

History 225

Re: Notes on the Union Blockade
(Source: Beringer, et. al.)

Handwritten:
Beringer
20/10

Tie this to the "Anaconda Plan" proposed by General-in-Chief of the Union Army, General Winfield Scott.

The original Union plan was highly conservative. There was a high consensus between the Union original war aim and the attending strategy. To end the secession or "rebellion" as soon as possible with as minimal damage to the South as possible. There was still the assumption that most Southerners were Union loyalists who were waiting to rejoin the Union as soon as possible. The North was not interested in destroying private property or to engage in any revolutionary reforms--like ending slavery. The aim was a restoration of the status quo ante. Not to wage a relentless and total war against the entire South.

Lincoln's top general, Scott, devised the first war plan to be consistent with this conservative war aim. It was dubbed "The Anaconda Plan." Scott believed that the military subjugation of the South could only come after a vast expenditure of billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of lives. That this kind of war would undermine the Constitution and the federal idea of government and make it impossible to restore the Union as it was.

His plan was twofold:

(1) To send a federal force down the Mississippi--some 12 to 20 gunboats" with enough steam transports to carry 60,000 men. With this force he intended to capture all the enemy river forts and ultimately control the Mississippi and deny it to the Confederacy;

(2) Was to blockade the South with the Union navy from the Gulf to Virginia. This way he would envelop the CSA and bring them to terms with a minimal of bloodshed. In short, to squeeze the South into submission.

Lincoln intruded upon the "Anaconda Plan." It was never put in place because Lincoln wanted to implement the Union's conservative war strategy in another way.

Propably submitting to pressure from Congressional radicals and other politicians Lincoln sought to end the war quickly by the One Big Battle. He rejected Scott's plan because it would take too long. Instead, he ordered General McDowell to take his army into Virginia to bring the war to an end by beating back the CSA forces and taking Richmond.

First Bull Run was the result. . .