

Philadelphia May 31 1776

The Conviction which of late Measures of Administration have brot to the Minds of doubting Persons has such an Effect, that I think of Colonies cannot long remain an independant depending People, but that they will declare themselves as their Interest & safety have long required, entirely separated from a prostituted Government of Gbritain. upon this Subject I have wrote to our Friend [Col?] Orne & beg leave to refer you thereto — the principal object of our attention at this important Time I think should be the manufacturing Arms, Lead & Cloathing, & obtaining Flint, for I suppose since the Measures adopted by North Carolina & Virginia that there cannot remain a Doubt with our Assembly of the propriety of declaring for Independency & therefore that our Thots will be <sup>mostly</sup> directed to a Mean for supporting it. Powder & Cannon are so successfully manufactured that if the spirit continues with sufficient Encouragement for our Manufacturers I think we may be sure of full Supplies — With respect to Arms then, is it not necessary that each Assembly should give such encouragement as will effectually answer the purpose? I was of opinion last fall that twelve Dollars should be given for all that should be brot to the Commissary in consequence of a Resolve then issued by the Court, but since that was not the opinion of the Members in general & we are now greatly in Want of this Article would it not be a good plan to exempt from the Duties of War all Manufacturers of fire arms, to give a premium to them for each Apprentice which they shall take & Journey man that they shall employ, & thirteen or fourteen Dollars for all

Dear Sir,

Philadelphia May [31?] 1776

The conviction which the late Measures of Administration have brot to the Minds of doubting Persons has such an Effect, that I think the Colonies cannot long remain an independent depending People, but that they will declare themselves as their Interest of Safety have long required, entirely separ<sup>at</sup>ed from the prostituted Government of Gbritain. upon this subject I have wrote to our Friend [Col?] Orne to beg leave to refer you thereto—the principal object of our attention at this important Time I think should be the manufacturing arms, lead and clothing, of obtaining Flint, for I suppose since the Measures adopted by North Carolina and Virginia that there cannot remain a doubt with our assembly of the propriety of declaring independency and therefore that our Tho'ts will be <sup>mostly</sup> directed to the Means for supporting it. Powder and cannon are so successfully manufactured that if the spirit continues with sufficient Encouragement for the manufacturers I think we may be sure of full supplies— With respect to arms then, is it not necessary that each assembly should give such encouragement as will effectually answer the purpose? I was of opinion last fall that twelve Dollars should be given for all that should be brot to the Commissary in consequence of the Resolve then issued by the court, but since that was not the opinion of the Members in general and we are now greatly in Want of this Article would it not be a good plan to exempt from the Duties of War all Manufacturers of fire arms, to give a premium to them for each Apprentice which they shall take and Journey man that they shall employ, and thirteen or fourteen Dollars for all

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society  
 MMN # 102153  
 Date: May 31, 1776  
 Description: Elbridge Gerry on domestic production of war products, Philadelphia

that shall be delivered agreeable to the former resolve in  
twelve months; surely when the success of our Measure  
much depends on obtaining this article we shall not hesitate  
to give full encouragements as will obtain it with as good  
success as we have heretofore of article of Saltpetre—

The Lead you have before attended to, I hope you will  
pursue the plan of carrying on of Works at North Hampton.  
If a Manufacturer is Wanted I apprehend the colony of Virginia  
will spare us one. They sent to Europe for several and are  
now successfully carrying on of Works in that Colony, pray my  
Dear Sir pursue these objects as of greatest Importance,

Flint I think must be imported, & Cloathing may  
be manufactured if the Inhabitants are timely apprized thereof.  
would it not be well to recommend to them at large to  
exert themselves for obtaining by their manufactures a  
Sufficiency of Woollen & Linnen for the ensuing Year &  
also for the assembly to cause a sufficient Number of  
Blankets Coats [etc?] to be made for the soldiers agreeable  
to the method pursued of last Year? The Men must be well  
fed, clothed, armed, & payed or You can never oblige them  
to do their Duty— our Friend Major Hoawley the Speaker  
Gen<sup>l</sup>, Orne & Mr Sullivan I think will <sup>assist</sup> promote these Measures,  
if you think it convenient to suggest the Same—

I hope that one or more Cannon Forger will be encouraged  
in our colony, & with respect to Cloathing think that after this  
Year our Trade will plentifully supply us— I remain Sir with  
sincere regard for your <sup>self</sup> and Friends your most obed<sup>t</sup> and humb<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>  
Elbridge Gerry

that shall be delivered agreeable to the former resolve in  
twelve months; surely when the success of our Measure  
much depends on obtaining this article we shall not hesitate  
to give full encouragements as will obtain it with as good  
success as we gave heretofore the article of Saltpetre—

The Lead you have before attended to and I hope you will  
pursue the plan of carrying on the works at North Hampton.  
If a Manufacturer is Wanted I apprehend the colony of Virginia  
will spare Us one. They sent to Europe for several and are  
now successfully carrying on the Works in that Colony, pray my  
Dear Sir pursue these objects as of the greatest Importance.

Flint I [think?] must be imported, and Cloathing may  
be manufactured if the Inhabitants are timely apprized thereof  
would it not be well to recommend to them at large to  
exert themselves for obtaining by their manufactures a  
Sufficiency of Woollen and linnen for the ensuing Year and  
also for the assembly to cause a sufficient Number of  
Blankets Coats [etc?] to be made for the soldiers agreeable  
to the method [pursued?] the last Year? The Men must be well  
fed, clothed, armed, and payed or You can never oblige them  
to do their Duty— our Friend Major Hoawley the Speaker  
Gen<sup>l</sup>, Orne and Mr Sullivan I think will <sup>assist</sup> and promote these Measures,  
if you Think it convenient to Suggest the Same—

I hope that one or more Cannon Forger will be encouraged  
in our colony, and with respect to cloathing think that after this  
Year our Trade will plentifully supply us— I remain Sir with  
sincere regard for your <sup>self</sup> and Friends your most obed<sup>t</sup> and humb<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>  
Elbridge Gerry

*All Manufactures can be obtained without sending to Virginia  
It will save much Time & Expense, as the Works, are far beyond the  
Allegheny Mountains*

P.S. If Manufacturers can be obtained without sending to [Virginia?]  
It will save much Time and Expense, as the Works, are far beyond the  
Allegheny Mountains—