

"Brown's Pre-Arranged Plan," Baltimore (MD) *Sun*, October 29, 1859
<https://stampedes.dickinson.edu/document/baltimore-md-sun-brown-pre-arranged-plan-october-29-1859>

BROWN'S PRE-ARRANGED PLAN.

Among the letters of Col. Hugh Forbes, just put forth, exposing a fore-knowledge by leading republican Senators and others of the long meditated insurrection of old Brown at Harper's Ferry, is one dated at Washington, D. C., May 14, 1858, and addressed to S. G. Howe, Boston. This letter gives his own and Brown's plans of operating on the Southern States. Forbes' plan was to organize along the Southern slave frontier a series of slave stampedes. But the following is more to the point:

BROWN'S PLAN.

Brown had a different scheme. He proposed, with some twenty-five to fifty (colored and white mixed,) well armed, and bringing a quantity of spare arms, to beat up a slave quarter in Virginia. To this I objected, that, no preparatory notice having been given to the slaves, (no notice could, with prudence, be given them,) the invitation to rise might, unless they were already in a state of agitation, meet with no response, or a feeble one. To this he replied that he was sure of a response. He calculated that he could get, on the first night, from 200 to 500.

Half, or thereabouts, of this first lot he proposed to keep with him, mounting 100 or so of them, and make a dash at Harper's Ferry manufactory, destroying what he could not carry off.—The other men not of this party were to be subdivided into three, four or five distinct parties, each under two or three of the original band, and would beat up other slaveholders, whence more men would be sent to join him.

In another letter of January 15th, to Sanborn, secretary of the Abolition Emigrant Aid Society, he refers to Capt. Brown in this wise:

There certainly is one error, and there may be others, in your letter of the 15th, respecting the sums received by Capt. Brown. The National Committee, which promised \$5,000, sent \$150, (not \$500 as you supposed,) and the person who brought the \$150 charged \$40 for expenses, leaving \$110 only. This was all Capt. B. had when I joined him at Tabor. I am sure that he would have given me money if he had it—any other supposition is out of the question. I cannot blame him for believing in the force of moral obligations. I only think that he was not sufficiently energetic in insisting upon their fulfilment. They are optional to make; but once made are sacred. Mr. Tidd sent on a financial mission may have brought more in November.

The \$600 for secret service you speak of as being enough for the purpose, is not enough. This is another error, and a serious one.

Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands