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though Britain returned to France Gorée, off Africa, and Guadeloupe, Martinique, Belle Isle, Desirade, Saint Lucia, and Marie-Galante, in the Antilles, as well as Havana to Spain, she retained Fort Saint Louis, at the mouth of the river Sénégal, and other trading points on that great river; and in the West Indies, she kept several islands: Saint Vincent, Dominica, and Tobago, with a total population of perhaps twenty thousand, together with Grenada (a new sugar island, with a slave population of twelve thousand in 1750). The huge French territory of Louisiana, Crozat's old concession, passed to Spain, with its six thousand slaves, and the almost empty Spanish colony of Florida also fell to Britain.

Both the French and Spaniards reacted to this peace by a determination to compensate for their losses. The French Prime Minister Choiseul sought immediately to develop new French interests in Africa so as to free their colonies in the West Indies from reliance on Britain, formally or informally, for the supply of slaves. That the provision of slaves was an essential part of French commercial policy he was left in no doubt. Thus, in 1762, the Chamber of Commerce of Nantes declared: "The African trade is precious not only because of gold and ivory, it is infinitely more so because of the blacks that it makes possible for only they are capable of carrying through the hard work which the agriculture and manufacturing [of sugar] demand. . . ." <sup>11</sup> Choiseul agreed: "I look upon this trade as the motor of all the others. . . ." Equally, the same body in La Rochelle declared, in 1765: "The African trade has always been looked on rightly as very advantageous to the nation. More than 100 ships [that is, from La Rochelle] are annually employed in this navigation. . . . They each introduce 300 blacks. The Ministry has been shown that this commerce brings into the kingdom 11,470,330 livres solely from the expeditions. . . . If foreigners [for example, Perfide Albion] were to introduce blacks into our