

The lamentable decadence that the island of Hispaniola has suffered for more than two centuries, the old abuses of its constitution and the small number of freed slaves and negroes that it possesses, whose shameful idleness, independence, and pride, and the continuous robberies and disorder that they commit in the countryside and on the ranches have reduced it to poverty.

But the happy dawn of the glorious reign of our august sovereign, Carlos IV, over the Island of Hispaniola ... offers a new career to its industry and navigation, through the cultivation of its fertile plains, and still more considerable treasures that it produces daily in the land, populated ... by a great multitude of settlers and negro farmers, extracted directly from the coasts of Africa, and made available to be purchased by the landowners.

-Spanish Government, "Legal Code for the Moral, Political, and Economic Governance of the Negroes of the Island of Hispaniola (Spanish Black Code)" (1784) excerpt.