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# THE WORKS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

# LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS MESSAGES TO CONGRESS MILITARY ORDERS MEMORANDA, Etc.

Introductions and Special Articles by

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# THE CORRESPONDENCE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(After March 4, 1861)

[Continued]



## CORRESPONDENCE

(After March 4, 1861)

[Continued.]

#### HENRY W. HALLECK.1

On December 2, 1861, the President authorized General Halleck, of the Department of Missouri, to suspend therein the writ of habeas corpus and to exercise martial law in his discretion.

#### [Telegram.]

Washington, D. C., December 31, 1861. General H. W. Halleck, St. Louis, Missouri.

General McClellan is sick. Are General Buell and yourself in concert? When he moves on Bowling Green, what hinders it being reinforced from Columbus? A simultaneous movement by you on Columbus might prevent it.

A. Lincoln.

[Similar despatch to Buell same date.]

Executive Mansion, January 1, 1862.
My dear General Halleck: General McClellan
is not dangerously ill, as I hope, but would better
not be disturbed with business. I am very anx-

<sup>1</sup> At the outbreak of the war General Halleck rivalled General George B. McClellan in reputation as a military authority. A graduate of West Point in 1839, he published in 1846 a book, *The Elements of Military Art and Science*, which was regarded as a classic. He was prominent in military and political movements in California from 1846 to 1854. The President appointed him commander of the Department of Missouri in November, 1861.

ious that, in case of General Buell's moving toward Nashville, the enemy shall not be greatly reinforced, and I think there is danger he will be from Columbus. It seems to me that a real or feigned attack on Columbus from up-river at the same time would either prevent this or compensate for it by throwing Columbus into our hands. I wrote General Buell a letter similar to this, meaning that he and you shall communicate and act in concert, unless it be your judgment and his that there is no necessity for it. You and he will understand much better than I how to do it. Please do not lose time in this matter. Yours very truly,

A. Lincoln.

See letter to Don Carlos Buell, on January 1, 1862; on January 7, 1862; on January 13, 1862; and on March 8, 1862.

On January 6, 1862, General Halleck wrote the President, describing the helpless condition of his department, and stating the impossibility of his aiding Buell

in Kentucky. He said:

Some of the brigadier-generals assigned to this department are entirely ignorant of their duties and unfit for any command. I assure you, Mr. President, it is very difficult to accomplish much with such means. I am in the condition of a carpenter who is required to build a bridge with a dull ax, a broken saw, and rotten timber. It is true that I have some very good green timber, which will answer the purpose as soon as I can get it into shape and season it a little. . . .

General Buell's army and the forces at Paducah occupy precisely the same position in relation to each other and to the enemy as did the armies of McDowell

and Patterson before the battle of Bull Run.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant, H. W. Halleck, Major-General.

On this letter the President wrote the following indorsement:

#### [Indorsement.]

The within is a copy of a letter just received from General Halleck. It is exceedingly discouraging. As everywhere else, nothing can be done.

A. Lincoln.

January 10, 1862.

Washington, D. C., January 15, 1862.

Major-General Halleck.

My dear Sir: This will introduce Governor G. Koerner, of Illinois, who is my personal friend, and who calls on you at my particular request. Please open the sealed letter he will hand you before he leaves you and confer with him as to its contents. Yours very truly, A. Lincoln.

#### [Inclosure.]

Executive Mansion, January 15, 1862.

Major-General Halleck.

My dear Sir: The Germans are true and patriotic, and so far as they have got cross in Missouri it is upon mistake and misunderstanding. Without a knowledge of its contents, Governor Koerner, of Illinois, will hand you this letter. He is an educated and talented German gentleman, as true a man as lives. With his assistance you can set everything right with the Germans. I write this without his knowledge, asking him at the same time, by letter, to deliver it. My clear judgment is that, with reference to the German element in your command, you should have Governor Koerner with you; and if agreeable to you and him, I will make him a brigadier-general, so that he can afford to so give his time. He does

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