



**2006 Shaping the World: Conversation on Democracy
Thomas Jefferson Talks With Napoleon Bonaparte**

Section IV - Jefferson & Bonaparte Share Their Views



Match the dates with the events pertaining to the ownership of the Louisiana Territory:

1800

French Explorer La Salle claims the country drained by the Mississippi River and her tributaries in the name of the French King Louis XIV (thus the name Louisiana)

1762

Louisiana territory east of the Mississippi (including New Orleans) ceded to Spain

1682

Louisiana territory east of Mississippi territory ceded to Great Britain

1803

Following the American Revolution, British possessions east of the Mississippi and south of Canada become territory of the United States

1783

Treaty of San Ildefonso gives original providence of Louisiana to France

1763

Napoleon sells Louisiana including New Orleans to United States



Create a series of maps or an overlay system of maps to indicate the various changes in ownership of the Louisiana Territory.

What was so important about New Orleans that when Jefferson learned that the territory of Louisiana had been transferred from Spain to France, he sent Robert R. Livingston to France in 1801 to try to purchase New Orleans from Napoleon?



Click image for larger version.

A copy of this Constitution was sent by Tobias Lear, U.S. Consul to Saint-Domingue, to James Madison, U.S. Secretary of State with a letter stating that "A new and important Symbol Aera has commenced here. A Constitution has been formed for the Government of this Island, by Deputies called together for that purpose by the General in Chief. It was read in public, with great parade, on the 7th instant. The papers which I send you will shew the Addresses which preceded and followed the reading. It is not yet printed from the public. It declares Genl. Toussaint Louverture Governor for life, with the power of naming his successor. It is to be submitted to the French Republic for approbation; but in the meantime, it is to have effect here in the Island."

Click here for [full transcript](#) of Lear's letter.

What response do you think this Constitution received from Thomas Jefferson? From the American people?

In January 1802 Napoleon sent troops to Haiti under the leadership of his brother-in-law Charles Leclerc (Pauline's husband) to reclaim the colony with the purpose of restoring order and the plantation economy. In May 1802 Toussaint signs a treaty with the French under the condition that slavery will not be reinstated. Toussaint and his family are then seized and sent to France. Toussaint is imprisoned in Fort de Joux in Doubs, France on August 25, 1802.



What information can you gather from the following primary source? (Use this [Document Analysis Worksheet](#) to assist you.)

On Board the [Le] Hero[s], 1 Thermidor, an X. [July 12, 1802]

General Toussaint L'Ouverture to General Bonaparte, First Consul of the French Republic .

CITIZEN FIRST CONSUL: I will not conceal my faults from you. I have committed some. What man is exempt? I am quite ready to avow them. After the word of honor of the Captain-General [General Leclerc] who represents the French Government, after a proclamation addressed to the colony, in which he promised to throw the veil of oblivion over the events which had taken place in Saint Domingo, I, as you did on the 18th Brumaire, withdrew into the bosom of my family. Scarcely had a month passed away, when evil-disposed persons, by means of intrigues, effected my ruin with the General-in-chief, by filling his mind with distrust against me. I received a letter from him which ordered me to act in conjunction with General Brunet. I obeyed. Accompanied by two persons, I went to Gonaïves, where I was arrested. They sent me on board the frigate *Creole*, I know not for what reason, without any other clothes than those I had on. The next day my house was exposed to pillage; my wife

and my children were arrested; they had nothing, not even the means to cover themselves.

Citizen First Consul: A mother fifty years of age may deserve the indulgence and the kindness of a generous and liberal nation. She has no account to render. I alone ought to be responsible for my conduct to the Government I have served. I have too high an idea of the greatness and the justice of the First Magistrate of the French people, to doubt a moment of its impartiality. I indulge the feeling that the balance in its hands will not incline to one side more than to another. I claim its generosity.

Salutations and respect,
Toussaint L'Ouverture

French *Minister of Marine and the Colonies*, Admiral Denis Decrès (1761-1820), wrote this letter to the Commandant of the prison where Toussaint was placed. What information can you gather from this primary source? (Use this [Document Analysis Worksheet](#) to assist you.)

Minister of the Marine to the Commandant at Fort de Joux

5 Brumaire, Year X (October 27, 1802)

I received your letter of 26 Vendémiaire relative to the prisoner of state Toussaint Louverture. The First Consul charged me to make known to you that you will respond with your head for his person. Toussaint Louverture has no right to any consideration other than that demanded by humanity. Hypocrisy is a vice as familiar to him as honor and loyalty are to you, Citizen Commandant. His conduct since his detention is such as to have fixed your opinions on what one should expect of him. You have seen yourself that he sought to fool you, and you were in fact fooled by the admission to his presence of one of his satellites disguised as a doctor.

You should not restrict yourself to what you've done in order to assure yourself that he has neither money nor jewels. You must search everywhere to assure yourself and examine to make sure that he hasn't hidden or buried any in his prison. Take his watch from him. If this is agreeable to him, this need can be met by establishing in his room one of those cheap clocks that are good enough to show the passing of time. If he is sick, the health officer best known by you must alone care for him and see him, but only when it's necessary and in your presence, and with the greatest precautions so that these visits don't in any way go beyond the sphere of what is most indispensable.

The only way Toussaint would have to see his lot improved would be for him to set aside his dissimulation. His personal interests, the religious sentiments with which he should have been penetrated for the expiation of the evil he has done, imposed on him the obligation of truthfulness. But he is far from fulfilling it, and by his continual dissimulation he approaches those who approach him with interest in his lot. You can tell him he can be tranquil concerning the lot of his family; its existence is committed to my care and they want for nothing.

I presume that you have put away from him everything that could bear any relation to a uniform. Toussaint is his name; it's the only denomination that should be given him. A warm garment, gray or brown, large and comfortable, and a round hat should be his apparel. When he brags of having been a general he does nothing but recall his crimes, his hideous conduct, and his tyranny over Europeans. He merits then, nothing but the most profound contempt for his ridiculous pride.

I salute you.

Source: Schoelcher, Victor (1889). *Vie de Toussaint Louverture*. Paris: Paul Ollendorf.
Translated by Mitch Abido

Before his death in prison on April 7, 1803 Toussaint wrote his autobiography. It was first published by M. Saint-Remy in *Mémoires de la Vie de Toussaint L'Ouverture*, in Paris in 1850. This memoir was first translated and published in English in *Toussaint L'Ouverture: A Biography and Autobiography* by John R. Beard in 1863.

What information can you gather from this excerpt? (Use this [Document Analysis Worksheet](#) to assist you.)



In the dungeon of Fort Joux, this 30 Fructidor, an XI. (17th September, 1802)

GENERAL, AND FIRST CONSUL,

The respect and the submission which I could wish forever graven on my heart [*here words are wanting as if obliterated by tears (Beard)*]. If I have sinned in doing my duty, it is contrary to my intentions; if I was wrong in forming the constitution, it was through my great desire to do good; it was through having employed too much zeal, too much self-love, thinking I was pleasing the Government under which I was; if the formalities which I ought to have observed were neglected, it was through inattention. I have had the misfortune to incur your wrath, but as to fidelity and probity, I am strong in my conscience, and I dare affirm, that among all the servants of the state no one is more honest than myself. I was one of your soldiers, and the first servant of the Republic in St. Domingo; but now I am wretched, ruined, dishonored, a victim of my own services; let your sensibility be moved at my position. You are too great in feeling and too just not to pronounce a judgment as to my destiny. I charge General Cafarelli, your aide-de-camp, to put my report into your hands. I beg you to take it into your best consideration. His honor, his frankness have forced me to open my heart to him.

Salutation and respect,

Using the information you collected from the three primary sources above, write an obituary for Toussaint L'Ouverture. (Students can use a modern day obituary as an example.)