

## 8. Selected Primary Documents

### Document No. 1. The Haitian Revolution

**Toussaint L'Ouverture, *Memoir... Written by Himself*, 1802**

*As a leader of the Haitian Revolution, François-Dominique Toussaint L'Ouverture (1743–1803) fought for the independence from France of the Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue. He also abolished slavery on the island of Hispaniola and wrote a constitution for the new state of Haiti. He was born a slave but became literate and was influenced by Enlightenment ideas. Battling and defeating French, Spanish, and British armies that attempted to crush the Revolution, he also invaded the eastern part of the island (currently the Dominican Republic) to liberate the slaves in the Spanish colony. In 1802 he was captured by the French and sent to Europe, where he died in prison a year later. His memoir, written at the beginning of his imprisonment, was published in French in 1850. The English version first appeared in 1853.).*

It is my duty to render to the French Government an exact account of my conduct. I shall relate the facts with all the simplicity and frankness of an old soldier, adding to them the reflections that naturally suggest themselves. In short, I shall tell the truth, though it be against myself.

The colony of Saint Domingo,<sup>1</sup> of which I was commander, enjoyed the greatest tranquillity; agriculture and commerce flourished there. The island had attained a degree of splendor which it had never before seen. And all this—I dare to say it—was my work.

Nevertheless, as we were upon a war footing, the Commission had published a decree ordering me to take all necessary measures to prevent the enemies of the Republic from penetrating into the island. Accordingly, I ordered all the commanders of the sea-ports not to permit any ships of war to enter into the roadstead, except they were known and had obtained permission from me. If it should be a squadron, no matter from what nation, it was absolutely prohibited from entering the port, or even the roadstead, unless I should myself know where it came from, and the port from which it sailed.

This order was in force, when, on the 26th of January, 1802, a squadron appeared before the Cape.<sup>2</sup> At that time I had left this town to visit the Spanish part, Santo Domingo, for the purpose of inspecting the agriculture. On setting out from Maguâna, I had despatched one of my aides-de-camp to Gen. Dessalines,<sup>3</sup> Commander-in-chief of the departments of the West and South, who was then at St. Marc, to order him to join me at Gonaïves,<sup>4</sup> or at St. Michel, to accompany me on my journey.

At the time of the squadron's appearance, I was at Santo Domingo, from which place I set out, three days after, to go to Hinche. Passing by Banique, arriving at Papayes, I met my aide-de-

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<sup>1</sup> Saint Domingo or Saint-Domingue was the name given to the French portion of the island of Hispaniola prior to 1804.

<sup>2</sup> The Cape or Cap Haïtien is a city on the northern coast of Haiti.

<sup>3</sup> Jean-Jacques Dessalines fought with Toussaint L'Ouverture against the British and French, later turning against Toussaint and joining forces with General Leclerc. He became the black republic's first leader as the self-declared Emperor of Haiti in 1804.

<sup>4</sup> Gonaïves is a coastal city in northern Haiti.

camp Couppé<sup>5</sup> and an officer sent by Gen. Christophe,<sup>6</sup> who brought me a letter from the general, by which he informed me of the arrival of the French squadron before the Cape, and assured me that the General-in-chief commanding this squadron had not done him the honor to write to him, but had only sent an officer to order him to prepare accommodations for his forces; that Gen. Christophe having demanded of this officer whether he was the bearer of letter to him or of dispatches for the General-in-chief, Toussaint L'Ouverture, requesting him to send them to him, that they might reach him at once, this officer replied to him, that he was not charged with any, and that it was not, in fact, a question concerning Gen. Toussaint. "Surrender the town," he continued; "you will be well recompensed; the French Government sends you presents." To which Gen. Christophe replied, "Since you have no letters for the General-in-chief nor for me, you may return and tell your general that he does not know his duty; that it is not thus that people present themselves in a country belonging to France."

Gen. Leclerc<sup>7</sup> having received this answer, summoned Gen. Christophe to deliver the place to him, and, in case of refusal, warned him that on the morning of the next day he should land fifteen thousand men. In response to this, Gen. Christophe begged him to wait for Gen. Toussaint L'Ouverture, to whom he had already sent the intelligence, and would do so the second time, with the greatest celerity. In fact, I received a second letter, and hastened to reach the Cape, in spite of the overflowing of the Hinche, hoping to have the pleasure of embracing my brothers-in-arms from Europe, and to receive at the same time the orders of the French

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<sup>5</sup> Couppé was an aide-de-camp to Toussaint L'Ouverture around 1802.

<sup>6</sup> Henri Cristophe (1767–1820) was a former slave who joined the rebel army led by Toussaint L'Ouverture and eventually become a general under his command. He later ruled the northern part of Haiti after having himself crowned King Henry I in 1811.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Victor Emmanuel Leclerc (1772–1802) was brother-in-law to Napoléon Bonaparte and the commander in chief of the French forces sent to reestablish slavery in Saint-Domingue in 1802. He ordered Toussaint L'Ouverture's arrest and imprisonment in France.

Government; and in order to march with greater speed, I left all my escorts. Between St. Michel and St. Raphaël, I met Gen. Dessalines and said to him, "I have sent for you to accompany me on my tour to Port-de-Paix, and to Môle; but that is useless now. I have just received two letters from Gen. Christophe, announcing the arrival of the French squadron before the Cape."

I communicated to him these letters, whereupon he told me that he had seen from St. Marc six large vessels making sail for the coast of Port Républicain;<sup>8</sup> but he was ignorant of what nation they were. I ordered him then to repair promptly to this port, since it was possible that Gen. Christophe having refused the entrance of the Cape to the general commanding the squadron, the latter might have proceeded to Port Républicain in the hope of finding me there; should this prove true, I ordered him, in advance, to request the general to wait for me, and to assure him that I would go first to the Cape in the hope of meeting him there, and in case I should not find him there, I would repair at once to Port Républicain to confer with him. I set out for the Cape, passing by Vases, the shortest road. On arriving upon the heights of the Grand Boucan, in the place called the Porte-Saint-Jacques, I perceived a fire in the town on the Cape. I urged my horse at full speed to reach this town, to find there the general commanding the squadron, and to ascertain who had caused the conflagration. But, on approaching, I found the roads filled with the inhabitants who had fled from this unfortunate town, and I was unable to penetrate farther because all the passages were cannonaded by the artillery of the vessels which were in the roadstead. I then resolved to go up to the Fort of Bel-Air, but I found this fort evacuated likewise, and all the pieces of cannon spiked.

I was, consequently, obliged to retrace my steps. After passing the hospital, I met Gen. Christophe, and asked him who had ordered the town to be fired. He replied that it was he. I

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<sup>8</sup> Port Républicain was the name given to Port-au-Prince after the beginning of the French Revolution.

reprimanded him severely for having employed such rigorous measures. "Why," said I to him, "did you not rather make some military arrangements to defend the town until my arrival?" He answered, "What do you wish, general? My duty, necessity, the circumstances, the reiterated threats of the general commanding the squadron, forced me to it. I showed the general the orders of which I was the bearer, but without avail." He added that the proclamations spread secretly in the town to seduce the people, and instigate an uprising, were not sanctioned by military usage; that if the commander of the squadron had truly pacific intentions, he would have waited for me; that he would not have employed the means which he used to gain the commander of the Fort of Boque, who is a drunkard; that he would not in consequence have seized this fort; that he would not have put to death half of the garrison of Fort Liberty; that he would not have made a descent upon Acul, and that, in a word, he would not have committed at first all the hostilities of which he was guilty.

Gen. Christophe joined me, and we continued the route together. On arriving at Haut-du-Cap, we passed through the habitations of Breda as far as the barrier of Boulard, passing by the gardens. There I ordered him to rally his troops, and go into camp on the Bonnet until further orders, and to keep me informed of all the movements he made. I told him that I was going to Héricourt; that there, perhaps, I should receive news from the commander of the squadron; that he would doubtless deliver to me the orders of the Government; that I might even meet him there; that I should then ascertain the reasons which had induced him to come in this manner; and, that, in case he was the bearer of orders from the government, I should request him to communicate them to me, and should in consequence make arrangements with him.

Gen. Christophe left me then to repair to the post which I had assigned to him; but he met a body of troops who fired upon him, forced him to dismount from his horse, plunge into the river, and cross it by swimming.

After separating from Gen. Christophe, I had at my side Adjutant-General Fontaine, two other officers, and my aide-de-camp, Couppé, who went in advance; he warned me of the troops on the road. I ordered him to go forward. He told me that this force was commanded by a general. I then demanded a conference with him. But Couppé had not time to execute my orders; they fired upon us at twenty-five steps from the barrier. My horse was pierced with a ball; another ball carried away the hat of one of my officers. This unexpected circumstance forced me to abandon the open road, to cross the savanna and the forests to reach Héricourt, where I remained three days to wait for news of the commander of the squadron, again without avail.

But, the next day, I received a letter from Gen. Rochambeau,<sup>9</sup> announcing "that the column which he commanded had seized upon Fort Liberty, taken and put to the sword a part of the garrison, which had resisted; that he had not believed the garrison would steep its bayonets in the blood of Frenchmen; on the contrary, he had expected to find it disposed in his favor." I replied to this letter, and, manifesting my indignation to the general, asked to know, "Why he had ordered the massacre of those brave soldiers who had only followed the orders given them; who had, besides, contributed so much to the happiness of the colony and to the triumph of the Republic. Was this the recompense that the French Government had promised them?"

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<sup>9</sup> General Rochambeau or Donatien-Marie-Joseph de Vimeur, Vicomte de Rochambeau (1750–1813), was a landowner in Saint-Domingue, Governor-General from 1792 to 1793, and leader of the French forces after General Leclerc's death in 1802.

I concluded by saying to Gen. Rochambeau, that "I would fight to the last to avenge the death of these brave soldiers, for my own liberty, and to reestablish tranquility and order in the colony."

This was, in fact, the resolution I had taken after having reflected deliberately upon the report Gen. Christophe had brought me, upon the danger I had just run, upon the letter of Gen. Rochambeau, and finally upon the conduct of the commander of the squadron.

Having formed my resolution, I went to Gonaives. There I communicated my intentions to Gen. Maurepas, and ordered him to make the most vigorous resistance to all vessels which should appear before Port-de-Paix, where he commanded; and, in case he should not be strong enough,—having only half of a brigade,—to imitate the example of Gen. Christophe and afterward withdraw to the Mountain, taking with him ammunition of all kinds; there to defend himself to the death.

I then went to St. Marc to visit the fortifications. I found that the news of the shameful events which had just taken place had reached this town, and the inhabitants had already fled. I gave orders for all the resistance to be made that the fortifications and munitions would allow of.

As I was on the point of setting out from this town to go to Port-au-Prince and the southern part to give my orders, Captains Jean-Philippe Dupin and Isaac brought me dispatches from Paul L'Ouverture,<sup>10</sup> who commanded at Santo Domingo. Both informed me that a descent had just been made upon Oyarsaval, and that the French and Spaniards who inhabited this place had risen and cut off the roads from Santo Domingo. I acquainted myself with these dispatches.

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<sup>10</sup> Paul L'Ouverture (ca. 1761–ca. 1803) was the younger brother of Toussaint L'Ouverture and a chief of brigade in the Haitian Revolutionary Army.

In running over the letter of Gen. Paul and the copy of Gen. Kerverseau's to the commander of the place of Santo Domingo, which was enclosed in it, I saw that this general had made the overture to the commander of the place, and not to Gen. Paul, as he should have done, to make preparations for the landing of his force. I saw also the refusal given by Gen. Paul to this invitation, until he should receive orders from me. I replied to Gen. Paul that I approved his conduct, and ordered him to make all possible effort to defend himself in case of attack; and even to make prisoners of Gen. Kerverseau and his force, if he could. I returned my reply by the captains just mentioned. But foreseeing, on account of the interception of the roads, that they might be arrested and their dispatches demanded, I gave them in charge a second letter, in which I ordered Gen. Paul to use all possible means of conciliation with Gen. Kerverseau. I charged the captains, in case they should be arrested, to conceal the first letter and show only the second.

My reply not arriving as soon as he expected, Gen. Paul sent another black officer with the same dispatches in duplicate. I gave only a receipt to this officer, and sent him back. Of these three messengers two were black and the other white. They were arrested, as I had anticipated; the two blacks were assassinated in violation of all justice and right, contrary to the customs of war; their dispatches were sent to Gen. Kerverseau, who concealed the first letter, and showed to Gen. Paul only the second, in which I had ordered him to enter into negotiations with Gen. Kerverseau. It was in consequence of this letter that Santo Domingo was surrendered.

Having sent off these dispatches, I resumed my route toward the South. I had hardly set forward when I was overtaken by an orderly, coming up at full speed, who brought me a package from Gen. Vernet and a letter from my wife, both announcing to me the arrival from Paris of my two children and their preceptor, of which I was not before aware. I learned also that they were

bearers of orders for me from the First Consul.<sup>11</sup> I retraced my steps and flew to Ennery, where I found my two children and the excellent tutor whom the First Consul had had the goodness to give them. I embraced them with the greatest satisfaction and ardor. I then inquired if they were bearers of letters from the First Consul for me. The tutor replied in the affirmative, and handed me a letter which I opened and read about half through; then I folded it, saying that I would reserve the reading of it for a more quiet moment. I begged him then to impart to me the intentions of the Government, and to tell me the name of the commander of the squadron, which I had not yet been able to ascertain. He answered, that his name was Leclerc; that the intention of the Government toward me was very favorable, which was confirmed by my children, and of which I afterwards assured myself by finishing the letter of the First Consul. I observed to them, nevertheless, that if the intentions of the Government were pacific and good regarding me and those who had contributed to the happiness which the colony enjoyed, Gen. Leclerc surely had not followed nor executed the orders he had received, since he had landed on the island like an enemy, and done evil merely for the pleasure of doing it, without addressing himself to the commander or making known to him his powers. I then asked Citizen Coisson, my children's tutor, if Gen. Leclerc had not given him a dispatch for me or charged him with something to tell me. He replied in the negative, advising me, however, to go to the Cape to confer with the general; my children added their solicitations to persuade me to do so. I represented to them, "that, after the conduct of this general, I could have no confidence in him; that he had landed like an enemy; that, in spite of that, I had believed it my duty to go to meet him in order to prevent the progress of the evil; that he had fired upon me, and I had run the greatest dangers; that, in short, if his intentions were as pure as those of the Government which sent him, he should have taken the trouble to write to me to inform me of his mission; that, before arriving in the

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<sup>11</sup> First Consul was the title given to Napoleon Bonaparte in 1799 as the new ruler of postrevolutionary France.

roadstead, he should have sent me an advice-boat with you, sir, and my children,—that being the ordinary practice,—to announce their arrival, and to impart to me his powers; that, since he had observed none of these formalities, the evil was done, and therefore I should refuse decidedly to go in search of him; that, nevertheless, to prove my attachment and submission to the French Government, I would consent to write a letter to Gen. Leclerc. I shall send to him, I continued, "by Mr. Granville, a worthy man, accompanied by my two children and their tutor, whom I shall charge to say to Gen. Leclerc, that it is absolutely dependent upon himself whether this colony is entirely lost, or preserved to France; that I will enter into all possible arrangements with him; that I am ready to submit to the orders of the French Government; but that Gen. Leclerc shall show me orders of which he is bearer, and shall, above all, cease from every species of hostility."

In fact, I wrote the letter, and the deputation set out. In the hope that after the desire I had just manifested to render my submission, order would again be restored, I remained at Gonaïves till the next day. There I learned that two vessels had attacked St. Marc; I proceeded there and learned that they had been repulsed. I returned then to Gonaïves to wait for Gen. Leclerc's reply. Finally, two days after, my two children arrived with the response so much desired, by which the general commanded me to report in person to him, at the Cape, and announced that he had furthermore ordered his generals to advance upon all points; that his orders being given, he could not revoke them. He promised, however, that Gen. Boudet should be stopped at Artibonite; I concluded then, that he did not know the country perfectly, or had been deceived; for, in order to reach Artibonite, it was necessary to have a free passage by St. Marc, which was impossible now, since the two vessels which had attacked this place had been repulsed. He added, further, that they should not attack Môle, only blockade it, since this place had already surrendered. I replied then plainly to the general, "that I should not report to him at the Cape; that his conduct

did not inspire me with sufficient confidence; that I was ready to deliver the command to him in conformity with the orders of the First Consul, but that I would not be his lieutenant-general." I besought him again to let me know his intentions, assuring him that I would contribute everything in my power to the reestablishment of order and tranquillity. I added, in conclusion, that if he persisted in his invasion, he would force me to defend myself, although I had but few troops. I sent him this letter with the utmost despatch, by an orderly, who brought me back word, "that he had no reply to make and had taken the field."

The inhabitants of Gonaïves then asked my permission to send a deputation to Gen. Leclerc, which I accorded to them, but he retained the deputation.

The next day I learned that he had taken, without striking a blow and without firing a gun, Dondon, St. Raphaël, St. Michel and Marmelade, and that he was prepared to march against Ennery and Gonaïves.

These new hostilities gave rise to new reflections. I thought that the conduct of Gen. Leclerc was entirely contrary to the intentions of the Government, since the First Consul, in his letter, promised peace, while the general made war. I saw that, instead of seeking to arrest this evil, he only increased it. "Does he not fear," I said to myself, "in pursuing such conduct, to be blamed by his Government? Can he hope to be approved by the First Consul, that great man whose equity and impartiality are so well known, while I shall be disapproved?" I resolved then to defend myself, in case of attack; and in spite of my few troops, I made my dispositions accordingly.

Gonaïves not being defensible, I ordered it to be burned, in case retreat was necessary. I placed Gen. Christophe, who had been obliged to fall back, in the Eribourg road, which leads to Bayonet, and withdrew myself to Ennery, where a part of my guard of honor had repaired to join and defend me. There I learned that Gros-Morne had just surrendered, and that the army was to march against Gonaïves with three columns; one of these, commanded by Gen. Rochambeau, purposing to pass by Coulevre and come down upon La Croix, to cut off the road from the town and the passage of the bridge of the Ester.

I ordered Gonaïves to be burned, and, ignorant of Gen. Rochambeau's strength, marched to meet the column, which was making for the bridge of the Ester, at the head of 300 grenadiers of my guard, commanded by their chief, and of sixty mounted guards. We met in a gorge. The attack commenced at six o'clock in the morning with a continuous fire which lasted until noon. Gen. Rochambeau began the attack. I learned from the prisoners I took that the column numbered more than 4,000 men. While I was engaged with Gen. Rochambeau, the column commanded by Gen. Leclerc reached Gonaïves. After the engagement at La Croix, I proceeded to the bridge of the Ester, with artillery, to defend the place, intending to go thence to St. Marc, where I expected to make a desperate resistance. But, on setting out, I learned that Gen. Dessalines, having arrived at this place before me, was obliged to evacuate it and retire to Petite Rivière. I was obliged, after this manoeuvre, to slacken my march in order to send in advance the prisoners taken at La Croix, and the wounded to Petite Rivière; and I determined to proceed there myself. When we reached Couriotte, in the plain, I left my troops there, and went in advance alone. I found all the country abandoned.

I received a letter from Gen. Dessalines, informing me that, having learned that the Cahos was to be attacked, he had gone to defend it. I sent an order to him to join me at once. I caused the ammunition and provisions which I had with me to be put in Fort L'Ouverture at the Crête-à-Pierrot. I ordered Gen. Vernet to procure vessels which would contain water enough to last the garrison during a siege. On the arrival of Gen. Dessalines, I ordered him to take command of the fort and defend it to the last extremity.

For this purpose I left him half of my guards with the chief-of-brigade, Magny, and my two squadrons. I charged him not to allow Gen. Vernet to be exposed to fire, but to let him remain in a safe place to superintend the making of cartridges. Finally, I told Gen. Dessalines that while Gen. Leclerc was attacking this place, I should go into the Northern part, make a diversion, and retake the different places which had been seized; by this manoeuvre, I should force the general to retrace his steps and make arrangements with me to preserve this beautiful colony to the Government.

Having given these orders, I took six companies of grenadiers commanded by Gabart, chief of the fourth demi-brigade, and Pourcely, the chief-of-battalion, and marched upon Ennery. I found there a proclamation of Gen. Leclerc, pronouncing me an outlaw. Confident that I had done no wrong with which to reproach myself, that all the disorder which prevailed in the country had been occasioned by Gen. Leclerc; believing myself, besides, the legitimate commander of the island,—I refuted his proclamation and declared him to be outlawed. Without loss of time I resumed my march and recaptured, without violence, St. Michel, St. Raphaël, Dondon, and Marmelade. In this last place I received a letter from Gen. Dessalines, announcing that Gen. Leclerc had marched against Petite Rivière with three columns; that one of these

columns, passing by the Cahos and the Grand-Fonds, had captured all the treasures of the Republic coming from Gonaïves, and some silver which the inhabitants had deposited; that it was so heavily loaded with booty it was unable to reach its destination, and had been obliged to turn back to deposit its riches at Port-Républicain; that the two other columns, which had attacked the fort, had been repulsed by the chief-of-brigade, Magny; that Gen. Leclerc, having united his forces, had ordered a second attack, which had likewise been repelled by himself, Dessalines, who had then arrived. Apprised of these facts, I moved upon Plaisance and captured the camp of Bidouret, who held this place. This camp was occupied by troops of the line. I assaulted all the advanced posts at the same time. Just as I was going to fall upon Plaisance, I received a letter from the commander of Marmelade, which gave me notice that a strong column from the Spanish part was advancing upon this latter place.

I then moved promptly upon this column, which, instead of advancing upon Marmelade, had marched upon Hinche, where I pursued, but was unable to overtake it. I returned to Gonaïves, made myself master of the plain surrounding the town, ready to march upon the Gros-Morne to succor Gen. Maurepas, whom I supposed must be at Port-de-Paix, or else retired to the mountains where I ordered him to encamp, not knowing that he had already capitulated and submitted to Gen. Leclerc.

I received a third letter from Gen. Dessalines, who reported that Gen. Leclerc, having ordered a general assault and been repulsed, had determined to surround the place and bombard it. As soon as I learned the danger with which he was threatened, I hastened to move my troops there to deliver him. Arrived before the camp, I made a reconnoissance, procured the necessary information and prepared to attack it. I could, without fail, have entered the camp by a weak side

which I had discovered, and seized the person of Gen. Leclerc and all his staff; but at the moment of execution; I received information that the garrison, failing of water, had been obliged to evacuate the fort. If the project had succeeded, my intention was to send Gen. Leclerc back to the First Consul, rendering to him an exact account of his conduct, and praying him to send me another person worthy of his confidence, to whom I could deliver up the command.

I retired to Grand Fonds to wait for the garrison of Crête-à-Pierrot and to unite my forces. As soon as the garrison arrived, I inquired of Gen. Dessalines where the prisoners were whom he had previously told me were at the Cahos. He replied that a part had been taken by Gen. Rochambeau's column, that another part had been killed in the different attacks that he had endured, and that the rest had escaped in the various marches which he had been obliged to make. This reply evinces the injustice of imputing to me the assassinations which were committed, because, it is said, as chief, I could have prevented them; but am I responsible for the evil which was done in my absence and without my knowledge?

While at Gonaïves (at the commencement of hostilities), I sent my aide-de-camp, Couppé, to Gen. Dessalines, to bid him order the commander of Léogane to take all the inhabitants, men and women, and send them to Port Républicain; to muster all the armed men he could in that place, and prepare himself for a most vigorous resistance in case of attack. My aide-de-camp, Couppé, bearer of my orders, returned and told me that he had not found Gen. Dessalines, but had learned that Léogane had been burned, and that the inhabitants had escaped to Port Républicain.

All these disasters happened just at the time that Gen. Leclerc came. Why did he not inform me of his powers before landing? Why did he land without my order and in defiance of

the order of the Commission? Did he not commit the first hostilities? Did he not seek to gain over the generals and other officers under my command by every possible means? Did he not try to instigate the laborers to rise, by persuading them that I treated them like slaves, and that he had come to break their chains? Ought he to have employed such means in a country where peace and tranquillity reigned?—in a country which was in the power of the Republic?

If I did oblige my fellow-countrymen to work; it was to teach them the value of true liberty without license; it was to prevent corruption of morals; it was for the general happiness of the island, for the interest of the Republic. And I had effectually succeeded in my undertaking, since there could not be found in all the colony a single man unemployed, and the number of beggars had diminished to such a degree that, apart from a few in the towns, not a single one was to be found in the country.

If Gen. Leclerc's intentions had been good, would he have received Golart into his army, and given to him the command of the 9th demi-brigade,—a corps that he had raised at the time that he was chief of battalion? Would he have employed this dangerous rebel, who caused proprietors to be assassinated in their own dwelling-places; who invaded the town of Môle-Saint-Nicolas; who fired upon Gen. Clerveaux, who commanded there; upon Gen. Maurepas and his brigade commander; who made war upon the laborers of Jean-Rabel from the Moustiques and the heights of Port-de-Paix; who carried his audacity so far as to oppose me when I marched against him to force him to submit to his chief, and to retake the territory and the town which he had invaded! The day that he dared to fire upon me, a ball cut the plume from my hat; Bondère, a physician, who accompanied me, was killed at my side, my aides-de-camp were unhorsed. In short, this brigand, after being steeped in every crime, concealed himself in a forest; he only

came out of it upon the arrival of the French squadron. Ought Gen. Leclerc to have raised likewise to the rank of brigade commander another rebel, called L'Amour Desrances, who had caused all the inhabitants of the Plain of Cul-de-Sac to be assassinated; who urged the laborers to revolt; who pillaged all this part of the island; against whom, only two months before the arrival of the squadron, I had been obliged to march, and whom I forced to hide in the forests? Why were rebels and others amicably received, while my subordinates and myself, who remained steadfastly faithful to the French Government, and who had maintained order and tranquillity, were warred upon? Why was it made a crime to have executed the orders of the Government? Why was all the evil which had been done and the disorders which had existed imputed to me? All these facts are known by every inhabitant of St. Domingo. Why, on arriving, did they not go to the root of the evil? Had the troops which gave themselves up to Gen. Leclerc received the order from me? Did they consult me? No. Well! those who committed the wrong did not consult me. It is not right to attribute to me more wrong than I deserve.

I shared these reflections with some prisoners which I had. They replied that it was my influence upon the people which was feared, and that these violent means were employed to destroy it. This caused me new reflections. Considering all the misfortunes which the colony had already suffered, the dwellings destroyed, assassinations committed, the violence exercised even upon women, I forgot all the wrongs which had been done me, to think only of the happiness of the island and the interest of the Government. I determined to obey the order of the First Consul, since Gen. Leclerc had just withdrawn from the Cape with all his forces, after the affair of Crête-à-Pierrot.

Let it be observed that up to this time I had not been able to find an instant in which to reply to the First Consul. I seized with eagerness this momentary quiet to do so. I assured the First Consul of my submission and entire devotion to his orders, but represented to him "that if he did not send another older general to take command, the resistance which I must continue to oppose to Gen. Leclerc would tend to increase the prevalent disorder."

I remembered then that Gen. Dessalines had reported to me that two officers of the squadron—one an aide-de-camp of Gen. Boudet, the other a naval officer, accompanied by two dragoons, sent to stir up a rebellion among the troops—had been made prisoners at the time of the evacuation of Port-au-Prince. I ordered them to be brought before me, and, after conversing with them, sent them back to Gen. Boudet, sending by them a letter with the one which I had written to the First Consul. Just as I was sending off these two officers, I learned that Gen. Hardy had passed Coupe-à-l'Inde with his army, that he had attacked my possessions, devastated them, and taken away all my animals, among them a horse named Bel-Argent, which I valued very highly. Without losing time, I marched against him with the force I had. I overtook him near Dondon. A fierce engagement took place, which lasted from eleven in the morning till six in the evening.

Before setting out, I had ordered Gen. Dessalines to join the troops which had evacuated Crête-à-Pierrot, and go into camp at Camp-Marchand, informing him that after the battle I should proceed to Marmelade.

Upon my arrival in that place, I received the reply of Gen. Boudet, which he sent me by my nephew Chancy, whom he had previously made prisoner.

That General assured me that my letter would easily reach the First Consul, that, to effect this, he had already sent it to Gen. Leclerc, who had promised him to forward it. Upon the report of my nephew, and after reading the letter of Gen. Boudet, I thought I recognized in him a character of honesty and frankness worthy of a French officer qualified to command. Therefore I addressed myself to him with confidence, begging him to persuade Gen. Leclerc to enter upon terms of conciliation with me. I assured him that ambition had never been my guide, but only honor; that I was ready to give up the command in obedience to the orders of the First Consul, and to make all necessary sacrifices to arrest the progress of the evil. I sent him this letter by my nephew Chancy, whom he kept with him. Two days after, I received a letter sent in haste by an orderly, announcing to me that he had made known my intentions to Gen. Leclerc, and assuring me that the latter was ready to make terms with me, and that I could depend upon the good intentions of the Government with regard to me.

The same day, Gen. Christophe communicated to me a letter which he had just received from a citizen named Vilton, living at the Petite-Anse, and another from Gen. Hardy, both asking him for an interview. I gave permission to Gen. Christophe to hold these interviews, recommending him to be very circumspect.

Gen. Christophe did not meet this appointment with Gen. Hardy, for he received a letter from Gen. Leclerc, proposing to him another rendezvous. He sent me a copy of this letter and of his reply, and asked my permission to report himself at the place indicated; which I granted, and he went.

Gen. Christophe, on his return, brought me a letter from Gen. Leclerc, saying that he should feel highly satisfied if he could induce me to concert with him, and submit to the orders

of the Republic. I replied immediately that I had always been submissive to the French Government, as I had invariably borne arms for it; that if from the beginning I had been treated as I should have been, not a single shot would have been fired; that peace would not have been even disturbed in the island, and that the intention of the Government would have been fulfilled. In short, I showed to Gen. Leclerc, as well as to Gen. Christophe, all my indignation at the course which the latter had pursued, without orders from me.

The next day, I sent to Gen. Leclerc my Adjutant-General Fontaine, bearer of a second letter, in which I asked for an interview at Héricourt, which he refused. Fontaine assured me, however, that he had been well received. I was not discouraged. I sent the third time my aide-de-camp, Couppé and my secretary Nathand, assuring him that I was ready to give up the command to him, conformably to the intentions of the First Consul. He replied, that an hour of conversation would be worth more than ten letters, giving me his word of honor that he would act with all the frankness and loyalty that could be expected of a French general. At the same time a proclamation from him was brought me, bidding all citizens to regard as null and void that article of the proclamation of Feb. 16, 1802, which made me an outlaw. "Do not fear," he said in this proclamation, "you and your generals, and the people who are with you, that I shall search out the past conduct of any one; I will draw the veil of oblivion over the events which have taken place at Saint Domingo; I imitate, in so doing, the example which the First Consul gave to France on the 11th of November. In future, I wish to see in the island only good citizens. You ask repose; after having borne the burden of government so long, repose is due you; but I hope that in your retirement you will use your wisdom, in your moments of leisure, for the prosperity of Saint Domingo."

After this proclamation and the word of honor of the general, I proceeded to the Cape. I submitted myself to Gen. Leclerc in accordance with the wish of the First Consul; I afterward talked with him with all the frankness and cordiality of a soldier who loves and esteems his comrade. He promised me forgetfulness of the past and the protection of the French Government. He agreed with me that we had both been wrong. "You can, General," he said to me, "retire to your home in perfect security. But tell me if Gen. Dessalines will obey my orders, and if I can rely upon him?" I replied that he could; that Gen. Dessalines might have faults, like every man, but that he understood military subordination. I suggested to him, however, that for the public good and to reestablish the laborers in their occupations, as they were at the time of his arrival in the island, it was necessary that Gen. Dessalines should be recalled to his command at Saint Marc, and Gen. Charles Belair to L'Arcahaye, which he promised me should be done. At eleven in the evening, I took leave of him and withdrew to Héricourt, where I passed the night with Gen. Fressinet, and set out the next morning for Marmelade.

The third day after, I received a letter from Gen. Leclerc, bidding me discharge my foot-guards and horse-guards. He addressed to me also an order for Gen. Dessalines; I acquainted myself with it and sent it to Gen. Dessalines, telling him to comply with it. And that I might the better fulfil the promises that I had made Gen. Leclerc, I requested Gen. Dessalines to meet me half-way between his house and mine. I urged him to submit, as I had done; I told him that the public interest required me to make great sacrifices, and that I was willing to make them; but as for him, he might keep his command. I said as much to Gen. Charles, also to all the officers with them; finally, I persuaded them, in spite of all the reluctance and regret they evinced, to leave me and go away. They even shed tears. After this interview, all returned to their own homes. Adjutant-General Perrin, whom Gen. Leclerc had sent to Dessalines with his orders, found him

very ready to comply with them, since I had previously engaged him to do so in our interview.

As we have seen, a promise was made to place Gen. Charles at L'Arcahay; however, it was not done.

It was unnecessary for me to order the inhabitants of Dondon, St. Michel, St. Raphaël and Marmelade to return to their homes, since they had done so as soon as I had taken possession of these communities; I only advised them to resume their usual occupations. I ordered also the inhabitants of Plaisance and the neighboring places, to return home and begin their labor, too. They expressed fears that they might be disturbed. Therefore I wrote to Gen. Leclerc, reminding him of his promise, and begging him to attend to their execution. He replied, that his orders were already given upon that subject. Meanwhile, the commander of this place had divided his forces and sent detachments into all the districts, which had alarmed the laborers and compelled them to flee to the mountains. I proceeded to Ennery and acquainted Gen. Leclerc with these things, as I had promised him. In this town I found a great many laborers from Gonaïves, whom I persuaded to return home. Before I left Marmelade, I ordered the commander of that place to restore the artillery and ammunition to the commander of Plaisance, in conformity to the desire of Gen. Leclerc. I also ordered the commander at Ennery to return the only piece of artillery there, and also the ammunition, to the commander of Gonaïves.

I then employed myself in rebuilding my houses which had been burned. In a house in the mountains, which had escaped the flames, I had to prepare a comfortable lodging for my wife, who was still in the woods where she had been obliged to take refuge.

While engaged in these occupations, I learned that 500 troops had arrived, to be stationed at Ennery, a little town, which, until then, could not have had more than 50 armed men as a

police force; and that a very large detachment had also been sent to St. Michel. I hastened to the town. I saw that all my houses had been pillaged and even the coffers of my laborers carried off. At the very moment when I was entering my complaint to the commander, I pointed out to him the soldiers loaded with fruit of all kinds, even unripe fruit; I also showed him the laborers who, seeing these robberies, were fleeing to other houses in the mountains. I gave an account to Gen. Leclerc of what was going on, and observed to him that the measures which were being taken, far from inspiring confidence, only increased distrust; that the number of troops which he had sent was very considerable, and could only be an injury to agriculture and the inhabitants. I then returned to my house in the mountains.

The next day I received, in this house, a visit from the commander at Ennery, and I saw very clearly that this soldier, instead of making me a visit of politeness, had come to my house merely to reconnoitre my dwelling and the avenues about it, that he might seize me the more easily when he received the order to do so. While talking with him, I was informed that several soldiers had gone with horses and other beasts of burden to one of my residences near the town, where a god-daughter of mine was residing, and had taken away the coffee and other provisions found there. I made complaint to him; he promised me to put a stop to these robberies and to punish severely those who had been guilty of them. Fearing that my house in the mountains inspired only distrust, I determined to remove to that very house which had just been pillaged, and almost totally destroyed, but two hundred paces from the town. I left my wife in the house which I had prepared for her. I was now occupied in laying out new plantations to replace those which had been destroyed, and in preparing necessary materials for reconstructing my buildings. But every day I experienced new robberies and new vexations. The soldiers came to my house in such large numbers that I dared not have them arrested. In vain I bore my complaints to the

commander. I received no satisfaction. Finally, I determined, though Gen. Leclerc had not done me the honor to answer my two former letters upon this subject, to write him a third, which I sent to him at the Cape by my son Placide, for greater security. This, like the others, elicited no reply. But the chief of the staff told me that he would make his report. Some time after, the commander, having come to see me again, one afternoon, found me at the head of my laborers, employed in directing the work of reconstruction. He himself saw my son Isaac drive away several soldiers who had just come to the gate to cut down the bananas and figs. I repeated to him the most earnest complaints. He still promised to stop these disorders. During three weeks that I stayed in this place, I witnessed daily new ravages; every day I received visits from people who came as spies, but they were all witnesses that I was engaged solely in domestic labors. Gen. Brunet himself came, and found me occupied in the same manner. Notwithstanding my conduct, I received a letter from Gen. Leclerc, which, in place of giving me satisfaction in regard to the complaints which I had made to him, accused me of keeping armed men within the borders of Ennery, and ordered me to send them away. Persuaded of my innocence, and that evil-disposed people had deceived him, I replied that I had too much honor to break promises which I had made, and that when I gave up the command to him, it was not without reflection; that, moreover, I had no intention of trying to take it back. I assured him, besides, that I had no knowledge of armed men in the environs of Ennery, and that for three weeks I had been constantly at work on my own place. I sent my son Isaac to give him an account of all the vexations I suffered, and to warn him that if he did not put an end to them, I should be obliged to leave the place where I was living, and go to my ranche in the Spanish part.

One day, before I received any answer from Gen. Leclerc, I was informed that one of his aides-de-camp, passing by Ennery, had told the commander that he was the bearer of an order for

my arrest, addressed to Gen. Brunet. Gen. Leclerc having given his word of honor and promised the protection of the French Government, I refused to believe the report; I even said to some one who advised me to leave my residence, that I had promised to stay there quietly, working to repair the havoc that had been made; that I had not given up the command and sent away my troops to act so foolishly now; that I did not wish to leave home, and if they came to arrest me, they would find me there; that, besides, I would not give credence to the calumny.

The next day I received a second letter from Gen. Leclerc, by my son whom I sent to him, which read thus:—

**General Leclerc—June 5, 1802—letter to Toussaint Louverture**

ARMY OF ST. DOMINGO,

HEADQUARTERS AT CAP FRANÇAIS, June 5, 1802.

THE GEN.-IN-CHIEF TO GEN. TOUSSAINT:—

Since you persist, Citizen-General, in thinking that the great number of troops stationed at Plaisance (the Secretary probably wrote Plaisance by mistake, meaning Ennery) frightens the laborers of that district, I have commissioned Gen. Brunet to act in concert with you, and to place a part of these troops in the rear of Gonaives and one detachment at Plaisance. Let the laborers understand, that, having taken this measure, I shall punish those who leave their dwellings to go to the mountains. Let me know, as soon as this order has been executed, the results which it produces, because, if the means of persuasion which you employ do not succeed, I shall use military measures. I salute you.

The same day I received a letter from Gen. Brunet, of which the following is an extract:—

**General Brunet—June 7, 1802—letter to Toussaint Louverture**

ARMY OF SAINT DOMINGO,

HEADQUARTERS AT GEORGES, June 7, 1802.

BRUNET, GEN. OF DIVISION, TO THE GEN. OF DIVISION,

TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE:

Now is the time, Citizen-General, to make known unquestionably to the General-in-chief that those who wish to deceive him in regard to your fidelity are base calumniators, and that your sentiments tend to restore order and tranquillity in your neighborhood. You must assist me in securing free communication to the Cape, which has been interrupted since yesterday, three persons having been murdered by fifty brigands between Ennery and Coupe-à-Pintade. Send in pursuit of these murderers men worthy of confidence, whom you are to pay well; I will keep account of your expenses.

We have arrangements to make together, my dear General, which it is impossible to do by letter, but which an hour's conference would complete. If I were not worn out by labor and petty cares, I should have been the bearer of my own letter today; but not being able to leave at this time, will you not come to me? If you have recovered from your indisposition, let it be to-morrow; when a good work is to be done, there should be no delay. You will not find in my country-house all the comforts which I could desire before receiving you, but you will find the sincerity of an honest man who desires only the prosperity of the colony and your own happiness. If Madame Toussaint, whom I greatly

desire to know, wishes to take the journey, it will give me pleasure. If she needs horses, I will send her mine. I repeat, General, you will never find a sincerer friend than myself.

With confidence in the Captain-General, with friendship for all who are under him, and hoping that you may enjoy peace,

I cordially salute you.

(Signed) BRUNET

P.S. Your servant who has gone to Port-au-Prince passed here this morning; he left with his passport made out in due form.

### **Toussaint's capture**

That very servant, instead of receiving his passport, was arrested, and is now in prison with me.

After reading these two letters, although not very well, I yielded to the solicitations of my sons and others, and set out the same night to see Gen. Brunet, accompanied by two officers only. At eight in the evening I arrived at the General's house. When he met me, I told him that I had received his letter, and also that of the General-in-chief, requesting me to act with him, and

that I had come for that purpose; that I had not brought my wife, as he requested, because she never left home, being much occupied with domestic duties, but if sometime, when he was travelling, he would do her the honor of visiting her, she would receive him with pleasure. I said to him that, being ill, my stay must be short, asking him, therefore, to finish our business as soon as possible, that I might return.

I handed him the letter of Gen. Leclerc. After reading it, he told me that he had not yet received any order to act in concert with me upon the subject of the letter; he then excused himself for a moment, and went out, after calling an officer to keep me company. He had hardly left the room when an aide-de-camp of Gen. Leclerc entered, accompanied by a large number of soldiers, who surrounded me, seized me, bound me as a criminal, and conducted me on board the frigate *Créole*.

I claimed the protection which Gen. Brunet, on his word of honor, had promised me, but without avail. I saw him no more. He had probably concealed himself to escape my well-merited reproaches. I afterward learned that he treated my family with great cruelty; that, immediately after my arrest, he sent a detachment of troops to the house where I had been living with a part of my family, mostly women, children, and laborers, and ordered them to set it on fire, compelling the unhappy victims to fly half-naked to the woods; that everything had been pillaged and sacked; that the aide-de-camp of Gen. Brunet had even taken from my house fifty-five ounces of gold belonging to me, and thirty-three ounces belonging to one of my nieces, together with all the linen of the family.

Having committed these outrages upon my dwelling, the commander at Ennery went, at the head of one hundred men, to the house occupied by my wife and nieces, and arrested them,

without giving them time to collect any of their effects. They were conducted like criminals to Gonaïves and put on board the frigate *Guerrière*.

When I was arrested, I had no extra clothing with me. I wrote to my wife, asking her to send me such things as I should need most to the Cape, hoping I should be taken there. This note I sent by an aide-de-camp of Gen. Leclerc, begging that it might be allowed to pass; it did not reach its destination, and I received nothing.

As soon as I was taken on board the *Créole*, we set sail, and, four leagues from the Cape, found the *Héros*, to which they transferred me. The next day, my wife and my children, who had been arrested with her, arrived there also. We immediately set sail for France. After a voyage of thirty-two days, during which I endured not only great fatigue, but also every species of hardship, while my wife and children received treatment from which their sex and rank should have preserved them, instead of allowing us to land, they retained us on board sixty-seven days.

After such treatment, could I not justly ask where were the promises of Gen. Leclerc? where was the protection of the French Government? If they no longer needed my services and wished to replace me, should they not have treated me as white French generals are always treated? They are warned when they are to be relieved of their command; a messenger is sent to notify them to resign the command to such and such persons; and in case they refuse to obey, measures are taken to compel them; they can then justly be treated as rebels and sent to France.

I have, in fact, known some generals guilty of criminally neglecting their duties, but who, in consideration of their character, have escaped punishment until they could be brought before superior authority.

Should not Gen. Leclerc have informed me that various charges had been brought against me? Should he not have said to me, "I gave you my word of honor and promised you the protection of the Government; to-day, as you have been found guilty, I am going to send you to that government to give an account of your conduct"? Or, "Government orders you to submit; I convey that order to you"? I have not been so treated; on the other hand, means have been employed against me which are only used against the greatest criminals. Doubtless, I owe this treatment to my color; but my color,—my color,—has it hindered me from serving my country with zeal and fidelity? Does the color of my skin impair my honor and my bravery?

But even supposing that I was a criminal, and that Government had ordered my arrest, was it necessary to employ a hundred riflemen to arrest my wife and children in their own home, without regard to their sex, age, and rank; without humanity and without charity? Was it necessary to burn my houses, and to pillage and sack my possessions? No. My wife, my children, my family had no responsibility in the matter; they were not accountable to the Government; it was not lawful to arrest them.

Gen. Leclerc's authority was undisputed; did he fear me as a rival? I can but compare him to the Roman Senate, pursuing Hannibal to the very depths of his retreat.

Upon the arrival of the squadron in the colony, they took advantage of my absence to seize a part of my correspondence, which was at Port-Républicain; another portion, which was in one of my houses, has also been seized since my arrest. Why have they not sent me with this correspondence to give an account of my movements? They have taken forcible possession of my papers in order to charge me with crimes which I have never committed; but I have nothing to fear; this correspondence is sufficient to justify me. They have sent me to France destitute of

everything; they have seized my property and my papers, and have spread atrocious calumnies concerning me. Is it not like cutting off a man's legs and telling him to walk? Is it not like cutting out a man's tongue and telling him to talk? Is it not burying a man alive?

In regard to the Constitution, the subject of one charge against me: Having driven from the colony the enemies of the Republic, calmed the factions and united all parties; perceiving, after I had taken possession of St. Domingo, that the Government made no laws for the colony, and feeling the necessity of police regulations for the security and tranquillity of the people, I called an assembly of wise and learned men, composed of deputies from all the communities, to conduct this business. When this assembly met, I represented to its members that they had an arduous and responsible task before them; that they were to make laws adapted to the country, advantageous to the Government, and beneficial to all,—laws suited to the localities, to the character and customs of the inhabitants. The Constitution must be submitted for the sanction of the Government, which alone had the right to adopt or reject it. Therefore, as soon as the Constitution was decided upon and its laws fixed, I sent the whole, by a member of the assembly, to the Government, to obtain its sanction. The errors or faults which this Constitution may contain cannot therefore be imputed to me. At the time of Leclerc's arrival, I had heard nothing from the Government upon this subject. Why to-day do they seek to make a crime of that which is no crime? Why put truth for falsehood, and falsehood for truth? Why put darkness for light and light for darkness?

In a conversation which I had at the Cape with Gen. Leclerc, he told me that while at Samana he had sent a spy to Santo Domingo to learn if I was there, who brought back word that I was. Why did he not go there to find me and give me the orders of the First Consul, before

commencing hostilities? He knew my readiness to obey orders. Instead of this, he took advantage of my absence at St. Domingo to proceed to the Cape and send troops to all parts of the colony. This conduct proves that he had no intention of communicating anything to me.

If Gen. Leclerc went to the colony to do evil, it should not be charged upon me. It is true that only one of us can be blamed; but however little one may wish to do me justice, it is clear that he is the author of all the evils which the island has suffered, since, without warning me, he entered the colony, which he found in a state of prosperity, fell upon the inhabitants, who were at their work, contributing to the welfare of the community, and shed their blood upon their native soil. That is the true source of the evil.

If two children were quarrelling together, should not their father or mother stop them, find out which was the aggressor, and punish him, or punish them, if they were both wrong? Gen. Leclerc had no right to arrest me; Government alone could arrest us both, hear us, and judge us. Yet Gen. Leclerc enjoys liberty, and I am in a dungeon.

Having given an account of my conduct since the arrival of the fleet at St. Domingo, I will enter into some details of previous events.

Since I entered the service of the Republic, I have not claimed a penny of my salary; Gen. Laveaux, Government agents, all responsible persons connected with the public treasury, can do me this justice, that no one has been more prudent, more disinterested than I. I have only now and then received the extra pay allowed me; very often I have not asked even this. Whenever I have taken money from the treasury, it has been for some public use; the governor (l'ordonnateur) has used it as the service required. I remember that once only, when far from

home, I borrowed six thousand francs from Citizen Smith, who was governor of the Department of the South.

I will sum up, in a few words, my conduct and the results of my administration. At the time of the evacuation of the English, there was not a penny in the public treasury; money had to be borrowed to pay the troops and the officers of the Republic. When Gen. Leclerc arrived, he found three millions, five hundred thousand francs in the public funds. When I returned to Cayes, after the departure of Gen. Rigaud, the treasury was empty; Gen. Leclerc found three millions there; he found proportionate sums in all the private depositories on the island. Thus it is seen that I did not serve my country from interested motives; but, on the contrary, I served it with honor, fidelity, and integrity, sustained by the hope of receiving, at some future day, flattering acknowledgments from the Government; all who know me will do me this justice.

I have been a slave; I am willing to own it; but I have never received reproaches from my masters.

I have neglected nothing at Saint Domingo for the welfare of the island; I have robbed myself of rest to contribute to it; I have sacrificed everything for it. I have made it my duty and pleasure to develop the resources of this beautiful colony. Zeal, activity, courage,—I have employed them all.

The island was invaded by the enemies of the Republic; I had then but a thousand men, armed with pikes. I sent them back to labor in the field, and organized several regiments, by the authority of Gen. Laveaux.

The Spanish portion had joined the English to make war upon the French. Gen. Desfourneaux was sent to attack Saint Michel with well-disciplined troops of the line; he could not take it. General Laveaux ordered me to the attack; I carried it. It is to be remarked that, at the time of the attack by Gen. Desfourneaux, the place was not fortified, and that when I took it, it was fortified by bastions in every corner. I also took Saint-Raphaël and Hinche, and rendered an account to Gen. Laveaux. The English were intrenched at Pont-de-l'Ester; I drove them from the place. They were in possession of Petite Rivière. My ammunition consisted of one case of cartridges which had fallen into the water on my way to the attack; this did not discourage me. I carried the place by assault before day, with my dragoons, and made all the garrison prisoners. I sent them to Gen. Laveaux. I had but one piece of cannon; I took nine at Petite Rivière. Among the posts gained at Petite Rivière, was a fortification defended by seven pieces of cannon, which I attacked, and carried by assault. I also conquered the Spaniards intrenched in the camps of Miraut and Dubourg at Verrettes. I gained a famous victory over the English in a battle which lasted from six in the morning until nearly night. This battle was so fierce that the roads were filled with the dead, and rivers of blood were seen on every side. I took all the baggage and ammunition of the enemy, and a large number of prisoners. I sent the whole to Gen. Laveaux, giving him an account of the engagement. All the posts of the English upon the heights of Saint Marc were taken by me; the walled fortifications in the mountains of Fond-Baptiste and Délices, the camp of Drouët in the Matheux mountains, which the English regarded as impregnable, the citadels of Mirebalais, called the Gibraltar of the island, occupied by eleven hundred men, the celebrated camp of l'Acul-du-Saut, the stone fortifications of Trou-d'Eau, three stories high, those of the camp of Décayette and of Beau-Bien,—in short, all the fortifications of the English in this quarter were unable to withstand me, as were those of Neybe, of Saint Jean de la

Maguâna, of Las Mathas, of Banique and other places occupied by the Spaniards; all were brought by me under the power of the Republic. I was also exposed to the greatest dangers; several times I narrowly escaped being made prisoner; I shed my blood for my country; I received a ball in the right hip which remains there still; I received a violent blow on the head from a cannon-ball, which knocked out the greater part of my teeth, and loosened the rest. In short, I received upon different occasions seventeen wounds, whose honorable scars still remain. Gen. Laveaux witnessed many of my engagements; he is too honorable not to do me justice: ask him if I ever hesitated to endanger my life, when the good of my country and the triumph of the Republic required it.

If I were to record the various services which I have rendered the Government, I should need many volumes, and even then should not finish them; and, as a reward for all these services, I have been arbitrarily arrested at St. Domingo, bound, and put on board ship like a criminal, without regard for my rank, without the least consideration. Is this the recompense due my labors? Should my conduct lead me to expect such treatment?

I was once rich. At the time of the revolution, I was worth six hundred and forty-eight thousand francs. I spent it in the service of my country. I purchased but one small estate upon which to establish my wife and family. To-day, notwithstanding my disinterestedness, they seek to cover me with opprobrium and infamy; I am made the most unhappy of men; my liberty is taken from me; I am separated from all that I hold dearest in the world,—from a venerable father, a hundred and five years old, who needs my assistance, from a dearly-loved wife, who, I fear, separated from me, cannot endure the afflictions which overwhelm her, and from a cherished family, who made the happiness of my life.

On my arrival in France I wrote to the First Consul and to the Minister of Marine, giving them an account of my situation, and asking their assistance for my family and myself.

Undoubtedly, they felt the justice of my request, and gave orders that what I asked should be furnished me. But, instead of this, I have received the old half-worn dress of a soldier, and shoes in the same condition. Did I need this humiliation added to my misfortune?

When I left the ship, I was put into a carriage. I hoped then that I was to be taken before a tribunal to give an account of my conduct, and to be judged. Far from it; without a moment's rest I was taken to a fort on the frontiers of the Republic, and confined in a frightful dungeon.

It is from the depths of this dreary prison that I appeal to the justice and magnanimity of the First Consul. He is too noble and too good a general to turn away from an old soldier, covered with wounds in the service of his country, without giving him the opportunity to justify himself, and to have judgment pronounced upon him.

I ask, then, to be brought before a tribunal or council of war, before which, also, Gen. Leclerc may appear, and that we may both be judged after we have both been heard; equity, reason, law, all assure me that this justice cannot be refused me.

In passing through France, I have seen in the newspapers an article concerning myself. I am accused in this article of being a rebel and a traitor, and, to justify the accusation, a letter is said to have been intercepted in which I encouraged the laborers of St. Domingo to revolt. I never wrote such a letter, and I defy any one to produce it, to tell me to whom it was addressed, and to bring forward the person. As to the rest of the calumny, it falls of itself; if I had intended

to make war, would I have laid down my arms and submitted? No reasonable man, much less a soldier, can believe such an absurdity.

### **Addition to the Memoirs**

If the Government had sent a wiser man, there would have been no trouble; not a single shot would have been fired.

Why did fear occasion so much injustice on the part of Gen. Leclerc? Why did he violate his word of honor? Upon the arrival of the frigate *Guerrière*, which brought my wife, why did I see on board a number of people who had been arrested with her? Many of these persons had not fired a shot. They were innocent men, fathers of families, who had been torn from the arms of their wives and children. All these persons had shed their blood to preserve the colony to France; they were officers of my staff, my secretaries, who had done nothing but by my orders; all, therefore, were arrested without cause.

Upon landing at Brest, my wife and children were sent to different destinations, of both of which I am ignorant. Government should do me more justice: my wife and children have done nothing and have nothing to answer for; they should be sent home to watch over our interests. Gen. Leclerc has occasioned all this evil; but I am at the bottom of a dungeon, unable to justify myself. Government is too just to keep my hands tied, and allow Gen. Leclerc to abuse me thus, without listening to me.

Everybody has told me that this Government was just; should I not, then, share its justice and its benefits?

Gen. Leclerc has said in the letter to the minister, which I have seen in the newspaper, that I was waiting for his troops to grow sick, in order to make war and take back the command. This is an atrocious and abominable lie: it is a cowardly act on his part. Although I may not have much knowledge or much education, I have enough good sense to hinder me from contending against the will of my Government; I never thought of it. The French Government is too strong, too powerful, for Gen. Leclerc to think me opposed to it, who am its servant. It is true, that when Gen. Leclerc marched against me, I said several times that I should make no attack, that I should only defend myself, until July or August; that then I would commence in my turn. But, afterward, I reflected upon the misfortunes of the colony and upon the letter of the First Consul; I then submitted.

I repeat it again: I demand that Gen. Leclerc and myself be judged before a tribunal; that Government should order all my correspondence to be brought; by this means my innocence, and all that I have done for the Republic will be seen, although I know that several letters have been intercepted.

First Consul, father of all soldiers, upright judge, defender of innocence, pronounce my destiny. My wounds are deep; apply to them the healing remedy which will prevent them from opening anew; you are the physician; I rely entirely upon your justice and wisdom!

### **Suggestions for Further Reading**

Bell, Madison Smartt. *Toussaint Louverture: A Biography*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2007.

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Geggus, David Patrick, and Norman Fiering. *The World of the Haitian Revolution*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.

Langley, Lester D. *The Americas in the Age of Revolution, 1750–1850*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1996.