

## John Laurens to Henry Laurens, January 14, 1778

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Head Quarters 14<sup>th</sup> Jan 1778

I barely hinted to you my dearest father my desire to augment the Continental Forces from an untried Source. I wish I had any foundation to ask for an extraordinary addition to those favors which I have already received from you. I would solicit you to cede me a number of your able bodied men slaves, instead of leaving me a fortune—

I would bring about a twofold good; first I would advance those who are unjustly deprived of the rights of mankind to a state which would be a proper gradation between abject slavery and perfect liberty, and besides I would reinforce the defenders of liberty with a number of gallant soldiers. Men, who have the habit of subordination almost indelibly impressed on them, would have one very essential qualification of soldiers. I am persuaded that if I could obtain authority for the purpose, I would have a corps of such men trained, uniformly clad, equip'd and ready in every respect to act at the opening of the next campaign. The ridicule that may be thrown on the color, I despise, because I am sure of rendering essential service to my country. I am tired of the languor with which so sacred a war as this, is carried on. My circumstances prevent me from writing so long a letter as I expected and wish'd to have done on a subject which I have much at heart. I entreat you to give a favorable answer to

Your most affectionate

John Laurens

The Honble Henry Laurens Esqr.,  
President of Congress

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