

Washington by the Committee of Arrangement
from congress

Head quarters, Fish Kill

Oct 6 - 1778

(In handwriting of Alexander
Hamilton)

The principal motive for authorizing the Count to raise his corps, was to induce him voluntarily to resign the command of the cavalry, with which the officers under him were in general dissatisfied, and it was thought better to submit to the defect in its composition, than either to leave the cavalry in a state, which occasioned a total relaxation of discipline, and destroyed its usefulness, or to force the Count out of it, whose zeal and bravery entitled him to regard, without compensating in some way that might reconcile him to the sacrifice, he was required to make. When he proposed his plan to me, I informed him of the objections to it and even avoided flattering him with the concurrence of Congress.

--- Their resolve of the 28th March
which sanctioned his raising a
corps left to the point of engaging
prisoners and deserters undecided,
but empowered me to dispense
in that instance with their
resolve against it, if I should
deem it not injurious to the
service. The reasons before assigned
determined me to consent to
the Comr's views so far as to
permit his composing a third
of his infantry of deserters.

When the Board was consulted
me on the propriety of permitting
this corps to join the army,
recurring to the original principle
of its formation, my opinion
naturally favored its coming
forward, if agreeable to Congress.
After all the trouble the
Comr has given himself to raise
and equip the corps he could
not but esteem it a singular
hardship to be deprived
of the benefit of his exertions
from considerations of

inconvenience. --

The circumstance of the Grants having exceeded his establishment was a matter to which I did not avert. There would certainly be no injustice in reducing the extra numbers. But whether as the men are raised and clad and the expence already incurred, it may not be as well to risk the additional disadvantage which may attend bringing them into the field is a question which Congress will decide --