MEMPHIS APPEAL.

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MEMPHIS.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1865.

REPORT OF LIEUT.-GEN. U. S. GRANT, OF THE ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES—1864-'65.

HEADQ'RS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES, WASHINGTON, D. C., July 22, 1865.

SR:—I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of the armies of the United States from the date of my appointment to command the same.

From an early period in the rebellion I had been impressed with the idea that active and continuous operations of all the troops that could be brought into the field, regardless of season and weather, were necessary to a speedy termination of the war. The resources of the enemy and his numerical strength were far inferior to ours, but as an offset to this we had a vast territory with a population hostile to the government, to garrison, and long lines of river and railroad communications to protect, to enable us to supply the operating armies.

The armies in the East and West acted independently and without concert, like a relay team, as we would say pulling to a point, enabling the enemy to use to great advantage his interior lines of communication for transporting troops from east to west, reinforcements from south to north (vigorously pushed, and to furlough large numbers, during seasons of inactivity on our part, to go to their homes and do the work of producing, for the support of their armies, a specie-paying currency, our principal strength and resources were not more than balanced by these disadvantages and the enemy's superior position.

From the first, I was firm in the conviction that no peace could be had that would be stable and conducive to the happiness of the people, both North and South, until the military power of the rebellion was entirely broken.

I therefore determined, first, to use the greatest number of troops practicable against the armed force of the enemy, preventing him from using the same force at different seasons against first one and then another of our armies, and the possibility of repose for refitting and replacing supplies for carrying on the resistance. Second, to hammer continuously against the armed force of the enemy and his resources, until by mere attrition, if no other way should result, he nothing left to him but an equal submission with the loyal section of our common country to the Constitution and laws of the land.

These views have been kept constantly in mind, and orders given and campaigns made to carry them out. Whether they might have been better in conception and execution is for the people, who mourn the loss of friends fallen, and who have to pay the pecuniary cost, to say. All I can say is, that what I have done has been done conscientiously, to the best of my ability, and in what I conceived to be for the best interests of the whole country.

At the date when this report begins the situation of the contending forces was about as follows: the Mississippi River was strongly garrisoned by Federal troops from its source down to Memphis. The line of the Arkansas was also held, thus giving to armed possession of all west of the Mississippi, north of that stream. A few points in southern Louisiana, principally on the Red River, were held by us, together with a small garrison at and near the mouth of the Rio Grande. All the balance of the vast territory of Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas was almost undisputed possession of the enemy, with an army of probably not less than 80,000 effective men that could have been brought into the field and have given resistent opposition to have brought them out. The let-alone policy had demoralized this force so that probably not more than one-half of it was ever present with its colors at any one time. But the one-half, or 40,000 men, with the bands of guerrillas scattered through Missouri, Arkansas, and along the Mississippi River, and the disloyal character of much of the population, compelled the use of a large number of troops to keep navigation open on the river, and to protect the loyal people in the west of Missouri. The line of Mississippi River held substantially with the line of the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers, running east to Cumberland nearly all of the state of Tennessee.

South of Chattanooga a small foothold had been obtained in Georgia, sufficient to protect East Tennessee from incursions from the south, with a depot at Dalton, Ga. West Virginia was substantially within our lines. Virginia, with the exception of the northern border, the Potomac River, and a small strip south of it, east of Lake river covered by the troops at Norfolk and Fort Monroe, and the territory covered by the Army of the Potomac lying along the Rapidan, was in the possession of the enemy. Along the sea-coast footholds had been obtained at Plymouth, Washington and Newbern, in North Carolina; Beaufort, Folly and Cole Islands, Port Royal, South Carolina; Fernandina and St. Augustine, in Florida. Key West and Pensacola were also in our possession, while all the important points on the Gulf were in our possession.

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Accompanying this report is a map of which was sent to General Sherman and other commanders in March, 1864, shows by red lines the strategic points occupied by us at that time, and also the lines which it was proposed to occupy.

Before the lines there were many bands of guerrillas and a large population disloyal to the government, making it necessary to guard every foot of road in possession, and to fortify our lines. In the South a reign of military despotism prevailed, which made every man and boy capable of bearing arms a soldier, and those who could not bear arms were used as spies and informers. Such a state of society rendered it necessary to adopt as a process for collecting deserters and returning them, thus crippling the enemy to bring almost his entire strength into the field.

I determined to concentrate the bulk of his forces east of the Mississippi into two armies, commanded by Gens. R. E. Lee and J. E. Johnston, his ablest and best generals. The latter was entrenched in a strong position south the south bank of the Rapidan, extending from Mine Run westward, strongly intrenched, covering and defending Richmond, the rebel capital, against the Army of the Potomac. The army under Johnston occupied a strongly entrenched position at Dalton, Ga., covering and defending Atlanta, Ga., a place of great importance to the rebellion, and the railroad connecting the armies of Maj.-Gen. W. T. Sherman.

In addition to these armies he had a large cavalry force under Forrest, in northwest Mississippi, a considerable force of all arms in the Shenandoah Valley, and in the western part of Virginia, and extensive eastern part of Tennessee; and also confronting our seacoast garrisons, and holding blockaded ports where we had no foothold upon land.

These two armies and the cities covered and defended by them, were the main objective points of the campaign.

Lieut.-Gen. George G. Meade had the immediate command of the Army of the Potomac from where I exercised general supervision of the movements of all our armies.

Gen. Sherman was instructed to move against Johnston's army, to break it up, and to go into the interior of the enemy's country as far as he could, inflicting all the damage he could upon their war resources. If the enemy in his front followed sign of joining Lee, to follow him up the full extent of his ability, while I would prevent the concentration of Lee upon him, if it was in the power of the Army of the Potomac to do so. Before specific written instructions were not given, for the reason that I had not decided upon the plan of the campaign, and was satisfied that he understood them, and would execute them to the fullest extent possible.

Maj.-Gen. N. P. Banks, then an expedition up Red River, under Maj.-Gen. Sherman, Lee, which had been organized previous to my appointment to command the armies, was ordered to move, the 15th of March, and it was intended that the transport should be taken at the earliest practicable day, and that if he found that the taking of it would occupy from ten to fifteen days, more than the time Sherman expected his troops to be absent, he would send back at the time specified by Gen. Sherman, even if it led to the abandonment of the main object of the Red River expedition, for this force was necessary in movements east of the Mississippi, that should this expedition prove successful, he would land his force at Mobile, or some other point on the Gulf, and return the troops to the neighborhood of New Orleans, commencing the move by the time Sherman should need them back. Orders were made that then held by Admiral Porter, that it might be a part of the spring campaign to move against Mobile, that it certainly would aid Sherman in his advance into Georgia, by attracting the attention of the enemy to other points than those in the interior of Georgia, where he was to operate.

Lee's army and Richmond being the greater objects toward which the energies of the rebellion tended in the next campaign, it is desirable to unite all the force we can, against them. The necessity of covering Washington with the Army of the Potomac, and of covering your capital with your army, makes it impossible to unite these forces at the beginning of any move. I propose, therefore, what comes next in order, to state the plan of campaign which was finally adopted. The Army of the Potomac will act from its present base, Lee's army being the only objective point. You will collect all the forces you can, wherever stationed that can be spared for garrison duty—I should say not less than twenty thousand effective men—to operate on the south side of James river, Richmond being your objective point. The force you already have will be added about ten thousand men from South Carolina, under Maj.-Gen. Gillmore, who will command them in person. Maj.-Gen. Sheridan is ordered to report to you, to command the troops sent into the field from your own department.

Gen. Gillmore will be ordered to report to you in person, with the troops of his command, on transports, by the 18th instant, or as soon thereafter as practicable. Should you not receive notice by the time he should, you will commence the execution of them and your other forces as you may deem best calculated to deceive the enemy as to the real move to be made.

When you are ready to move, take City Point, with as much force as possible. Fortify, or rather entrench, at once, and concentrate all your troops for the time to move against Lee's army. From City Point directions cannot be given at this time for your further movements.

The fact has already been stated—that is, that Richmond is to be your objective point, and that I desire to co-operate between your force and the Army of the Potomac—must be your guide. This indicates the necessity of your holding close to the south bank of the James River, and advance. Then, should the enemy be forced into his entrenchments in Richmond, the army of the Potomac would follow, and by means of transports the two armies would be united.

All the minor details of your advance are left entirely to your own discretion. If, however, you think it advisable to use your cavalry south of the James river, you can do so, and should Hick's Ford above City Point, it would be of immense advantage.

You will please forward for my information a plan of your proposed campaign, with orders, details and instructions you may give for the execution of this order.

U. S. GRANT, Lieut.-Gen.

Maj.-Gen. B. F. BUTLER.

On the 19th these instructions were substantially reiterated. On the 19th, in order to secure full co-operation between this army and that of Gen. Meade, the following was directed to him to move from Fort Monroe the same day that Gen. Meade moved from Culpeper. The exact time I was to telegraph him as soon as I left City Point, and that it would not be earlier than the 27th of April; that it was my intention to fight Lee between Culpeper and Richmond if he would stand. Should he have retreated back into Richmond, I would follow up and make a junction with his (Gen. Butler's) army on the James River; that, could I be certain he would be in the Potomac river, I would, if on that side so as to have his left resting on the James above the city, I would form the junction there; that circumstances might make this course advisable even now; that I would leave the exaction to secure footing as far up the south side of the river as he could, and as soon as possible after the receipt of orders to move; that if he could not carry the city he should at least detain as large a force as possible.

In co-operation with the main movements against Lee and Johnston, I was desirous of using other troops to secure a foothold in the interior of Georgia, where the fields of immediate operations, and also those kept in the background for the protection of otherextended lines between the loyal states and the armies operating against them.

A very considerable force under command of Maj.-Gen. Siegel was held for the protection of West Virginia and the frontier of Maryland and Pennsylvania. Whilst these troops could not be withdrawn to distant fields without exposing the North to invasion by comparatively small bodies of the enemy, they could act directly to their front and give better protection than if lying idle in garrison. By such a movement they would compel the enemy to detach largely for the protection of his supplies and lines of communication. Gen. Siegel was therefore directed to organize all his available force into two expeditions, to move from Beverly and Martinsburg, under command of Gens. Ord and Crook, against the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad.

Subsequently, Gen. Ord having been relieved at his own request, Gen. Siegel was instructed, at his own suggestion, to give up the expedition by Beverly and to form two columns, one under Gen. Crook, on the Kanawha, numbering about ten thousand men, and one on the Shenandoah, numbering about seven thousand men. The one on the Shenandoah to assemble between the Cumberland and the main Kanawha, and the infantry and artillery advanced to Cedar creek with such cavalry as could be made available at the moment, to threaten the enemy in the Shenandoah valley, and concentrate all your troops for the time to move, which was the 20th of April, when the troops to be at your disposal would be ordered to the Kanawha, and from there, if I should direct, he would assume command in person. The accompanying map, a copy of which was sent to General Sherman and other commanders in March, 1864, shows by red lines the strategic points occupied by us at that time, and also the lines which it was proposed to occupy.

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