

THIS WAS THE CIVIL WAR Lincoln's Command Problems

By MERTON T. AKERS
UPI Correspondent

The question before President Lincoln in early October 1863 was:

How can a President and commander-in-chief of the nation's armed forces compel his generals to fight?

And secondarily, if the generals did fight, as happened on occasion, how could he force them to keep on fighting until the Union, with its superior manpower and industrial might, won the Civil War?

The question was not new. It had plagued Lincoln since Fort Sumter, especially in the eastern war theater. He could call the role of many failures and few victories—McDowell's reluctance to fight the first battle of Bull Run (Manassas); McClellan's tardiness in launching the '62 Peninsula campaign; his failure to follow up the battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg); Burnside's rashness at Fredericksburg; Hooker's ineptitude at Chancellorsville; Meade's slowness in pursuit of Lee after Gettysburg.

Remedies Ineffective

The problem had become chronic. Lincoln's homemade remedies were ineffective. Some of his remedies had been no better than expedient, some seemingly almost casual. More often than not, Lincoln's choice between generals to head the big eastern Army of the Potomac was between bad and worse, not between good and better.

Now in this October of 1863 his problem of leadership was doubled. Not one general was in trouble, but two.

Maj. Gen. George G. Meade had followed the army of Gen. Robert E. Lee back into Virginia after the battle of Gettysburg but had not come to grips with it by October.

Lincoln became impatient in mid-September and wrote to Army Commander Henry W. Halleck that Meade should be moving on Lee.

In due time Meade replied that "I can get a battle out of Lee under very disadvantageous circumstances . . . which is not likely to result in any very decided advantage, even in case I should be victorious. In this view I am reluctant to run the risks without the positive sanc-

tion of the government." Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton sent the dispatch to Lincoln "for reflection overnight."

The President then analyzed the whole subject of the Army of the Potomac and Meade in a letter to Halleck.

"For a battle, then, General Meade has three men to General Lee's two. Yet it having been determined that choosing ground and standing on the defensive gives so great an advantage that the three cannot safely attack the two, the three are left simply standing on the defensive also."

"If the enemy's 60,000 are sufficient to keep our 90,000 away from Richmond, why, by the same rule, may not 40,000 of ours keep their 60,000 away from Washington, leaving us 50,000 to put to some other uses? . . ."

Same Old Story

Secretary of Navy Gideon Welles, talking to Lincoln about this time, quoted him as saying that Meade was not doing anything and did not want to do anything.

"It is the same old story of this Army of the Potomac," Welles quoted Lincoln. "Imbecility, inefficiency—don't want to do . . ."

"Oh, it is terrible, terrible! This weakness, this indifference of our Potomac generals, with such armies of good and brave men."

A little later Meade was in Washington and reported to his wife that he was courteously received. He offered to quit as army commander if either Lincoln or Halleck wished.

Halleck told him, Meade continued, "there is no such good luck for me . . ."

But Halleck and Lincoln urged that "I should try and do something."

Finally on Oct. 16, Lincoln wrote to Halleck and made an offer to Meade that he never had made to a general before.

"If General Meade now can attack him (Lee) on a field no worse than equal for us, and will do so with all the skill and courage which he, his officers, and men possess, the honor will be his if he succeeds, and the blame mine if he fails."

Welles noted in his diary the same day that "this is taking

Meade beyond his ability." The letter reached the press and anti-administration newspapers raised a storm. Lincoln was prodding generals to useless slaughter, the editorial ran.

But Lincoln might as well have saved the wear and tear on his pen. Meade fought nothing bigger than a small-sized engagement before time for the army to go into winter quarters.

Lincoln's other command problem was in the West. Between the mountains and the Mississippi River he had four armies, all independent and all occupied with their own problems. Coordination, when there was any, was through Washington.

Largest Army Penned

The largest army, under Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans, was penned in Chattanooga, Tenn., after losing the battle of Chickamauga. It had been reinforced with two corps from the Army of the Potomac and seemed safe for the time being but it was not showing many signs of fighting. Other reinforcements were on the way from the Army of the Tennessee commanded by Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside had an army at Knoxville, Tenn., and Maj. Gen. N. P. Banks one on the lower Mississippi.

Time and Lincoln's patience were running out on Rosecrans. Stanton wanted him removed. Lincoln was deliberating the question, meanwhile writing notes to Rosecrans, urging him to hold on, to stab at the Confederates and to live off the land.

But Rosecrans was having supply troubles. Confederate cavalry had raided his lines and on Oct. 2, he ordered the army on two-third rations. Forage for horses and mules was scarce and he ordered the country combed for unravaged cornfields. Their rations were reduced to half and not many of them existed.

Despite his immediate problems Rosecrans found time to write to Lincoln on Oct. 3:

"If we maintain the position in such strength that the enemy are obliged to abandon their position, and the elections in the great states go favorably, would it not be well to offer a general amnesty to all officers



OLD QUESTION—The question before President Lincoln in early October, 1863, was how to make his generals fight. And, if they did fight, how could he keep them fighting until the North, with its superior manpower and industrial strength, could win the war.

It was not a new question; it had plagued Lincoln since Fort Sumter. Lincoln had double general trouble. Maj. Gen. George C. Meade, left, had, after the Battle of Gettysburg, followed the army of Gen. Robert E. Lee back into Virginia but it was now October and he had not come to grips with the Confederate force. Lincoln became impatient and did everything he could to get Meade moving. Lincoln also had trouble in the west. The largest Union army, under Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans, was penned in at Chattanooga after losing the battle of Chickamauga. It had been reinforced but showed no signs of life. Lincoln knew that he had to act on Rosecrans, probably replace him. (UPI)

Taylor May Go to Pakistan for Talks

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Kennedy is considering sending Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, to Pakistan next month in further efforts to patch up strained U. S. relations with that country, officials said Saturday.

Taylor returned last week from a trouble-shooting mission to Viet Nam. U. S. relations with Pakistan have been deteriorating as a result of a series of trade and border agreements it made with Red China, apparently in annoyance over American aid to India.

Taylor is scheduled to attend a meeting in Ankara, Turkey, Nov. 5-6 of the military committee of the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), of which Pakistan is a member. Officials said it has been suggested Taylor go on to Pakistan from there.

COMMITTED SUICIDE
LA ROCHELLE, France (UPI) — Claude Auditeau, 28, committed suicide Sunday by shooting himself minutes after he accidentally shot and killed Michel Cointard, 14, while the two hunted pheasants, police said today.

Many Barriers Of Segregation Dropped

By AL KUETTNER
UPI Correspondent

Negroes called it their "summer of discontent" but the fact is that many segregation barriers were dropped almost without fanfare during the past three months.

It was only three years ago that violence swept the University of Georgia when its first two Negroes were admitted. Today, 35 Negroes attend units of the state's university system including 15 at Georgia and two at Valdosta State college which is in a strong segregation area. There was no fuss about any of them.

According to the Southern Education Reporting Service, 139 of the 150 school districts which desegregated for the first time this fall did so voluntarily.

Here are some other cracks that have appeared in the wall of segregation since July 1: The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers voted to remove all racial membership restrictions.

Chattanooga, Tenn., desegregated most leading restaurants. The Muscogee County (Columbus) Ga., and Brunswick, Ga., school boards voted to desegregate schools voluntarily.

Norfolk, Va., announced through a biracial commission that motels and hotels would desegregate.

At Gary, Ind., Methodist hospital ended discrimination in all areas of hospital life.

Rural desegregation came to Tennessee with admission of five Negroes to Livingston Academy without trouble.

Jackson, Miss., placed five Negro officers on the police force.

In Baton Rouge, La., barriers were dropped at lunch counters and at 12 retail stores.

Sumter, S. C., desegregated a theater, the first move in that town.

In Peoria, Ill., banks agreed to hire 20 Negroes in non-customer jobs.

At Selma, Ala., four Negro

women were admitted to the previously all-white First Presbyterian church.

Some Still Dissatisfied

If the segregation walls are tumbling so quietly, why are some Negro leaders still dissatisfied?

Leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth argue that most of the victories so far are token concessions. Their cry is "freedom now," meaning wholesale integration.

That kind of argument appeals to some large groups of Negroes. It is the rally cry that

turns out thousands in such places as Birmingham.

Against some strong advice from his own people, King is moving toward the launching of another major street demonstration in the Alabama city. He and Shuttlesworth claim there has been too little effort to resolve racial discord since the demonstrations of last May.

A bi-racial committee in Birmingham, which has been struggling toward a start at desegregation amidst the shock of dynamitings and killings, views the planned resumption of King's campaign much like the

act of driving a herd of horses over a field of grass that has just sprouted in the spring.

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