

John T. Norton to Lewis Tappan

February 15, 1841:

Yours of the 12<sup>th</sup> came to hand today. In the haste of my interview with Mr. Jocelyn, I may have forgotten to explain to him why the Africans could not be brought here & kept as you proposed.

Judge William said expressly that if the prisoners were brought before him under existing circumstances, he should feel it to be his duty to proceed to an immediate hearing & so stated were his principles on the subject that he was confident that he should order them directly back. You will perceive therefore that it would be to no avail to move in the matter at all. He felt that he had no right whatever to interfere unless? the subject was before the Supreme Court of the U.S.

I agree with you fully that the Africans should be freed here. They are entitled to unqualified freedom. I should feel but little more confidence in our Govt., nor in some of our naval officers (Lieut. Meade, for instance) than in the Govr. of Cuba. Much sincere prayer is, I doubt not, continually ascending in behalf of our poor brothers & I cannot doubt, that deliverance will come in some way. Their friends must pray without ceasing & at the same time must use every means in their power.

If you think of it when at the A\_\_\_ 's office let the future number of the reporter be addressed to the Rev. Horace Potter, D.D., Albany. He has just spent three days with me & I have given him a set up to their time. He is nearly or quite right on the subject of slavery.

Very truly yours

John T. Norton