

LT MAGALETTA REMARKS AT LAFAYETTE'S GRAVE

1 October 2009, Paris

Count La Fayette, distinguished guests, friends and patriots all: I am privileged to stand here today at the grave of the Marquis de La Fayette, the great friend of the United States of America, representing the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts. We have come to pay homage to a noble son of France who risked all for the liberty of the people of the United States during our war for independence from the British Crown.

The Marquis de La Fayette came to America in 1777 to fight for the cause of liberty and the rights of a free people to determine their own destiny. It was a cause at that time alien to men of his class. La Fayette risked his station, his fortune and his life for a noble cause. Our people owe him a debt that can really never be repaid other than to remember. On 17 June 1824 La Fayette was present in our home city of Boston, Massachusetts for the laying of a cornerstone to a monument commemorating the Battle of Bunker Hill, the first great battle of the American Revolution.

Today we deposit soil from that very battlefield here on the grave of La Fayette. This mingling of the battle consecrated soil of Massachusetts with the sacred soil of France symbolizes the never-ending bond between America and La Fayette and more importantly, the unbreakable bond of Franco-American friendship. May God rest the soul of the Marquis de La Fayette, may God bless the United States of America and may God bless our longtime friend and ally France. Thank you all for coming!