

History 225
Re: Lecture/Outline # 3

*within this
is General
copy.*

*Lincoln's letter
to Winfield Scott
1861*

General Winfield Scott's Anaconda Plan for Victory

Short bio. on Scott:

At the time the Civil War began Scott was general-in-chief of the Northern armies. He was the finest soldier of the first 70 years of the Republic. He fought in the War of 1812 and came to recognition w/ victory over British Regulars at Chippewa. Scott was the architect of the US army's defeat of the Mexicans in the Mexican-American war (1846-8).

By the time of the Civil War Scott was 75 years old. His former impressive mental and physical stature was devastated by age and especially by gross obesity. (He could not even mount a horse he was so huge by 1861). The demands of enormous frame sapped all his energies. During staff meetings or strategy sessions with the President and his advisers Scott was likely to drift off.

Scott's grand strategy for a Union victory called the Anaconda Plan was two-fold:

1. Blockade of the CSA's Atlantic Ocean ports
2. Use of navy and army in joint cooperation to control the Mississippi (thus splitting the Confederacy) and then a massive use of land troops to march from New Orleans across the Lower South (as Sherman would ultimately do in 1864/5) with a sweep up toward the Virginia battlefields. + Richmond

The Anaconda plan deployed the Union's two initial physical superiorities: its great pool of manpower which would allow it to confront the South on two fronts: Richmond/Petersburg and to take a large force across the Lower South. (Pinning the CSA forces in Virginia to protect the capital and not relieve the marching columns of Union troops marching through Georgia and the Carolinas. And its greater industrial technology (the fighting ship in blockade mission and taking control of the Mississippi. Thus, the Union would over time squeeze the South into submission.

The problem was time. Lincoln did not have time. The North--papers, Congress, and the general populace wanted action and action soon.

O\Point here: The Civil War was perhaps the most democratic war in our history.