial authority to protect the tribal peoples and restrain the conquistadors and settlers, the Dominican friars held no authority, save spiritual, over the settlers. The friars availed themselves of what influence they possessed by preaching sermons at Mass condemning the *hidalgos* for oppressing and enslaving the tribal peoples (Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Book III, Chapters 1-4).

Friar Bartolomé de las Casas took his role as "Protector of the Indians" seriously. Even as the *conquistador* Hernán Cortés began what de las Casas's *Historia* described as a "violent" and "tyrannical" conquest of Mexico, the Friar followed in the footsteps of Christopher Columbus. De las Casas persistently petitioned King Ferdinand to fund the creation of a religious brotherhood funded by the royal treasury to enforce the civil rights legislation for which Christopher Columbus had successfully lobbied. As the King had done with Columbus's petitions for the civil rights legislation, he granted de las Casas's petition as well (*Id.*, Chapters 114, 130, 138 and 217).

Friar Bartolomé de las Casas and his band of mendicant brothers traveled the settlements of the New World, ministering to the aggrieved tribal peoples, preaching sermons to the *hidalgos* of the evils of slavery, and enforcing the civil rights legislation Christopher Columbus had secured. As with Christopher Columbus, de las Casas's civil rights efforts earned him the enmity of the *hidalgos*. However, in time, de las Casas succeeded in putting an end to the enslavement of the tribal peoples of the New World (the Portuguese would not start the African slave trade until 1516), to Ovando's war against the tribes, and to the Viceroy's reign of terror. When peace finally fell once again between the settlers and the tribal peoples, the survivors intermarried and the Latino race was born. Modern Latinos would not exist if not for Christopher Columbus's civil rights activism, continued, after his death, by Bartolomé de las Casas. De las Casas wrote of his own deeds, "This was one of the most outstanding events that occurred in Spain: that a poor clergyman with no estate and no outside help other than God's, persecuted and hated by everybody (the Spanish in the Indies spoke of him as one who was bent on destroying them and Castile), should come to have such

influence on a King...and to be the cause of so many measures discussed throughout this History" (*Id.*, Book III, *passim*; Chapter 138, parenthetical in original).

De las Casas's description of his own success, surely by no coincidence, paralleled his portrayal of the greatest hero of the fifteenth and sixteenth Centuries: Christopher Columbus, the low-born and humble Genoan sailor who was hated by the Spanish *hidalgos* for actively opposing their *encomienda* system and for restraining their greed, sloth and mistreatment of the tribal peoples of the West Indies during his nearly eight-year term as governor there. Though Christopher Columbus had been dead more than a decade by the time of the events closing the final volume of de las Casas's *Historia de las Indias*, the narrative echoed Christopher Columbus's legend and legacy as the Biblical David versus Goliath; the low-born, self-made defender of the downtrodden; and the first civil rights activist of the Western Hemisphere and the New World.

De las Casas's accounts demonstrate indisputably the reason why the Crown of Spain gave Christopher Columbus a majestic burial and monument in the Cathedral of Seville; the Founding Fathers of the United States named the nation's capital after him; American Presidents William Henry Harrison and Franklin Delano Roosevelt instituted Columbus Day holidays celebrated annually to this day; and one hundred forty-four places in the United States have been named after Christopher Columbus, including cities, counties, towns, bodies of water, and schools. That reason is this: despite the "Big Lie" of the cultural majoritarians, the primary historical sources show that by his deeds, his motives and his efforts – realized and unrealized – Christopher Columbus was unmistakably, far and away, and by any standards, the single greatest hero of human rights of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

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