

**Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, Cadiz, 5 February 1783 (excerpt)**

Now, My dear General, that You are Going to Enjoy some Ease and Quiet, Permit me to propose a plan to you Which Might Become Greatly Beneficial to the Black part of Mankind—Let us Unite in Purchasing a small Estate Where We May try the Experiment to free the Negroes, and Use them only as tenants—Such an Example as Yours Might Render it a General Practice, and if We succeed in America, I Will cheerfully devote a part of My time to Render the Method fascionable in the West indias—if it Be a Wild scheme, I Had Rather Be Mad that Way, than to Be thought Wise on the other tack.

Cite as: <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-10575>

**George Washington to Marquis de Lafayette, Newburgh, 5 April 1783 (excerpt)**

The scheme my dear Marqs which you propose as a precedent, to encourage the emancipation of the black people of this country from the Bondage in wch they are held, is a striking evidence of the benevolence of your Heart. I shall be happy to join you in so laudable a work; but will defer going into a detail of the business, 'till I have the pleasure of seeing you.

Cite as: <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-10998>

**Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, Paris, 6 February 1786 (excerpt)**

. . . an other Secret I intrust to you, my dear General, is that I Have purchased for Hundred And twenty five thousand French livres a plantation in the Colony of Cayenne and am going to free my Negroes in order to Make that Experiment which you know is My Hobby Horse.

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**George Washington to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, 10 May 1786 (excerpt)**

The benevolence of your heart my Dr Marqs is so conspicuous upon all occasions, that I never wonder at any fresh proofs of it; but your late purchase of an Estate in the Colony of Cayenne with a view of emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit would diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country, but I despair of seeing it—some petitions were presented to the Assembly at its last Session, for the abolition of slavery, but they could scarcely obtain a reading. To set them afloat at once would, I really believe, be productive of much inconvenience & mischief; but by degrees it certainly might, & assuredly ought to be effected & that too by Legislative authority.

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