B.S.

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Two Paths To Command: Command Systems of the Union and the Confederacy 1861-1865

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This thesis presents a parallel look at the command systems of the Union and the Confederacy from tne beginning of the war until 1865. Emphasis is on the changes in the two systems as they each change and adapted to the conditions of the modern war. Problems encountered in the relationship between each nation's military leaders and the political civilians leading each nation are examined. War departments of the Union and the Confederacy are discussed briefly. Development of the corps structures in both armies is also discussed.

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ABSTRACT

TWO PATHS TO COMMAND: COMMAND SYSTEMS OF THE UNION AND THE CONFEDERACY, 1861-1865 by Leonard Joseph Fullenkamp.

A parallel look at the command systems of the Union and the Confederacy as they evolved during the Civil War in part explains why the war was fought the way it was and why it lasted four years. Both nations began the war with national command systems which were ill-equipped to control the huge armies which eventually were formed. Ultimately, after numerous costly mistakes, the North was able to achieve an effective command system which contributed to the Union victory. The South was never able to develop a command system which provided for the efficient utilization of its forces.

At the beginning of the Civil War Abraham Lincoln exercised general control over the Union's armies while the details of military command remained in the hands of General-in-Chief Winfield Scott. Neither Scott nor his successor, George McClellan, were able to provide the effective leadership demanded by the President. Dissatisfied with the strategic direction of the war by his generals Lincoln assumed their duties himself and for a time functioned as both the commander-in-chief and general-in-chief. This arrangement did not measurably improve his ability to direct the nation's armies, and therefore Lincoln restored the position of general-in-chief to the Union's command system and appointed Major General Henry Halleck to that post. Although seemingly qualified to be the senior military commander, Halleck refused to wield the authority Lincoln was willing to give him. Consequently, for a year and a half, Lincoln maintained a high degree of personal involvement in the direction of the war while he sought a general who shared his strategic views.

Finally, in March 1864 Lincoln and the Congress picked Ulysses G. Grant to replace Henry Halleck. Grant's effectiveness as the senior military commander was enhanced by the appointment of Halleck as the Chief of Staff of the Army. In this capacity Halleck performed many of the burdensome administrative duties, normally the responsibility of the general-in-chief, thus enabling Grant to direct his full attention to the prosecution of the war. This command arrangement provided the most efficient use of the nation's armies, thereby, for the first time since the war began, bringing the full weight of the Union's combat power against the South. Having benefited from its mistakes, the North was eventually able to develop a command system which produced the most effective use of its advantages in manpower and resources.

By contrast, the South was never able to achieve a comparably effective command system. Jefferson Davis believed he could be both the political and military leader for his country and its armies, and therefore the command system devised by the Confederacy in 1861 assigned him both tasks. Throughout the war, Davis retained a firm grip on both jobs despite a succession of military reversals and repeated attempts by his political opponents to dilute his war powers. On two occasions, in March 1862 and February 1864, Davis was forced to name commanding generals in order to quiet his critics. Neither of these officers was given substantive authority and, as a consequence, their appointments did not significantly alter the Confederate command system. In February 1865 Davis was at last compelled by Congress to relinquish command of the army to General Robert E. Lee, who was named General-in-Chief of the Confederate armies. This change to the Confederate command system came too late in the war and therefore did not significantly affect either the direction or the eventual outcome of the war.

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CHAPTER I

Mobilization and Initial Failures

"What can I do with such generals
as we have?" Lincoln

In the course of the American Civil War both the North and the South formed huge armies to overcome their opponents. Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, as commanders-in-chief, bore the primary responsibility for the conduct of the war in their respective nations. Operating under similar command systems at the outset, they were forced to reshape their command systems under the stress of war. Ultimately the North after years of costly mistakes achieved an effective command system which enabled it to bring the full weight of its national resources into play and thereby to achieve victory over the South. For a variety of reasons the South was never able to achieve a similarly effective structure, and the resulting problems of command led to a dissipation of strength and resources and contributed significantly to Confederate defeat.[1]

A study of the command systems of the North and South and their development in the course of the war helps to explain successes and failures in the battles and campaigns. It illuminates the reasons why the Federal government required four years and the expenditure of an enormous amount of treasure and thousands of lives to subdue the South.[2] At the beginning of the Civil War command systems were comparatively simple as befitted the small armies then in existence. As the war progressed and huge armies were formed, however, the systems became more complex, and on many occasions failed under the added burden. Ultimately the North discovered the pathway to command which led to the development of a system of command designed to produce the most efficient utilization of its armies, whereas the pathway

selected and followed by the South led to its defeat.

Factors which affected the development of the Civil War command systems included historical traditions, the nature of the war, the size of the forces involved, and perhaps the most important of all, the personalities of the principals who constructed the respective systems. Historically, under the doctrine of civilian supremacy over the military, America's armed forces occupied a subordinate relationship to the President and the Congress.[3] Prior to the war it was generally assumed that the army was unquestionably under civilian control. Sharing a common historical tradition and heritage, the states which left the Union placed their armed forces in a similar relationship to civilian authority.[4] There was every reason to believe in 1861 that the system of command adopted in 1789, and most recently effectively employed in the Mexican War, would function successfully in the Civil War. In these previous wars, however, America's armed forces had numbered only in the thousands. During the Civil War, as the armed forces in the North and South approached a million men each, the leaders found there were no American historical traditions on which to base the command of these huge armies. Confronted with the problems of controlling these large armies, the existing command systems collapsed under the strain; new ones had to be devised.[5]

Development of new systems of command was complicated by the perceptions of the Civil War leaders and generals. Most perceived war to be a highly personal thing, and thought that they would wage it in a personal manner. A "chain of command" was an idea foreign to

most leaders at the beginning of the war; for most commanders, its meaning and implications remained hidden throughout the struggle.[6]

Crucial to the successful functioning of any command system are the personalities of the individuals who hold positions of responsibility at the various levels of command within the system. Even the best leader will fail as a commander if he lacks the ability to communicate his orders to his armies or if the various elements within the chain of command fail to cooperate with each other.[7] For this reason, any study of command systems must deal with both the agencies and organizations of command and with the individuals who occupy key positions within the command system.

Because the Confederacy patterned its constitution, government, and therefore its command system after the United States, initially there were few differences between their respective command structures. Executive leadership was provided by the President through his deputy for military affairs, the Secretary of War. This cabinet officer was the head of the War Department and presided over that bureaucracy. Composed of a number of component bureaus, the War Department provided administrative and logistical support for the army.[8] Orders from the President were normally transmitted through the War Department to the Army. There was a parallel system for the Navy which consisted of the Secretary of the Navy and the Navy Department, however, this discussion will be limited to the evolution of the respective army command systems.

Congress did not occupy a clearly defined niche in the chain of command, but, because of the legislative body's extensive involvement

with the army, it was in a position to have an influence on the command systems. It drafted army regulations, approved nominations for officers, voted fiscal support for the war effort, and through its committees closely scrutinized the direction of the war. In the North, the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War became a force with which Lincoln frequently had to be concerned as he directed the nation's war effort, while Jefferson Davis had to endure the Committee on Military Affairs.[9]

Davis found the Confederate Congress particularly troublesome, primarily because of the fundamental states'-rights issues on which the Confederacy was founded. Initially, the Congress was willing to give the President a relatively free hand in directing the war and in formulating military policy. Later in the war, Davis came to feel threatened by the Congress, and vigorously resisted what he thought were efforts to dilute his powers as commander-in-chief. Struggling to fight a war amid states'-rights ideals, Davis found himself continually at odds with one or another faction in Congress as his war policies inevitably offended some state or section of the country. Toward the end of the war sectional differences divided the Congress on many issues; however, in opposition to Davis's direction of the war they were united. Though not a potent force in the North or the South in the months preceding the first Battle of Bull Run, after that event and throughout the remainder of the war, the Congresses were a factor to be reckoned with in the structure of command.[10]

With command systems made up of a number of components, effective

supervision of the armies could only be achieved if the elements within the systems cooperated with one another. This did not happen until late in the war. As a consequence, coordination, the basic ingredient essential for high command, was absent in the command systems of both nations from the beginning.[11]

At the outbreak of the war the Federal command system was poorly staffed and equipped for waging war. Abraham Lincoln had been President of the United States for a little more than a month when the attack on Fort Sumter in South Carolina signaled the beginning of the war. He had served in the Illinois State Legislature and one term as a United States Congressman from that state. Possessing a backwoods brand of humor and an easy going affable manner, he seemed to have few qualities which would be of use to him as the nation's chief executive in time of war. Little in his background prepared him to assume his role as commander-in-chief of the Union Army. Except for a brief tour of service in the Black Hawk War in 1832, where he held the grade of captain and later, private, in a volunteer unit, he had no military service or training.[12] He attempted to prepare himself for his role as commander-in-chief by reading books on the military art, but soon gave this up and relied upon his instincts and judgment.

Though frequently criticized for becoming too involved in the details of the military situation, Lincoln nevertheless had no duties more pressing than those of commander-in-chief. Upon the success of the armed forces in the field depended the future of the Nation.[13] Lacking a sound military background, the President should have chosen

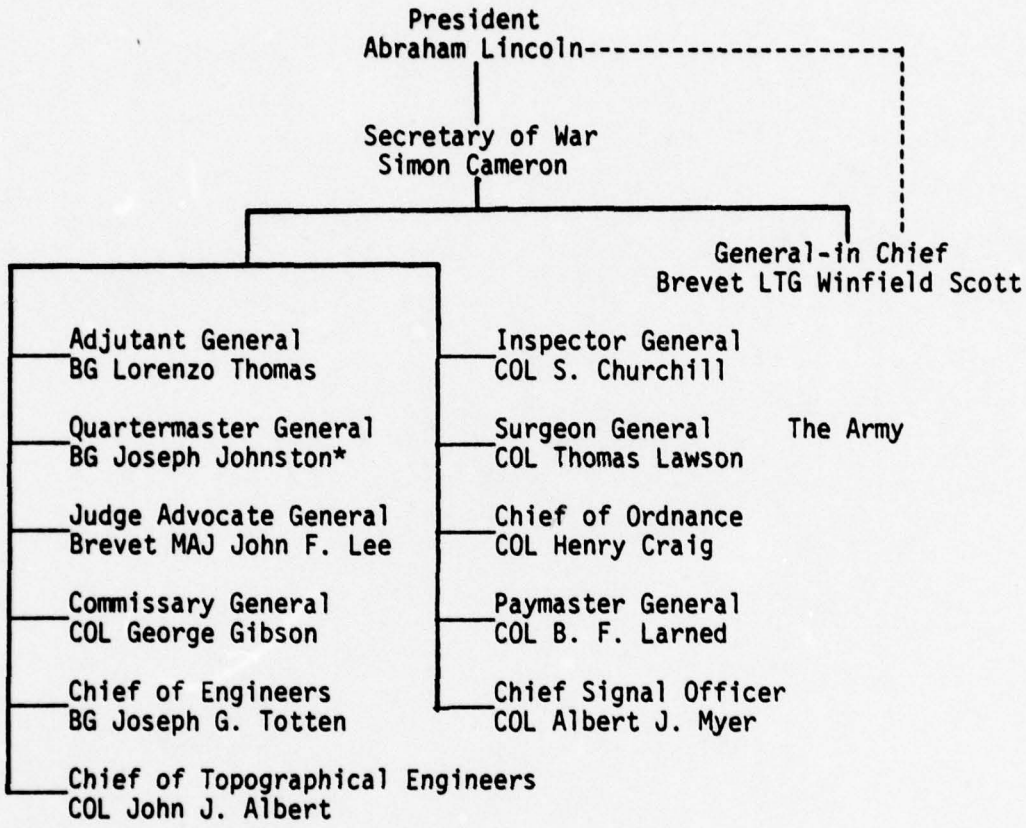
a man knowledgeable in military affairs to fill the important position of Secretary of War. He did not select such a deputy. As a political reward for services during his presidential campaign, Lincoln picked Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania to be his Secretary of War. Purely a political appointee, Cameron's tenure as Secretary of War was marked by scandal and corruption.[14]

As the Secretary of War he presided over a War Department (see Chart 1) consisting of eleven bureaus or semi-independent departments which were collectively, though erroneously, referred to as the "general staff."[15] There was no provision for retirement from the army either for age or disability, and as a consequence, the bureau chiefs were old men and set in their ways. The lack of retirement procedures made senility and high rank nearly synonymous throughout the Army, and this was especially true of the staff departments. In April, 1861, the average age of the eleven bureau chiefs was sixty four, and six were over seventy years old.[16]

Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott was the commanding general of the army and had held that position since July 5, 1841. Scott was an able officer who had gained important war experience in handling large armies during the Mexican War, but at seventy-four, he was physically incapable of taking the field in person.[17] Following the Mexican War, Scott had moved his headquarters to New York to escape Washington's politics and politicians. This led in 1855 to a bitter dispute between Scott and then Secretary of War Jefferson Davis over the relationship between the head of the War Department and the commanding general of the army. Davis believed that Scott, displaced

Chart 1

Organization of the Union
War Department April 1861



Source: Marvin A. Kriedberg and Merton G. Henry, History of Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 87 and 130.

* Resigned his commission in the Union Army April 22, 1861.

---- Broken line indicates informal path of command or coordination.

from Washington, was out of touch with military affairs. Four years later when war broke out, Davis was proved correct on this point, as the commanding general was out of touch and hampered in his effectiveness during the critical days of mobilization.[18]

Although the question of the appropriate location for the commanding general's headquarters appeared to be the basis for the dispute between Davis and Scott, a more fundamental question was at the heart of the issue. The relationship between the various components of the command system for the nation's forces was, and had been for years, unclear. To Davis the question was, "How could the responsibilities of the President, Secretary of War, and commanding general be defined to assure constitutional ascendancy of the civil authorities and yet bring into full play the professional expertise of the Army's senior general?"[19] Davis wanted the office of the Secretary of War defined to be the focus of civilian control of the military. As a deputy to the Secretary of War the commanding general would provide the military expertise for the supervision of the army.[20] Scott protested that he was not a deputy and that there was no "proper superior" to the commanding general other than the President.[21] Finally, the United States Attorney General was called upon to rule on the question. His decision went against General Scott when he ruled that the Secretary of War could legally command the ranking general without specifying that he spoke "by order of the President.[22] This decision clearly established the Secretary of War's superiority over the ranking general of the army but did not assign to the position the

authority Davis sought. The fundamental question concerning command of the army within the War Department remained unresolved.

Prior to the war, the mission of the army was to guard the nation's boundaries and to provide defense against hostile Indians along the western frontier. Numbering approximately 16,000 men, the Regular Army of the United States was scattered across the length and breadth of the nation. Organized into regiments, these forces were distributed among seventy-nine posts along the frontiers from Texas to Minnesota and from Puget Sound to Southern California. A handful manned posts along the Atlantic coast and the Canadian border, while a few others guarded the nations twenty-three arsenals. Despite the regimental organization, it was even highly unusual to find a company-sized force assembled in a single location. Imposed upon the regimental organization, the country was divided into six geographical departments, each presided over by an officer who was the link between the field forces and the War Department.[23]

Dispersed as they were, the elements of the Regular Army could not be assembled when the war started without stripping the frontier of its defenses against the Indians. In essence, therefore, there was no Regular Army that the President could call upon to deal with the growing rebellion. Even more discouraging for the President was the news that almost thirty percent of the officers of the Regular Army had been dismissed or had resigned their commissions in order to join the Confederacy.[24] Among those who had "gone South" were the distinguished former Adjutant General, Colonel Samuel Cooper, and the

man Lincoln and Scott had hoped would lead the Union Army in the field, Robert E. Lee.[25] On the eve of the greatest war ever to be fought in the nation's history, Lincoln found himself commander-in-chief of a small, dispersed army, untrained in large-scale operations, and presided over by old men.

Jefferson Davis, as President and commander-in-chief of the Southern states (see Map 1) took a firm hand in the formation of the Confederate armed forces. Unlike Lincoln, Davis was prepared by his background for his duties as his nation's chief executive.[26] A graduate of the United States Military Academy and a hero in the Mexican War, Davis had both a military education and experience leading soldiers in war.[27] Politically he had been both a Congressman and a Senator from his home state of Mississippi and had served as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs. President Franklin Pierce had appointed him to head the War Department, and Davis had proved capable and efficient during his tenure in office.[28] With this background, Davis brought to the presidency a strong sense of dedication to the American tradition of the civilian supremacy over the military.[29]

Having such experience, Davis was determined to exert direct control of the military affairs in the Confederacy. He appointed as his Secretary of War, Leroy Pope Walker, a political compromise appointee who had no military training or experience. This last fact did not overly concern the President because the War Department was going to receive a large share of his attentions, and the fact that Walker was

Map 1 The Confederate States of America 1861-1865

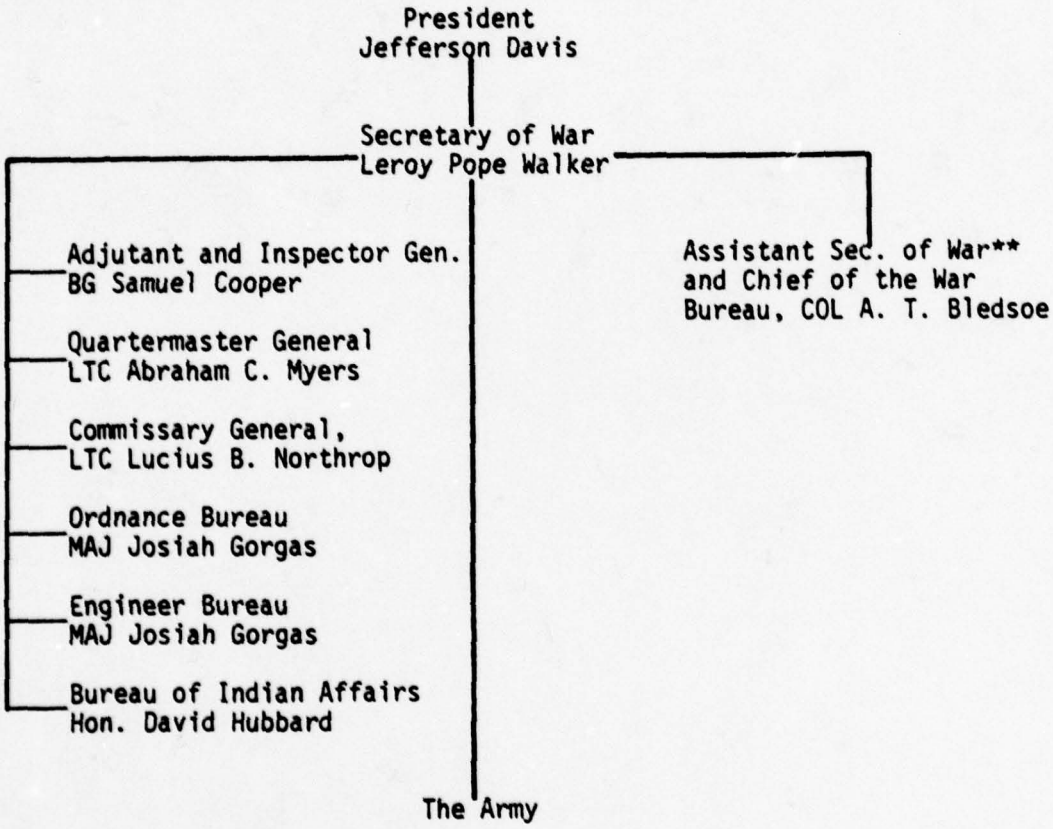
energetic, devoted to the Confederacy, and confident of its success, rendered him an acceptable choice.[30] Many in the South thought Davis planned to direct every detail of the War Department personally, thereby reducing the secretary to the status of a "chief clerk."[31] This belief proved well founded, and as a result the relationship between the Confederate President and the Secretary of War at times became strained when some of the later incumbents of that office, there were six in all, objected to their roles as mere clerks.

Not anticipating a major struggle with the Union, the founding fathers of the Confederacy initially contemplated a small military organization, hardly more than a skeleton force to garrison forts and control the Indian territory. During February and March, 1861, a series of acts passed by the Provisional Congress created the War Department (see Chart 2) with a small Regular Army patterned after the equivalent organizations in the United States.[32] The organization of the Regular Army consisted of a corps of engineers, one regiment of cavalry, six regiments of infantry, and a corps of artillery.[33] Unlike the Union Army which had two grades of general officers, the Confederate Regular Army which was to have only five generals, had no provision for any rank higher than brigadier general.[34] This small force was to be supplemented when necessary by a state militia.

An important difference between the organizations and command systems of the Confederate and Union Regular Armies was the omission of a general-in-chief, or commanding general, in the Confederate command structure. Jefferson Davis did not believe such a position

Chart 2

Organization of the Confederate
War Department* April 1861



Source: Official Records, Series IV, Volume I, p. 1176.

* Organized by Law, February 21, 1861.
** Position Unofficial, not authorized by law until December 10, 1861.

was required. He believed that command of the army was the prerogative of the commander-in-chief and was to be exercised by the President. His deputy, the Secretary of War, would communicate with the army through the ranking general officer in the army the Adjutant-Inspector General.[35] Influenced by Davis and his experience as Secretary of War, the Confederate Congress had combined the War Department bureaus of the Adjutant General and the Inspector General. Davis thought that these two offices were compatible and that the duties of the two bureaus could be performed more efficiently by one man; and especially since Davis envisioned the Adjutant-Inspector General as the ranking military officer in the Army.[36]

In light of the deteriorating political situation in the early months of 1861, concurrent with the organization of the army of the Confederate States, Congress authorized the President to accept up to 100,000 volunteers for twelve months service in the Provisional Army of the Confederacy.[37] Ultimately problems with recruiting and funding retarded efforts to create the Regular Army especially as the Confederacy's full attentions focused on raising and equipping the Provisional Army.[38] Under the vigorous leadership of Jefferson Davis the Confederate States had accomplished the incredible tasks of founding a nation and the establishing of a framework for both a Regular and Provisional Army.

Theoretically there was another category of forces to be considered should war become a reality. Under the Militia Acts of 1792 and 1795, each state had been charged to maintain an armed and trained militia.[39] Militia strength reports available to the Adjutant General's office in

January 1861 indicated that there were over three million men in the collective state militias, two and one half million in the Union States and roughly half a million in the Confederate States. What the militia returns did not indicate, however, was the extent to which the training and organization of the militia forces had been permitted to deteriorate. Disuse and lack of proper supervision relegated the militia to little more than a paper force.[40] There were a few exceptions to this. In South Carolina, for example, where the martial spirit seemed to run a little stronger and deeper than in other parts of the country, there was a fairly good militia unit which formed the nucleus of the force that laid siege to Fort Sumter during the spring of 1861.

Fort Sumter's capture by Confederate forces provided the spark that ignited the flame. Responding to the seizure of that fort, Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand volunteers from the militia of the Union States to suppress the Southern insurrection.[41] Davis had been empowered to call for 100,000 volunteers two months earlier and had thereby placed the Confederacy well ahead of the Union in the drive towards mobilization.[42] With war at hand, both presidents began the task of organizing their forces and preparing for the first battle. Naively both governments believed that a single great victory would render the winning side triumphant.

Neither side seemed aware that technology--inventions such as the steamboat, the railroad, and the telegraph--was going to alter greatly the scope of warfare.[43] On another level, improved weapons such as the breech-loading rifle would produce more numerous casualties and

alter battlefield tactics. These realities would only gradually become apparent as numerous battles brought no end to the struggle.

Responding to Lincoln's call, volunteers began streaming into Washington. There were many jobs that had to be done at once. Volunteer units had to be equipped and organized, and leaders had to be found to train and command the growing army. By a stroke of his pen, Lincoln had increased the size of the Union Army to nearly five times its prewar strength.[44] Under this strain the Federal command system began to crack. At the heart of the Federal mobilization machine, the weakest cog was the one that should have been the strongest, Secretary of War Cameron.[45] Not only was he corrupt, but perhaps worse, he was also inept. By virtue of his position he could pass out lucrative contracts for equipping and transporting the growing army. Cameron's actions during this period were eventually investigated by Congress, but for the time being, he was free to dispense contracts as political favors or for other more substantial considerations.[46] Within the department the various bureaus quickly demonstrated that they were unequal to the task of providing support to the expanding army.[47] Lacking a strong supervisor to coordinate their efforts, the various staff bureaus often worked at cross-purposes, adding further to the growing confusion.[48]

General Scott endeavored to organize the growing number of volunteers and, at the same time, to prepare the country for war. Department boundaries had to be realigned, and new departments had to be

created. The forces available within the departments were then organized and their commanders appointed.[49] Departmental boundaries were constantly changing throughout the war as the administration struggled to manage both territory and forces. Between 1861 and 1865, the number of geographical departments in the country was expanded from a prewar figure of six to a postwar number of fifty-three.[50] Not all fifty-three territorial departments had whole armies attached to them, but each field army command was attached to one of these departments for administrative purposes. For example, throughout General William T. Sherman's Atlanta Campaign of 1864 he was the commander of the Department of Ohio and his armies were attached to that department for administrative and logistical support even though they were operating in Georgia.[51]

In spite of the numerous laws passed during May and June, 1861, this legislation did not significantly improve command and control for the expanding army. They did little to give uniformity to the heterogenous mass of an army composed of regulars, volunteers, and militia with their dissimilar organizations, uniforms, and equipment.[52] During this orgy of legislation Congress suddenly became concerned that the huge force they were creating might some day pose a threat to the civilian leadership of the country. Therefore, confident of victory, it passed a law limiting the postwar strength of the army to 25,000.

While the Federal army was being organized, the development of national strategy required the attention of the commanding general and the commander-in-chief. Scott advocated his grandiose "Anaconda Plan,"

whereby a combined force of 85,000 men would conduct an enveloping land campaign in conjunction with a naval blockade to strangle the South into submission.[53] Lincoln rejected this proposal believing that such a scheme was unrealistic because of the great numbers of men and ships required to implement it, and instead directed Scott to plan for an advance by the Federal Army towards Richmond as soon as possible.[54] Charged with this mission, the general-in-chief selected Irvin McDowell, a brevet major general in the Regular Army and a member of Scott's personal staff, to command the force.

McDowell plunged into the task of organizing and preparing the main striking force of the Union with the limitless energy for which he was noted. Bearing the ostentatious title of the Grand Army of the United States, McDowell's force was to occupy its new department in the north-eastern portion of Virginia as soon as possible.[55] Although he commanded the primary Union army, there was no doubt in McDowell's mind that he was clearly subordinate to Scott, a condition his successor would ultimately challenge. For the time being, McDowell's perception of his position in the command system caused him to assume that Scott was coordinating the actions of the other forces which would support his drive toward Richmond. For example, there were Union forces at Harpers Ferry and in western Virginia which would be expected to occupy the attentions of the Confederate forces in their areas by preventing them from interfering with McDowell's operation. On the other hand, Scott assumed McDowell, as the departmental commander, was aware that all the forces within the boundaries of the department were

under his control and that coordination of these forces was his responsibility. As a consequence of this misunderstanding, neither general devoted sufficient attention to the coordination of the Union forces in the state of Virginia, an oversight which had an important effect on the first major battle of the war.

Directing strategy for combined armies was not McDowell's immediate concern. As the size of his army continued to grow daily, he perceived a lack of organization among his numerous regiments and on May 29, 1861, formed his regiments into three brigades. To fill his staff positions he employed engineer officers in the belief that they would be capable of handling administrative details. However, these officers were not trained in staff functions and as a consequence the army commander had to do many things himself.[56] On the night before the great army initiated its drive towards Richmond, alone and unattended by aides or staff officers, McDowell was observed prowling around a Washington railroad yard searching for a misplaced artillery battery. He worked himself into a state of near exhaustion as he struggled to weld the disorganized, untrained collection of units into an army capable of fighting in a coordinated manner. Not since the Mexican War had so many soldiers been collected under a single commander, and few officers on active duty had ever seen soldiers massed in such numbers, let alone commanded large formations. McDowell decided to conduct a review with eight regiments in order to give himself and his subordinates a chance to command large troop units. When he did so, however, he was sharply criticized for tyring to "make a show."[57]

Following the Battle of Bull Run, McDowell commented, "I had no opportunity to test my machinery; to move it around and see whether it would work smoothly or not. There was not a man there who had ever maneuvered troops in large bodies.... I wanted very much a little time; all of us wanted it, we did not have a bit of it."[58]

Learning that the Confederates had moved a large body of troops to the vicinity of Manassas Junction in northeastern Virginia, Lincoln, over the objections of both Scott and McDowell, directed the Grand Army to proceed south and engage the Rebel forces. When McDowell argued that his troops were still green and that more time for organization and training was required, he was told by Lincoln, "You are green, it is true; but they are green also; you are green alike. [59] True though this statement may have been, it showed a lack of appreciation for the greater difficulties involved in conducting offensive rather than defensive operations.

Federal information reporting Confederate soldiers at Manassas Junction was correct. After the fall of Fort Sumter and the prospect of war had become certain, Davis pressed ahead with the organization of the Southern forces. Volunteers came forward in such staggering numbers that the head of the War Department reported in late July that 200,000 volunteers could be enlisted within two months if only the Confederacy had the weapons to arm them.[60]

As the state militia forces and volunteer units were integrated into the Provisional Confederate Army, an immediate problem came to light. The military organizations of the states provided for both

brigadier and major generals, but the highest grade in the Army of the Confederate States was brigadier general. Davis perceived "that it would sometimes occur that where troops of the Confederacy do duty with the militia, the general selected for command and possessed of the views of this government will be superseded by an officer of the militia not having the same advantages."[61] To avoid this contingency, the President recommended that additional rank be given to the general officers of the Confederate Army. In keeping with the policy of having but one grade of general officer in the Regular Army of the Confederacy, Davis requested that the law on organization be amended so that the grade would be that of full general.[62] At this time President Davis still believed that the war would be short and therefore advocated the concept of a single grade of general officer, thinking ahead to the time when the army would again be small and one grade of general officer was all that would be needed in an army having only five generals. When the Provisional Army, which was organized on the "Old Army" grade structure with both brigadier and major generals, was merged with the Confederate Regular Army the result was a general-officer grade structure containing three ranks. Later with the advent of the corps organization, the rank of lieutenant general was added.

Confederate forces were organized under a set of regulations molded after the Union Army Regulations. In fact, the Confederate Army Regulations published in 1861 were nothing more than a revised version of the 1857 edition of the Regulations of the United States Army. In substance the changes were simply the deletion of the grades

of general officer (they were restored in after the merger of the Regular and Provisional forces), and the alteration of all references to the "United States" to reflect the "Confederate States of America."[63]

Under these regulations the basic organization was the regiment. A full regiment normally consisted of ten companies of one hundred men, although it was unusual for a regiment to remain at full strength.[64] Regiments within geographic areas of departments were banded together to form armies. This was a common practice duplicated in both the Union and the Confederacy. Davis, familiar with the departmental concept from his service as Secretary of War, adopted departmental structuring because it provided administrative and logistical support for his armies and because it agreed with the government's views on strategy.

Southern strategy was primarily "defensive" and emphasized protection of Confederate territory. In view of this, each department was charged with the defense of a designated war zone, and in some cases departments were further subdivided into districts or subdistricts as the military situation or geography dictated. Davis planned to grant considerable autonomy to the departmental commanders and to charge them with both offensive and defensive planning within their departments. Such a system of well-organized, semi-independent departments would facilitate administrative and logistical support for the forces within them and would also fulfill certain political requirements. Such a system would provide a defense mechanism for every inch of Southern terrain.[65] An inherent weakness in the system was that it demanded a strong executive who could coordinate the actions of the departments so

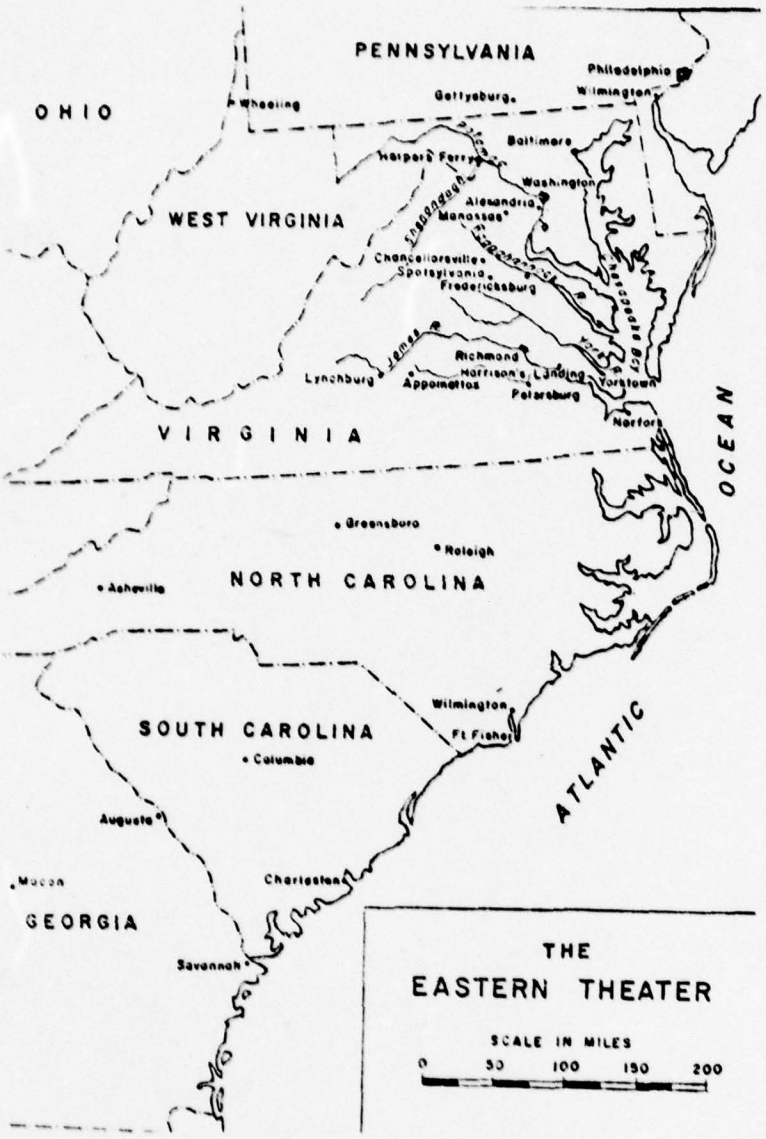
that they would be mutually supporting and capable of reenforcing each other. Jefferson Davis was a strong executive, but confronted with the problems of communicating with the distant departments, he was not able to coordinate effectively the efforts of the departments. Lacking a commanding general of the Confederate Army and with a Secretary of War who lacked military experience, the burden of exercising direct control over the armed forces fell squarely on the President. Under this command arrangement, then, the departmental commanders communicated through the War Department directly with the Commander-in-Chief.

This system should have produced unity of command, and this was the case during the early days of the war when the armies were still relatively small, the departments few in number, and the problems confronting the President not so complex. Later in the war difficulties directly related to the departmental system and cooperation among the departments had an adverse effect on the efficiency of the Southern command system. Problems of communications due to distance reduced Davis's ability to direct the efforts in such distant departments as the Trans-Mississippi and probably can be cited as a primary reason for the loss of Vicksburg in 1863.[66] Prior to the war Jefferson Davis had expressed a preference to be the commander of the Confederate Army rather than the nation's chief executive. Under the command system he developed for his nation, he ended up with both jobs. For four years he attempted the impossible task of being personally both the political and military leader of his country.

Anticipating the Federal advance into northeastern Virginia (see

Map 2) Davis organized his forces to meet this threat.[67] The nucleus of the Confederate army was formed by two hundred fifty officers who had resigned their commissions in the Union Army to fight for the Southern cause. Attesting to the quality of these men is the fact that one hundred eighty-two of their number eventually wore the wreath and three stars of a Confederate general officer. One of these officers, Pierre G. T. Beauregard, the "Hero of Fort Sumter," was appointed by Davis to command the forces in Virginia along what was called the Alexandria Line.[68] Swollen by reinforcements, these forces known as the Army of the Potomac (later its name was changed to the Army of Northern Virginia), numbered about fifteen thousand by June, 1861. Believing that his increasing mass needed tighter control, Beauregard organized his nineteen regiments into six brigades. These brigades were uneven in size; three were commanded by colonels and three by generals. The brigade organization reduced the number of commanders with whom Beauregard had to deal directly and enlarged the relative size of the maneuver units.[69] Like their counterparts in the Union Army, the officers of these newly created brigades never had commanded forces of such numbers. Fortunately fate placed these units on the defensive during the first battle, where maneuvering of large masses of untrained troops was kept to a minimum.

On July 21, 1861, the newly created forces of the North and South met in what was the first major engagement of the war. McDowell's Grand Army, numbering approximately 29,000 effectives, advanced on Manassas Junction organized by divisions. His main column consisted of


PENNSYLVANIA
OHIO
WEST VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA
NORTH CAROLINA
SOUTH CAROLINA
GEORGIA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Philadelphia
Wilmington
Gettysburg
Wheeling
Baltimore
Harpers Ferry
Washington
Alexandria
Manassas
Chancellorsville
Spotsylvania
Fredericksburg
Richmond
Harrison's Landing
Yorktown
Petersburg
Lynchburg
Appomattox
Norfolk
Greensboro
Raleigh
Asheville
Wilmington
Ft Fisher
Columbia
Augusta
Macon
Charleston
Savannah
THE
EASTERN THEATER
SCALE IN MILES
0 50 100 150 200

Map 2

four divisions with a fifth division following as a reserve. These divisions had been hastily organized, with some brigades having been formed just a few hours before the advance began. McDowell's army lacked a recognizable system of command, its commanders being newly appointed and generally unknown to one another. McDowell's plan for attacking the Confederates further added to the confusion of the day. Tactically he had devised a good plan, but it was far too complex for the untrained force charged with executing it.[70] Years later General William T. Sherman was to say of the battle, "it was one of the best planned battles of the war, but one of the worst fought."[71]

Beauregard's force had recently been reinforced by General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of the Shenandoah which had slipped away from the Union force charged with containing it in the Shenandoah Valley.[72] The combined forces of Beauregard and Johnston, numbering 33,000, halted the Federal attack and repulsed the poorly led Union soldiers. McDowell, personally commanding one of the Federal assault units, had neglected to set up a command post and quickly lost control of the battle as a result.[73]

Prior to the battle Beauregard had organized his forces into brigades, but as he wrote his operations order for the battle he realized the difficulties of controlling so many separate brigades. Consequently, in his order he referred to two brigades as a division, even though no divisional organization existed in the Confederate Army structure. Since this order never reached all the brigades, it is unlikely that most were aware of the divisional organizations on the day

of the battle. Offensive in design, the plan was never implemented since the Federal attack placed the Confederates on the defensive and thus spared Beauregard the confusion of trying to maneuver untrained and unorganized forces in battle.[74]

McDowell's forces initially gained ground as they pressed the attack but gradually slowed as the Southern defense stiffened. By midday the strains of carrying the offense began to show on the green troops, and the Union attack stalled. Arrival of reinforcements led to a Rebel counterattack which drove the Union forces back. The Federals conducted an orderly withdrawal which degenerated into a rout when leaders lost control of their units. Soldiers became entangled with camp followers, Congressmen, and spectators who had come down from Washington to view the battle. As control was lost, the army disintegrated into a mob which rushed pell-mell back to Washington.[75]

For the Union, the "national murder" at Bull Run made clear that it could not simply hurl animated uniforms at opposing forces with any hope of success.[76] Units and their leaders had to be effectively organized and properly trained. Southern euphoria over the victory obscured this lesson and instilled in the Southern leadership a false sense of their military capabilities.[77]

Lincoln and his administration were severely criticized in the aftermath of the Union defeat. Washington seemed in imminent danger of being captured as there was no effective force to halt a Confederate drive on the Northern capital. Clearly, the Union army was badly in need of a new commander who could take charge and rebuild the force.

Union leadership, from the commander-in-chief, the commanding general, down to the general commanding the army in the field had been unequal to the task of making war. Their collective failure was attributable to inexperience and a lack of expertise as well as shortcomings within the command system. Within the army, the command system had failed. A chain of command by which a large army could be controlled in battle was clearly needed. During the war both the North and the South experimented with a variety of organizations as they struggled with the problems of employing massed armies in battle. Perhaps as a result of common military educations and backgrounds, the generals who commanded the respective armies would eventually adopt organizations greatly similar to each other.

There were existing military precedents familiar to most soldiers of the day to assist the generals and guide them in their search for organizations which would facilitate control of mass armies. Many of the generals of the Civil War were graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, and as students there they had studied the writings of the Baron Henri Jomini.[78] Jomini had been an officer under Napoleon and had written about the armies of the great French marshal. In his book, The Art of War, Jomini had described the formation of divisions and corps and the techniques for employing them in battle. Throughout the Civil War, the military organizations and tactics of the mass armies of both the North and the South reflected the concepts expressed by Jomini.[79]

Following different paths, Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis

sought to devise the most efficient command system and thereby to secure victory for their respective nation. Neither leader had such a guide as Jomini on which to model their civilian national command system. As their armies grew in size and number, each sought to create a structure which would provide the most efficient supervision and utilization of their forces. Lincoln continued to experiment with an organization which contained both a strong Secretary of War and a commanding general of the army. Ultimately in 1864 the North achieved a modern command system which aided the Union in securing victory. Davis also experimented with a variety of command arrangements but would never agree to any system which, in his estimation, diluted his powers as commander-in-chief. He continued to perform most of the functions which should have been the responsibility of the Secretary of War and resisted until the last months of the war efforts to establish the office of commanding general of the Confederate armies.

CHAPTER II

Union Disorganization and Southern Innovations

"I found no army to command, a mere collection of regiments cowering on the banks of the Potomac, some perfectly raw, others dispirited by the recent defeat." George McClellan

Federal leadership had badly underestimated the need for adequately preparing the nation's armies before sending them off to fight. As Commander-in-Chief, Lincoln deserved a large share of the blame since he had insisted on pushing the army into combat before it was ready, in spite of General Irvin McDowell's pleas for more time to prepare his forces. Political considerations had influenced the President's decision, but as he and his counterpart in the Confederacy were to learn, many decisions in this war would be so complex that few could be considered purely military or purely political. Another reality Lincoln had to accept was the inadequacy of his general, McDowell, for high command. As commander-in-chief, the President had the authority to hire and fire his generals, but if he fired McDowell, who was to be his replacement?

George Brinton McClellan, a major general in the Ohio militia and a former regular army officer, had accepted command of the troops of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois at the beginning of the war. Soldiers under his command defeated Confederate forces in a series of relatively minor engagements which took place in western Virginia between May and July, 1861. Although minor victories, they were among the few achieved by Union forces during the first months of the war. On the basis of success, then, Lincoln called McClellan to Washington and placed him in command of the Army of the Potomac, or rather what was left of that Army.[1]

McClellan was a brilliant organizer and perfectly suited for the task of rebuilding the shattered army. A graduate of West Point, he

had enjoyed a successful military career before resigning from the Army in 1857 to accept a position as an official with the Illinois Central Railroad. He was so successful at this occupation that his employers were reluctant to allow him to resign when the war came, believing that he could make more of a contribution to the war effort as director of a railroad than as a military officer. McClellan could not be dissuaded, and he resigned the railroad position he held and was immediately given command of the Ohio militia. Under his firm hand, the militia forces of the midwestern states had been quickly organized and had fought with success in their first engagements.

One factor which greatly assisted McClellan in organization and mobilization of the forces in the Ohio Valley was his familiarity with large military units such as corps and divisions. As a result of having been sent to Europe as an observer during the Crimean War in 1855, George McClellan had become one of a very few officers in the Union Army who had first-hand experience with large military units.[2] When Lincoln called the general to Washington in July 1861, he hoped that McClellan would be equally successful in reorganizing the Army of the Potomac as he had appeared to have been with organizing the forces in the midwest. Years later McClellan recalled his impressions of the Union forces he first observed upon his arrival in the capital, "I found no army to command, a mere collection of regiments cowering on the banks of the Potomac, some perfectly raw, others dispirited by the recent defeat."[3] Undismayed, the new commander set to work organizing his army and arranging the defenses of Washington.

Aggressive, confident, and knowledgeable, the "Little Napoleon," as he had been nicknamed by the press, seemed to have all the qualities Lincoln could have asked for in a general. McClellan had a flaw, however, that slowly began to reveal itself. "Little Mac" had a tremendous ego, that caused him to believe he was more important than he really was. He thought of himself as the savior of the Union, a belief which was bolstered by the preferential treatment he was given by both the President and the Congress. It was not long before he was no longer content to be subordinate to General Scott, and instead maintained that he should be answerable only to the President.[4] Realizing that he had a great deal of power, McClellan was not to be satisfied until he had it all. Lincoln aggravated the situation by dealing directly with the thirty-five-year-old general, bypassing both the general-in-chief and Secretary of War Cameron. In effect, the President elevated McClellan to a position coequal to the head of the War Department and the ranking of general in the army. In doing so he effectively sabotaged his own command system by confusing the relationships among its key people.

McClellan determined that he should be the general-in-chief of the Union armies and schemed to acquire this exalted title. As his army grew in size, and with it his sense of his own importance, the "Little Napoleon" began to conspire with certain Radical Republicans in Congress. He led them to believe that it was his intention to commence an offensive at the earliest possible date, but that his plans were being obstructed by the overly cautious general-in-chief.[5] If he had Scott's job, he argued, he would have a free hand to begin his offensive at once.

The Radical Republicans, furious over the rout at Bull Run and eager to punish the Confederacy, were willing collaborators with the ambitious general in his efforts to oust the aged general.

Slowly Scott came to the realization that he himself was incapable of providing the army and the President with the vigorous leadership the Civil War demanded from the general-in-chief. Insulted by McClellan's attempts to oust him, Scott resolved to hold onto his job until Major General Henry Halleck, currently commanding a department on the west coast, could be brought to Washington. Halleck had worked for Scott before the war, had taught at West Point, and had written a number of books on tactics and strategy. Nicknamed "Old Brains," Halleck was thought by Scott to be a suitable successor as general-in-chief and preferable in the old man's eyes to the brash young General McClellan.[6]

While Scott and McClellan feuded, Cameron continued his inept mishandling of the affairs of the War Department amid increasing complaints from Congress. Congress had made repeated attempts to enhance the efficiency of the department by passing legislation increasing the number of personnel in the staff bureaus and added an Assistant Secretary of War, but these measures had not corrected the problem. In August, 1861, a Retirement Act was passed which enabled the old men to be moved out of the way and to be replaced with younger officers better able to deal with the hectic duties of the bureaus.[7] Even this maneuver had not increased the department's reputation or productivity. Secretary of War Cameron remained the crux of the problem. He was overwhelmed by the demands of his job, and like Scott, was continually involved in squabbles with McClellan who chafed at the War Department's inability

to meet the needs of the army. Unlike Scott, however, Cameron avoided contact with McClellan--including skipping cabinet meetings--rather than risk confrontation with the general.[8]

Ultimately the urgent necessity to rebuild the Army of the Potomac and to provide strong leadership for the entire Union Army caused Lincoln to make changes in his command system. Scott provided the impetus for the transformation when he requested to be retired from active duty. His tenure as general-in-chief finally came to an end in October 1861, his standing as an advisor to Lincoln having been severely eroded after Bull Run and since McClellan's arrival in Washington. As McClellan had become the focus of attention, the old general saw that he no longer had the confidence of the President and therefore decided to retire effective November 1, 1861.

Lincoln concurred with Scott's request to leave the army and named McClellan general-in-chief on that same date. At thirty-five years of age, George B. McClellan became the youngest man in the history of the nation to attain the position of commanding general. He would now prove he was not equal to either the position that he held or the task at hand.[9]

One of his first acts as the army's new leader was to remove from Washington the man Scott had wanted to be the commanding general. Halleck had no sooner arrived in Washington than he was sent on his way west to replace General John C. Fremont who had just been relieved of command at St. Louis, Missouri, for issuing an emancipation proclamation contrary to the wishes of the President.[10] A year later Lincoln would

issue his own proclamation, but in the fall of 1861 he believed neither the political nor the military situation warranted such action. Scott had retired; McClellan was promoted; Halleck had been outmaneuvered; and Fremont had been sacked for mixing political and military concerns. This last transgression would become more and more common as the war progressed. An astute observer would have noted that politics had been as influential in the first three personnel moves involving Scott, McClellan, and Halleck, as in the last with Fremont. Fremont, a Republican, was only the first in a long succession of politically active generals Lincoln was going to have to cope with as commander-in-chief.[11]

McClellan assumed the duties of his new office with characteristic vigor and effectively used his talents for organization. However, it was not long before a weakness in his direction of the war began to develop. He seemed not to understand fully the strategic implications of his office.[12] As general-in-chief he was responsible for the coordination of all the Federal armies, not just the giant Army of the Potomac which continued to grow each day. In the west for example, Halleck perceived a need to combine a number of departments and to consolidate the efforts of the scattered armies. Despite repeated requests from Halleck urging that the general-in-chief consolidate the western armies under one commander, no such orders were forthcoming from McClellan.[13] While this issue was yet to be resolved, McClellan and Lincoln had to direct their attention to another matter of even greater importance. Congress, until now relatively silent, had finally determined to take

an active part in the direction of the war.

Among the legislative branch's first efforts to influence the actions of the Union's chain of command was the creation, by joint resolution of Congress, of the Committee on the Conduct of the War. This committee was formed initially to investigate a military disaster at Ball's Bluff, an engagement where Union forces under General Charles P. Stone had suffered heavy casualties in what appeared to be a grossly mishandled military operation. Senator Benjamin Wade, a leading Radical Republican from the state of Ohio, was appointed chairman of the committee which, under the resolution which had created the body, was directed to "inquire into the conduct of the present war."[14] Stone was eventually imprisoned as a result of the committee's investigation, and on a larger scale, Lincoln's direction of the war was from thenceforth subjected to intense scrutiny from some very vocal critics.[15]

Congress also voiced its opposition to the manner in which the war was being conducted in another fashion. Many of its members were furious at the inefficiency, extravagance, and frauds being perpetrated on the government under Cameron's direction of the War Department.[16] The Secretary of War further undermined his own position when he sided with Fremont's proposal for emancipation and called for the arming of the slaves. Under intense pressure from Congress, Lincoln at last moved to replace the incompetent, unpopular secretary.[17] That the President allowed Cameron to remain in the position as long as he did can be explained in two contexts. Simon Cameron's views on slavery were popular with some of the more Radical Republicans in Congress,

and any precipitous action by Lincoln against the head of the War Department could have united this faction against him. And then there was the matter of a replacement: Where was the man who could do the job any better?

Early in January 1862, Lincoln was able to ease Cameron out of the War Department and the Union command system by appointing him to the post of minister to Russia. The President nominated Edwin M. Stanton, a lawyer who at the time was serving as a legal advisor to the War Department, to replace the controversial Secretary of War. By the war's end, Stanton was to become one of the country's greatest war secretaries, but in the interim the learning process was at times difficult.[18]

In the days after the Battle of Bull Run, Lincoln had replaced what appeared to be defective cogs in the Union command system, and the new men seemed to make a difference. McClellan had reorganized the Army of the Potomac by first returning to the basic regimental organization and then forming new brigades and divisions as men with talent were found to command the larger units.[19] Stanton had taken charge at the War Department, literally bringing order out of chaos. He rooted out the inefficient and ineffective officers within the staff bureaus and completely altered the system of awarding government contracts, thereby greatly decreasing the opportunities for fraud and waste in those areas.[20] While there had been no major changes in the structure of the Union command system, the personnel changes were certainly an enhancement to the existing system, or so it seemed.

Lincoln had been forced to act after the disaster in Virginia, and there could have been few doubts in anyone's mind that the existing Union command arrangement had been inadequate. This was not the situation in the Confederacy, and that early victory for the South had contributed to Jefferson Davis's belief that the command system he and the Congress had designed was functioning successfully. Not all the President's senior military officers agreed with this assessment. General Joseph E. Johnston, following the Confederate triumph at Manassas Junction, noted that the army was "more disorganized by victory than that of the United States by defeat."[21] This obvious overstatement had been used by the general to explain why the Confederate army had failed to pursue the routed Union army and thereby missed capturing Washington. Many in the South believed a brilliant prospect for bringing the war to an early end had been lost when the opportunity to capture the enemy's capital had been permitted to slip away; and this failure had led to a round of recriminations and fault finding. Davis blamed the generals for failing to follow up their victory with a vigorous pursuit, and he in turn was attacked by his military men for his lack of supervision following the battle. The fundamental issue in question was the basic direction of the war by the President.[22] Because Davis's intention was to be a commander-in-chief who insisted on exercising "command," ultimate responsibility for the actions of the Confederate armies was his alone.[23] Their successes would be his successes, and their failures--past failures included--would be his failures. Personal direction of the war meant that Davis was in a position where criticism of the

direction of the war and the actions of the armies and its generals would also be personal criticism of the President.

Another incident which occurred shortly after Manassas provided an indication of the extent to which Davis intended to guard his prerogatives as commander-in-chief. Beauregard asked the President for a clarification of his position within the combined armies in northeastern Virginia. General Johnston had assumed command from Beauregard after the battle in July, being the ranking general officer within the department. General Beauregard suggested to Davis that in consideration of the size of the forces gathered, division of the force into two army corps would produce the most efficient command system for the army. Further, Beauregard presumed himself to be one of the "corps" commanders. Davis responded to this by disapproving the corps arrangement, stating that it violated the laws of the Confederacy concerning military organizations and in addition that the structuring of the army and its organizations was the prerogative of the commander-in-chief. This sharp rebuke infuriated the volatile Creole general and fueled the growing rift between the two men.[24]

Concurrent with the debate on the organization of Johnston's and Beauregard's forces was another dispute which ultimately would come to plague Davis throughout the war. In August 1861, Congress passed legislation authorizing the President to appoint officers to the grade of full general in the Confederate Army. This action had been requested to ensure that at all times officers of the Regular Army would always outrank general officers of state and volunteer forces. Under this act

Davis nominated for confirmation by the Senate in order of rank, Samuel Cooper, Albert S. Johnston, Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, and P.G.T. Beauregard.[25] Rank held in the Union Army before the war had been the criterion used by Davis to establish seniority among his generals. Unfortunately, the confusing system of brevet promotions and temporary ranks used in the Union Army prior to the war had caused the Confederate President unintentionally to slight both Joseph Johnston and Robert E. Lee.[26] General Lee felt resentment at the slight but voiced no objection publically, although he did mention the incident in his private correspondence. On the other hand Joe Johnston vehemently objected to the order of seniority and stated so in writing to the President, beginning a prolonged quarrel which was to last throughout their lifetimes. Their mutual dislike for each other came to have an adverse impact on the Southern command system as the ill-feelings between them hindered their relations throughout the war and especially during the critical days before the surrender of Vicksburg.[27]

Other problems seemed more deserving of Davis's immediate attention than quarreling with the generals. Topping the list were the problems in the War Department. Leroy P. Walker was proving himself incapable of handling the tremendous burden of his duties as the Secretary of War. After months of struggling with the job for which he was ill-suited, he was forced to resign in September, 1861, for reasons of declining health.[28] Davis immediately accepted Walker's resignation and appointed Judah P. Benjamin, formerly the Attorney General, to the vacated post. Unlike Walker, whose unfamiliarity with military affairs

caused him to leave such details to the President, Benjamin was more than willing to take an active part in the direction of the war and the supervision of the army.[29]

Benjamin applied his skill and energy in conducting the business of his department and was successful in clearing away the piles of work Walker had left undone. In his dealings with the army, however, the new secretary was not so successful. Within a month of assuming office he managed to become embroiled in quarrels with both Joseph Johnston and P.G.T. Beauregard. These disagreements were based on relatively minor issues which assumed a secondary importance to the developing conflicts in personalities between the head of the War Department and the generals in the army. Benjamin traded a number of insulting letters with both generals; those to Johnston were over the continuing argument concerning the latter's correct ranking among the Confederate generals, and the quarrel with Beauregard was over the addition of a rocket battery to the general's army.[30] Both Johnston and Beauregard had powerful and influential friends in political office who were quite willing to support the generals in their quarrels with the Davis administration. Louis T. Wigfall, a Confederate Senator from Texas, for example, was an especially outspoken critic of the government, who at times sided with one or the other general.[31]

Frequent criticism of his administration from one special interest group or another proved bothersome to Davis but did not keep him from taking actions he deemed appropriate concerning military affairs. There was a new round of verbal attacks against the President when General Lee

was recalled from the Kanawha Valley and reassigned to a more important post. Lee's first attempt at directing soldiers in battle in this war had resulted in an embarrassing defeat at Cheat Mountain in western Virginia. His critics referred to him as "Granny Lee" and "affirmed that his reputation was based on an impressive presence and a historic name rather than an ability as a field commander."[32] Ignoring such criticism, Davis appointed Lee to head the department which embraced South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida and assigned him the special mission of upgrading the defenses of the city of Charleston, South Carolina. In supporting Lee, Davis demonstrated loyalty to a man he was convinced was a competent general, and he was ultimately proved correct in his assesment as Lee went on to become the greatest general of the Confederacy. The President's loyalty was not always well founded.[33] In the winter of 1863-1864, Davis staunchly supported Braxton Bragg when there was a near unanimous outcry in the Army and Congress for the general's removal from army command. As in the case of Lee, convinced he was a good judge of men, he sustained Bragg in command. Whereas later events proved he had been right about Lee, he was subsequently proven badly mistaken about Bragg.

Lee departed for Charleston unsure of the command relationship between himself and the state forces of South Carolina. Although the war had been in progress some eight months, this issue was not completely resolved to Lee's satisfaction. In his mind he had every right to be concerned, having viewed the problem first hand in the Kanawha Valley. He had been sent to western Virginia to "coordinate" rather than "command," a task he had found impossible.[34] Now enroute to South Carolina he asked

the President for a clarification of his duties. He was informed that he was a full general in the Regular Army of the Confederacy, the senior officer in the department, and had the entire support of the administration.[35] In requesting clarification of his authority as a commander, Lee demonstrated he had learned a valuable lesson early in the war: as a departmental commander, there should be no doubt concerning the limits of authority. Unfortunately the President did not also learn from this exchange with Lee, and questions which stemmed from ambiguity of command and the limits of the authority of departmental commanders were to plague both the President and some of his less competent generals on many later occasions. These future incidents would not be resolved as satisfactorily as Lee's status had been.

Congressional criticism of Davis's direction of the war continued to increase in intensity with each military reversal, and members of the legislative body became more organized in their efforts to reduce the President's status as the undisputed commander of the armies. While the opponents of the Confederate President were planning legislation designed to reduce the chief executive's personal direction of the war, the United States President was seriously considering an expanded role for himself as his nation's war director. Throughout the first year of the war, Lincoln had restricted his involvement in military affairs because he believed he had no expertise which qualified him to become more actively involved. Months of military reversals, however, had caused him to become frustrated because his professionals, the generals, did not seem aggressive enough in the prosecution of the war. Personal involvement

appeared to be the best course of action to the President. Lincoln was especially aggravated by McClellan's reluctance to initiate another campaign, and in desperation, the chief executive considered taking the field himself at the head of the army.[36] Later in the war Davis would also express these same sentiments. At one point he thought that if all the Southern forces were divided into two great armies with himself at the head of one and Lee in command of the other they could achieve victory.[37] Lincoln resisted the temptation to take to the field in person, but in lieu of this resolved to become more involved in both the strategic direction of the war and the lesser details of military affairs.

He first demonstrated this new resolve when he assumed some of the duties of the general-in-chief. Advised by Stanton of Halleck's request for a consolidated command in the west, Lincoln telegraphed Halleck and asked if McClellan had been consulted on such a command arrangement. He was informed that although the general-in-chief had been questioned on the issue, he had not seen fit to grant Halleck's request. The President directed Halleck to cooperate with the other western army commanders, but unfortunately failed to order McClellan to ensure that these instructions were carried out. McClellan did not wish for Halleck to gain any prestige by acquiring a larger command and likewise did not want to involve himself in disputes with the other western generals which would certainly arise if he ordered them to subordinate their commands to Halleck's. For the moment Lincoln's first effort at becoming involved in military affairs had failed. Imprecision in the western

command relationships persisted for two more months until finally, after McClellan was relieved of his duties as general-in-chief, Stanton carried out the President's wishes and ordered Halleck to form a consolidated command.[38]

A series of events during January and March, 1862, culminated with Lincoln assuming personal command of the armies of the United States and the adoption of a command system strikingly similar to that of the Confederacy. In addition to the President there was another group who had endured enough of Little Mac's bluff, bluster, and reluctance to fight. Ben Wade and the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, no longer enamored with the general, presented Lincoln with a method to undermine the general-in-chief, and which they hoped would precipitate action. Their solution was to divide McClellan's great Army of the Potomac, which by now consisted of twelve divisions, into four army corps. As commanders of these new organizations, the Committee wanted Lincoln to appoint officers who would side with the administration in its desire to fight.[39] Despite McClellan's argument that the formation of the corps be delayed until the fortunes of war revealed officers who were fit for such commands, he was forced to comply with the President's orders and to accept as his corps commanders men selected by Lincoln and the Committee.[40] Confronted with this kind of meddling, McClellan should have resigned in protest, since in ordering the formation of corps Lincoln was involving himself in a decision that properly belonged to the general-in-chief. Little Mac did not resign. He implemented the President's order and then, despite the counsel of his corps commanders,

continued to find excuses to delay the initiation of a new campaign.

McClellan's massive army continued to squat around Washington, consuming supplies and draining the treasury.[41] Lincoln again attempted to compel his general to fight, and in January 1862, issued General War Order Number One which directed McClellan to launch an offensive not later than February 22. To the embarrassment of the administration, the order was promptly published in both the Northern and Southern newspapers.[42] February 22 came and went and still McClellan did not move. He invariably seemed to have one reason or another for not moving or for justifying delays. In the interim Forts Henry and Donelson (see Map 3) were captured by forces under Grant, thus providing the only good news during a very dark time for the Union.[43] At long last McClellan submitted his Urbana Plan for the capture of Richmond. Lincoln was immediately skeptical of the plan.[44] Of primary concern to the President was that for a time Washington would be exposed to a possible attack from the southwest as McClellan's army maneuvered to attack Richmond from the east. Lincoln solicited recommendations from the corps commanders of the Army of the Potomac in order to convince himself to approve the plan. With doubts about the potential risks of Little Mac's plan, the President reluctantly gave his approval when the corps commanders sustained McClellan. In approving the plan, Lincoln extracted a heavy price from McClellan. Informing his general that supervision of an operation of such magnitude would obviously be time consuming and require the general's full attention, Lincoln relieved McClellan of the added burdens of the office of general-in-chief.[45]


ILLINOIS
INDIANA
MISSOURI
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE
ARKANSAS
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
GA.
LOUISIANA
GULF OF MEXICO
Missouri R.
Bloomfield
Sedalia
St. Louis
Rolla
Springfield
Wilson Creek
Pea Ridge
Cairo
Belmont
Columbus
New Madrid
Fort Henry
Paducah
Bowling Green
Louisville
Perryville
Mill Springs
Fort Donelson
Cumberland R.
Nashville
Franklin
Murfreesboro
Knoxville
Fort Pillow
Memphis
Shiloh
Tennessee R.
Chattanooga
Chickamauga
Dalton
Little Rock
Arkansas R.
Corinth
Holly Springs
Tupelo
Arkansas Post
Atlanta
Mississippi R.
Shreveport
Vicksburg
Jackson
Grand Gulf
Red R.
Alexandria
Selma
Montgomery
Alabama R.
Tombigbee R.
Mobile
Port Hudson
Baton Rouge
Gulf Port
Pensacola
New Orleans
THE
WESTERN THEATER
SCALE IN MILES
0 50 100 150 200

Map 3

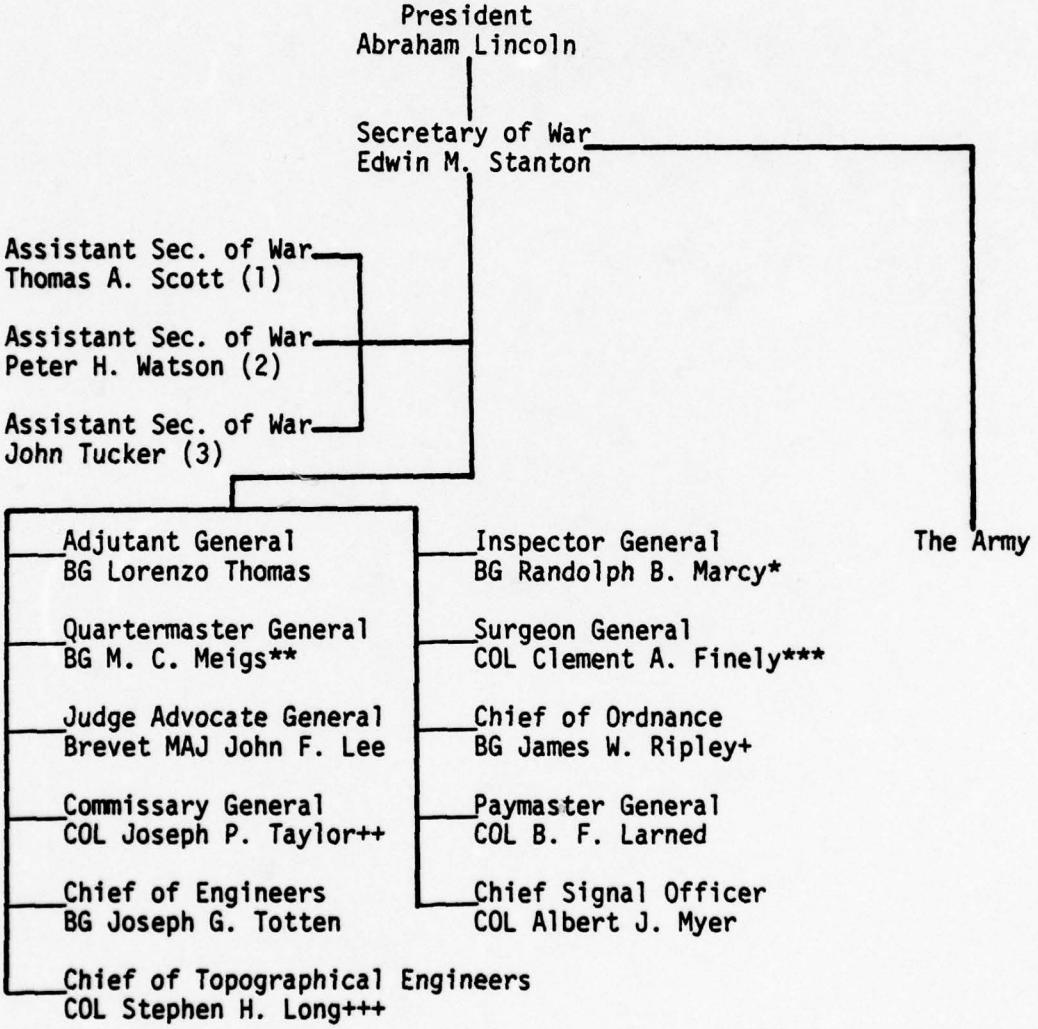
No successor to the position of commanding general was named, and consequently Lincoln became the head of his nation's army and thus he had altered the command system (see Chart 3) so that it resembled the current Southern command system.[46] In both the North and the South separate army commanders dealt directly with the respective Presidents. The chief executives were responsible for strategical control and, in some instances, tactical command of their field armies. Similarity in the two command systems existed only briefly because at the time Lincoln was taking this bold step, Jefferson Davis was being prevailed upon to relinquish some of his authority as Commander-in-Chief.[47]

Following the loss of Forts Henry and Donelson, Davis modified the Southern command structure. Responding to his critics who wanted stronger military participation in the direction of the war, the Confederate President asked Congress for legislation creating the position of general-in-chief of the Confederate Armies.[48] During this same period Davis also found himself in need of a new Secretary of War. Judah Benjamin was becoming far too controversial in that office. His most recent dispute involved Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, a controversy which had nearly led to the resignation of this invaluable officer.[49] Davis had been forced to intervene in the matter to smooth the general's ruffled feathers.

Responding to Davis's request for military legislation, Congress sought to provide the President with a chance to bring military expertise to the war and enable him to remove Benjamin from office at the same time. It passed legislation which provided that if a general of the army were

Chart 3

Organization of the Union
War Department March 1862



Source: Marvin A. Kriedberg and Merton G. Henry, History of Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 87 and 131.

* Assigned August 9, 1861
** Assigned May 15, 1861
***Assigned May 15, 1861
\+ Assigned April 23, 1861
++ Assigned September 29, 1861
+++Assigned September 9, 1861

(1) Assigned August 3, 1861
(2) Assigned January 24, 1862
(3) Assigned January 29, 1862

appointed Secretary of War he would not lose his rank. The implied wish of Congress was that Davis appoint Lee--his prestige now restored after success in the south--to the cabinet post held by Benjamin. The President, however, did not think that a soldier would make a good secretary, and instead asked Congress to provide him with two secretaries, one military and one civilian. The military appointee would fill the post of commanding general and act as the military or technical head of the War Department, but he would not replace the Secretary of War as a cabinet officer. By the time this legislation was sent to the President his enemies in Congress had written it in a manner objectionable to Davis. The proposed military law provided for a commanding general, nomimated by the President and approved by the Senate, who was authorized to take personal command of the army in the field at any time. Davis saw this as a move to dilute his powers as commander-in-chief and therefore vetoed the bill, much to the outrage of Congress. To silence his critics, he assigned General Robert E. Lee, recalled from his headquarters at Savannah, "to duty at the seat of government," charged "under the direction of the President with the conduct of military operations in the armies of the Confederacy."[50] Davis completed his reorganization of the War Department by replacing Secretary of War Benjamin with George W. Randolph.[51]

Despite the addition of a commanding general to the Confederate command system, there was not substantial diminution of the President's authority. Davis continued to be the unquestioned director of the war effort. What duties Lee did get involved with were described by his

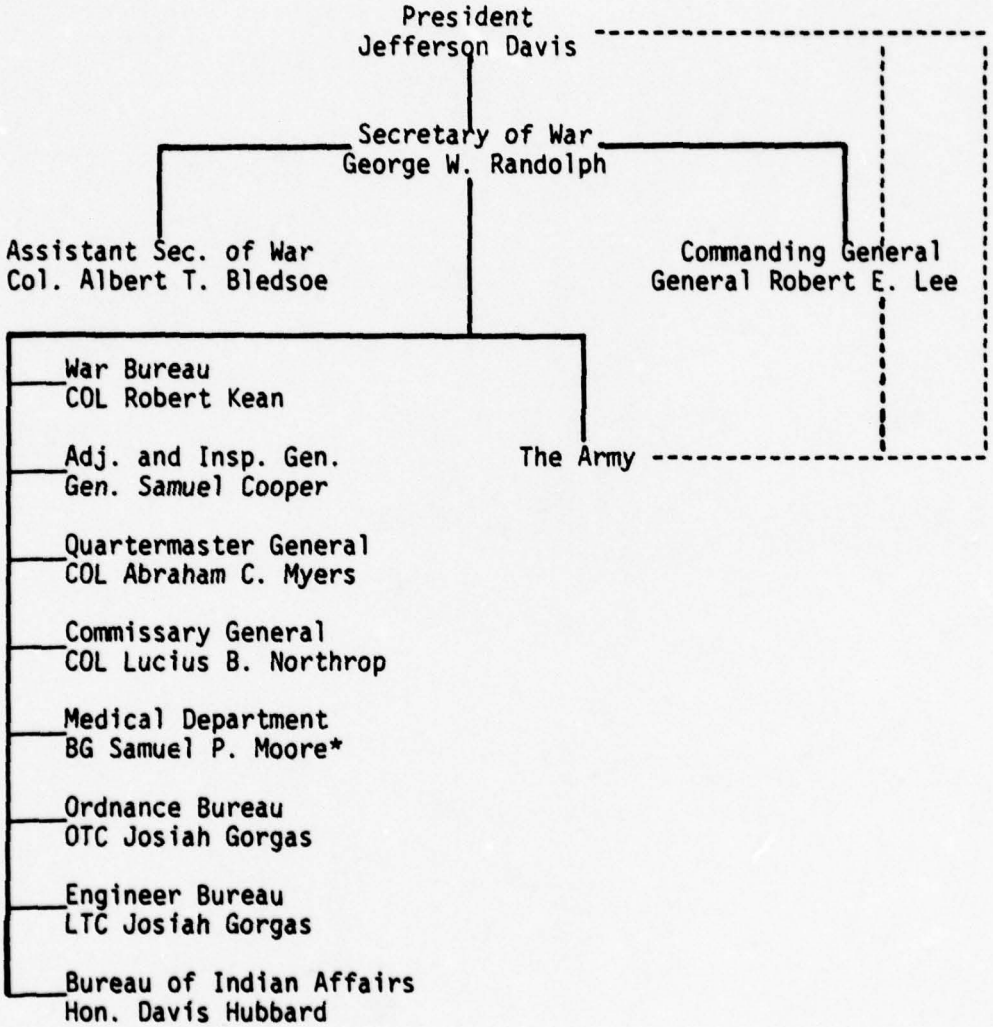
noted biographer, Douglas Southall Freeman, as "minor, vexatious matters of detail and counselling of commanders in charge of the smaller armies."[52] On the larger strategic issues the President usually consulted him, but in no instance, according to Freeman, was Lee ever given a free hand to initiate and direct to full completion any plan of magnitude. Lee had been given the post of commanding general; but because of the President's interpretation of the duties of that position, the Confederate command system had not been appreciably altered by its creation (see Chart 4).[53]

On the other hand, the recent changes in the Union command system proved to be substantial. After McClellan had been relieved as general-in-chief, the President and the Secretary of War shared the duties of that position. Lincoln directed Halleck to consolidate the scattered western forces under his command. Halleck had easily convinced the President of the wisdom of such an arrangement, since Lincoln believed Halleck had been the brains behind the victories at Henry and Donelson. The President hoped that by giving Halleck the authority he requested, "Old Brains" would continue to produce victories in the west.[54]

Lincoln and Stanton jointly performed the duties of general-in-chief for a three-month period, communicating directly with departmental commanders, receiving reports, and issuing instructions. Stanton signed orders on behalf of the general-in-chief and wielded much of the authority of that office.[55] Seeking to enhance this arrangement with a dash of military expertise, the President and the Secretary of War tried to persuade the aged general Ethan Allen Hitchcock to accept the position

Chart 4

Organization of the Confederate War Department March 1862



Source: Official Records, Series IV, Volume I, p. 1176.

*Assigned July 30, 1861

as advisor to the President and military head of the War Department. Although he declined to accept any position of responsibility, for a time Hitchcock did function as an advisor to Lincoln and Stanton, but made no significant contribution to the direction of the war while in this capacity.[56] The President and the Secretary of War were not very successful during the period they exercised personal leadership of the war effort. Although the President had acted wisely when he consolidated the forces in the west, thereby providing unity of command in that theater, his actions in the eastern theater produced the opposite effect. He proceeded to create a complex command arrangement in the east by fragmenting the states of Virginia and Maryland into five separate departments.

Lincoln intended to use the forces in the east to support McClellan's assault on Richmond, but when Stonewall Jackson threatened Washington from the Shenandoah Valley the President thought he saw a chance to crush the Rebel force.[57] Lincoln devised a fairly good plan to destroy Jackson's force; unfortunately, the instruments to carry out the destruction were armies led by Generals John C. Fremont and Irvin McDowell. Political friends of Fremont had pressured Lincoln into restoring the general to command after the President had relieved him over the emancipation issue in the west. Lincoln's plan called for the converging forces of Fremont and McDowell to trap and defeat Jackson's smaller force. Speed and aggressive execution were the key elements of the President's scheme, ingredients which neither of the generals was capable of providing. Jackson outwitted his foes, fighting and defeating

them separately before they were able to combine their forces and trap him in the valley.[58] This disaster was compounded when McClellan, having been deprived of McDowell's reenforcements during his drive on Richmond, stated he could have captured the Southern capital if only he would have received the 10,000 men from McDowell.[59] Whether or not this was true can be debated; however, there was no question in the absence of a general-in-chief, coordination of armies was the responsibility of the commander-in-chief. Therefore any failures which resulted from, or appeared to result from, a lack of cooperation of the Union armies were attributed to the leadership of the President. He was criticized for the failure to capture Jackson's force and thus had provided McClellan with an explanation for his lack of success in the campaign to capture Richmond.

While things went badly for Lincoln in the east, he had reason to be encouraged by Halleck's performance in the west. Upon consolidation of his forces, Halleck adopted the army corps organization to improve his control over the expanded army. Subsequently, forces under his command, led by General Grant, won a battle at Pittsburg Landing in Tennessee. Although it was not apparent until later that it was Ulysses S. Grant who was responsible for the successes in the west, to outward appearances it seemed that it was Halleck who was giving the Union its victories.[60]

Gradually, Lincoln developed a better strategic understanding of the war as he was forced to deal with the problems of directing the scattered Union forces. He eventually realized that fragmenting the

forces in Virginia was a strategic error and sought to correct it by organizing the units around Washington and those in the Shenandoah Valley into one large force commanded by General John Pope.[61] His plan was to use this army, together with McClellan's, to surround Richmond and cut it off from the rest of the Confederacy. Under the Articles of War governing command in joint operations, McClellan the senior of the two major generals would be the commander of the combined armies.[62] Before the plan could be put into effect, however, McClellan's forces suffered a series of setbacks which forced the Army of the Potomac to withdraw from Richmond.

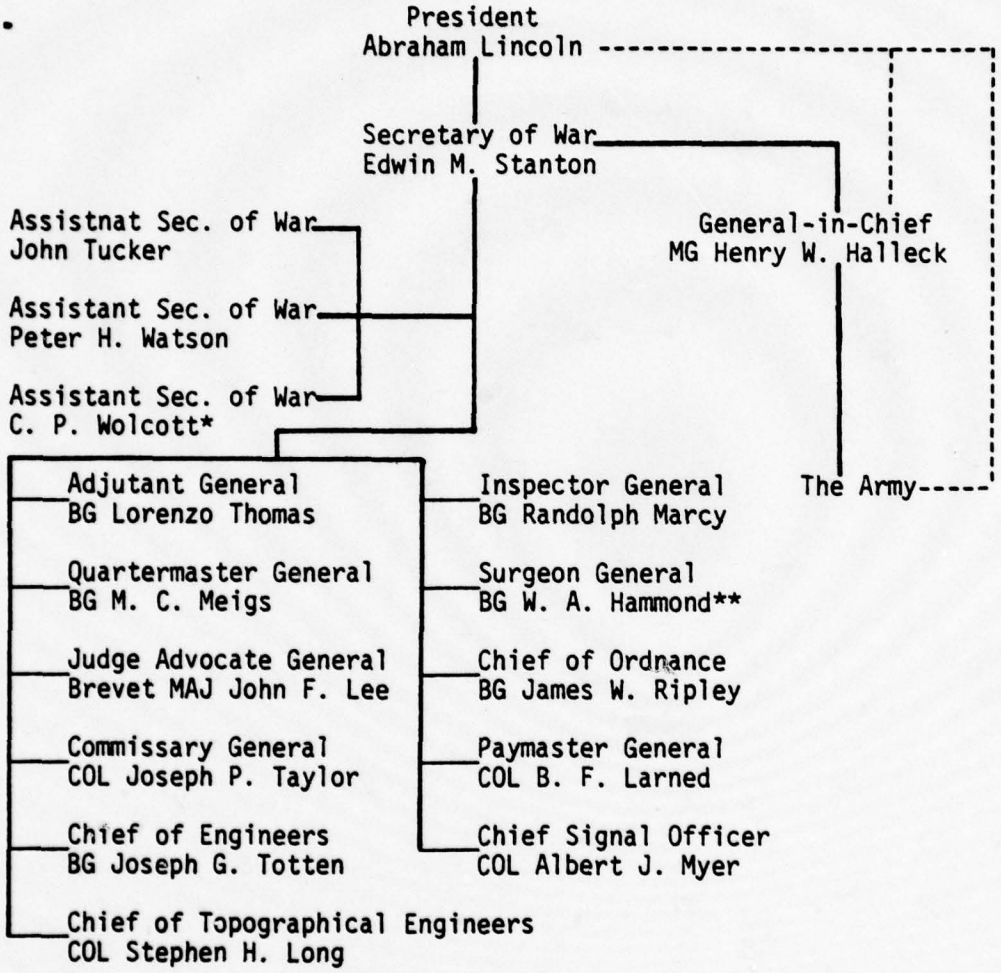
At this point Lincoln began to reassess his dual role of commander-in-chief and general-in-chief. He had not hesitated to assume the duties of commanding general when he lost confidence in McClellan's ability to provide strategic direction of the war, but now he began to doubt the wisdom of that decision. He had found upon assuming his expanded duties that while he had a clear idea in his own mind as to what strategy he wished to pursue, he was unable to get the army to perform as he wished. He found it difficult to translate his strategic concepts into military orders comprehensible to his army commanders. Frustrated, Lincoln seriously considered appointing another general-in-chief if the right man could be found. There was no single catastrophic event which finally convinced Lincoln to do this, but rather a combination of things such as McClellan's abortive attempt to capture Richmond and the failure to crush Jackson's forces in the Valley. When the Union forces were compelled by the attacking Confederate forces to withdraw from around

Richmond, the President at last came to the conclusion that he needed a military advisor to make those military decisions that he found so hard to make. Following the recommendation of General Scott, whom Lincoln had visited at West Point to obtain advice during the Richmond campaign, the President decided to appoint Major General Henry W. Halleck to the office of General-in-Chief (see Chart 5).[63] "Old Brains" was ordered to Washington, and on July 23, 1862, assumed the duties of commanding general of the Union armies.[64] For one hundred five days Lincoln had performed the duties of both the commander-in-chief and general-in-chief only to conclude that he was incapable of handling both roles.

During the period when the Union President was personally supervising his nation's armies, the Confederacy employed a command system which contained a commanding general. Between March and June, 1862, Lee performed the duties of general-in-chief, albeit with very little real authority.[65] The Confederacy's command system reverted back to its traditional form when Lee was chosen to replace the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia.[66] General Johnston was severely wounded at the Battle of Fair Oaks in May, 1862, and could no longer continue in command. It is unclear if Lee was relieved of his duties as commanding general of all the Confederate armies when Davis appointed him to an army command. The order assigning him to army command explained that the wounding of Johnston "renders it necessary to interfere temporarily with the duties to which you were assigned in connection with the general service, but only so far as to make you available for

Chart 5

Organization of the Union
War Department July 1862



Source: Marvin A. Kriedberg and Merton G. Henry, History of Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 87 and 132.

* Assigned June 12, 1862
**Assigned April 25, 1862

command in the field of a particular army."[67] To those who would argue that Lee continued to wear both hats in the same way McClellan had done as general-in-chief and commander of a field army, it is only necessary to point out the key words of Davis's instructions to Lee, those being "to interfere temporarily." These words imply that the duties of commanding general are to be interrupted while another set of duties are performed. Two years later when Bragg was appointed to the post of commanding general no orders were issued relieving Lee of the duties of that position, thus giving the impression that the office was considered vacant. Finally, even though Davis appointed Lee commanding general, he at no time ever intended that Lee exercise "command" over the armies. Therefore, there never was anything of substance for Davis to "interfere with" when he reassigned Lee to command a field army. Had Lee been permitted to remain the commanding general, perhaps in time he could have given added dimension to that position, since Davis respected Lee and the two had an excellent working relationship. This did not occur, however, and with Lee's reassignment the Confederacy's experiment with a new command system ended for a time.

While command structures were subjected to frequent changes at the highest levels during the remainder of the war, by the latter part of 1862 the command systems within the armies had become stabilized. As the armies of both the North and the South grew in size the army corps organization was adopted to facilitate control. McClellan's giant army, which had threatened Richmond in the summer of 1862, numbered in excess of 100,000 men, while the Confederate forces opposing it numbered

roughly 85,000 men.[68] Although it had been Lincoln and the politicians who had precipitated the formation of corps within the Union armies, it was McClellan who had given the army the basic organization which it would use throughout the war.[69] He had organized the Army of the Potomac into divisions of three brigades, each brigade containing four regiments. Depending on the mission and the number of units available, a varying number of divisions were combined to form an army corps. McClellan eventually would have adopted the corps organization had Lincoln not preempted him on this matter. Army corps were the next logical organization in the military command structure which would facilitate control of larger forces.[70]

Similarly, as a natural by-product of growth, the Southern armies adopted the corps organization within a few months of the Union army. Shortly after assuming command of the Army of Northern Virginia, Lee reorganized his forces into army corps.[71] He had observed under the old system where direction of operations was in the hands of divisional commanders, that the general commanding the army was simply unable to coordinate the activities of each separate division. As a consequence, there had been little or no unity of effort among divisions, and each in effect acted as a distinct army. Divisions led by aggressive commanders seemed to be involved in every fight while others were perpetually in reserve or sluggish in getting into the battle. Because of his experiences directing the army during the Seven Days Campaign, Lee sought a method of tightening his control over his divisions. Legally, there was no solution to the problem since the Confederate military

acts provided for no organization higher than a division. This notwithstanding, in July 1862 Lee informally reorganized his command into "wings," with Jackson and Longstreet designated as commanders of these new commands. Although they were not referred to as such, these wings were actually army corps. Two months later the Confederate Congress enacted legislation authorizing the new military organization, and in October passed legislation creating the rank of lieutenant general for the corps commanders.[72] The added rank was given to remove any possibility of a situation arising where a divisional commander was senior in rank to the corps commander, and in addition to recognize the increased responsibility of the position.[73] For reasons of tradition the Union was reluctant to promote anyone to the rank of lieutenant general until much later in the war.[74] As a result within the Union army disputes over questions of rank were common as one general or another would refuse to serve under a corps commander. Whenever possible Lincoln sought to appoint the ranking major generals to corps commands, but still there were arguments. The President even sought legislation authorizing him to appoint generals to positions of command without regard to seniority of rank among major generals, but even this did not resolve all the arguments.[75] Dilemmas over rank were to bother Lincoln throughout the war.

A combination of an increasing number of units on the battlefield, and the need for tighter control over these units precipitated the formation of army corps within the Union and Confederate armies. That the organization was first introduced in the Union command system was

probably the result of the need for increased command and control required for offensive operations, and of course for the political considerations previously mentioned. The Confederacy had considered the corps organization immediately after the first major battle of the war in July 1861 but had not adopted it at that time because of the dispute between Davis and Beauregard. A year later when Lee accomplished the same thing the President seems not to have objected.[76] In part this was because the military situation had changed greatly in the intervening year and in part because Davis and Lee had an excellent working relationship. In Lee the President had found a general in whom he had confidence and, having done so, was willing to relinquish to him the prerogatives a field commander should have. Personalities and the ability of the general in the field to communicate with the commander-in-chief were significant factors which facilitated the army reorganization in the summer of 1862. Lee cited the benefits derived from the adoption of the corps organization as significant factors in the Confederate victory at the Second Battle of Bull Run.[77] Another factor which had contributed to the Southern triumph was a serious breakdown in the Union command system. Lincoln's new command system had collapsed under the strain of its first real test, and Halleck, the new general-in-chief, was the primary cause for the failure.

Lincoln had selected Halleck because he believed "Old Brains" was the most competent military man available to manage the Union's combined armies. He thought Halleck understood tactics and strategy and would be capable of assisting the commander-in-chief in making those difficult

decisions he disliked making himself. Halleck had been in Washington for only a short time when he began to manifest traits which ultimately reduced his effectiveness as the general-in-chief. From the very beginning Lincoln should have been suspicious of the new commanding general because of the condition in which he left his western command. After Halleck had lobbied to have all the forces in the west united under one commander, upon his departure for Washington he appointed no successor in that role. As a consequence, the unified command in the west dissolved into the three separate commands of Grant, Sherman, and Rosecrans.[78] Grant was the logical successor to Halleck in the west, but it was because of Halleck's jealousy of Grant that he was not given the post.

Lincoln hoped that the new commanding general would step in and take charge of the direction of the army and be the strong General-in-Chief the Union command system needed. This was especially important because of the impending military operation in which Pope and McClellan would combine forces and execute a new drive on Richmond. Lincoln attempted to give Halleck the authority to exercise command, but the General-in-Chief refused to reach out and seize it, to exercise it, and was, as a result, not the leader the President had hoped for.[79] Halleck's reputation as an educated soldier and a scholar hid the fact that his strength lay in handling administrative details, not in making command decisions and accepting responsibility for those decisions. As McClellan's forces were moving into northern Virginia to join Pope's, the Little Napoleon asked Halleck for a decision on whom would be given command of the combined forces. Familiar with the Articles of War on the question, McClellan knew that as the ranking major general he should be in command,

but he insisted on a clarification of the matter seeking to avoid blame if the operation should fail because of a lack of coordination between his forces and those of General Pope. Halleck busied himself with the details of his new job and avoided making a decision on the question in order to avoid culpability for the operation should it fail. Lincoln, believing that his commanding general would guarantee unity of effort between the two forces, resisted the impulse to get involved in the direction of the operation. Halleck did not adequately supervise the operation; Pope and McClellan never did cooperate with each other; and Lee took advantage of the situation to defeat Pope's army soundly in the Second Battle of Bull Run. Superior Union forces were defeated not simply because of a failure within the command system but because of the inadequacy of a key individual within the system, General Henry W. Halleck.[80] "Old Brains" was to blame even though he was nowhere near the battlefield, because he had neglected to ensure unity of command between the two Union armies.

Seeking to restore order among the scattered and demoralized Union forces in Virginia, Lincoln took charge again and appointed McClellan to command Pope's shattered forces as well as all forces in the vicinity of Washington. The President made this decision without consulting his Secretary of War, knowing that Stanton, who disliked and distrusted McClellan, would object to the decision.[81] Because of Halleck's reluctance to exercise command, Lincoln resolved to continue this function personally, employing the general-in-chief as his front man. This final

decision completed, for a time, the evolution of the Union command system that had been in progress since the beginning of the war. It had passed through a number of stages with relative degrees of participation by the chief executive, the Secretary of War, and the general-in-chief. From a system with a relatively inactive commander-in-chief, the Union command structure had been transformed by the events of war into a system dominated by him. Despite the apparent differences in the Union and Confederate command systems in the fall of 1862 (the South's system currently lacked a general-in-chief), both Presidents were in fact the commanders of their respective forces, not simply the constitutional heads. Each President functioned as his own chief of staff, exercising control over his armies to a greater extent than had been envisioned by the framers of the constitutions on which the respective nations were founded.[82]

Whereas Lincoln was uncomfortable in the role of military leader, Davis was not. He preferred to have the tight control over his forces he was exercising, and he believed that such a condition was within his prerogatives as the commander-in-chief. At one time the framers of the Southern Constitution had considered drafting a provision into their constitution which would have permitted the President to be the actual field commander of the army, but this measure had not been adopted.[83] Nevertheless, Davis believed that the degree of control he maintained over the army was consistent with the Constitution as written and that to exercise any less control would in fact be a dereliction of his duties.

This interpretation of his responsibilities and the manner in which he guarded his prerogatives as commander-in-chief led to a serious conflict between the President and Secretary of War George Randolph. When the head of the War Department attempted to exercise command over a portion of the army, his brief nine-month stint as Secretary of War ended in a dispute with Davis over Randolph's authority to issue such an order. Davis objected to his doing so and curtly overruled the secretary's orders. Insulted by this rebuke, Randolph resigned. It was a peculiar affair in that Secretary Randolph had, at no time previously, taken an active interest in the direction of military affairs, limiting his activities to the administration of the department's bureaus. J. B. Jones, the Rebel war clerk who kept a diary of his days in the department, considered Randolph an inefficient secretary and once described him as a "mere clerk."[84] The President and the Secretary of War did not have a good working relationship, and it is probable that Randolph was seeking an excuse to resign when he issued the controversial order. Regardless of what his motives were, the head of the War Department unquestionably exceeded his authority when he attempted to direct the disposition of Confederate forces without consulting the commander-in-chief. In the command structures of both the North and the South, the Secretaries of War had only the degree of authority the respective Presidents chose to give them, and in Randolph's case, Davis had given him very little.

General Gustavus W. Smith, an active duty Confederate general, was appointed as an interim Secretary of War until a permanent replacement

for Randolph could be found.[85] Smith was a controversial figure with many enemies within both the army and the Confederate government. News of his appointment caused a stir within these organizations until word filtered down that his appointment was temporary.[86] With Smith as the Secretary of War the Confederacy briefly had some measure of military expertise in the War Department, but because the general held the office for only four days he was not able to have any influence on the military situation.

Fourth in the succession of Confederate Secretaries of War, and the man who finally gave a dimension to the office it had not previously enjoyed, was James A. Seddon. Despite his deceptively frail appearance, Seddon had a hardy constitution which, together with his talent for administration, rendered him the most capable and successful of the parade of men who headed the Confederate War Department. Seddon's administrative ability was comparable to that of the capable Union Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton; but of greater importance, the new Secretary of War had the confidence of President Davis during the early days of his appointment. Lacking in military experience as his predessors had been, because Davis had confidence in him, he was destined to have a greater influence on Southern military strategy than any of the others until events beyond his control eroded his stature as an advisor.[87]

Seddon had been in office for only a short time when he became convinced that the Confederate command system contained a serious weakness. In the west the Confederacy had been handed a series of defeats

by better organized Union forces. Their distance from Richmond had precluded effective executive supervision over the departments of west Tennessee, northern Mississippi, Missouri, and Arkansas. The Secretary of War reasoned that because able generalship, in combination with departmental planning, had resulted in victories for Lee in Virginia, the same could be achieved if a similar combination could be duplicated in the west. General Joseph E. Johnston, recently recovered from wounds received at Seven Pines, was Seddon's choice for the position of first officer in the western command. Although Davis initially opposed the nomination of Johnston, lacking confidence in his generalship, eventually the President was persuaded by Seddon to appoint the general commander of the Confederate forces in the west, on November 24, 1862.[88] The Secretary of War convinced Davis to give Johnston the authority to direct the war in the west with a measure of autonomy heretofore not given field commanders, thereby giving a new dimension to the Southern command system.

As the year of 1862 drew to a close and military activity lessened with the coming of winter, the war seemed no closer to resolution than it had a year earlier. It had been a highly turbulent year from the standpoint of the respective command systems of the two nations, and each had undergone a number of alterations in both personnel and configurations. Four men, Benjamin, Randolph, Smith, and Seddon had served as Confederate Secretaries of War, and for a brief period--March through June--a commanding general had been part of the Southern command system. Seddon had set the stage for another modification to the command system

with the creation of Johnston's theater command in the west. In the North, the changes in the Union command system began in March when McClellan was relieved of his duties as the general-in-chief and Lincoln and Stanton had assumed the duties of that office. The President, assisted by his Secretary of War, had tried being both general-in-chief and commander-in-chief for a period but had abandoned that arrangement when it did not improve the supervision of military operations. General Henry Halleck had been appointed to the office of commanding general of the Union armies but then refused to accept fully the responsibilities of that post necessitating the President's continued involvement in military affairs.

Lincoln, more so than Davis, had improved as a wartime executive during the year. The events which led to the second and final dismissal of General McClellan illustrate this point. President Lincoln had restored McClellan to command of all the Union forces in Virginia after the Second Battle of Bull Run because he knew that the Little Napoleon was the best man for that task. The President's confidence in McClellan was substantiated when the hastily reorganized Army of the Potomac fought Lee's army to a standstill at the Battle of Antietam, thereby terminating an embarrassing Confederate invasion of the North.[89] On the merit of his general's slim victory Lincoln issued his preliminary emancipation proclamation.[90] McClellan was enraged over the proclamation--he opposed Lincoln's policy on slavery--and it was only because of the protests of his friends that the general was dissuaded from resigning. George McClellan did not understand the Union command system or his position

in it, and he was under the mistaken impression that he was more important than he really was.[91] To strike back at Lincoln, McClellan issued an order to his soldiers which implied that through the political process of voting the military could demonstrate its dislike for politician's actions.[92] For a time Lincoln tolerated McClellan's arrogance and political conduct because he hoped the general could give the Union victories. However, when the President finally concluded that the general was not going to do that, he dismissed him.[93] Subsequent generals would not be given as many chances to fail as George McClellan had been given. Lincoln determined to try successive generals in key field commands until a successful general could be found. From a reticent leader who deferred to his military leaders, the Union President had at last evolved into a strong chief executive with an appreciation of his role as commander-in-chief equal to that of the Southern President.

CHAPTER III

Confederate Failures and Union Perseverance

"We had them within our grasp, we had only to stretch forth our hands and they were ours, and nothing I could say or do could make the army move." Lincoln

Union victories during 1863 contributed significantly to the ultimate outcome of the war. Grant's capture of Vicksburg and Meade's victory over Lee at Gettysburg signaled the turning point in the conflict between the nations. Both these triumphs can be traced to successes and failures within the respective command systems of the North and South. An absence of unity of command prevented a concerted effort by the Confederate forces in the west which would have precluded the fall of Vicksburg, while on another level, failures within the command system of Lee's army produced the conditions which led to his defeat at Gettysburg. Confederate command problems of 1863 had their roots in a reorganization of the southern command structure which occurred during the winter of 1862-1863.

This reorganization resulted in the division of the Confederacy into four major regional commands: (1) General Edmund Kirby Smith's Trans-Mississippi Department; (2) General Joseph Johnston's Department of the West, embracing the commands of Braxton Bragg in middle Tennessee and Alabama, John C. Pemberton in Mississippi and east Louisiana, and the Department of East Tennessee; (3) P.G.T. Beauregard's Department of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida; and (4) Robert E. Lee's command in Virginia and North Carolina.[1] Consolidation of the smaller departmental commands to form larger ones was not, in itself, a radical departure from the initial concept of departmental organization that Davis had instituted at the beginning of the war. What was significant about the consolidated commands was the greater degree of autonomy that the Confederate President had been persuaded by his Secretary of War to

give to the two western regional commanders, Johnston and Kirby Smith.[2]

Seddon convinced Davis that granting the commanders of the regional departments broad discretionary powers would increase the flexibility and responsiveness of the Southern forces in those areas.[3] Although Seddon's thinking on the benefits to be gained from the new organizations was correct, the success of semiautonomous commands depended greatly on the abilities of the men chosen to command them. These commanders were expected to take charge and function with minimal supervision from Richmond. Ironically, Lee the general who was best suited to the demands of departmental command was the closest to Richmond, while the two men least suited for such commands headed the departments located the greatest distance from the capital.[4] Unknown to both Seddon and Davis, the experiment with semiautonomous commands was doomed to failure from the beginning because of the key individuals chosen to make the system function.

While Davis was involved with the details of setting up the new departmental commands, Lincoln also chose to make some adjustments in the Union command system. In the east, he relieved McClellan for the second and final time as commander of the Army of the Potomac in November, 1862, and replaced him with Ambrose E. Burnside. Major General Burnside was a man of impressive physical stature but lacking in such qualities, as military expertise and confidence, that would have made him a successful army commander. Ironically at the time he was picked to replace McClellan he candidly admitted to the President that he was not suited for such a position.

General Burnside served as the commander of the Army of the Potomac for a little more than a month before he was relieved because of the incompetent leadership he provided at the battle of Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862. Lincoln had doubted the wisdom of launching an attack across the Rappahannock River against Lee's well-entrenched Confederate forces but had not been sufficiently confident in his convictions to forbid it.[6] Part of the blame for the disaster belonged to General Henry Halleck, who had failed miserably in his role as general-in-chief. As the President's military expert, it was his responsibility to review military plans and advise Lincoln on their feasibility. Unwilling to interfere with the plans of a general in the field, Halleck did not caution Lincoln on the inadvisability of Burnside's project, indeed even if he was aware of it, and as a consequence the general was permitted to blunder ahead with his attack.[7] Lee had sufficient advance notice of Burnside's intentions and was fully prepared to repulse the Union forces. General Burnside's supervision of the battle was so bad that four of his subordinates, Generals William B. Franklin, William F. Smith, John Newton, and John Cochrane, went to Lincoln and requested that the army commander be removed from command because of his incompetence.[8]

From the President through the general-in-chief down to the commander of the army in the field the Union command system had failed to avert the disastrous defeat at Fredericksburg. Reminiscent of the defeats suffered at the Battles of First and Second Bull Run, the loss at Fredericksburg was the result of human failure rather than structural

failure within the Union command system. Two military men, Halleck and Burnside, had been inadequate, the former as a supervisor, the latter as a commander. Regardless of where the blame was placed, the results were the same; another ill-conceived and poorly executed military operation had ended in failure. Furious at yet another military debacle, the Committee on the Conduct of the War conducted hearings to catch the "fool and traitor generals."[9] Despite its zeal and the inquisition-like atmosphere of the hearings, the Committee came to the somewhat lame conclusion that while the assault had been unwise, its failure was due to the "imponderables of war."[10] Lincoln was so badly shaken by the outcome of the battle that he ordered Burnside not to "make a general movement of the army without letting me know."[11]

In the days after the Battle of Fredericksburg Lincoln was visited by Major General John A. McClernand, who presented a scheme for the capture of the city of Vicksburg on the Mississippi River.[12] Demonstrating he had not yet learned to appreciate the value of unity of command, the President approved McClernand's plan and authorized the general to form an independent command for the purpose of carrying it out. McClernand was the embodiment of all the evils inherent in "political generals"--men without military training who had received a commission because of their political position or because of political patronage. Lincoln had given him a general's commission at the beginning of the war in order to encourage McClernand and his Democratic followers to support the war effort. He had served for a time in the west, and although brave and aggressive, he knew very little about military tactics

or directing troops. Hardly competent as a commander, he was vain, intriguing, and extremely ambitious. Lincoln authorized McClernand to form his independent command without consulting General-in-Chief Halleck or General Grant, in whose department McClernand would be conducting operations. Secretary of War Stanton composed the order personally, and Halleck and Grant first learned of the politico's impending expedition when they read reports of it in the newspapers.[13] Most confusing to Grant was the command relationship between McClernand and himself: Was the political general under his command or was he the commander of an independent force responsive only to Lincoln? Stanton's orders were so ambiguous that the question was subject to interpretation.[14]

Why Lincoln would abandon existing command channels and authorize an independent expedition for McClernand is a difficult question. Grant, who was already having difficulty enlisting soldiers, would be in direct competition with McClernand for men and resources. T. Harry Williams offers as an explanation the argument that Lincoln had become so disgusted by the excuses for inaction presented by professional soldiers like McClellan and Burnside that he decided to experiment and entrust the direction of a major campaign to an amateur like McClernand.[15]

Lincoln created a potentially serious impairment within the Union command system in the west by giving McClernand authority to form an independent command in what was, according to departmental boundaries, General Grant's territory.[16] Grant resented the interference, as did Halleck, who, as a professional soldier, greatly disapproved of "political generals" including the likes of such men as Benjamin Butler, Nathaniel

P. Banks, John Fremont, and especially John McClernand. Sarcastically, he noted of such men: "It requires a professional man to conduct a law suit where a few thousand dollars are involved; but mere politicians can conduct armies where thousands of human lives, millions of money and the safety of the Government itself are involved."[17]

Believing that Lincoln must have a good reason to give McClernand a command as he did, Grant did not make an issue of the conflict of command in manner as to produce a confrontation with either Lincoln or McClernand. Rather than obstructing McClernand's efforts to raise a command, Grant simply made no effort to aid the general in his task. When it later appeared that McClernand was going to interfere with one of Grant's subordinates, General William T. Sherman, in his attempt to capture Vicksburg, Grant moved in and assumed personal command of the operation.[18] As the ranking major general and with the backing of Halleck, Grant formed a single command composed of all the forces around Vicksburg. McClernand's force was made a corps of the larger force and thus lost its independent status. Furious, McClernand appealed to Lincoln. The President, who by now had second thoughts about the wisdom of giving the general too much latitude, urged McClernand to cooperate with Grant for the good of the Union cause.

Lincoln's change of thinking on the matter was not caused by any suddenly acquired insight into the evils of divided commands but rather stemmed from a weariness at having to resolve disputes between bickering generals. He had just been through the episode with Burnside's generals and was therefore in no mood to involve himself in another between Grant

and McClernand. As a result Grant and Halleck were able to maneuver McClernand back into the conventional command system and in doing so to correct an error in judgment on the part of the commander-in-chief before it had been allowed to impair seriously the operations in the west.[19]

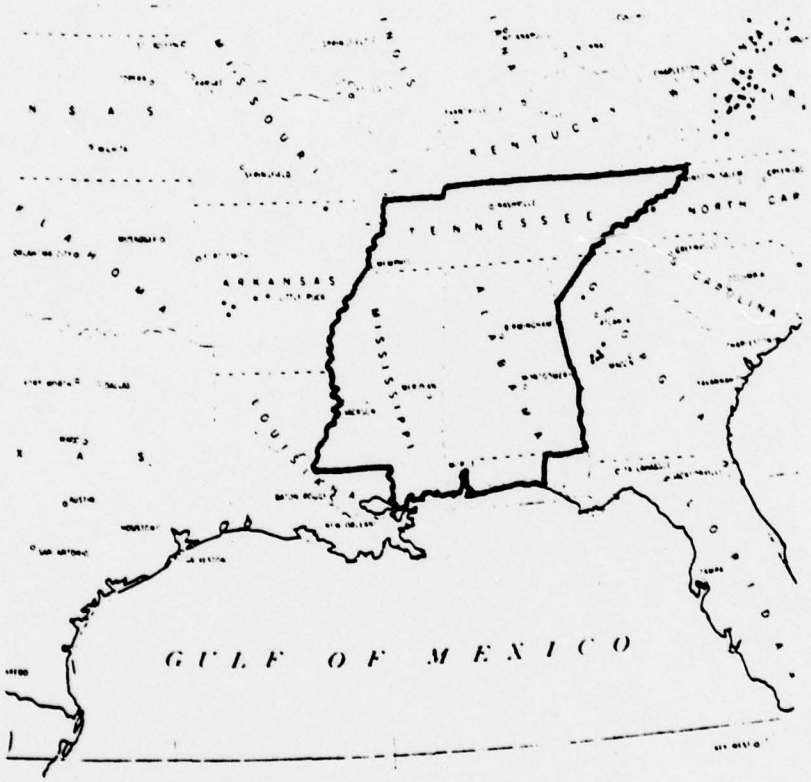
Halleck had been instrumental in solving this command problem. However, had he provided Lincoln with the strong decisive management of the armies the commander-in-chief sought, there would never have been justification for the McClernand experiment in the first place. Like Halleck, Stanton had been a contributor to both the creation and the solution of the problem. Energetic, brash, and confident of his abilities, the Secretary of War was willing to be an active war director should Halleck or Lincoln appear to be slacking in their roles.[20] The President appreciated the tremendous competency Stanton had brought to the War Department and as a consequence valued the secretary's opinion. Unfortunately, Stanton lacked the expertise in military affairs that would have rendered him a competent military advisor. He demonstrated this lack of expertise by collaborating in the decision to give McClernand an independent command, when he should have objected to it as a violation of the principle of unity of command. Over a period of time, as he had done with Halleck, Lincoln was gradually able to put Stanton's contributions into the proper perspective and eventually came to rely on his opinions only in those matters wherein he was competent to advise.[21] He was not so fortunate when it came to finding a general to command his major army in the field, the Army of the Potomac.

A succession of generals, McDowell, McClellan, Pope, and Burnside had proved to be inadequate, but fortunately for Lincoln and the Union cause, the North had no monopoly on such men. Jefferson Davis had generals who were likewise unequal to the important assignments they were given.

Davis's plans to establish semiautonomous commands in the west were unsuccessful for two reasons. His generals, Johnston and Kirby Smith, failed to provide the leadership necessary to make the semi-independent commands function effectively, and the orders issued by Davis were ambiguous and confusing. There should have been no difficulties in organizing Joseph Johnston's command, since Seddon had a clear understanding of the command system he proposed for implementation in the west. The confusion arose when the President wrote the order directing Johnston to assume command of the department.

> General Johnston will, for the purpose of correspondence and reports, establish his headquarters at Chattanooga, or such other place as in his judgment will best secure facilities for ready communication with the troops within the limits of his command, and will repair in person to any part of said command whenever his presence may for the time be necessary or desirable.[22]

Throughout the troubled months that Johnston served as commander of the Department of the West (see Map 4), he was never able to grasp the implications of the order or the extent of the authority which he had been granted.[23] Theoretically, he had the prerogative to assume command of any of the three armies in his theater if in his estimation the situation warranted it.[24] Such an idea was totally foreign to Johnston, who believed that command of an army was indivisible and that any attempt



Map 4 Johnston's Department of the West

at a dual command was impossible. Johnston did not think of himself as a theater commander rather in his mind he was a mere "coordinator," a position of less importance and influence than that of a commander. He explained his interpretation of his role in a letter to his old friend and political supporter, Senator Louis T. Wigfall of Texas:

> Each of the three departments assigned to me has its general, and there is no room for two, and since I can't remove him appointed by the President for the precise place, nothing but the part of inspector general is left to me...I am virtually laid upon the shelf with the responsibility of command.[25]

Firm in his belief that he had no command authority, he made no effort to act like a commander. One of the problems Johnston had to deal with upon arriving in his new command concerned the fate of Braxton Bragg. A favorite of Jefferson Davis, Bragg had been receiving increasingly heavy criticism in recent months in both the Richmond newspapers and the Congress over his unsuitability for command.[26] Davis wanted the theater commander to investigate the reports of bad morale in the Army of Tennessee and, if true, replace General Bragg as the commander of that army. Johnston so misunderstood his role as departmental commander that he looked upon this task as "spying on a friend."[27] Much to Seddon's consternation, rather than relieving Bragg, after a brief inspection tour of the Army of Tennessee, Johnston reported to Richmond that General Bragg showed "great skill and vigor" as an army commander.[28]

No amount of prodding from either Davis or Seddon could compel Johnston to act as a theater commander. Instead, he continued to find

fault with his assignment. After examining his department he reported to Richmond that it was misaligned and that his two major armies, Bragg's and Pemberton's, were too far apart to be mutually reinforcing.[29] Johnston's belief that he was just a figurehead and that Davis retained actual command was substantiated by the continued correspondence between the officers in his command and the President.[30] Rapidly, the weight of growing uncertainty in the minds of the principals caused the command system to collapse upon itself. Johnston believed he had no real authority and, therefore, exercised none. Davis and Seddon, realizing Johnston was not wielding the authority they sought to give him, were forced to involve themselves in the details of Johnston's command in order to prevent a breakdown of cooperation among its subordinate commands. In turn, Johnston viewed these actions as interference in his affairs and further evidence of the hollowness of his appointment. Human shortcomings, rather than structural defects were the fundamental cause for the failure of the theater-command concept implemented by the Confederacy in 1862-1863.[31] The theater-command concept came to an end befitting its confused existence when Seddon ordered Johnston to proceed to Mississippi and assume command of the forces there in May, 1863.[32] There was no implication in this order that Johnston was being relieved of his duties as first-officer of the western theater. However, Johnston misinterpreted this fact as being so.[33] At this point a situation then existed where a commander who had never really commanded was now under the impression that he had been relieved, while the administration which had appointed him continued to operate under

the assumption that the general was still in command. This confused command situation led to the series of events which ended with the loss of Vicksburg.[34] Thus, Davis's attempt at creating a more flexible command system in the west had, for the moment, failed. Joseph Johnston had been a poor choice for such a command. Although he possessed many qualities which made him a good army commander, he simply was not suited for theater command. An alternative choice would have been Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. He had demonstrated in the Shenandoah Valley what he could do with an independent command and was, therefore, ideally suited for such a role. For unknown reasons it seems he was never considered for Johnston's position.[35] The hopes for success of the theater-command concept had relied heavily on the foundation of good leadership, and it had not been forthcoming. Despite the good intentions of the President and the Secretary of War, the experiment with a new command system had confused, rather than clarified, the situation in the west at a time when Union forces were threatening to divide the Confederacy.

Problems in the other large western command created by Davis during the winter of 1862-1863 also contributed to the deteriorating military situation along the Mississippi River. The command system devised for the Trans-Mississippi, similar to that of Johnston's, did not measurably improve the management of that department. Largest of the commands created by Davis, Kirby Smith's department encompassed nearly all of the Confederate territory west of the Mississippi River.[36] During the first two years of the war there had been no centralized command in the

states west of the Mississippi, and by late 1862 it was apparent that unless actions were taken to prevent it, the Trans-Mississippi would simply drift away from the Confederacy. Davis had already agreed to the creation of a semiautonomous command for Johnston and was therefore receptive to the western congressmen and spokesmen for the Indian territories who advocated a similar command arrangement for the Trans-Mississippi. In order to ensure unity of purpose among Confederate and state civil officers, and the myriad of military leaders in the vast territory, the President decided to appoint one commander for everything west of the river (see Map 5).[37]

Remote from Richmond, and seemingly ignored, as evidenced by the succession of mediocre generals who had previously been assigned there, the Trans-Mississippi had grown increasingly independent. Upon his arrival Kirby Smith found that two years of inattention had fragmented the commands west of the river and that there was little cooperation among the units. Potentially a valuable source for economic and human resources to the Confederacy, the failure to organize and govern the area had led to a denial of its riches to the South. Unless Kirby Smith could bring order out of the chaos the Trans-Mississippi was in danger of being irrevocably lost to the Confederacy. Unfortunately for the South, the task given Kirby Smith exceeded his ability or, for that matter, any man's ability to accomplish.[38]

Kirby Smith reorganized his huge command subdividing it into a number of military districts each with its own commander who was responsible for a portion of the department. Although accurate strength

Map 5 Kirby Smith's Trans-Mississippi Department

reports were difficult to obtain, an estimate of the total forces of Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and the Indian territories placed their numbers near 50,000 men, thus making the Trans- Mississippi a significant reservoir of manpower. Davis and his advisors hoped that once Kirby Smith had improved the morale, organization, training, and economic standing of his vast department it would be able to send troops and supplies to aid the eastern armies.

This was not to be the case, as was soon demonstrated by the failure of troops from the Trans-Mississippi to come to the aid of the besieged forces at Vicksburg.[39] When urged by Davis to provide forces to break the siege, Kirby Smith protested that he could not send assistance because he feared Union invasions of his department. Of greatest concern to him was the threat posed by the forces of General Nathaniel P. Banks, who appeared to be preparing to launch an offensive into Louisiana from his base at New Orleans. Reluctantly, Davis accepted Kirby Smith's excuses, and as a result no assistance to Vicksburg was forthcoming from the west. When the Federals finally succeeded in capturing the city, they then were in control of the entire length of the Mississippi, thereby cutting off the Trans-Mississippi from the rest of the Confederacy.[40] Left to itself the vast department continued to operate under the supervision of Kirby Smith until the end of the war providing practically no support whatsoever to the war effort.[41]

Davis's attempt to create a command system for the territory west of the Mississippi River which would have secured those lands and their resources for the Confederacy failed because the effort came too late

and because the man sent to organize it could not work miracles. By early 1863 a sense of western nationalism had taken root in the Trans-Mississippi, which supplanted sentiments of loyalty to the Confederacy. Kirby Smith succumbed to that nationalism and became a sort of "benevolent despot," more concerned with the safety of his subjects than the welfare of the country.[42] Twice, first with Johnston and then with Kirby Smith, Davis had relinquished his iron grip on the direction of the war and delegated extensive powers to his field commanders, and twice they had failed him. These attempts at giving greater autonomy to field commanders had not improved the Southern command system; on the contrary, they had impaired the President's ability to command his forces in the west.

Confusion in the mind of Johnston over his status as a theater commander and the reluctance of Kirby Smith to send troops to Vicksburg were not the only factors which led to the loss of the vital river city. There was another event in the eastern theater which had a direct bearing on the fate of Vicksburg. Two of Davis's trusted deputies presented the President with conflicting courses of action which both contended would break the Union siege. Secretary of War Seddon advocated pulling every available man from the eastern seaboard and sending them west to reinforce Johnston, who was then to attack Grant. General Robert E. Lee doubted the severity of the situation at Vicksburg. He believed that with the coming of summer and the return of the "fever" the Federal forces would be forced to slow their operations. Lee recommended an invasion of the North as the best way to relieve tensions in the west.[43]

Seddon opposed Lee's plan as did Beauregard, who also had a plan. He proposed that reinforcements be sent to Bragg in Tennessee, and that Bragg, thus strengthened, be ordered to attack Grant from the North.[44]

There was no designated military advisor in the Confederate command system to whom Davis could turn to for advice on which course of action to approve. Formerly, Lee had served in that role in 1862, but now he was one of the advocates for that particular course of action. Even if he were still an "advisor," his opinions would be biased toward his plan. Davis submitted the proposals to his cabinet for their consideration. After much discussion Lee's plan was selected and given near unanimous approval, the lone dissenter being Postmaster General John H. Reagan. Davis retained some misgivings about the invasion, but Lee was able to allay these fears and ultimately convinced the President of the soundness of his proposal.[45]

Lee had recently defeated the Union Army of the Potomac at the Battle of Chancellorsville and for this reason did not view it as a deterrent to his proposed invasion. He reasoned that by conducting offensive operations he would relieve Federal pressure on Richmond by drawing the Union troops to the north, and of equal importance, an invasion would enable him to subsist his army in Pennsylvania, where provisions were abundant. Another consideration which bolstered Lee's belief in the validity of carrying the war deep into northern territory was the prospect of strengthening the peace movement which seemed to be gathering momentum in the Union states.[46]

Political considerations weighed heavily on Davis and influenced

his decision to approve Lee's plans. A sweeping victory on northern soil would encourage England to grant recognition to the Confederacy, and this added support would almost certainly guarantee success for the Southern cause. Finally, backed by a near unanimous vote of confidence from his cabinet and in view of the combined political and military considerations the commander-in-chief approved his field general's plan.[47]

Lee's raid into northern territory ended with a disastrous defeat at Gettysburg, which occurred simultaneously with Pemberton's surrender of Vicksburg. Command problems within Lee's army were largely to blame for his defeat at the hands of the Union army commanded by Major General George G. Meade.[48] After Jackson's death at Chancellorsville, Lee was forced to reorganize his army to compensate for the loss of this great field commander. Jackson had commanded a corps with four divisions, which was a difficult task considering the span of control problems such a large command created. Lee realized he had no one of Jackson's caliber to replace him, and therefore reorganized his force, transforming what had been an army with two "wings" or corps into one with three corps of near uniform size. This new arrangement reduced the span of control problems for the new corps commanders and theoretically should have improved Lee's control over his forces. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Losses incurred at Chancellorsville made it necessary to install many new and untried leaders in positions of responsibility. Under the great strain of battle at Gettysburg the new army organization with its inexperienced leaders did not function well, Lee was not at his best as a field commander, and his trusted lieutenant, James

Longstreet, failed him at a critical hour.[49]

At the same time in the west, Vicksburg was lost to the Confederacy due to a monumental failure in the Confederate command system. Confusion caused by the ambiguity of Johnston's status as the overall commander in the west coupled with Davis's orders directly to General Pemberton, the commander of the city garrison, prevented the Confederate general from escaping before Grant completed his encirclement of the city.[50] Troops from the western department were in the best position to aid Pemberton's besieged forces, but Davis refused to call on them, having been convinced by Kirby Smith of the imminent danger of Union raids into the Trans-Mississippi and because he believed until it was too late that Johnston was exercising command in the west.[51]

Predictably, after the loss of the city there was much debate concerning just who was to blame for the catastrophe. The Commander-in-Chief blamed Johnston, and the general and his supporters in turn held the President accountable.[52] In examining the factors surrounding the loss of the city, confusion, errors in judgment, and failures at all levels in the Confederate command system appear to be significant reasons for the disaster. But, in a larger sense, the decision to allow Lee to invade the North as a method of relieving the pressure on the beleagured city was the most serious error in judgment of the entire episode.[53]

Blaming the failure of Lee's army at Gettysburg solely on inherent command failures within the Army of Northern Virginia could be misconstrued as a depreciation of the skillful leadership Meade provided

the Union army. Such an interpretation would be an injustice to the man who, succeeding a series of mediocre commanders, was finally able to give the Army of the Potomac the leadership it so badly needed. General Meade had been given the job only two days before the battle because Hooker, in the aftermath of the Battle of Chancellorsville, had lost his fighting spirit.

Nicknamed "Fighting Joe" because of his exploits in battle, Hooker had replaced Burnside earlier in the year after the humiliating defeat of the Union army at Fredericksburg. Lincoln had sincere hopes that the pugnacious general would give the battered Army of the Potomac new fighting spirit. Wanting to believe that Hooker was the general who could give the Union victories, the President permitted him to alter informally the Union command system so that Halleck would not be the general's immediate supervisor. Halleck and Hooker had served together in California before the war and shared an intense dislike for one another. Hooker feared the general-in-chief would interfere with his plans and therefore wanted to bypass him in his dealings with the President. Lincoln agreed to this and thereby obscured the proper relationship between the general-in-chief and the commander of a field army, thus creating the potential for unnecessary confusion in the command system.[54]

Like each of his predecessors Hooker reorganized the army, eliminating the grand divisions Burnside had formed. These grand divisions, each consisting of two or more corps, were intended to facilitate control of the numerous corps which had been added to the Army of the

Potomac. In Hooker's opinion these grand divisions complicated rather than streamlined the command system.[55] He deleted them and returned to a conventional corps arrangement. This reorganization was not a major improvement in command because in replacing the larger units Hooker ended up by forming seven corps. Five would have been a better number and would not have presented the control problems that seven corps eventually gave the army commander.[56]

Outgeneraled at Chancellorsville by "Bobbie Lee," a derisive nickname Hooker had given his foe, "Fighting Joe" was left deeply shaken by his defeat.[57] He blamed the government for not supporting him and suspected that Halleck was secretly working against him. Fearing that the general-in-chief would ruin any chances he had for future success, Hooker expressed his concerns to Lincoln. Indirectly, he sought assurances from the President that Halleck had no power to order his movements. Exasperated, Lincoln responded,

> To remove all misunderstanding, I now place you in the strict military relation to General Halleck of a commander of one of the armies to the general-in-chief of all the armies. I have not intended differently, but as it seems to be differently understood I shall direct him to give you orders, and you to obey them.[58]

Lincoln's comment that he had never "intended differently" was not entirely correct. Hooker had been led to believe that Halleck was excluded from their relationship when the President authorized the army commander to correspond directly with him, thereby bypassing the general-in-chief.

Upon learning of Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania, Hooker demanded

that reinforcements be sent to him from around Washington. Lincoln consulted Halleck on the matter, and the General-in-Chief advised against stripping the capital of its defenses, a decision the President endorsed.[59] Hooker threatened to resign if additional forces were not given to him, prompting Lincoln, in consultation with his advisors, to come to the decision that a new commander for the Army of the Potomac was needed. "Fighting Joe" had succumbed to the same fears and apprehensions which had afflicted McClellan. Convinced that the opposing Confederate forces had him outnumbered, he adamantly insisted he could not initiate an offensive unless he had reinforcements.

Confronted with yet another general who would not fight, Lincoln had no choice but to appoint one who would. Halleck and Stanton nominated Meade, and the President accepted the recommendation.[60] Nicknamed the "Old Snapping Turtle" by his men because of his gruff manner, Meade was nervous, dyspeptic, and irascible, but he was personally brave and had an outstanding reputation as an able general.[61] Upon learning that Meade had replaced Hooker, Lee noted that the new Federal commander was a general of ability and intelligence, who was both painstaking and conscientious. He added that unlike Burnside, Pope, or Hooker, Meade would not make any major blunders when facing the Confederate army, and he would convert any mistakes committed by his opponent into Federal advantages.[62]

Lee's assessment of Meade proved to be correct. The Union general did stand firm and capitalize on errors committed by Southern leadership at Gettysburg. In three days of intense fighting he repelled repeated

Confederate attacks, the last of which came on July 3, 1863, when George Pickett's historic charge was thrown back. Lincoln's elation over Meade's victory was short-lived, and his joy turned to despair when he read the general's congratulatory message to the Union army. In part, Meade's message read that the army had achieved a great victory, but the added task of driving "from our soil every vestige of the invader remained yet to be accomplished."[63]

Upon reading this Lincoln dropped to his knees and cried, "Drive the invader from our soil! My God, is that all?"[64] Here was yet another general who failed to grasp the fundamental fact that to win the war it was not enough simply to win battles. Victory could be achieved only by destroying both the enemy's willingness and means to fight, and that meant destroying the enemy's armies, not simply defeating them. Meade allowed Lee's army to slip away, cross back over into Virginia, and go on fighting for almost two more years.

At a time when Lincoln was urging Meade to pursue and crush Lee, Halleck demonstrated that he had no better understanding of the situation than did Meade. Advising caution, Halleck wrote to Meade, "Do not be influenced by any dispatch from here against your own judgment. Regard them as suggestions only...I think it will be best for you to postpone a general battle until you can concentrate all your forces and get your reserves and resources."[65]

Lincoln's command system was interfering with his prosecution of the war. He and his deputy, Stanton, wanted the generals to fight, and although he ordered it, his General-in-Chief and field army commander,

his military men, had numerous reasons to avoid fighting. Learning that Lee had escaped with his army back into Virginia, Lincoln was furious: "We had them within our grasp, we had only to stretch forth our hands and they were ours, and nothing I could say or do could make the army move."[66] At this point in the summer of 1863 it must have seemed to Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis that the best generals were wearing the uniform of the enemy. Johnston, Pemberton, and Kirby Smith had disappointed Davis; Burnside, Hooker, and Meade had failed Lincoln. Command systems were not at fault; poor commanders were the crux of the problem.

Robert E. Lee wrote to the President after his defeat at Gettysburg and offered to resign noting, "The general remedy for want of success in a military commander is his removal."[67] Davis rejected Lee's overture to resign and declined to replace his favorite general. Although unspoken, the Confederate President's sentiments must have been similar to Lincoln's--where were the men who could do any better?[68] For Davis and the Confederacy there was no one else to try; for Lincoln and the Union there was a general in the west who was yet to be tried as a high commander, Ulysses S. Grant. Stanton and Halleck developed a plan to have him appointed commander of the Army of the Potomac but abandoned it when they were informed of Grant's opposition to such an appointment.[69] Another six months would pass before the western general was finally called to Washington.

In the autumn of 1863 a potential crisis for the Confederacy began to develop in east Tennessee when the army of Major General William S.

Rosecrans, after weeks of prodding from the administration, finally began an offensive against Bragg's army. This operation was designed to drive the Confederate forces out of the state of Tennessee. Bragg gave ground as he was pressed by the Union forces causing President Davis, although still a friend and supporter of Bragg, to believe that unless drastic action was taken, Confederate forces were in danger of losing all of east Tennessee.[70]

From reports and a steady stream of critics who came to Richmond to complain about the general, Davis had learned of the deep divisions within Bragg's command. Now during a time when the Union army was advancing, the President feared that Bragg was devoting too much time fighting his own generals when he should have been fighting the Union generals.[71] Davis was eventually dragged into one of these feuds when he ordered General Leonidas Polk restored to command after Bragg had relieved him. Shortly thereafter twelve of Bragg's general officers signed a petition demanding that the general be removed from command of the Army of Tennessee.[72] General Nathan B. Forrest, on yet another occasion, threatened to resign if Bragg were not replaced, and it was only by the intervention of President Davis that he was dissuaded from doing so.[73] Congress became involved in the debate over Bragg's fitness to command when a number of generals wrote to influential men in Congress, notably Senator Louis Wigfall and Representative Henry S. Foote, with complaints about the general. Seeking to discover the actual situation in Bragg's army, Davis went in person to inspect the command and talk to the generals.

Despite what he saw and heard--and there were many who complained long and loud against the army commander--the commander-in-chief decided to allow Bragg to remain in command. Davis had considered the possible replacements--Lee, Johnston, Beauregard, and Pemberton--before dismissing each as an alternative commander.[74] Pemberton was unacceptable to the army, and Johnston and Beauregard were unacceptable to the President.[75] Davis had asked Lee to give up his eastern department and assume command in Tennessee, but Lee had declined the President's request.[76] Instead of replacing Bragg, Davis decided to reinforce the Army of Tennessee with one army corps, Longstreet's, temporarily detached from Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

These forces arrived on the battlefield at a critical moment and helped Bragg's forces to achieve a stunning victory over Rosecrans at the Battle of Chickamauga, September 19-20, 1863.[77] Davis's efforts in sustaining Bragg in command had only a temporary effect, however. Fundamental problems still existed in the command arrangement of Bragg's army, and they resurfaced at a time when Grant, now the commander of all the Union forces in the west, decided to break the Confederate siege of Chattanooga.

His victory at Chickamauga for the moment sustained Bragg in command but signaled the end for Rosecrans. When Lincoln learned of the rout of the Union army in Tennessee, he lost what little confidence he had left in General Rosecrans. He decided to reorganize the entire command system in the west, and on October 16 placed all the forces in the west , including Rosecrans's besieged army in Chattanooga, under one

commander.[78] Lincoln at last realized that although the Union forces in the west outnumbered the Confederate troops, the advantages to be gained from superior numbers were being forfeited because the Northern armies were not assisting one another. Combining all the forces under one commander would ensure cooperation and unity of effort. The President reasoned that since it seemed that General Grant was the only successful general in the west, he should have command of the combined western forces. Lincoln's decision was not innovative; in fact, by giving Grant command of the army group, he simply restored the western command arrangement he had given Halleck a year and a half before. Why it took the Union so long to rediscover the army group command arrangement is not easy to explain. Possible explanations include the apparent lack of a suitable general for the post, Halleck's hostility towards Grant, and the Union's general officer grade structure, which made it difficult to place one major general under another's command. Despite Grant's victories in west Tennessee early in the war, it was not until after Vicksburg that his reputation as a competent general was firmly established with Lincoln. His alleged drinking problem had made him unpopular in Regular Army circles and especially in the mind of Halleck, who doubted that Grant had any real talent as a general. Finally, in spite of the legislation of 1862 which enabled Lincoln to appoint general officers to command positions without regard to seniority of rank, he was generally reluctant to do so because of the inevitable bickering which resulted when a senior major general felt slighted at having to serve under an officer who was below him on the grade list. By late

1863 times had changed; Grant had demonstrated his competence, and Lincoln had gorwn accustomed to dealing with unhappy generals.

Grant's first action upon being named to his new post was to replace Rosecrans with General George Thomas, "the Rock of Chickamauga," the man who had been the real hero of that battle. Personally assuming command of the operation to break the Confederate siege of Chattanooga, General Grant brought together a combined force of sufficient strength to disrupt Bragg's lines and drive the Confederate forces into Georgia.[79]

There was another reason besides the change in the Union command arrangement which accounted for the ease with which Grant was able to break the siege of Chattanooga. Prevailing command problems in the Army of Tennessee were also a contributing factor. Bragg's relationship with his generals had continued to deteriorate as the army fought to contain Grant. Personality conflicts between the army commander and his officers interfered with command.[80] Lacking a coordinated plan of action and confronted with a subordinate like Longstreet who challenged his every decision, Bragg lost control of the situation. Late in November, under heavy pressure from the Union forces, he was compelled to withdraw to the south into Georgia. On November 28 Bragg submitted his resignation, and three days later he was ordered to turn over his command to General William Hardee.[81]

Almost a year after Secretary of War Seddon had made the first overtures to have him removed from command, and after the loss of Vicksburg, the Mississippi River, and the state of Tennessee, Braxton Bragg was finally evicted from a command for which he was unsuited.

Jefferson Davis had many opportunities to relieve Bragg, but on each occasion, for reasons of personal loyalty to his general or for lack of what he considered to be viable alternatives, the President had elected to retain him in command. Seddon had been right in his estimation of Bragg; Davis had misjudged the man. Bragg was removed from army command, but his service to the Confederacy was not at an end.

Anti-administration newspapers and Davis's opponents in Congress blamed the President for the latest disaster in the west.[82] By exercising personal command of the Confederate forces Davis made himself the focus for criticism when either the army or its generals performed badly. Because there was no general-in-chief for all the armies in the Confederate command system, there was no one else who could shoulder a share of the criticism directed at the commander-in-chief. Congress demanded to know why Johnston had been removed from theater command and further urged that he be appointed to replace Hardee in Bragg's old command. When Lee, for the second time, showed little enthusiasm for a command in the west, Davis yielded to the advice of Seddon and the demands of Congress and appointed Johnston to command of the Army of Tennessee.[83]

In an attempt to silence the critics of his personal direction of the war, on February 24, 1864, President Davis modified the Confederate command system by appointing Braxton Bragg his chief military advisor. His new position was similar to that which had been formerly held by Lee from March through May, 1862.[84] Reactions to the new

command system were generally unfavorable, especially those expressed in the Richmond newspapers. Typical was the comment in the Washington Chronicle as quoted in the Pittsburgh Evening Chronicle, March 4, 1864, which noted,

> The Richmond papers announce with hardly concealed regret the appointment of General Bragg....His appointment is exceedingly unpopular and Davis himself shares equal odium.[85]

Don C. Seitz, a biographer of General Bragg, notes that Bragg's new post "brought with it the title of Commander-in-Chief of the Confederate forces, a distinction of considerable magnitude in words, but...created no direct authority, Bragg's actual duties being confined to echoing the conclusions of the powers above him."[86] This is not a completely accurate assessment of Bragg's contributions as the President's advisor (see Chart 6).[87]

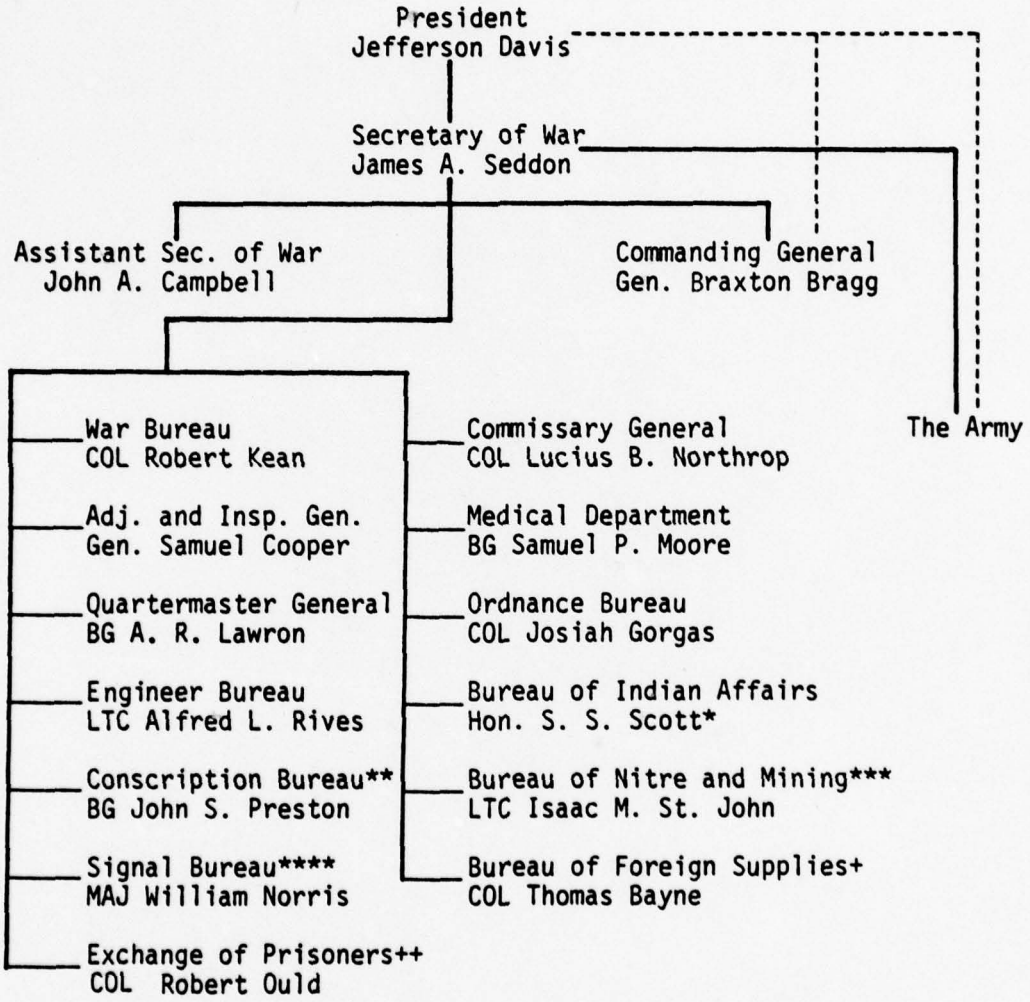
For a time, Bragg's influence with the President in military matters surpassed that of the Secretary of War. Not content with being a clerk, Bragg sought to gain control of the War Department a situation which led to a great deal of antagonism between him and Seddon. Robert G. Kean, the administrative head of the War Bureau noted in his diary that,

> the invasions of the functions of the Secretary of War by the Commanding General continue more and more numerous....Nothing but a sense of duty can make....the present secretary put up with it. All sorts of orders are published in the adjutant's generals office, and a copy sent to the secretary endorsed, "published by the order of General Bragg."[88]

In a strategic sense, however, aside from a minor campaign in North Carolina, Bragg contributed little to the direction of the war.[89] As

Chart 6

Organization of the Confederate
War Department February 1864



Source: Official Records, Series IV, Volume III, p. 1183.
* Assigned April 1862
** Bureau formed December 30, 1862
*** Formed April 1862, authorized by law June 9, 1864
****Bureau formed April 19, 1862
\+ Bureau formed February 6, 1864
++ Bureau formed July 22, 1862

he had from the beginning of the war, Jefferson Davis continued to exercise personal command over the Confederate armies. Regardless of the relative worth of the position held by Bragg, the fact that Davis was compelled to alter his command system is an indication of how intense the criticism of his personal leadership must have been.

Less than two weeks after Davis had installed Bragg as his chief military advisor, Lincoln made a major change in the Union command system. Replacing Halleck, Ulysses S. Grant was named General-in-Chief and given the rank of lieutenant general.[90] This decision had been slow in coming, and few realized the impact it would have on the war. As early as December, 1863, Lincoln had considered bringing Grant to the east to command the Army of the Potomac but had decided against it, feeling his leadership was needed in the west.[91] When Meade failed to bring about a decisive engagement with Lee in the months after Gettysburg, the President at last concluded that new leadership in the east was necessary.

Congress and especially the Committee on the Conduct of the War believed that Grant was the right man for command in the eastern theater. Various Congressmen urged the President to replace Halleck with Grant, but Lincoln, the politician, hesitated. He was concerned that, given the exalted title, Grant might be tempted to join other generals such as McClellan and Fremont who were preparing to run against Lincoln in the fall presidential election.[92]

Not to be dissuaded, Congress forged ahead and after much debate, passed a bill reviving the rank of lieutenant general. This bill

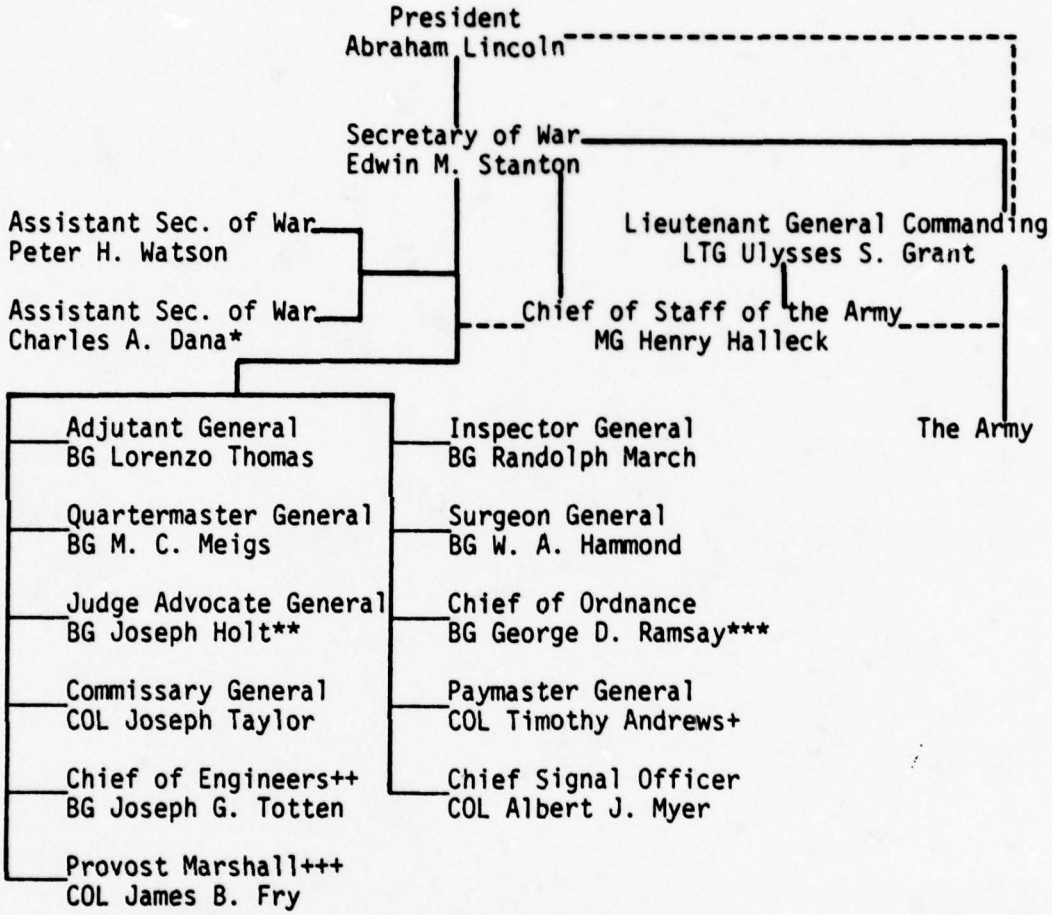
empowered the President to appoint one officer from among the present major generals in the Regular Army to the new grade. It was the intention of Congress that the rank be given to Grant, but the bill did not mention the general by name.[93] After receiving assurances from the general that he had no political ambitions, Lincoln ordered Grant to Washington, and on March 9, 1864, presented him with his commission as the army's only lieutenant general. The following day, Grant was given command of all the Union armies (see Chart 7).[94]

In the coming months Ulysses S. Grant was to become an aggressive general-in-chief, active in the direction of the war. After years of experimentation with mediocre generals Lincoln had at last found a general who could and would fight. Strategically Grant and Lincoln shared similar beliefs, a factor which greatly facilitated coordination and cooperation between the commander-in-chief and the general-in-chief. Jefferson Davis had no such general on whom to rely.[95] In the ensuing months the combination of Lincoln and Grant would at last bring the North's tremendous advantages in manpower and logistics to bear against the South. Weakened by three years of fighting, time was running out for the Confederacy.

During 1863 Lincoln had tried a number of generals in army commands while Davis had experimented with a number of ways of commanding armies. Ultimately, the Union had found a successful general to command its armies; the Confederacy had simply shuffled the same generals into different positions. Unlike Lincoln, Davis had established no tradition of rapid and frequent removals from command of unsuccessful generals.

Chart 7

Organization of the Union
War Department March 1864



Source: Marvin A. Kriedberg and Merton G. Henry, History of Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 87 and 133.

* Assigned January 24, 1864
** Assigned September 3, 1862
*** Assigned September 15, 1863
\+ Assigned September 6, 1862
++ Bureaus of Topographical Engineers and Engineers merged on March 3, 1863.
+++ Office of Provost Marshal created March 3, 1863.

Davis's distrust of the abilities of his principal generals, Johnston, Beauregard, and Kirby Smith, ripened with time and constituted a serious weakness in the Confederate command structure during the last year of the war.[96]

CHAPTER IV

A Modern Command System

"...the president is not endowed with military genius, but who could have done better?"

Josiah Gorgas

During the last year of the war, Jefferson Davis tried desperately and unsuccessfully to create a command system that would ensure the most economical utilization of the South's dwindling resources and manpower. Lincoln and the Union, on the other hand, after three years of trial and error at last achieved success in their efforts to develop a modern and efficient command system. With the elevation of Ulysses S. Grant to high command the North was able to bring the prosecution of the war into sharp focus, although more than a year of bitter fighting ensued while the Union's new command system developed its full potential.

No single individual can be credited with being the sole architect of the Union command system adopted in March, 1864. Congress contributed to the development of the new system by drafting the legislation which made Grant the ranking general in the army. It was the wish of Congress that the man who was appointed lieutenant general "be authorized, under the direction and during the pleasure of the President, to command the armies of the United States."[1] Unlike Henry Halleck, who was merely a facade from behind which Lincoln directed the army, the lieutenant general was to exercise command over the armies. Congress did not intend to infringe upon Lincoln's prerogatives as commander-in-chief rather it was the intention of the legislative body to restore what it considered to be the correct relationship between the President and the Army.[2]

It would not be correct to say that Lincoln demonstrated exceptional insight by appointing Grant to high command, for at the time

he considered the decision even the President was not aware of the form the new command system would take. Grant was by all appearances a successful general and for this reason Lincoln hoped he could continue to be successful as the commander of the Federal armies.[3] Nevertheless, McClellan and Halleck had been selected because of their reputation as successful generals, and they had not proved capable of handling the duties of the general-in-chief.

Unwittingly, Grant and Halleck were the principals who were most instrumental in the development of the command system devised by the Union during the last year of the war. Characteristics in their personalities were mutually recognized and exploited so that the role each eventually adopted was best suited for him.[4] Grant was a commander and a field soldier, who nurtured an intense dislike for administration and what he considered to be the political intrigues of Washington.[5] Since the beginning of the war he had commanded various units from brigade through army level, and immediately prior to being selected general-in-chief, he had been the theater commander in the west. Aggressive and confident in his abilities as a commander, Grant's skills were primarily oriented toward fighting rather than toward administration.

Henry Halleck's talents, on the other hand, were in the fields of politics and administration. Although he had shirked his responsibilities as the ranking military commander, Halleck had performed the administrative duties of general-in-chief with laudable expertise.[6] During his tenure in office he was instrumental in bringing about

certain reforms in the army and had aided in the improvement of efficiency and cooperation among the War Department staff bureaus.[7] He liked the interplay of intrigue and political strategy, the power and politics of Washington. Upon learning that Grant was to be named lieutenant general, Halleck submitted a request to be relieved from duty as general-in-chief realizing that it was the wish of Congress that Grant fill that post.[8]

Two days later the War Department issued General Orders, Number 98 which relieved Halleck and appointed Grant to the post of general-in-chief. Of significance, the second paragraph of the order read,

> Major General H. W. Halleck is assigned to duty in Washington, as Chief of Staff of the Army, under the direction of the Secretary of War and the Lieutenant General commanding. His orders will be obeyed and respected accordingly.[9]

While it is not known who suggested the creation of the office, the personalities of Grant and Halleck were, in all probability, contributing factors to the eventual decision. From the outset it was Grant's intention to exercise command in the field rather than from behind a desk in Washington.[10] Because the general-in-chief was determined to involve himself personally in the supervision of the war in the east, there was a definite need for someone like Halleck to assist him in coordinating the activities of the other Union armies scattered throughout the seventeen geographical departments across the country.[11] Halleck was able to function as a channel of communication between Lincoln and Grant and between Grant and the other departmental commanders. Because of his educational background and military experience, Halleck had the

faculty of being able to communicate civilian ideas to a soldier and military ideas to a civilian and make them both understand what he was talking about.[12] During the ensuing months he was able to interpret Lincoln's strategic concepts to Grant and Grant's military language to the President. In large measure thanks to Halleck's unique ability, Lincoln and Grant seldom misunderstood one another, a factor which greatly enhanced the Union command system. When William T. Sherman, who had served under both men, was informed of the new command structure he commented, "Halleck has more reserve book-learning and knowledge of men than Grant; whereas the latter, by his honesty, simplicity, candor, and reliance on friends, is better suited to act with soldiers."[13]

Within a month of the creation of the office of the Chief of Staff, Grant and Halleck had worked out a basic set of operating procedures governing the command of the army. Rather than Grant himself having to read all the reports from subordinate commanders and frame and write minute instructions for them, a task which would have left him little time for strategic planning, he instructed his departmental commanders to correspond directly with Halleck. The Chief of Staff, in turn, either handled routine matters himself or summarized them and forwarded them to Grant for his instructions.[14] Upon receipt of these instructions, Halleck would transmit the general-in-chief's orders back to the subordinates in the field. Grant's exercise of command from the field in this manner would not have been possible had it not been for the extensive telegraph network which enabled him to communicate

rapidly with both Halleck in Washington and the commanders of the distant departments.[15]

Secretary of War Stanton and Grant became involved in a minor dispute over the control of the War Department bureaus shortly after the new general-in-chief assumed command, but the issue was resolved before any great damage was done to the working relationship between the two men. At issue was Grant's resentment of the traditional relationship between the various staff departments and the army commanders in the field. These agencies--quartermaster, commissary, ordnance, and so on--considered themselves independent and on occasion would ignore orders from field commanders unless the orders were confirmed by their own bureau chiefs in Washington. Now that he was the general-in-chief, Grant insisted that these agencies be placed under his control, a proposal which did not appeal to Stanton. He believed that, by regulation, the War Department bureaus came under the Secretary of War and to alter this relationship would necessitate action by Congress. Grant finally went to the President, who resolved the matter by reassuring the general-in-chief that although he could not legally give Grant command of the staff departments, "there is no one but myself that can interfere with your orders, and you can rest assured that I will not."[16] In spite of this seeming accommodation of Grant's request, Lincoln made no effort to change the existing arrangement, and control of the bureaus remained in Stanton's hands. Most of Grant's problems with the agencies were resolved by working through the Secretary of War or through the Chief of Staff.

Although he did not realize it at the time, Grant had been spared the tremendous additional burden he would have incurred had he been able to persuade Lincoln to give him total control over the War Department. In effect, Grant had been asking the President to do away with the Secretary of War as his civilian deputy for military affairs. Placing the total logistical and administrative responsibilities in the general-in-chief's hands would have left him little time for directing strategic military operations. Lincoln prevented what would have been a tragic mistake in the organization of the Union command system.

Halleck, functioning as a liaison between Grant and Stanton, made the existing system palatable to the general-in-chief. "Old Brains" deserved more credit for making the Union command system work than was given him at the time by the officers in the army.[17] He was the critical element which enabled the command system to function. Had there been no one like Henry Halleck, Grant could not have absented himself from Washington rather he would have been compelled to remain in the capital like each of his predecessors. Because of his familiarity with the details of the War Department and the months of experience he had as general-in-chief, Halleck possessed the unique qualities which gave the dimension to the office of Chief of Staff it eventually came to have. On the personal level, Halleck performed the near impossible task of serving two masters, Grant and Stanton, and that he was able to do so for over a year reflects great credit upon the man and his contribution to the army.

Stanton and Grant butted heads one more time before they finally settled into a working relationship. While preparing for a spring offensive, Grant began withdrawing men from the fortifications around Washington in such large numbers that Stanton objected. He was concerned that the capital would be vulnerable without soldiers to man its defenses. Grant disagreed with the Secretary of War, thereby prompting the latter to seek arbitration from the President on the question of troop dispositions. Lincoln settled the dispute when he remarked to Stanton, "You and I, Mr. Stanton, have been trying to boss this job, and we have not succeeded very well with it. We have sent across the mountain for Mr. Grant, as Mrs. Grant calls him, to relieve us, and I think we had better leave him alone to do as he pleases."[18]

In addition to bolstering the Army of the Potomac with the troops from the Washington defenses, Grant made other changes in the organization of the Union armies. Shortly after assuming the office of general-in-chief, Grant appointed his close friend and former subordinate, General William T. Sherman, to command the Military Division of the Mississippi, which embraced the Departments of the Ohio, Cumberland, Tennessee, and Arkansas, thereby ensuring continued unity of command in the west.[19] In the east it was expected by the congressmen who had backed Grant for high command that he would either command the Army of the Potomac personally or at the very least replace Meade with another general.[20] During the months since Gettysburg, the Committee on the Conduct of the War had sought to have Meade replaced

with a general who was politically more acceptable to the Radical Republicans. Meade himself expected Grant would replace him with his own man, probably a general from the west. To the great aggravation of the Republicans, the general-in-chief retained Meade in command of the Army of the Potomac, and the two of them, Grant and Meade, entered into a peculiar command relationship which endured until the end of the war.[21] Grant located his field headquarters with Meade's and for the next year traveled with the Army of the Potomac. Each headquarters, the general-in-chief's and the army commander's, was kept separate and distinct, with its own staff officers and tents. Inevitably, in spite of the excellent rapport between Grant and Meade, this arrangement gave the impression of dual command of a single army and ultimately led to confusion in command on a number of occasions.[22] Meade certainly would have preferred that Grant direct the war from a desk back in Washington, and his sentiments were shared by a number of army commanders who objected to communicating with Grant through the Chief of Staff. Both Sherman and Hooker disapproved of the office of Chief of Staff, believing that it created the impression of dual command of the Union armies.[23] Although incorrect in their interpretation of the duties and authority of the Chief of Staff, the fact that these prominent generals did not appreciate the addition of the post to the Union command system illustrates the prevailing belief among Civil War generals concerning the indivisibility of command. Despite these and other problems of coordination which afflicted the Union command system during the remainder of the war, however, the arrangement

of Commander-in-Chief, General-in-Chief, and Chief of Staff gave the United States a modern command system that was superior to anything achieved in Europe until the great German militarist Field Marshal Count Helmut Von Moltke forged the Prussian staff machine of 1866 and 1870.[24]

In his memoirs Grant implied that at the same time Lincoln made him General-in-Chief he gave him the widest possible latitude in the direction of the war.[25] It is true that Grant was given more latitude in determining strategy than had been given McClellan and Halleck, but in many respects he had no more authority than either of his predecessors. Lincoln retained a firm grip on the direction of the war and permitted Grant a free hand in the prosecution of the war only in so far as his actions as general-in-chief remained consistent with the President's overall strategy.[26] Reminiscent of Winfield Scott's Anaconda Plan, Grant's strategy in the spring of 1864 consisted of pressuring the Confederacy on all sides with every available Union force which could be brought into the struggle. In the east Meade's army and armies commanded by Generals Benjamin Butler and Franz Sigel were ordered to cooperate in the destruction of Lee's army. Grant's plans for the western theater called for two offensives, one led by Sherman into northern Georgia, the other under Nathaniel P. Banks was to capture Mobile, Alabama. The intent of this strategy was for the eastern and western armies to hammer continuously at the armies and resources of the enemy at every possible point until by attrition, if nothing else, the Union won.[27] All available Federal troops would be

utilized; those not fighting would be continually advancing, exerting pressure on the Confederacy or as Lincoln phrased it, "Those not skinning can hold a leg."[28]

Grant's first offensive demonstrated that he, in agreement with Lincoln, correctly perceived that the most direct path to total Union victory entailed the destruction of the enemy's means to fight, and this meant the destruction of the enemy's armies. When Grant launched his spring offensive in 1864 his primary objective was Lee's Army of Northern Virginia rather than the Confederate capital at Richmond.[29] Although bloodied in the battles of the Wilderness campaign, Grant neither retreated as the former Union commanders had done nor advanced directly towards Richmond but rather continued to engage Lee's army at every opportunity. The western phase of the Union's grand strategic plan was initiated when Sherman's armies pushed into northern Georgia on May 5, 1864. Opposing the combined armies of Sherman's command, which numbered in excess of 100,000 men, was Joe Johnston with the 60,000 men of the Army of Tennessee.[30]

Johnston's antagonistic relationship with Jefferson Davis and his chief military advisor, Braxton Bragg, had grown beyond the bounds of a personal dispute involving the key members of the Confederate command system.[31] By 1864 it had become an important political issue. Davis's cabinet had voted unanimously for Bragg's dismissal from command in Tennessee after Chattanooga, and Congress had demanded Johnston's appointment to the vacated post.[32] The defeat at Gettysburg and the loss of Vicksburg were blamed on Davis and had led to an erosion of

confidence in his abilities to command the southern armies. By demanding a larger voice in the direction of the war, Congress and the cabinet were overtly attempting to dilute Davis's prerogatives as commander-in-chief.[33] Their efforts to assert themselves as war directors jeopardized the concept of unity of command at the highest level of the Confederate command system. Political interference in the conduct of the war, typified by the President's capitulation to pressures and subsequent appointment of Johnston, became more extensive with each successive military disaster. During a time when the Confederacy was about to be confronted with the greatest threat to its existence since the beginning of the war--a time when unity of command was absolutely vital--the Confederate President was slowly losing his iron grip on the war powers he had long cherished.

Had Jefferson Davis been more interested in securing relief for himself from the criticisms and abuse from his political foes rather than in saving the Confederacy, he could have exercised an option which would have lifted the burden of military command from his shoulders. He could have called upon Congress to create the post of Commander of the Confederate Armies and appointed to it a military man such as Lee, who, as a generalissimo, would have been responsible for the fate of the armies and the nation.[34] It was not in Davis's nature to shirk responsibility, and as a strict constructionist in constitutional matters, any course of action which reduced the scope of his executive powers was unacceptable to him. Throughout the war Davis resisted the creation of the office of commanding general of the armies because he

viewed that office as unnecessary and because he believed that the army had only one commander, the President. On the two occasions (in 1862 and 1864) when he had been compelled to appoint a general to such a post, Davis did not grant the commanding general any substantive powers. He prided himself on performing the functions of a war President, of being the actual commander-in-chief, and would not voluntarily relinquish the authority granted him under the Constitution.[35] Congress, aware that the President would not easily surrender his prerogatives of command, explored various ways to dilute Davis's war powers. Another year of bitter struggles between the chief executive and the legislature was to ensue until, in February 1865, congressional action at last forced Davis to appoint a commander of the Southern armies with substantive authority to direct the conduct of the war.

Against the background of the highly charged political atmosphere within the Confederacy, Lee, in the east, and Johnston, in the west, sought to contain the Union advances. Johnston skillfully traded ground for lives as he resisted Sherman's march into Georgia. Although a sound strategic military concept, the loss of southern territory was abhorrent to congressmen from the forfeited territories as well as to Davis and his general-in-chief, Bragg.[36] Fearful that Johnston had lost his fighting nerve and unwilling to accept his general's strategy, the President considered replacing Johnston but hesitated while he pondered a possible successor. Misled by Bragg concerning the seriousness of the situation confronting Johnston and burdened with his personal

distrust of the general, Davis relieved Johnston at a time when, despite retreating in the face of a superior enemy force, the morale of the Army of Tennessee had actually been improving.[37] Bragg was able to convince the President to appoint John B. Hood to be the new commander of the Army of Tennessee, which by now had been pushed to Atlanta, Georgia.[38]

Hood, formerly one of Johnston's corps commanders, was a fearless fighter but inferior to Johnston in his understanding of military strategy.[39] Whereas Johnston had refused to do battle with Sherman's stronger armies, Hood obliged the Union general. After two unsuccessful attempts to halt Sherman's advance, Hood withdrew from Atlanta, forfeiting the state capital whose symbolism far surpassed its intrinsic value to the Confederacy.[40] News of the loss of the city flashed throughout the South and intensified the bitterness and resentment directed against the Southern President, who had come to be considered the father of all the military disasters that had befallen the Confederacy.

Sherman's victory over Hood and capture of the city of Atlanta came at a time when the Union President, like his counterpart, was also the recipient of criticism. Northern hopes for a swift victory over the South had faded as Grant became bogged down in the summer campaigns of 1864. This waning of public confidence led to renewed complaints against the President concerning the direction of the war, especially since Grant's offensive seemed to be producing casualties and little else. After having defeated a succession of mediocre generals in the west, Grant had at last met his equal in Robert E. Lee. Frustrated

by the Confederate general's tactical genius, Grant had sought in vain to flank the Southern army or to bring it to decisive battle. Grant had fought one bloody battle after another, culminating in the Battle of Cold Harbor, where the Federals lost in excess of 13,000 casualties, nearly 7,000 of which occurred within a single hour. Lee's army sustained less than one-third the number of casualties suffered by the Union army, with Southern killed, wounded, and missing numbering approximately 4,000.[41] Unable to flank Lee or to force the Confederate army to fight a decisive battle, Grant altered his strategy in the east and shifted his army south of the James River in an attempt to force the Southern army into Petersburg, where by means of a siege both the army and the city could be captured. Slowly, Grant's giant army encircled the city, surrounding Lee's army as Pemberton had been caught at Vicksburg.[42] The failure by the Union general-in-chief to defeat Lee in open battle had precluded the swift victory the North had hoped for, and both Lincoln and his general were disappointed at having to resort to siege tactics.

Grant was not totally at fault for the Union's lack of success during the spring and summer of 1864. Problems in the Northern command system had interfered with the Federal general-in-chief's direction of the war in spite of the improvements earlier in the year. Political generals, specifically Butler and Sigel, were the primary causes of the problems.[43] Lincoln had given Grant extensive powers when he appointed him general-in-chief but had clouded Grant's authority when the question of replacing what were considered imcompetent

political generals was raised by him. Butler and Sigel, neither of whom were professional soldiers, were ordered to protect the flanks of Grant's army during his offensive. Butler was to threaten Richmond from the southeast, while Sigel was to contain the Confederate forces known to be operating in the Shenandoah Valley.[44] Sigel was defeated by an inspired Confederate unit which included cadets from the Virginia Military Institute, and Butler was inexcusably delayed in performing his mission, thereby forfeiting the opportunity to capture Petersburg before Lee occupied the city.[45] Angered by their failures to perform their assigned missions, Grant asked Lincoln to relieve both men. Lincoln declined, fearful of antagonizing the friends of Butler, a Democrat, who was known to have strong backers in both the Republican and Democratic parties.[46] Now that the offensive had bogged down and become a siege, Grant had additional justification for seeking the removal of Butler. The political general was the ranking Union major general and in Grant's absence would be the man to assume command of the combined Union forces around Petersburg.[47] Believing Butler incompetent to command a corps, let alone an army, the general-in-chief wanted to insulate him from potential command. Lincoln refused to fire Butler for political reasons but did not forbid Grant from doing so. The general-in-chief, demonstrating that he understood the vital relationship between war and politics, shelved his plan to fire Butler and spared Lincoln any possible embarrassment during an election year.[48] Franz Sigel's backers did not have exceptional political clout and as a consequence could not prevent the general from

being summarily relieved by the general-in-chief.[49] Eventually Grant did relieve Butler, but it was not until after the fall presidential election.

In an attempt to weaken Grant's hold on Petersburg, Lee tried to divide the Union general's command by threatening Washington with a raid led by Jubal A. Early.[50] Stripped of the troops needed to man its defenses, the northern capital was a vulnerable target. Early's brief foray on Washington and the ensuing confusion and panic it precipitated debunks the idea that the Union command system functioned with machine-like precision after Grant was elevated to high command.[51] When the general-in-chief was first informed of the potential of a Confederate raid on Washington he was not excessively concerned. He erroneously believed that a Union army commanded by General David Hunter was operating in the Shenandoah Valley and was near enough to the capital to handle any problems caused by Confederate raiders. In fact, Hunter was nowhere near Washington. Following an engagement with Early, where the Union army had been routed, Hunter had retreated farther into West Virginia rather than back towards the capital. Ignorant of Hunter's situation, Grant discounted the apprehensions expressed by Halleck and confidently ordered the Chief of Staff to direct Hunter to get behind Early and trap him in the valley.[52]

Lincoln intervened at this point and informed Grant of Hunter's predicament and suggested, but did not order, that the general-in-chief dispatch reinforcements from his command to confront the Rebel forces threatening Washington.[53] Grant complied, but the two army corps

rushed to Washington failed to capture Early's raiders, primarily because the tangled command system in the area around Washington did not make anyone responsible for catching him. There was no commander or central authority responsible for directing military operations in the vicinity of Washington. General Christopher C. Augur commanded the XXII Corps and the Department of Washington, Hunder had an army in West Virginia, and General H. G. Wright commanded the corps dispatched by Grant to the capital. No one had been designated to coordinate these forces, and as a consequence Early met no organized resistance. Halleck, in keeping with his character, refused to issue orders to anyone without instructions from his superiors, and Lincoln issued no orders, believing Grant was capable of solving the problem[54] In the confusion, Early menaced Washington and then fled unhindered into the Valley. Seeking to preclude a reoccurrence of the confused command situation caused by the Confederate raid, the General-in-Chief-decided to consolidate the three military departments surrounding Washington into a single department under one commander.[55]

Before Grant's plan could be implemented, Early again threatened Washington. This time the President involved himself in the details of military command and appointed Halleck the temporary commander of the departments around Washington with the authority to operate independently of the general-in-chief until the emergency had passed. Lincoln telegraphed Grant that difficulties in communications between the latter's headquarters and Washington had prompted the interim command arrangement in and around the capital.[56]

Following the second crisis, Grant proposed that his cavalry leader, General Philip H. Sheridan, go to Washington and take temporary command of the forces in the departments surrounding the capital.[57] These four departments, the Washington, Susquehanna, West Virginia, and Middle Department, were to be merged into one division under the administrative control of General Hunter, the senior military commander in the area. Sheridan was to exercise field command over the troops in the newly formed department with the mission of relentlessly pursuing the enemy, "to go where Early went and follow the Confederates to the death."[58] Lincoln concurred with Grant's strategy but requested that the general-in-chief return to Washington and see to it that his orders were carried out. Three years of experience at giving orders to generals had convinced Lincoln that merely directing something to happen did not always ensure that it would be carried through. Referring to Grant's strategy, Lincoln advised ". . .it will neither be done nor attempted, unless you watch it every day and hour, and force it."[59]

Lincoln had perceived the need to involve himself in the details of military command during Early's raid because Grant had failed to perform his duties as general-in-chief in a satisfactory manner when he tried to direct military operations from a great distance while relying on poor intelligence. Regardless of his personal distaste for Washington, Grant should have personally supervised the resolution of the difficulties caused by the Confederate harassment of the capital. Finally heeding Lincoln's request, Grant returned to Washington, supervised the formation of the new department, and appointed Sheridan to

be its overall commander when Hunter declined the post. As a result the Union armies were now organized into three primary striking forces, with the Army of the Potomac around Petersburg, Sherman's armies driving into Georgia, and Sheridan's mobile force operating in the Shenandoah Valley.[60]

Grant's appointment as general-in-chief had produced a sense of optimism within the administration and the country, but as the month of August 1864 came to a close the high spirits had begun to sag. Around Petersburg the Union army was dug in, and the end of the siege was nowhere in sight. New draft calls produced riots and threatened to cause resistance to the conscription laws.[61] Politically, Lincoln was concerned about the upcoming fall presidential election in which his strongest challenger, George McClellan, threatened to run on a "peace" platform.[62] Support for the war and the President was suddenly revived, however, when news of Sherman's capture of Atlanta reached Washington. More good news soon followed, when Sheridan reported that he had caught and defeated Early in the Valley. Lincoln was confident on the basis of these victories that ultimate success was certain if the people would continue to support the war.[63]

Early's defeat and the fall of Atlanta continued the erosion of the morale of the Southern people and helped to diminish further the confidence in the leadership of Jefferson Davis. Johnston's supporters blamed Davis for the loss of Atlanta, pointing to the President's appointment of Hood as the primary reason for the disaster. There was talk in the newspapers and in the Congress of ousting Davis and replacing

him with a military dictator who could take over the supervision of the war.[64]

Seeking to regain the initiative in the war and offset the demoralizing loss of Atlanta, Davis approved an offensive plan whereby Hood's army would invade Tennessee and threaten Sherman's lines of supply and communications. If the strategy worked, the Union general would be compelled to withdraw from Georgia. Although enthusiastic about Hood's scheme, the President no longer had complete confidence in the general's judgment after the fall of Atlanta. As a result, having convinced himself "of the necessity of subjecting Hood's fiery energy to the guidance of a better and more calculating intellect," Davis revived the concept of theater command.[65] He appointed General P.G.T. Beauregard to command the newly created Military Division of the West on October 4, 1864.[66] Included in Beauregard's department was Hood's army in Georgia and General Richard Taylor's army in Alabama. Similar to the instructions Davis had given Johnston in 1862, Beauregard's orders from the President were ambiguous and implied that he was to be more of a coordinator than a commander. In part the general's instructions read,

> Your personal presence is expected whenever in your judgment the interests of your command render it expedient; and wherever present with an army in the field you will exercise immediate command of the troops.[67]

Uncertain as to the extent of his authority Beauregard demanded further clarification of the exact nature of his assignment. Davis responded that the general was to exercise immediate control over the army while

with it in the field "but to retain the contemplated freedom of motion it was designed that you should not relieve the General of the particular army; but by retaining the organization be enabled to leave the army at any moment without impairing administrative efficiency."[68] This attempt at clarification only added to Beauregard's confused conception of the post to which he had been assigned and led the general to regard his position as that of a mere coordinator, or advisor, rather than a commander.[69] Like General Joseph Johnston in 1862, Beauregard failed to comprehend the degree of authority he had been given and therefore did not exercise it.[70]

Beauregard did not believe that Hood's proposal to invade Tennessee contained any hope of success, but because he did not comprehend the extent of his authority as theater commander he did not consider that he had any alternative but to support the plan.[71] Hood reinforced Beauregard's interpretation that he was a figurehead without substantive powers. Upon initiating his drive northward, he continued to submit reports to President Davis rather than to the theater commander and was lax in keeping Beauregard apprised of his movements.[72] Initially, Hood was successful in harassing Sherman's lines of communication, and the Federal general was forced to withdraw forces from Atlanta to meet the Confederate threat. Ultimately, however, because of his superior numbers Sherman was able to divide his force and send a portion of it commanded by General George Thomas to Tennessee while he took the remainder of his army and launched a drive through Georgia towards Savannah.[73] Having failed in his attempt to compel the Union army to

withdraw from Georgia, Hood sought to revitalize his plan by striking at the Federal supply points in Tennessee. Beauregard was too far removed from the scene of Hood's battles at Franklin and Nashville, Tennessee, and therefore was unable to prevent the aggressive Southern general from wrecking his army by rash assaults on the Union defensive positions.[74]

As for Sherman, Beauregard had little success trying to assemble the necessary forces required to halt the Federal general's drive to the coast from within the five states in his vast department. He was unsuccessful in containing Sherman in part because of his own mistakes and also because of factors over which he had no control. Like the Confederate high command, Beauregard did not understand the nature of Sherman's movement.[75] Even after the theater commander determined that Sherman's army was heading for the coast without wasting time attacking interior towns, he did not urge Richmond to order a concentration of all Southern troops in his department to halt the Union forces. Almost pathetically, Beauregard scurried from place to place in his department evacuating garrisons while the Federal army rolled on in triumph.[76]

With each report of a new Union success Davis's hold on his war powers was threatened further.[77] Beauregard seemed incapable of containing Sherman, Lee was besieged at Petersburg, and the Trans-Mississippi had all but become an independent foreign nation. During this critical period in December, 1864, Davis became seriously ill and was confined to bed. Shattered, wracked with neuraligia, he was unable

to work. With the President incapacitated, the army was without a leader, a central authority who could coordinate a desperate effort to save the Confederacy. As the President's chief military advisor and nominally the commanding general of the Confederate armies, Braxton Bragg would have been the logical man to step forward and assume the direction of the war. This did not happen, however, for Bragg was no longer in Richmond, having been sent to command the forces at Wilmington, North Carolina, October 15, 1864. This had been intended to be a temporary assignment but became permanent when Bragg was assigned to be the commander of the Department consisting of the state of North Carolina east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, November 11, 1864.[78] Uncertain concerning his status as the general-in-chief, Bragg sought clarification from the President. Davis had abruptly informed him that he was the commander of a department and that his duties at the War Department could be handled by his subordinates.[79] Secretary of War Seddon was the other man who could have possibly taken up the burden of coordinating the war effort, but since he had no military expertise any direction he could have offered would have been limited.

Davis's illness together with the recent military disasters in Tennessee and Georgia precipitated another challenge to his powers as commander-in-chief. Intermittently since the spring of 1862 there had been a movement in Congress to force the Confederate President to appoint General Robert E. Lee to high command. Periodically this movement would assert itself, especially in the aftermath of a military disaster.[80] Finally, after fours years of military failures, Davis

was no longer able to combat those critics who sought to strip him of his executive powers. On January 9, 1865, Senator Edward Sparrow from the Committee on Military Affairs introduced a bill providing for a general-in-chief to command all the Confederate military forces. This was a direct challenge to Davis's constitutional authority, and the few stalwart supporters the President had left in Congress objected on constitutional grounds. The crux of the issue was that the powers Congress sought to give the commanding general would be so extensive that his authority to command the army would surpass that of the President. After five days of intense debate, the issue was tabled in favor of a compromise resolution which "advised" Davis to appoint Lee as general-in-chief, Beauregard to command South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, and Joseph Johnston to head the Army of Tennessee. In attempting to pass this resolution Congress clearly intended to assert itself in matters of war policy and supervision.[81] Realizing that any proposal which contained the name of Davis's bitter enemy, Johnston, would be totally unacceptable to the President, his backers in Congress achieved a final compromise. They called for the resurrection of the general-in-chief bill and had the demand for the restoration of Johnston placed in an "unassuming resolution" which stated that "the restoration of Johnston to army command would promote joy and confidence in the nation."[82]

On January 16, amid the general assumption that Lee would be named to fill the post, the legislature passed the bill creating the post of

general-in-chief. Ignoring the resolution concerning Johnston, Davis appointed Robert E. Lee as General-in-Chief of the Armies of the Confederate States on February 6, 1865 (see Chart 8).[83] Confident in his ability to control Lee, the President did not fear that the new general-in-chief would attempt to seize dictatorial powers as some in Congress hoped. This faith was vindicated when Lee told sixteen senators who wrote him, asking that he restore Johnston to command:

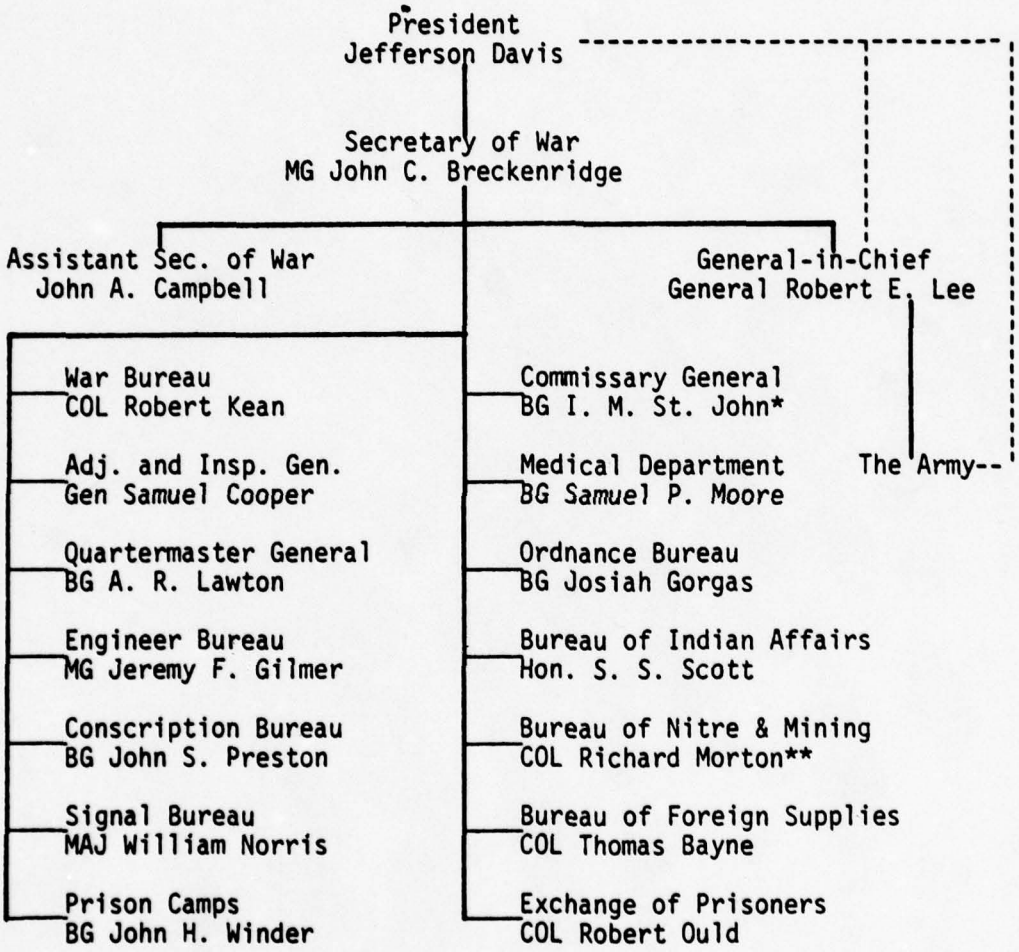
> I do not consider that my appointment as general-in-chief. . .confers the rights which you assume belongs to it, nor is it proper that it should. I can only employ such troops and officers as may be placed at my disposal by the War Department.[84]

Despite the efforts of Congress to wrest control of the war away from Davis, and in spite of the addition of the new office in the Confederate command system, the appointment of Lee as general-in-chief did not significantly alter the existing command relationships. Lee, ever the soldier, believed absolutely in the propriety of civilian control over the military and would take no part in any attempt to change that relationship.[85]

At the same time that Lee was appointed to high command, Davis lost the services of James Seddon as Secretary of War. Exhausted by two trying years as the head of the War Department and angered by the abuse from political enemies of the administration, Seddon resigned his office in late January.[86] Unable to dissuade him, Davis reluctantly accepted his resignation and subsequently on February 6, appointed Major General John C. Breckenridge to the vacated post.[87] Seddon had

Chart 8

Organization of the Confederate
War Department February 1865



Source: Official Records, Series IV, Volume III, p. 1183.

* Assigned February 16, 1865
**Bureau Established June 9, 1864; Morton Assigned February 22, 1865

served the Confederacy long and well, although his ability to influence military decisions was minimal after Johnston's bungling of theater command, for which the secretary was considered partially responsible. Breckenridge was a poor choice for Secretary of War during a period of crisis, but he had been selected by Davis primarily because of his acceptability to Congress. The new head of the War Department made no secret of the fact that he believed the war was already lost.[88]

Lee disagreed with the Secretary of War's assessment of the situation but acknowledged that the state of affairs was serious. Although keenly aware of the President's feelings on the matter, this realization prompted the general-in-chief to request that Davis appoint Johnston to command the Army of Tennessee. Tactfully, Lee explained to the President that if Beauregard were incapacitated, Johnston would have to be close by to replace him. Davis acquiesced to Lee's wishes and on February 22 placed Johnston in charge of operations in the Carolinas, with instructions to collect the scattered troops in those states and attack Sherman on the march before he could move north and link up with Grant.[89]

Lee had assumed high command when there was little hope left for victory. In March he assessed the Confederate and Union military situations thusly: Union forces located in the eastern seaboard states numbered in excess of 280,000, while against this combined total the Confederacy could only muster 65,000 effectives. His alternatives were few. He could fight or he could seek terms of surrender. Fighting offered the ragged armies of the Confederacy little chance for success.

Lee raised the subject of a negotiated surrender with the President, who responded that he was determined to have the Confederacy go down to defeat rather than accept any terms which did not recognize Southern independence.[90]

On April 1 Grant cut the last railroad artery connecting Richmond and the lower South. Lee advised Davis that both Richmond and Petersburg had to be abandoned and then launched an offensive to save his army from capture.[91] He was unable to move very far before Grant again closed in on the tattered Confederate army, and on April 9, seven days after the evacuation of Petersburg, Lee surrendered his at Appomattox Courthouse.

Even in defeat the Confederate command system lacked unity of command. When Lee surrendered he did not do so as the commander of all the Confederate armies but rather as the commander of a single unit, the Army of Northern Virginia. Each separate army commander agreed to terms for his own army with whichever Union general he happened to be facing when the decision to surrender was made. In the succeeding weeks General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered the Army of Tennessee, and General Richard Taylor surrendered his army located at Mobile, Alabama.[92] With the surrender of General E. Kirby Smith on May 26 the forces of the Trans-Mississippi became the last major Confederate units to agree to lay down their arms.[93]

There was an attempt made to surrender formally all of the Confederate forces, but this was prevented by the assassination of Lincoln and the installation of the militant Andrew Johnson as his successor.

Shortly after the surrender of his army, Lee wrote to Davis and advised the President of the futility of continuing the war.[94] At the time he received the message Davis was with the armies of Johnston and Beauregard, whose forces were opposed by Sherman. Johnston and Beauregard told the President the people were tired of war and that, having heard the news of Lee's surrender, the soldiers regarded the war as over and were leaving to go to their homes. To most people, North and South, Lee's army had come to represent the only effective Confederate force, and as such its surrender symbolized the end of armed Confederate resistance.[95]

At last accepting reality and backed by a unanimous vote of his cabinet, Davis authorized Johnston to seek peace terms based on the surrender of all the Confederate armed forces. After receiving favorable terms from General Sherman, Davis, again backed by a unanimous vote of the cabinet, agreed to surrender all the armies. Unfortunately, Sherman had exceeded his authority and had offered terms far more generous than the new administration in Washington intended. President Andrew Johnson repudiated Sherman's terms, and the general was ordered to offer to receive Johnston's surrender on the same terms as Grant had given Lee. Davis balked at this and ordered Johnston not to surrender, but the cause was lost, and on April 26, ignoring the President's order, General Johnston surrendered his army.[96]

Jefferson Davis continued his flight south, hoping to make his way to the Trans-Mississippi and carry on the fight. His intentions were thwarted when one Confederate force after another, following the lead

of Lee and Johnston, surrendered. At last convinced of the futility of further attempts to organize resistance and with the belief that his life was in danger if he remained in America, Davis decided to flee the country. His flight to freedom ended on the night of May 9-10 near Irwinsville, Georgia, when he was captured by a Federal cavalry patrol.[97] With the capture of the Confederate Commander-in-Chief, even though there was no symbolic ceremony of surrender, the war was at last over.

To a certain extent the events of the last days of the war summarize the successes and failures of the command systems of the Union and the Confederacy. The Northern armies, working together, coordinated by an efficient command system, had combined their efforts to bring about the capitulation of the Southern forces. In Grant, Lincoln had at last found a general who was willing to accept responsibility for conducting the war and directing the nations armies. Taking up that burden, Grant's strategy had been simple, "Find out where your enemy is. Get at him as soon as you can. Strike him as hard as you can and as often as you can, and keep moving."[98] Halleck managed the Union armies not directly engaged in the struggle, thus leaving the general-in-chief free to concentrate on the immediate problems of pressuring the enemy. Stanton's efficient supervision of the War Department guaranteed that Grant always had the administrative and logistical support to "keep moving." Ultimately, this command system led the Union to victory when the South could no longer endure the relentless pressure of the Federal armies.

Fragmented, without a central authority to govern their actions, separate Rebel armies surrendered independently of each other. Lee never had the opportunity as the Confederate general-in-chief to alter the eventual outcome of the war. He became the supreme military commander at a time when any chance for saving the South had passed. Had the Confederacy been able to develop a more efficient command system earlier in the war, possibly, by careful utilization of manpower and resources, the conflict could have been prolonged to the point where waning Northern hopes for complete victory could have produced a negotiated settlement favorable to the South. The Confederacy did not develop an efficient command system because Jefferson Davis did not wish to relinquish his constitutional powers as commander-in-chief and, therefore, experimented only with those command systems in which he remained, literally and figuratively, the central authority. Bound by tradition and led by a President who remained adamant in his determination to be the military leader of his nation, the South was never able to develop a command system which would have produced the most efficient use of its forces, and consequently was unsuccessful in its bid for independence.

Command systems are simply structures through which orders are passed from the commander-in-chief to his armies in the field. Any system which efficiently accomplishes this end, regardless of structure, could be considered effective. The Union's system in 1865 was, in reality, not very different from the system in existence in 1861. There was a new general-in-chief and the administrative office of the chief

of staff had been added, but Lincoln was still the President. Structurally, the office of the chief of staff was the only difference. Nevertheless, the Union's command system in 1865 was infinitely more effective than it had been in 1861 because Lincoln, the benefactor of four years of war experience, was a better war-president in 1865 than he had been in 1861, and Grant was a better combat general than any of his predecessors. This combination, Lincoln and Grant, supported administratively and logistically by Stanton and Halleck focused the Union's war efforts and, in the end, crushed the South.

Despite some short-lived internal adjustments, the Southern command system of 1865 was very similar to what it had been in 1861. This discounts Lee's elevation to high command, since it came at a time when it could no longer affect the outcome of the war. Davis had remained the central feature in the Confederate command system throughout the war. Had he been an effective, experienced war leader, such an arrangement would have ensured a coordinated effort by all the Southern armies. Davis, however, was not a brilliant military leader, and he had surrounded himself with generals who were incompetent--such as Bragg--or who were unequal to the tasks assigned them--men like Johnston, Kirby Smith, and Hood. Inadequate leadership offset any gains which may have been produced as a result of the simple command system adopted by the South, and as a result, in time the Southern command arrangement failed under the strain of war.

In the final analysis, a parallel look at the two command systems and the key individuals who comprised each system helps to explain why

the North, with its tremendous advantages in manpower and resources, required four years to defeat the South. Moreover, it explains why the South, who had only not to lose in order to win, was incapable of sustaining the war and gradually allowed its strength and resources to dissipate causing its ultimate destruction. If the Confederacy would have adopted a command system that provided for the most efficient use of its armies and resources early in the war, it could have prolonged the struggle and prevented the Union from exploiting its advantages. This combination could have led to a negotiated settlement favorable to the South. By contrast, if the Northern command system in 1861 would have been effective, the rebellion could have been quickly crushed, thus sparing both sides the enormous losses each eventually incurred. Failures in the command systems were, in part, responsible for the war lasting four years. Success by the North in developing an effective command system contributed significantly to the Union victory.

Notes for Chapter One

[1]Frank E. Vandiver, Rebel Brass: The Confederate Command System (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956), p. 5.

[2]Grady McWhiney, ed., Grant, Lee, Lincoln and the Radicals: Essays on Civil War Leadership (Clinton, Mass: Colonial Press, Inc., 1964), p. 7.

[3]Harold M. Hyman, A More Perfect Union: The Impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction on the Constitution (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), pp. 144-145.

[4]Curtis A. Amlund, Federalism in the Southern Confederacy (Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1966), pp. 37-38.

[5]J. C. Randall and David H. Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction, 2d ed. (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Company, 1969), p. 195.

[6]Frank E. Vandiver, "Jefferson Davis and Unified Army Command," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXXVIII (January 1955), p. 7.

[7]T. Harry Williams, Americans At War: The Development of the American Military System (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), pp. 14-15.

[8]A concise history of the organization and evolution of the Union command system from its conception in 1781 through the beginning of the Civil War is contained in Thomas H. Hammersley, ed., Complete Regular Army Register of the United States: For One Hundred Years (1779-1879) (Washington, D. C.: T.H.S. Hammersley, 1880), pp. 233-255. For an account of the formation of the Confederate command system at the start of the war, Rembert W. Patrick, Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1944), pp. 103-154, provides the general background. There is no really good source which examines the Confederate War Department in detail. Other sources which provide general information about the functioning of the department are Richard P. Goff, Confederate Supply (Durham: Duke University Press, 1969), and Edward Younger, ed., Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean, Head of the Bureau of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957). Douglas Freeman, R. E. Lee, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), pp. 510-540 covers the organization of the Virginia state forces which formed the foundation for the Provisional Army of the Confederacy.

[9]Howard C. Westwood, "The Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War--A Look at the Record," Lincoln Herald, LXXX (Spring 1978), 3-10.

[10]Some examples of Davis's adversary relationship with Congress are contained in Amlund, Federalism in the Confederacy, pp. 37-41.

[11]Vandiver, Rebel Brass, p. 21.

[12]Francis V. Greene, "Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief," Scribner's Magazine, XLVI (July 1909), 104.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Burton J. Hendrick, Lincoln's War Cabinet (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946), p. 221; and Alexander H. Meneely, The War Department, 1861 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928), pp. 74-82. Hendrick and Meneely discuss Cameron's unfitness for office and provide examples of his misdeeds in office.

[15]J. D. Hittle, The Military Staff (Harrisburg: The Military Publishing Company, 1949), p. 173. The information contained in Chart 1 is taken from Marvin A. Kriedberg and Merton G. Henry, A History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army, 1775-1945) (Washington, D. C.: Department of the Army, 1955), pp. 86-87, and 183.

[16]Meneely, The War Department, 1861, pp. 25-26.

[17]T. Harry Williams, Lincoln and His Generals (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), p. 3.

[18]Charles W. Elliott, Winfield Scott, The Soldier and the Man (New York: Macmillan Company, Inc., 1937), p. 679.

[19]Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army (New York: Macmillan Company, Inc., 1967), p. 86.

[20]Ibib.

[21]Elliott, Scott, p. 679.

[22]Weigley, History of the U. S. Army, pp. 193-194.

[23]William A. Ganoe, History of the United States Army (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1942), pp. 244-245.

[24]Ezra Warner, Generals in Gray: Lives of the Confederate Commanders (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), p. xxiii.

[25]Freeman, Lee, I, p. 436; and Kriedberg and Henry, History of Military Mobilization, p. 89. Freeman describes the sequence of events which led to the offer of command of the Union armies to Lee. Kriedberg and Henry note Cooper's decision to join the Confederacy.

[26]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 28.

[27]Clement Eaton, Jefferson Davis (New York: Macmillan Company, Inc., 1977), pp. 15, and 58-65.

[28]Ibid. Davis's career in the House of Representatives, pp. 47-56; as a United States Senator, pp. 67-80; and his tenure as Pierce's Secretary of War, pp. 81-88.

[29]Amlund, Federalism in the Confederacy, pp. 37-38.

[30]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 106.

[31]Ibid., p. 104.

[32]United States. War Department. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series III, Volume I (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), pp. 67-68. Hereafter this source referred to as Official Records. For a list of the laws passed by the Provisional Congress between February 20 and March 6, 1861, refer to the notes at the bottom of pages 6-7, Goff, Confederate Supply. Chart 2 is based on Official Records, Series IV, Volume I, p. 1176 and also on the descriptions of the Confederate War Department contained in Goff, Confederate Supply, pp. 6-10; and Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, ed., Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, I (New York: The Century Company, 1887), p. 6. The addition of the office of the Assistant Secretary of War is discussed in Official Records, Series IV, Volume I, p. 247 and p. 780.

[33]Richard P. Weinert, "The Confederate Regular Army," Military Affairs XXVI (November 1962): 97-98.

[34]Ibid, p. 97.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Wilfred B. Yearns, The Confederate Congress (Atlanta: Foote and Davies, Inc., 1960), pp. 102-103. Davis can not be identified as the ultimate author of the decision to combine the office of the Adjutant and Inspector General. Yearns states that ". . .the members of the military and naval committees were in constant touch with President Davis and did little without consulting him." Because of his experience and conflicts with Scott while he was Secretary of War, Davis undoubtedly wished to prevent any possibility of confusion on where command of the army resided. Likewise he wished to make clear the relationship between the Secretary of Army and the ranking general in the army, the general subordinate to his civilian superior. Lastly Davis probably considered the duties of the two officers to be very similar and believed they could most efficiently be handled by a single officer.

[37]Ibid., p. 60

[38]Weinert, "The Confederate Regular Army," p. 107.

[39]Kriedberg and Henry, History of Mobilization, p. 92.

[40]Official Records, Series III, Volume I, pp. 67-68. Condition of the militia is also discussed in Kriedberg and Henry, History of Military Mobilization, p. 90.

[41]Official Records, Series III, Volume I, pp. 67-68.

[42]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 107.

[43]Walter Millis, Arms and Men (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1956), p. 111.

[44]The first call was for 75,000 men; in July Lincoln was authorized to call for 500,000 men. Kriedberg and Henry, History of Mobilization, pp. 92-93.

[45]Fred A. Shannon, The Organization and Administration of the Union Army, 1861-1865, I (Cleveland: Arthur Clark, 1928), p. 26.

[46]Hendrick, Lincoln and His Cabinet, p. 220.

[47]Hittle, The Military Staff, p. 168.

[48]Lloyd M. Short, The Development of National Administrative Organization in the United States (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1923), pp. 240-241.

[49]Warren W. Hassler Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1962), p. xix.

[50]Weigley, History of the Army, p. 228.

[51]Ibid.

[52]Ganoe, History of the Army, pp. 263-264.

[53]Theodore Ropp, "Anaconda's Anyone?" Military Affairs, XXVII (September 1963), 71-76; and Greene, "Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief," p. 105. Both sources discuss Scott's strategy, Greene with less enthusiasm than Ropp.

[54]Greene, "Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief," p. 105.

[55]Hassler, Commanders, p. 3

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid., p. 7.

[58]Ibid., p. 11.

[59]Ibid., p. 10.

[60]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 108.

[61]James D. Richardson, ed., The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy: Including Diplomatic Correspondence 1861-1865, I (New York: Chelsea House, 1966), p. 80.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Confederate States Congress. Regulations for the Army of the Confederate States, 1861 (Richmond: R. N. Smith, 1861). These regulations were published in 1861 and later revised two times; reprinted in 1863 the regulations contained over 3000 errors and had to be republished and corrected in 1864.

[64]H. C. B. Rogers, The Confederates and Federals at War (New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1973), p. 29.

[65]Thomas L. Connelly and Archer C. Jones, The Politics of Command (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), pp. 89-91; and Sir Frederick B. Maurice, Governments and War: A Study of the Conduct of War (London: William Heineman Ltd., 1926), pp. 29-30. Maurice is critical of the departmental organization because in his opinion it did not permit the flexibility to deal with a fluid combat situation where boundaries were frequently overrun. Connelly and Jones do not disapprove of the departmental system, but they were critical of the rigidity with which the boundaries were adhered to and the fact that Davis chose to retain control over each individual department. The departmental system became a problem for the Confederacy when the administration adhered to what were administrative and logistical boundaries during tactical situations. For example, during the siege of Vicksburg the boundaries between the Trans-Mississippi and the departments to the east interfered with the flow of reenforcements to the city.

[66]Vandiver, Rebel Brass, pp. 8, and 20.

[67]Map 2 is taken from Stephen E. Ambrose, Halleck: Lincoln's Chief of Staff (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962), p. 76.

[68]Freeman, Lee, I, pp. 527-529. Lee, as the major general commanding the Virginia state militia, was left with an empty title when his state forces were transferred to the Confederate Army on June 8, 1861. He was also a brigadier general in the Regular Army of the Confederacy and in that capacity President Davis used him as an unofficial and untitled assistant for military affairs during June and July, 1861.

[69]T. Harry Williams, P.G.T. Beauregard, Napoleon in Gray (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1955), p. 72.

[70]Hassler, Commanders, pp. 10-14.

[71]Greene, "Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief," p. 105.

[72]Williams, Beauregard, pp. 78-79. Although Johnston outranked Beauregard and technically should have assumed command of the two armies, he deferred to Beauregard who was familiar with the terrain and the proposed plan of battle.

[73]Hassler, Commanders, p. 21

[74]Williams, Beauregard, pp. 80-81.

[75]Randall and Donald, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 200.

[76]Ganoe, History of the Army, p. 264.

[77]Randall and Donald, Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 200

[78]Connelly and Jones, Politics of Command, pp. 3-30.

[79]Henri Jomini, The Art of War, translated by G. H. Mendell and W. P. Craighill (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1862), p. 255.

Notes for Chapter Two

[1]William S. Myers, A Study in Personality: General George Brinton McClellan (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1934), pp. 188-192.

[2]Hassler, Commanders, p. 27. McClellan was one of three officers selected by Secretary of War Jefferson Davis for duty as an observer to the Crimean War. He was accompanied by Majors Richard Delafield and Alfred Mordecai. A report of their trip was printed in Document 1 of Senate Executive Documents, Special Session 34th Congress, 1857; and as a book, published in 1861 under the title, The Armies of Europe. McClellan's experiences in Europe are described in Myers, McClellan, pp. 86-101. Hittle, The Military Staff, p. 167, notes that the report submitted by the three officers was totally devoid of any comment pertaining to the great Prussian staff system.

[3]George B. McClellan, Report on the Organization and Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1864), p. 98.

[4]Myers, McClellan, pp. 214-215. On August 8, 1861, in an interview with Secretary of State Seward, McClellan stated, "I don't know whether Scott is a dotard or a traitor!. . .He cannot or will not comprehend the condition in which we are placed. ...If he cannot be taken out of my path I will not retain my position, but will resign and let the administration take care of itself. . ." A collection of letters between Scott and McClellan highlighting the debate between the two as both sought high command are contained in Peter S. Michie, General McClellan (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1901), pp. 108-115.

[5]Meneely, The War Department, p. 316, describes a meeting at the house of Frank Blair attended by Benjamin Wade, Zachariah Chandler, Lyman Trumbull and George McClellan. The topic of the meeting was Scott and his reluctance to fight. McClellan's intriguing is also described by T. Harry Williams, Lincoln and the Radicals (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1941), pp. 43-46.

[6]Official Records, Series I, Volume II, Pt. 1. pp. 491-493. Scott expressed his opinion of Halleck in a letter to Cameron on October 4, 1861, and in that same letter stated his wish that it be Henry Halleck and not George McClellan who succeeded him.

[7]Kriedberg and Henry, History of Military Mobilization, p. 129.

[8]Meneely, The War Department, pp. 194 and 317. Congress assisted McClellan by increasing the personnel in the staff departments. Personnel added by position are listed in Official Records, Series III, Vol. I, pp. 396-398.

[9]Randall and Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 331. Three men prior to McClellan had held the title "Commanding General of the Army" in the years since Congress instituted the position in 1821. These men and the age at which they assumed the post were as follows: Major General Jacob Brown, 46; Major General Alexander Macomb, 46; and Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, 55. Prior to 1821 the ranking officer in the army held no specific title, but in practice functioned as the Commanding General. Twelve men held this position the first of whom was George Washington. Captain John Doughty at age 30, June-August 1784 commanded the remnants of the Continental Army. Webster's American Military Biographies (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Company, 1978), and Weigley, History of the Army, p. 559.

[10]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 11; and Michie, McClellan, pp. 113-115. Scott states in a letter to Cameron that he "shall try to hold out till the arrival of Major General Halleck. . ." and then "shall definitely retire from command of the army."

[11]For a brief discussion of Lincoln's problems with political generals see Greene, "Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief," pp. 104-115.

[12]Immediately after assuming his duties as general-in-chief, McClellan did correspond with the other army commanders and did issue orders reorganizing the western departments. This interest was short-lived and soon McClellan was devoting the majority of his time to his own army. This led to a lack of supervision over the other Union forces which ultimately prompted Lincoln to become actively involved in military affairs. Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 46-47.

[13]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 29. Halleck devoted much time and energy to obtaining a larger personal command. He thought the command system in the west was archaic, that a general needed autonomy to make his plans effective, and that he was the only general qualified to command the entire area. On February 8, 1862, he asked McClellan to create a Western Division. For his wing commanders he proposed Generals Buell, Hunter and E. A. Hitchcock. Advantages to be gained from this plan would be orders would go through one officer, simplifying the command system and eliminating the departmental lines.

McClellan received Halleck's request but took no action. Official Records, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 595.

[14]Hans L. Trefousse, "The Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War," Civil War History X (March 1964): 5-19. "The Committee was something less than an inquisition. Operating within restrictions placed on it by Congress, it could and did interrogate officials high and low, but lacked the power to appoint or dismiss them. It excelled in producing propaganda, severed as Lincoln's goad, and it became an important vehicle for the radicals. Despite its errors it performed a significant service." Ibid., p. 119.

[15]Westwood, "Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War," pp. 3-10. Westwood's article contends that the Committee was not an obstacle to Lincoln, but rather performed a valuable service and was "a hard-working, bipartisan group, addressing questions of a perfectly legitimate concern to the legislature during an intercine was." Ibid., p. 10.

[16]Meneely, The War Department, pp. 353-354.

[17]Hendrick, Lincoln's Cabinet, p. 232.

[18]Ibid., p. 236. Lincoln selected Stanton to fill the vacant cabinet position with the full knowledge that Stanton was a vocal critic of himself (Lincoln) and his supervision of the war to date. Stanton was devoted to the Union, capable, energetic and most importantly, had a reputation for incorruptibility. Fletcher Pratt, Stanton: Lincoln's Secretary of War (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1953), pp. 133-135.

[19]McClellan, Report on the Army of the Potomac, pp. 50-55. McClellan considered the chaos and confusion in the army after Bull Run so extensive that a total reorganization starting from "scratch" was necessary.

[20]Benjamin P. Thomas and Harold Hyman, Stanton: The Life and Times of Lincoln's Secretary of War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), pp. 152-154.

[21]Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, I, p. 252.

[22]Johnston and Davis traded criticisms of one another in books each wrote after the war. Joseph Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations Directed During the Late War Between the States, edited by Frank E. Vandiver (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959),

pp. 58-64, contends that the army was too disorganized to conduct an effective pursuit after the battle. Jefferson Davis, The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, I (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1881), pp. 362-363 argues that he wished to order a pursuit but was dissuaded from doing so by his generals. A definitive answer to the question of whether or not an aggressive pursuit would have led to the capture of Washington is probably not possible. Considering the disorganization of the Confederate army described by Johnston the successful undertaking of such a venture was probably beyond the capabilities of the untrained Rebel troops.

[23]Randall and Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction, p. 201.

[24]Williams, Beauregard, p. 102; and Jefferson Davis, Jefferson Davis Constitutionalist, His Letters, Papers and Speeches, edited by Dunbar Rowland (Jackson, Miss.: The Torgerson Press, 1923), V., pp. 130-131.

[25]Congress of the Confederate States of America, Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865, I (Sen. Doc. 234, 58th Cong., 2d sess., 1904-1905), p. 464.

[26]Eaton, Davis, pp. 139-140; and Freeman, Lee, I, p. 559.

[27]For Johnston's account of this dispute and his justification for claim to be the ranking Confederate general officer, see Johnston's Narrative of Military Operations, pp. 70-73.

[28]William C. Harris, Leroy Pope Walker: Confederate Secretary of War (Tuscaloosa: Confederate Publishing Company, 1962), pp. 108-109, and 112-114.

[29]Robert D. Meade, Judah P. Benjamin, Confederate Statesman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1943), p. 179.

[30]Ibid., pp. 204-205.

[31]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 38.

[32]Freeman, Lee, I, pp. 601-603, and 606-607.

[33]Davis supported Bragg as commander of the Army of Tennessee despite intense criticism of the general both within the army and from political opponents, see Thomas R. Hay, "Braxton Bragg and the Southern

Confederacy," The Georgia Historical Quarterly, IX (December 1925), 294-301. For Davis's relations with his generals, see Grady McWhiney, "Jefferson Davis and the Art of War," Civil War History, XXI (June 1975), 110-112.

[34]Freeman, Lee, I, p. 541.

[35]Ibid., pp. 603 and 607.

[36]Meneely, The War Department, p. 362.

[37]Varina H. Davis, Jefferson Davis, Ex-President of the Confederate States of America, A Memoir By His Wife, II (New York: Belford Company, 1890), p. 494.

[38]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 70; and Ambrose, Halleck, pp. 29-35.

[39]Williams, Lincoln and the Radicals, pp. 120-121. Stanton and the Committee on the Conduct of the War convinced Lincoln to adopt the corps organization and to appoint corps commanders who were Republicans. Lincoln stated that he checked with "every military man he knew on corps formations." See also Pratt, Stanton, pp. 172-173; Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 68-69; and Samuel L. French, The Army of the Potomac from 1861-1863 (New York: Publishing Society of New York, 1906), pp. 36-37.

[40]McClellan, Report on the Army of the Potomac, p. 53; William Swinton, Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1866), p. 64, states "in armies above sixty thousand men, it has been common since the time of Napoleon, to create from the assemblage of two or more divisions the higher unit of the corps d'armee." McClellan favored this organization but wished to delay the implementation until suitable commanders for the corps could be identified. Lincoln overruled his general and ordered the corps formed immediately.

[41]Russell F. Weigley, Quartermaster General of the Union Army, A Biography of M. C. Meigs (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), pp. 206-207.

[42]Ganoe, History of the Army, 273.

[43]Map 3 is taken from Ambrose, Halleck, p. 30.

[44]John G. Nicolay and John Hay, Abraham Lincoln, A History, V (New York: The Century Company, 1890), pp. 161 and 170-171.

[45]Michie, McClellan, pp. 210-211. Lincoln's "War Order Number 3," relieves McClellan of command of the Union armies with the explanation that both the task of commanding the Army of the Potomac and all the Union armies would be too great a burden for the general. Lincoln wanted McClellan to be free to devote his entire energies to the upcoming campaign. In another respect, Lincoln's actions amounted to a vote of no confidence in McClellan's performance as General-in-Chief.

[46]The two command systems were similar in that the Presidents were in actual command of the armies. Stanton, Lincoln's deputy, participated in the decision-making process to a greater extent than his counterpart in the south, Judah P. Benjamin, who was in the final days of his tenure in office. For an example of Stanton's influence see Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, pp. 170-171. Chart 3 is based on Kriedberg and Henry, History of Mobilization, pp. 86-87, and 131.

[47]Freeman, Lee, I, p. 628.

[48]Ibid., II, pp. 4-5.

[49]Meade, Benjamin, pp. 213-218; and Frank E. Vandiver, Mighty Stonewall (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1957), pp. 192-195. Benjamin directed one of Jackson's subordinates to reposition himself in the middle of a campaign without bothering to consult with Jackson or Joseph Johnston, Jackson's superior. Objecting to interference with his command, Jackson attempted to resign but was dissuaded from doing so by Johnston. One of Benjamin's primary problems as Secretary of War involved his disregard of the professional soldiers in the officer corps. One of his first acts after becoming the head of the War Department was the selection of Earl Van Dorn to command all the cavalry in Johnston's army. Originally Van Dorn had been given a command that was not adequate to his rank, and when this was pointed out to Benjamin his solution was to make Van Dorn's command larger without consulting Johnston as to the wisdom of his action. Naturally Johnston protested and had the matter corrected. Rank meant little to Benjamin, and he was more than willing to argue with Johnston on his claim to be the ranking general of the army. Douglas Southall Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), pp. 120-121.

[50]Official Records, Series I, Vol. V, p. 1099.

[51]This sequence is described by Freeman, Lee, II, pp. 4-5. Davis explains his reasons for vetoing "An Act to create the office of commanding general of the armies of the Confederate States," in his veto message to Congress, March 14, 1862, Richardson, ed., Messages and Papers of the Confederacy, I, pp. 215-216.

[52]Freeman, Lee, II, pp. 6-7; and Connelly and Jones, Politics of Command, pp. 33-35. Lee actually supplied little general strategic guidance for the South in the opinion of Connelly and Jones. They argue that he had no view of Southern grand strategy, or if he did have such a view he chose to remain silent on the subject. Despite his position as an advisor to Davis, Lee failed to give advice on this subject because he probably believed he lacked the authority to do so. Later in the war when it was unclear whether Lee was still an official advisor to Davis he did venture to give his opinion on strategic matters. Connelly and Jones give some examples of this on pages 36-37.

[53]Davis continued to command the army after Lee's appointment. The broken line between Lee and the army indicates that the commanding general had advisory contact with the army but did not exercise any substantive command over it. He assisted in providing some guidance to the staff bureaus but they did not fall under his control. Johnson and Buel, ed., Battles and Leaders, I, 6; Goff, Confederate Supply, 8; and Official Records, Series IV, Vol. 1, p. 1176, were the sources used to construct Chart 4.

[54]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 59.

[55]Pratt, Stanton, p. 176.

[56]Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, pp. 185-186; and Weigley, History of the Army, pp. 246-248.

[57]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 97-98; and Ganoe, History of the Army, p. 275.

[58]Frank E. Vandiver, Their Tattered Flags: The Epic of the Confederacy (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 136-137; Ganoe, History of the Army, p. 280.

[59]Myers, McClellan, pp. 284-285.

[60]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 47. Halleck reorganized his army and adopted the corps organization in April, 1862. Grant was duly recognized by Congress for his part in the victories in the west, but the general consensus in Washington was that Halleck was the "brains" behind the successes in the west.

[61]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 122.

[62]Ibid., pp. 122-123.

[63]Chart 5, Kriedberg and Henry, History of Military Mobilization, pp. 86-87, and 132. A broken line running from Lincoln to the army has been added to the diagram to reflect Lincoln's continued involvement with the army even after the appointment of Halleck.

[64]Ibid., pp. 134-135; and Ambrose, Halleck, pp. 60-63. John Pope, had recently served in the west under Halleck, also nominated his former commander for the position of General-in-Chief. Stanton concurred in the appointment.

[65]Freeman takes the position that Lee was left to handle the "minor vexatious matters," Lee, II, pp. 6-7.

[66]Ibid., II, pp. 78-79.

[67]Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[68]Numbers, when applied to troop strengths, are subject to much discussion as to their validity. Union numbers generally include all soldiers including cooks, teamsters, sick and wounded; whereas Confederate totals only reflect able-bodied rifle-carrying soldiers. Williams demonstrates that McClellan had between 98,000 and 158,000 men in his army with the lower figure representing "effectives" as men capable of being employed in battle. Confederate totals of 85,000 reflect actual soldiers fit for battle. If the larger Union figure were used it would appear that the Federals outnumbered the Rebels almost two-to-one when in fact in terms of actual combatants the two armies were almost the same size. Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 88-89.

[69]Rogers, The Confederates and Federals at War, p. 29. William Swinton is quoted, "Had there been no McClellan there would have been no Grant; for the army made no essential improvement under any of his successors."

[70]Swinton, Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 64.

[71]The following discussion describes Lee's rationale for adopting the corps organization for his army and is taken from Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, I, pp. 670-675.

[72]Freeman, Lee, II, pp. 343-344.

[73]Vandiver, Mighty Stonewall, pp. 405-406; and Official Records, Series I, Volume XIX, part 2, pp. 633-634; and Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, II, p. 238.

[74]Congressional Globe, 36th Congress, 1st Session, part 1, pp. 586-594. During the debate surrounding the revival of the grade of lieutenant general the argument was repeatedly raised that such an exalted rank should be reserved for persons warranting exceptional recognition. Only Washington had held the rank previously, Winfield Scott having been a lieutenant general by Brevet.

[75]A joint resolution of Congress, March 1862, authorized the President to assign commanders without regard for rank whenever military operations required presence of two or more officers of the same grade in the same field or the same departments. Congressional Globe, 37th Congress, 2d Session, part 2, 1260. In May 1863, when Rosecrans was attempting to have his date of rank changed in order to outrank Grant, Lincoln wrote to him in exasperation, "Truth to speak, I do not appreciate this matter of rank on paper as you officers do. The world will not forget that you fought the battle of Stone's River, and it will never care a fig whether you rank General Grant on paper, or he so ranks you." John G. Nicolay and John Hay, Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, VIII (new York: Francis D. Tandy Company, 1894), pp. 226-229.

[76]Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, I, p. 671. "Scarcely a reference appears in extant correspondence to any decision to establish corps." This would seem to indicate Lee was able to convince Davis of the need for such organizations without problems. Vandiver, Mighty Stonewall, pp. 405-406, states that Davis wrote to Lee on September 28, 1862, and informed him that authority had been given by Congress to appoint commanders of corps d'armee, with the rank of lieutenant general. See also Official Records, Series I, Vol, XIX, part 2, 633-634; and James Mathews, ed., Statutes at Large of the Confederate States of America, I (Richmond: R. N. Smith, 1862), Chapters 3 and 26.

[77]Freeman, Lee, II, p. 344.

[78]Ganoe, History of the Army, p. 279.

[79]McWhiney, Grant, Lee, Lincoln, p. 20

[80]At the Second Battle of Bull Run Union forces under Generals Pope, Porter, Hooker and McDowell numbering 70,000 were defeated by Confederate forces under Lee, Jackson, and Longstreet numbering 55,000. Ganoe, History of the Army, p. 280. Casualties for the Union were heavy, 16,054 men killed, wounded, or missing, while aggregate Confederate casualties were 9, 197. Thomas L. Livermore, Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-1865 (Boston: Houghton, Miffin and Company, 1900), p. 88. McClellan refused to assume command of the combined armies under the Articles of War because Pope would not acknowledge McClellan as his superior.

[81]McClellan's reappointment to high command was opposed by the cabinet and especially by Stanton. Lincoln agreed that they had reason to be critical of McClellan but argued, "There is no one in the army who can man these fortifications and lick these troops into shape half as well as he can." Pratt, Stanton, pp. 235-236; and Salmon P. Chase, Inside Lincoln's Cabinet: The Civil War Diaries of Salmon P. Chase, edited by David Donald (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1954), pp. 118-119.

[82]Yearns, The Confederate Congress, p. 108. Congress did not intend for Davis to take active command in the field. The debate on the question is contained in the Journal of the Provisional Congress, I, p. 200. Framers of the United States Constitution considered the problem, Williams, Americans At War, pp. 7-8.

[83]Journal of the Provisional Congress, I, p. 108.

[84]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, pp. 126-131; and John B. Jones, A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, edited by Earl S. Miers (New York: Sagamore Press, Inc., 1958), pp. 118-120.

[85]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, pp. 131-132.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Ibid., p. 135.

[88]Ibid., p. 134; and Vandiver, "Jefferson Davis and Unified Army Command," pp. 28-30; and Davis, Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, II, p. 402.

[89]McClellan missed an excellent opportunity to score a decisive victory over Lee when he failed to exploit the intelligence value of a recovered copy of General Lee's plan of operations. This plan indicated that Lee had divided his command rendering his scattered army vulnerable to a decisive attack from the massed Union forces. Moving with characteristic hesitancy, McClellan missed his chance to strike the dispersed Rebel force and instead had to fight Lee's reassembled army at Sharpsburg, Maryland. Accounts of the events leading to the battle and McClellan's actions can be found in Michie, McClellan, pp. 404-429; and William Allan, The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862 (Boston: Houghton, Miffin and Company, 1892); pp. 343-447. Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, II, Appendix I, presents a slightly different version of how the order came to be lost. Both agree that the lost copy belonged to General D. H. Hill.

[90]Pratt, Stanton, p. 180.

[91]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, 170-171.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Ibid., pp. 176-177.

Notes for Chapter Three

[1]Connelly and Jones, The Politics of Command, p. 124.

[2]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, pp. 134-135; and Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, p. xxi.

[3]Vandiver, Rebel Brass, pp. 34-35; and H. J. Eckenrode, Jefferson Davis: President of the South (New York: Macmillan Company, Inc., 1930), pp. 188-189, and 194-195. Seddon became Secretary of War at a time when Davis acutely felt the need for a trusted advisor close at hand. Lee was gone from Richmond in the field with his army. Eckenrode believes that Seddon was able to convince Davis to appoint Johnston to the position in the west largely because of the President's confidence in Seddon's judgment. Lincoln had adopted a similar arrangement for the Union forces in the west as early as March 1862 when he combined all the forces in Ohio, Tennessee, and Illinois under Henry Halleck. More reliable communications in the North had not made it necessary to give Halleck the degree of autonomy Davis now considered giving to Johnston. Another version of the origin of the idea of a combined command in the west is given by Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, p. 148, where he implies that he conceived of the idea independently of Seddon and was in the process of suggesting it when the Secretary of War informed him that the government had come to the same conclusion. Thomas L. Connelly, Autumn of Glory, The Army of Tennessee, 1862-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), p. 33, credits the impetus for a large command in the west to Generals Bragg, Polk, and Kirby Smith, who had written Davis requesting such a move to face the combined armies of Union Generals Grant and Sherman.

[4]That both Johnston and Kirby Smith would have difficult times in their respective commands could not have been predicted by Davis and in that respect his judgment in selecting them could not be faulted. Johnston failed in the west because he simply could not grasp the concept of theater command and was unwilling to wield the power he held. Just as Davis was delegating authority to Johnston, Johnston was to delegate authority to his army commanders, but just as Davis intended to remain in overall control, Johnston was supposed to do likewise. Johnston did not grasp the concept of delegated authority and did not wield the power Davis had given him, and as a consequence, the authority was gradually withdrawn. See Vandiver, Rebel Brass, pp. 58-59. Edmund Kirby Smith had, if possible, an even more difficult task than Johnston. He faced a collective set of civil and military problems which together were more than even the best administrator could have handled. See

Vandiver, Their Tattered Flags, pp. 190-191. Vandiver writes, "By the time Kirby Smith took charge of his domain in February 1863, long neglect had created chaos beyond one man's repair and patterns of disarray were well entrenched."

[5]John G. Nicolay, A Short Life of Abraham Lincoln (New York: The Century Company, 1890), p. 364.

[6]Hassler, Commanders, p. 104. After being briefed on Burnside's plan, Lincoln believed its only hope for success lay in its rapid implementation before the Confederates could mass to prevent the Union forces from crossing the River. Burnside lacked the decisiveness for rapid action and Lincoln's worst fears were realized.

[7]Prior to the battle Lincoln was advised by General Herman Haupt that Burnside was in a precarious position facing Lee and that the impending Union attacks would only maim the army charging enemy fortifications. Lincoln then asked Halleck to telegraph Burnside and order the army to withdraw to the north side of the river and abort the attack. Halleck responded, "I will do no such thing. If we were personally present and knew the exact situation, we might assume such responsibility. If such orders are issued, you must issue them yourself. I hold that the general in the field is the best judge of existing conditions." See Ambrose, Halleck, p. 97. Against his better judgment, Lincoln agreed with Halleck and issued no orders preventing Burnside from fighting.

[8]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 202; Hassler, Commanders, p. 120.

[9]Hassler, Commanders, p. 120.

[10]United States Congress. Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, III (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), p. 643.

[11]Hassler, Commanders, p. 120.

[12]Official Records, Series I, Vol. XVII, part 2, pp. 282 and 503.

[13]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, 192-194.

[14]Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, p. 265.

[15]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 194.

[16]Ibid., pp. 192-193.

[17]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 206.

[18]Bruce Catton, This Hallowed Ground, The Story of the Union Side of the Civil War (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1956), pp. 196-202. Catton provides a brief summary of McClernand's efforts at raising troops and planning the operation, concluding with Grant's maneuver to regain control over the general. Grant said years later of the incident, "I had good reason to believe that in forestalling him I was by no means giving offense to those whose authority to command was above both him and me," Ibid, p. 202.

[19]Ibid., pp. 198-199. Grant assumed command of the operation, forming the forces under his charge into corps. McClernand was made a corps commander. Stanton supported Halleck and Grant in this scheme to dilute McClernand's status as an independent commander. Grant tolerated the general until mid-June, when he finally relieved him for issuing a congratulatory address which publicly disparged the achievements of all but his troops. Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, p. 268. For correspondence to McClernand entreating him to support the combined Union cause, see Roy P. Basler, ed., The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, VI (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), p. 71.

[20]Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, pp. 255-256. An able administrator, Stanton wanted the control of the army tightened up, or made more centralized. Nominally, the eight separate field forces were under Halleck's control, but were actually almost autonomous.

[21]Ibid., pp. 143, and 286-289. Stanton gave a dimension to the position of Secretary of War it had not previously had, but this did not make up for his lack of military expertise. His personal direction of the transfer of 20,000 men by railroad from the east to reinforce the Union garrison at Chickamauga is an example of his administration at its best. Stanton's attempt at being a military strategist during the three months the army was without a General-in-Chief is an example of his weakness in this area.

[22]See Special Orders, Number 275, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Richmond, November 24, 1862, in Official Records, Series I, Vol. XVII, part 2, pp. 757-758. Johnston's orders prescribe the geographical boundaries of his department in the first two paragraphs,

while the paragraph cited is the closing paragraph of the order. Johnston refers to this order in his Narrative of Military Operations, p. 149, as "special orders, No. 225"; however despite the difference in numbers the orders are the same.

[23]Map 4, The Official Atlas of the Civil War, introduction by Henry Steele Commanger (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1958), plate CLXVI.

[24]Eckenrode, Davis, p. 199. Seddon wanted Johnston to have the same authority over his armies as "the government itself exerted over the armies near the capital." It was expected that Johnston would assume command in person of the army that needed him the most.

[25]Quote is from a letter Johnston to Wigfall, February 14, 1863, as cited in Vandiver, "Jefferson Davis and Unified Army Command;" Johnston's comments on the evils of dual command are from Vandiver, Tattered Flags, p. 186.

[26]For a brief summary of the events for which Bragg was being criticized see Thomas R. Hay, "Braxton Bragg and the Southern Confederacy," pp. 277-290; and Connelly, Autumn of Glory, p. 40.

[27]Vandiver, Tattered Flags, p. 185. Seddon was furious when Johnston's report on Bragg was highly complimentary and paid tribute to the general's "great vigor and skill." See Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 136.

[28]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 136.

[29]Eckenrode, Davis, p. 199.

[30]Connelly and Jones, Politics of Command, p. 112.

[31]Ibid., p. 113. Connelly and Jones blame Davis for the failure, giving examples of Davis's interference in Johnston's command. For instance in December 1862 Davis ordered one-fourth of Bragg's infantry to reinforce Pemberton without consulting Johnston, and in February 1863, the President planned, without Johnston's knowledge, a cavalry invasion of Tennessee using troops from the East Tennessee Department. Vandiver, Rebel Brass, pp. 58-59, believes that the failure of the system was to be found in the mutual misunderstanding between Davis and Johnston over the concept of theater command.

[32]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 136.

[33]Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 203-208; and Connelly and Jones, Politics of Command, p. 114. In June Johnston learned he was still the theater commander. Davis was angered by this and ridiculed Johnston's misconception. Although the controversy over Johnston's position continued for a few more months, after going to Mississippi, Johnston ceased to function as a theater commander, indeed if he ever had. Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 95 and 110-111, states that Johnston was formally relieved of theater command by orders issued on July 22, 1863.

[34]Vandiver, Tattered Flags, p. 186.

[35]Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 186 and 202. Had Davis thought of Jackson as a candidate for theater command, it is questionable whether Lee would have released him for the command in the west.

[36]James L. Nichols, The Confederate Quartermaster in the Trans-Mississippi (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964), p. 4; and Joseph H. Parks, General Edmund Kirby Smith, C.S.A. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1954), pp. 253-254.

[37]Map 5, Official Atlas of the Civil War, plate CLXVII.

[38]Warner, Generals in Gray, pp. 279-280; and Vandiver, Tattered Flags, pp. 191, and 196-197.

[39]Kirby Smith found his new command demoralized and disorganized largely due to the poor leadership of the generals commanding the various armies within the departments. He had been the commander of the new department for only four months before Vicksburg surrendered, having issued orders reorganizing his department on March 1, 1863. In all fairness to Kirby Smith, he was so overcome with the immediate problems of reorganizing that he simply was not able to respond quickly enough to the emergency at Vicksburg. Parks, Kirby Smith, pp. 253-254, and 275-280.

[40]With the Mississippi River in Federal possession, the Trans-Mississippi was isolated from the rest of the South. Kirby Smith assumed complete authority for the area and ran it as a separate nation, even to the point of attempting to secure aid from foreign nations. Parks, Kirby Smith, pp. 280-282.

[41]Vandiver, Tattered Flags, pp. 196-197.

[42]Ibid.; and Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 233-234, and 236-237.

[43]Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 218-223; Freeman, Lee, III, p. 19; and Connelly and Jones, The Politics of Command, pp. 126-129. Lee was adamant in his refusal to send troops to the west, offering Davis the reasoning that to do so would place Virginia in great jeopardy. Summer and the return of the "fever" would hold Grant back, Lee had argued. Seddon's ability to influence Davis had been eroded in the aftermath of Johnston's failure in the west, and the President blamed Seddon for the confusion caused by Johnston's bungling of his assignment. Lee's arguments supporting his proposal, an invasion of the North, are a striking example of Lee's strategic thinking and are an instance when, in addition to functioning as a departmental commander, he is shown advising movements of armies aside from his own. See also Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 104-105.

[44]Beauregard advocated Lee's holding the defensive in Virginia, detaching 30,000 troops from that army to reenforce Bragg in Tennessee, and then placing the resulting force under Johnston. This army was to have the mission of attacking Grant to relieve the pressure on Vicksburg. Seddon's plan was more direct. He wanted reinforcements for Johnston in Mississippi, who in turn would attack Grant. See Williams, Beauregard, p. 181, for a complete discussion on the details of Beauregard's plan.

[45]Accounts of the cabinet meeting, Lee's arguments, and Postmaster General Reagan's reasons for dissenting are found in Connelly and Jones, Politics of Command, pp. 122-123, and 182; and Hudson Strode, Jefferson Davis, Confederate President (New York: Harcourt and Brace and Company, 1959), pp. 403-406. Beauregard wrote to Davis and stated that Lee's raid into Pennsylvania to relieve pressure on the western theater violated all the principles of war. His argument made no impression on Davis.

[46]Freeman, Lee, III, pp. 18-19; Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 222-225. Both Lee and Davis were aware of the tremendous risk associated with the invasion, but they each believed that the potential advantages to be gained from success warranted the taking of the risks. See also Vandiver, Their Tattered Flags, p. 219.

[47]Eaton, Davis, pp. 174-176.

[48]Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, III, Chapter IX, analyzes the battle and the reasons for the Confederate defeat. Jackson's death and the ensuing command problems caused by the reorganization after Chancellorsville are examined in detail. See also Freeman, Lee, III, pp. 147-155.

[49]Freeman, Lee, III, pp. 12-16; and Donald B. Sanger and Thomas R. Hay, James Longstreet (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952), p. 185.

[50]On May 17, 1863, as Grant was closing in on Vicksburg, Johnston sent Pemberton instructions to evacuate the city and save his army. Ten days earlier Davis had telegraphed Pemberton and told him to hold Vicksburg and Port Hudson at all costs as their retention was vital to the maintaining of a link with the Trans-Mississippi Department. Pemberton, trapped by conflicting orders, stayed where he was and as a result was encircled by Grant. See John C. Pemberton, Pemberton, Defender of Vicksburg (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), pp. 205-206.

[51]Eckenrode, Davis, p. 206.

[52]For Johnston's position see, Narrative of Military Operations, Chapters VII and VIII. Criticism of Johnston is discussed by Frank E. Vandiver, ed., The Civil War Diary of Josiah Gorgas (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952), pp. 43 and 61.

[53]Lee was able to convince Davis to approve the invasion on the strength of his past successes as a field commander. More so than any other person, Lee was able to influence the Confederate President on strategic decisions. Unfortunately for the South, this was one time when Davis should have stood firm and stopped Lee rather than approving Lee's faulty strategy. Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 221-222, blames Lee for intimidating Davis into approving the invasion with the implied threat that any plan which removed troops from Virginia placed the state in great danger, an allegation with which Eckenrode does not agree.

[54]Hassler, Commanders, pp. 130-131.

[55]Swinton, Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, 231-232. Burnside formed the three grand divisions of two corps each shortly after assuming command of the Army of the Potomac. In Swinton's opinion, adding an extra level of command between the army commander and the corps commanders adversely affected control over the elements of the army.

[56]Hassler, Commanders, p. 133.

[57]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 253.

[58]Ibid., p. 256.

[59]Ibid., p. 258.

[60]There is some confusion on whether Halleck was consulted on the nomination of Meade. Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 259, states that Halleck's opinion was not sought on the matter. Ambrose, Halleck, p. 136; and Clarence E. Macartney, Grant and His Generals (New York: McBride Company, 1953), p. 161, both describe Halleck as an active contributor in the decision to replace Hooker with Meade. Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, p. 273, state that Halleck brought Hooker's telegram requesting to be relieved to Stanton, who in turn called Lincoln, and together the two of them decided on Meade as the successor for Hooker. Halleck's participation in this decision as described by Ambrose was probably after the fact.

[61]Hassler, Commanders, p. 163.

[62]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 260-262.

[63]David H. Bates, Lincoln in the Telegraph Office (New York: The Century Company, 1907), pp. 155-156.

[64]Ibid.

[65]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 141.

[66]Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, VII, p. 278.

[67]Clifford Dowdey, ed., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961), p. 589.

[68]When asked by Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles why he did not get rid of Meade, Lincoln replied, "What can I do with such generals as we have? Who among them is any better than Meade?" Nicolay and Hay, Lincoln, VIII, pp. 233-234. In a letter from Seddon to Wigfall, the head of the War Department commented that Davis thought Bragg "was better than any with whom he could replace him." See note, Hay, "Braxton Bragg and the Southern Confederacy," p. 308.

[69]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 275. On the question of command of the Army of the Potomac, Grant wrote, "Whilst I would disobey no order I should beg very hard to be excused before accepting that command."

[70]Vandiver, ed., Diary of Gorgas, p. 62; and Eaton, Davis, p. 184.

[71]Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 234-236. Labeled by Connelly the "Anti-Bragg men," Generals Polk and Hindman were open in their opposition to Bragg. There was substance in their charges and countercharges against each other, but personalities were in large measure responsible for the problems.

[72]Ibid., pp. 238-240. Among the twelve generals were all the corps commanders except one, and several of the division and brigade commanders. Although General Harvey Hill was the alleged author of the petition, Connelly believes that Longstreet was the real prime mover behind the entire scheme to have Bragg removed from command.

[73]Ibid., p. 240.

[74]Ibid., p. 243.

[75]Ibid., pp. 242-244. With Johnston and Beauregard it was probably the old personality conflicts that made them unacceptable to Davis. Pemberton was so tainted by his defeat at Vicksburg that no division in the Army of Tennessee would have him as a commander.

[76]Lee did not refuse to serve in the west; he simply argued that he could better serve the Confederacy in Virginia. Lee discussed his thoughts on the matter in a letter to Davis, see Dowdey, ed., Wartime Papers of Lee, p. 596. See also Freeman, Lee, III, pp. 165-166, for Lee's sentiments on the transfer to the west. Connelly and Jones, Politics of Command, p. 195, view Lee's reluctance to serve outside Virginia as having an adverse impact on the Confederate command system.

[77]For a summary of the events of the battle see Catton, This Hallowed Ground, pp. 280-286' and Sanger and Hay, Longstreet, pp. 200-211. Longstreet literally arrived in Tennessee on the day of the battle with his divisions after having been transferred from the eastern theater by train.

[78]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 284-285.

[79]Ibid., pp. 289-290; and Catton, This Hallowed Ground, 288-303. Two army corps under Joe Hooker were detached from the Army of the Potomac and sent west to help Grant break the siege. Most of the Army of the Tennessee under Sherman was ordered east from Mississippi. Grant met Stanton in Indianapolis and was informed of the details of his new command. Grant's first action was to gelegraph Thomas to assume command of the Army of the Cumberland. Grant's plan to break the siege called for Hooker to strike at Lookout Mountain and for Sherman

to take Missionary Ridge. Thomas with his army was instructed to pressure the center of the Confederate line in order to prevent reinforcements from being shifted to the flanks. This attack was transformed from a secondary attack to the main thrust when the Army of the Cumberland, superbly led, carried its advance to the top of Missionary Ridge.

[80]Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 255 and 253-261. A feud between Longstreet and Bragg led to a failure to block the reopening of a Union supply route into Chattanooga. On October 30 Bragg wrote to Davis informing him that he intended to relieve more generals and at the same time threatened to resign if he were not better supported from Richmond.

[81]Ibid., pp. 270-278. Connelly blames Bragg for the defeat of the Confederate forces at Chattanooga and substantiates his accusations by citing a number of what he considers blunders committed by the Southern commander. Among these were the line Bragg chose to hold was weak in men and geographical advantages; due to poor intelligence-gathering efforts, Bragg lacked a clear understanding of Union activities; and finally "Bragg's personality--quarrelsome, suspicious, quick to blame--had simply not been sufficient." Ibid., p. 278.

[82]Strode, Davis, pp. 503-508.

[83]Ibid., p. 510; and Freeman, Lee, III, 214-215. Lee recommended that Beauregard replace Bragg but found Davis "indisposed" to follow his advice. Of himself Lee said, "I have no ambition but to serve the Confederacy and do all I can to win our independence." However, he held to the belief that others could accomplish more with the Army of Tennessee than he could hope to do. For the full text of Lee's reply see Douglas S. Freeman, ed., Lee's Dispatches (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1957), pp. 130-131.

[84]Don C. Seitz, Braxton Bragg, General of the Confederacy (Columbia, S. C.: The State Company, 1924), p. 410; and Official Records, XXXIII, p. 1196. General Orders, Number 23, February 24, 1864, "General Braxton Bragg is assigned to duty at the seat of government, and, under the direction of the President, is charged with the conduct of military operations in the armies of the Confederacy."

[85]Hay, "Braxton Bragg and the Southern Confederacy," p. 307.

[86]Seitz, Bragg, p. 410; and Connelly, Autumn of Glory, p. 278. Connelly believes that Bragg had a greater degree of influence than does Seitz. In view of Bragg's role in dismissal of Johnston during the Atlanta Campaign, Connelly's estimate of Bragg's power seems to

be the more accurate of the two opinions.

[87]The information in Chart 6 is from Johnson and Buel, ed., Battles and Leaders, I, p. 6; and Official Records, Series IV, Vol. III, p. 1183. In time Bragg came to have considerable influence over the staff bureaus, but he never exercised any real control over the army. The broken line between Bragg and the President illustrates Bragg's role as an advisor. The broken line between Davis and the army illustrates his personal supervision of the army commanders and the exclusion of the Secretary of War from the actual command channel. A letter from Seddon to Davis, Official Records, Series IV, Vol. III, pp. 943-945, provides an excellent description of the Confederate War Department.

[88]Edward Younger, ed., Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean, Head of the Bureau of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 127-128.

[89]Seitz, Bragg, p. 410; and Hay "Braxton Bragg and the Southern Confederacy," pp. 308-309. In October 1864 Davis temporarily assigned Bragg to command the military department comprised of the state of North Carolina east of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

[90]Bruce Catton, Grant Takes Command (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), pp. 126-128. Grant received his commission as the army's only lieutenant general on March 9, 1864 and the following day assumed his duties as the general-in-chief.

[91]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 290.

[92]Murray M. Horowitz, "That Presidential Grub: Lincoln Versus His Generals," Lincoln Herald 79 (Winter 1977): 157. Upon learning that Grant had no political ambitions, Lincoln was relieved and commented, "You will never know how gratifying that is to me. No man knows how deeply that presidential grub gnaws unless he has had it himself." See also Macartney, Grant and His Generals, p. 326, regarding McClellan and Fremont and their bids for the presidency. Catton, Grant Takes Command, p. 119, observes that deep dissatisfaction with Halleck was one of the primary reasons why most Congressmen were willing to pass the bill creating the rank of lieutenant general, anticipating that Grant would replace Halleck.

[93]Williams, Lincoln and the Radicals, pp. 336-338; Congressional Globe, 1st Session, 38th Congress, p. 842; and Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 120-121.

[94]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 298. Chart 7 is taken from Kriedberg and Henry, History of Mobilization, pp. 86-87, and 133. This diagram illustrates the Union's "Modern" command system. Halleck has two solid lines coming into his office as Chief of Staff, implying he is working for both the Secretary of War and the General-in-Chief. The broken line between the Chief of Staff and the army illustrates Halleck's duties as Grant's deputy; the line between Halleck and the bureaus illustrates his duties as Stanton's assistant. The Provost Marshal Bureau was added in March, 1863 in order to enforce the conscription laws. See Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, p. 280, for a discussion on the creation, and duties of, the office of the Provost Marshal.

[95]Lee's name comes immediately to mind, but it must be remembered that it was not until February 1865, that Lee became the Confederate General-in-Chief. Prior to that time he was only a departmental commander, although an important one. Bragg, the current General-in-Chief, was not Grant's equal in authority or talent.

[96]Connelly and Jones, The Politics of Command, p. 196.

Notes for Chapter Four

[1]Congressional Globe, 1st Session, 38th Congress, p. 842.

[2]Ibid., pp. 586-592, 771-772, and 789-798. Examples of the rationale which motivated the Congress to pass the bill dealing with the lieutenant general are to be found in the debates of January and February, 1864. Lyman Trumbull, Senator from the state of Illinois, stated during the debate on the bill, "The bill as it came to us from the House of Representatives was intended not simply to confer the honor of lieutenant general upon the person who should be selected . . . but it was intended also in conferring this high honor upon him to give him some command corresponding with the title conferred by it." See Senator Trumbull's remarks in the Globe, p. 586.

[3]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 297.

[4]Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 132-133; and Macartney, Grant and His Generals, pp. 164-165.

[5]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 301.

[6]Ambrose, Halleck, pp. 160-161.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Official Records, Series I, Vol. XXXIII, p. 663. Halleck wrote in a private letter on this subject, ". . .the higher grade of Lt General has been created and filled, and as soon as General Grant receives his commission and enters upon the duties of that grade he must ex necessitate, perform the duties and incur the responsibilities of General-in-Chief."

[9]Ibid., p. 669.

[10]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 301; Ambrose, Halleck, p. 164; and Ulysses S. Grant, Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant (New York: Charles L. Webster and Company, 1894), pp. 403-405. Williams states that the architect of the command system is unknown, while Ambrose states, "To Halleck's delight, Grant decided that Old Brains should stay in Washington." In his memoirs Grant ignores the decision completely and does not mention the creation of Halleck's position as Chief of Staff; at the same time he notes, "orders were published by

the War Department placing me in command of all the armies." Catton does not discuss the background of the development of the office in his excellent biography of Grant, Grant Takes Command. Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, p. 297, simply imply that the Secretary of War "helped to work out" the arrangement.

[11]Official Army Register For 1864, pp. 118-119. Listed are the departments and the geographical areas which make up each department or division. See also Grant, Memoirs, p. 410, where he describes the disposition of the armies when he assumed command. He notes that there were actually nineteen departments, though because of some overlapping there were only seventeen departmental commanders.

[12]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 301.

[13]M. A. DeWolfe Howe, ed., Home Letters of General Sherman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 287.

[14]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 302; and Ambrose, Halleck, p. 116. Grant expressed his appreciation of what Halleck was doing for him in Washington on one occasion after the Chief of Staff had facilitated the redeployment of forces to Grant, "The promptness and rapidity with which you have forwarded reinforcements have contributed largely to the feeling of confidence inspired in our men and to break down that of the enemy." Official Records, Series I, Vol. XXXVI, Part 2, p. 478.

[15]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 163.

[16]Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 138-139.

[17]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 162. In Hooker's opinion being the Chief of Staff of the army was "a little like being married to a woman but not permitted to sleep with her."

[18]Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, p. 229. After their initial disagreements the two developed a very good working relationship as can be shown by this quote from a letter Grant wrote to Lincoln May 1, 1864, "...I have never had cause of complaint...against the administration or the Secretary of War....I have been astonished at the readiness with which everything asked for has been yielded....Should my success be less than I desire and expect, the least I can say is, the fault is not with you."

[19]William T. Sherman, Memoirs of General William T. Sherman, II (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1957), p. 6.

[20]Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 128-129; and Freeman Cleaves, Meade of Gettysburg (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), pp. 224-227.

[21]Grant comments on this relationship in his Memoirs, p. 405; and Arthur Grant, in an unpublished Masters Thesis, "Unity of Command: The Command Relationship Between Generals Grant and Meade In The Campaigns of 1864-1865," Rice University, 1974, examines this relationship in detail.

[22]There are numerous examples of the problems caused by Grant and Meade trying to keep command distinctions between the command of all the armies and command of a single army. Catton, Grant Takes Command, provides a detailed account of these problems. For a brief summary of the problems in their relationship see, Macartney, Grant and His Generals, Chapter II; and McWhiney, Grant, Lee, Lincoln and the Radicals,

[23]Ambrose, Halleck, p. 162.

[24]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 303.

[25]Grant, Memoirs, p. 407.

[26]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 305-306, and 315; Rogers, The Confederates and Federals at War, p. 29.

[27]Grant describes his strategy in a letter to William T. Sherman, Memoirs, pp. 412-413.

[28]Catton, Grant Takes Command, p. 153; Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 308; and Grant, Memoirs, p. 413. Grant uses the quote in a letter to Sherman without attributing it to Lincoln, whereas both Catton and Williams cite Lincoln as the author.

[29]Freeman, ed., Lee's Dispatches, p. 172.

[30]Sherman, Memoirs, II, pp. 30-31; and Connelly, Autumn of Glory, p. 329.

[31]Yearns, Confederate Congress, p. 148, and Connelly, Autumn of Glory, p. 289.

[32]Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 261 and 265.

[33]For discussions of the Confederate Congress and its power relative to the President's, see Vandiver, Rebel Brass, pp. 76-78; and Eaton, Davis, Chapter XXI. Davis was able to resist any real efforts by Congress to strip him of his war powers until January 1865 however, in spite of their disorganization, Congress was able to exert enough influence in Davis in the spring of 1864 to cause him to appoint Johnston to army command.

[34]Eckenrode, Davis, p. 267.

[35]Eaton, Davis, p. 243. A quote from the Richmond Whig, March 9, 1864, presents a concise view of Davis's feelings on his prerogatives as Commander-in-Chief: "The President never for a moment relinquished his rights as Commander-in-Chief, and never entertained the first thought of doing so. This earth holds not the human being more jealous of his constitutional rights than Mr. Davis, and among those rights that to which he clings with death-like tenacity is well-known to be the supreme and exclusive control of military operations."

[36]Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 362-366. There is some doubt in Connelly's mind concerning the true nature of Johnston's plans, the issue being whether the general was really skillful or simply outmaneuvered by Sherman. Vandiver, Tattered Flags, pp. 278-279, evaluated Johnston's campaign tactics favorably, "...Johnston made his retreat a deadly process, turned it into a type of offense." Grant, Memoirs, p. 435, declared, "For my own part, I think that Johnston's tactics were right. Anything that could have prolonged the war a year beyond the time it finally did close, would probably have exhausted the North to such an extent that they might have abandoned the contest and agreed to separation."

[37]Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 405-422. Connelly discusses in detail the events surrounding the removal of Johnston in mid-campaign noting, "The process by which Davis and his cabinet concluded that Johnston would not defend Atlanta and his ensuing removal present difficult historiographical questions due to the abundance of conflicting testimony."

[38]Seitz, Bragg, pp. 450-451, states that Bragg did not advocate the removal of Johnston but did recommend that Hood be the general's successor if he were to be relieved. Davis consulted with his Secretary of War and with Lee on the decision to retain or replace Johnston. Lee advised against removing a general at a critical time during a campaign but then implied that, "We may lose Atlanta and the army too. Hood is a bold fighter." See, Dowdey, ed., Wartime Papers of Lee, p. 821. Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 421, observes that it was ultimately Davis's decision, and he made it, but it was Bragg who had misled the President about Johnston and it was he who had suggested Hood for the job.

[39]Alf J. Mapp Jr., Frock Coats and Epaulets (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1963), pp. 418-419; and Thomas R. Hay, Hood's Tennessee Campaign (New York: W. Neale, 1929), p. 21.

[40]Connelly, Autumn of Glory, pp. 468-469; and Eckenrode, Davis, p. 309.

[41]Bruce Catton, Never Call Retreat (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1965), pp. 364-365, and 368.

[42]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 318-319; and Grant, Memoirs, pp. 505-506. Grant describes his change of plans, "My idea from the start has been to beat Lee's army if possible north of Richmond; then after destroying his lines of communications on the north side of the James River to transfer the army to the south side and besiege Lee in Richmond, or follow him south if he should retreat."

[43]McWhiney, Grant, Lee, Lincoln and the Radicals, pp. 21-23.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, III, p. 515.

[46]Ambrose, Halleck, pp. 169-170. For examples of Butler's political influence see, Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 146, and 333.

[47]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 321.

[48]Ibid., p. 324. There is another side to this affair. While it was true that Grant did back down in the end for political reasons and consent to leaving Butler in command, Butler himself had fought to retain his position. Catton, Grant Takes Command, p. 333, portrays

Butler as "more than Grant could handle....Politically, Butler was up where he could not be reached by nobody but the President, and if the President did not choose to reach him Grant certainly could not." Grant had set himself an impossible task. Lincoln was not going to antagonize Butler's friends in an election year, and Grant never really had the clout as General-in-Chief to remove Butler unless he had the overt backing of the President.

[49]Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 248-250.

[50]Ibid., p. 309; and Dowdey, ed., Wartime Papers of Lee, pp. 822-823.

[51]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 324.

[52]Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 310-311.

[53]Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, VII, p. 437.

[54]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, pp. 327-328.

[55]Catton, Grant Takes Command, p. 317. Seeking to achieve unified command for the area around Washington Grant wanted to merge the various departments. This episode provides an example of the limitations on Grant and the extent of his authority. Although General-in-Chief, he could not order the formation of the new department but had to request it of the Secretary of War.

[56]Halleck was the weak link in the Union command system and was primarily the cause of the confusion caused by Early's raid. Had he been willing to assume the responsibility for the defense of Washington from the first moment that the Confederate threat on Washington became known, the crisis in command would not have developed in the first place. Jealous of Grant and in keeping with his nature, Halleck had done nothing until ordered to do so by Lincoln. Catton, Grant Takes Command, pp. 318-319.

[57]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 331.

[58]Grant, Memoirs, pp. 528-529.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Catton, Grant Takes Command, p. 348. From the first moment that he considered forming a consolidated command around the capital, Sheridan had been his choice to fill the post of its commander. Despite Sheridan's being only thirty-three years old, Grant though the cavalry commander was the best man for the job, a feeling not shared by Stanton and Halleck, who thought Sheridan too young for such a large command. Hunter paved the way for Sheridan, when the former declined to accept a hollow command. Hunter knew that by being in the field, Sheridan would be the real commander, while he sat back in Baltimore or somewhere else and commanded a headquarters. Lincoln overruled Halleck and Stanton and permitted Sheridan to be appointed to the post of commander of the consolidated departments, which were collectively named the Middle Division.

[61]Thomas and Hyman, Stanton, pp. 327-328; and Grant, Memoirs, p. 532. Grant writes that Halleck advised him "that there was an organized scheme afoot in the north to resist the draft, and suggested that it might become necessary to draw troops from the field to put it down."

[62]Catton, Never Call Retreat, pp. 382-383.

[63]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 336.

[64]Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 309-310.

[65]Hay, Hood's Tennessee Campaign, pp. 27-28.

[66]Williams, Beauregard, p. 241; and Connelly, Autumn of Glory, p. 472. Lee was instrumental in the selection of Beauregard for this new command, see, Hay, Hood's Tennessee Campaign, p. 28.

[67]Rowland, ed., Davis Letters and Speeches, VI, pp. 348-349.

[68]Vandiver, "Jefferson Davis and Unified Army Command," p. 37.

[69]Hay, Hood's Tennessee Campaign, pp. 28-29.

[70]Connelly, Autumn of Glory, p. 473; and Williams, Beauregard, p. 242. Both authors examine Davis's motivations for creating the post for Beauregard and the general's failure to grasp the scope of the authority given to him. Beauregard was suspicious of Davis and viewed his appointment as nothing more than being "laid upon a shelf." He could not accept the possibility that Davis was actually entrusting him with a responsible position.

[71]Hay, Hood's Tennessee Campaign, pp. 27-28.

[72]Williams, Beauregard, p. 244.

[73]Ibid., pp. 246-247.

[74]Hay, Hood's Tennessee Campaign, pp. 189-194.

[75]Williams, Beauregard, p. 247.

[76]Ibid., p. 248.

[77]Eckenrode, Davis, p. 315. December 1864 was a bad month for the Confederacy. With Sherman pressuring Beauregard and Bragg in the south and Lee besieged by Grant it was no time for the President to be incapacitated. Jones in his Diary, pp. 460-463, describes the situation, "There is deep vexation in the city--a general apprehension that our affairs are rapidly approaching a crisis such as has not been experienced before....I suspect some coup d' etat is meditated." This last sentiment was in response to the rumor that Davis was near death and that for the sake of the country someone was going to have to take charge of the government and the direction of the army.

[78]Seitz, Bragg, pp. 462-463, and 465.

[79]Ibid., pp. 466-467.

[80]Yearns, Confederate Congress, pp. 226-227.

[81]Ibid.

[82]Ibid.

[83]Richardson, ed., Messages and Papers of the Confederacy, I, p. 570. Chart 8, depicts the final command arrangement adopted by the Confederacy. Lee is now the commander of the army although the President is still Commander-in-Chief. This command arrangement is very similar to the Union command arrangement of April 1861. It had taken the Confederacy four years to achieve a command system which balanced the expertise of the military with the civilian control intended by the Constitution. Staff Bureaus remained the responsibility of the Secretary of War and not the General-in-Chief. Johnson and Buel, ed.,

Battles and Leaders, p. 6, list the bureaus and the incumbents shown on the diagram; see also Official Records, Series IV, Vol. III, p. 1183. Noticeably absent among the staff bureaus is the Provost Marshal. Although Johnson and Buel list the Provost Marshal as one of the staff bureaus, this cannot be verified in the Official Records and therefore has been omitted from the diagram.

[84]Yearns, Confederate Congress, p. 228.

[85]Eckenrode, Davis, p. 318; and Dowdey, ed., Wartime Papers of Lee, p. 892.

[86]Patrick, Davis and His Cabinet, p. 146.

[87]Ibid.

[88]Ibid., pp. 149-150.

[89]Freeman, Lee, IV, p. 5; and Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, III, p. 19.

[90]Freeman, Lee, IV, pp. 8-9.

[91]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, p. 352.

[92]Connelly and Jones, Politics of Command, p. 88.

[93]Parks, E. Kirby Smith, p. 478; and Clifford Dowdey, Robert E. Lee (London: Victor Gollanez Ltd., 1970), p. 594.

[94]Dowdey, Lee, p. 594.

[95]Ibid., p. 590.

[96]Ibid., pp. 593-594.

[97]Eckenrode, Davis, pp. 334-335; and Vandiver, Their Tattered Flags, p. 306.

[98]Official Records, Series I, Vol. XXIV, Part 3, p. 567.

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