falling, the fort "did more service than it otherwise could." And, to use a phrase from his letter to Fox, "the cause of the country would be advanced" because everybody had to recognize that he did not start the war but had war forced on him. After the attack, he told the Congress, "no choice was left but to call out the war power of the Government; and so to resist force, employed for its destruction, by force, for its preservation."

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

A People's Contest

The attack on Fort Sumter cleared the air. The news revived the Lincoln administration, which had appeared indecisive and almost comatose, and gave it a clear objective: preserving the Union by putting down the rebellion.

Many Northerners were euphoric at the outbreak of war, confident that the Union with its vast natural resources, its enormous superiority in manufactures, its 300 percent advantage in railroad mileage was bound to prevail. Surely its 20,000,000 inhabitants could easily defeat the 5,000,000 in the Confederacy (which grew to 9,000,000 after the states of the upper South seceded). Seward thought the war would be over in ninety days. The *Chicago Tribune* anticipated success "within two or three months at the furthest," because "Illinois can whip the South by herself." The *New York Times* predicted victory in thirty days, and the *New York Tribune* assured its readers "that Jeff. Davis & Co. will be swinging from the battlements at Washington . . . by the 4th of July."

The President was not so optimistic. Overhearing boastful contrasts of Northern enterprise and endurance with Southern laziness and fickleness, Lincoln warned against overconfidence. Northerners and Southerners came from the same stock and had "essentially the same characteristics and powers." "Man for man," he predicted, "the soldier from the South will be a match for the soldier from the North and *vice versa*."

I

On April 15, 1861, the day after Fort Sumter surrendered, Lincoln issued a proclamation announcing that the execution of the laws in the seven states of the Deep South was obstructed "by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings," and he called for the states to supply 75,000 militiamen "in order to suppress said combinations, and to cause the laws to be duly executed." At the same time, he summoned a special session of Congress, to meet on July 4.

A tidal wave of approval greeted his proclamation. "Cincinnati sustains proclamation great and universal enthusiasm," wired William M. Dickson. "Nothing can exceed the enthusiasm," two New York City merchants reported. Large Union demonstrations assembled in nearly every Northern city. Typical was a public meeting in Pittsburgh where thousands of citizens, disregarding all partisan feeling, vowed undying fealty to the nation and pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to defend their country.

Democrats as well as Republicans rallied behind the President. On April 14 during a private two-hour conversation, Lincoln showed Douglas the draft of the proclamation he intended to issue the next day. The senator forgot their past differences. In a statement released to the press he announced that while he "was unalterably opposed to the administration on all its political issues, he was prepared to sustain the President in the exercise of all his constitutional functions to preserve the Union, and maintain the government, and defend the Federal Capital." Returning to Illinois a few days later, Douglas worked heroically to persuade Democrats in the West to support the President because "the shortest way to peace is the most stupendous and unanimous preparation for war."

The only criticism of the President's proclamation was that it called for too few men. Douglas told Lincoln that he should have asked for 200,000 men, and Browning thought he needed 300,000. But in calling for only 75,000 men on April 15, Lincoln was acting on General Scott's advice. In addition, the President had to keep in mind the states of the upper South, still teetering between Union and secession. They would certainly regard the summoning of a vast army as proof that he intended to invade the South. And, most important of all, he recognized that the government was unprepared to arm, feed, transport, and train hundreds of thousands of new recruits.

Lincoln called for troops to serve only ninety days not because he believed that the war would be over quickly but because a 1795 law limited a call-up of militia to not more than thirty days after the assembling of Congress. With Congress called into session on July 4, the volunteer force would have to be disbanded by August 4. He could have convened Congress earlier, but that would have meant an even shorter term of service for the volunteers.

Promptly the Northern states began to fill their quotas of soldiers. Massachusetts Governor John A. Andrew, who had anticipated the outbreak of hostilities, instantly replied to Lincoln's call: "Dispatch received. By what route shall I send?" Other governors used more words to convey the same message. From the far north Israel Washburn assured the President that "the people of Maine of all parties will rally with alacrity to the maintenance of the Government." From the West, Governor O. P. Morton of Indiana pledged 10,000 men "for the defense of the Nation and to uphold the authority of the Government."

They had no trouble filling their quotas with eager volunteers. There were thousands of men like Renewick Dickerson of Nashua, New Hampshire, who wrote to the President: "I have but one son of seventeen Summers, he our only child, a man in stature—We are ready to volunteer, to fight for the integrity of the Union—These rugged hills of New Hampshire overlook strong arms and brave hearts." These volunteers, vowing "woe to the rebel hordes that meets them in battle array," were, as one youthful soldier reported to his mother, "wound up to the very pinnacle of patriotic ardor." "There are," this lad continued, "but two contingencies both equally glorious, either to die, and be numbered among the martyrs to freedom, or live to pass victoriously through this strug[g]le for the right and be crowned with an aureole of glory."

But the states of the upper South, still in the Union, gave a very different response. "I can be no party to this wicked violation of the laws of the country, and to this war upon the liberties of a free people. You can get no troops from North Carolina," Governor John Ellis responded to Lincoln's call, and the governors of Virginia, Tennessee, and Arkansas echoed his words. All four states promptly seceded from the Union. Within weeks all joined the Confederacy, which moved its capital to Richmond.

In the border slave states initial reactions to Lincoln's proclamation were also unfavorable. "Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States," Governor Beriah Magoffin responded, and Governor Claiborne Jackson of Missouri denounced the call for troops as "illegal, unconstitutional, and revolutionary in its object, inhuman and diabolical." In Delaware, where slavery was a minor factor, the governor refused to comply with Lincoln's requisition but permitted volunteer companies to offer their services for the support of the Constitution and laws of the country.

More important was Maryland, a state that nearly surrounded the national capital and controlled the only railroad access to the District of Columbia. "The excitement is fearful," Governor Thomas Hicks and Baltimore Mayor George W. Brown telegraphed the President on April 18. "Send no troops here." The next day the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment, on its way to defend Washington, was attacked by a secessionist mob as it attempted to cross Baltimore, and four soldiers, along with some civilians, were killed. Lincoln

wanted to shore up the governor, a wavering Unionist who tended to collapse under secessionist pressure, and he agreed for the time that reinforcements would be marched around, rather than through, Baltimore.

Doubting that this arrangement would last, he said to the Marylanders half playfully: "If I grant you this concession, that no troops shall pass through the city, you will be back here to-morrow demanding that none shall be marched around it." He was right. Shortly afterward Governor Hicks asked him to stop sending any troops through Maryland and suggested asking Lord Lyons, the British minister, to mediate the sectional conflict. That was too much for Lincoln. When a Baltimore committee descended on his office on April 22 and demanded that he bring no more troops across Maryland and make peace with the Confederacy on any terms, he had had enough. "You would have me break my oath and surrender the Government without a blow," he exploded. "There is no Washington in that—no Jackson in that—no manhood nor honor in that." He had to have troops to defend the capital, and they could only come across Maryland. "Our men are not moles, and can't dig under the earth; they are not birds, and can't fly through the air," he reminded the committee. "Go home and tell your people that if they will not attack us, we will not attack them; but if they do attack us, we will return it, and that severely."

The threat was an empty one, because Lincoln did not have enough troops to defend Washington, much less to reduce Baltimore. After the firing on Fort Sumter the capital seemed almost deserted because of a steady exodus of pro-Confederate officials, including high-ranking army and navy officers. The most notable of these was Robert E. Lee, who declined an offer to head the Union armies because he felt he must go with his state, Virginia. To preserve some semblance of order in the national capital, Cassius M. Clay, wearing three pistols and an "Arkansas toothpick" (a sharp dagger), organized the Clay Guards, and Senator-elect James H. Lane of Kansas recruited the Frontier Guards from fellow Kansans who were in Washington looking for jobs. Lane's group was quartered in the East Room of the White House.

For nearly a week Washington was virtually under siege. Marylanders destroyed the railroad bridges linking Baltimore with the North and cut the telegraph lines. A Confederate assault from Virginia was expected daily, and everyone predicted that it would be aided by the thousands of secessionist sympathizers in the city. In the lonely hours, Lincoln paced the floor of the White House, gazing wistfully down the Potomac for the sight of ships bringing reinforcements and breaking out eventually in anguish: "Why don't they come! Why don't they come!" Every day there were rumors that additional troops, including the Seventh New York and a Rhode Island regiment, were coming soon, but none arrived. Chatting with the wounded soldiers of the Massachusetts Sixth Regiment, the President said with bitter irony: "I don't believe there is any North. The Seventh Regiment is a myth. R. Island is not known in our geography any longer. *You* are the only Northern realities."

On April 25 the arrival of the Seventh New York Regiment changed the picture. General Benjamin F. Butler had discovered an ingenious way of circumventing Baltimore by ferrying men down the Chesapeake Bay to Annapolis, where they could be entrained for Washington. Within days thousands of troops began pouring into Washington. There was still a danger that when the Maryland legislature met in Frederick on April 26 it would vote to secede. General Scott was ready to arrest secessionist politicians in advance of this meeting, but the President directed him to hold off, observe the proceedings, and, if it became necessary, then resort "to the bombardment of their cities—and of course the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus." Neither of these extreme measures proved necessary, but to make certain that Maryland remained loyal, General Butler occupied Federal Hill, overlooking Baltimore harbor, on May 13.

Meanwhile, on April 27, Lincoln did authorize the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus along the route between Washington and Philadelphia. This meant that the military authorities could make summary arrests of persons thought to be aiding the Confederacy or attempting to overthrow the government. Such persons could be detained indefinitely without judicial hearing and without indictment, and the arresting officer was not obliged to release them when a judge issued a writ of habeas corpus. The President's action at this time was of limited scope and did not attract great attention until the arrest of one John Merryman, lieutenant of a secessionist drill company, at Cockeysville, Maryland. Imprisoned at Fort McHenry in Baltimore harbor, Merryman secured a writ of habeas corpus from Chief Justice Taney, which ordered that he be tried before a regular court or released. When the arresting officer, under Lincoln's orders, refused to accept the writ, Taney felt he had no alternative but to rule that the Chief Executive had acted unlawfully. He reminded Lincoln of his oath to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed" and warned that if such usurpation continued "the people of the United States are no longer living under a government of laws." Unprepared at this time to make a general argument for broad presidential war powers, Lincoln ignored Taney's ruling.

The situation in Kentucky was as critical as that in Maryland. Lincoln could not let his native state, which controlled the south bank of the vital Ohio River, fall under Confederate control. Ties of kinship and commerce, along with the institution of slavery, linked Kentucky to the South, but a long tradition, personified by Henry Clay and John J. Crittenden, bound the state to the Union. Lincoln's call for troops aroused the pro-Southern elements in the state to bitter opposition. Fortunately he had sober and responsible friends in Kentucky, like Joshua Speed and his brother James, a prominent attorney in Louisville, on whose advice he could implicitly rely. When Kentucky adopted a policy of neutrality, "taking sides not with the Administra-

tion nor with the seceding States, but with the Union against them both," the President shrewdly avoided a confrontation. He had "the unquestioned right at all times to march the United States troops into and over any and every State," Lincoln told former Kentucky Congressman Garrett Davis, but promised that "if Kentucky made no demonstration of force against the United States, he would not molest her."

Ostensibly respecting Kentucky's neutrality, both Union and Confederate authorities worked surreptitiously to strengthen their supporters in the state. Lincoln named Robert Anderson, the hero of Fort Sumter and a native of Kentucky, commander of the newly created Military Department of Kentucky, which embraced all of the state within one hundred miles of the Ohio River, and he authorized William Nelson, another Kentucky native, secretly to distribute 5,000 stand of arms to the Unionists in the state. But he avoided hostilities during the uneasy neutrality, recognizing that Unionism was growing faster in Kentucky than secessionist sentiment.

Less successful was Lincoln's handling of Missouri, a border slave state of enormous strategic importance because it controlled traffic on the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri river network so vital to the Northwest. Not familiar with the politics of the state, Lincoln had to rely on the Blairs, whose primary interest was in promoting the political fortunes of Frank Blair. The pro-Southern faction in eastern Missouri rallied at Camp Jackson (named after the prosecession governor) just outside St. Louis, while pro-Union forces organized inside that city under the command of the aggressive Nathaniel Lyon. When Lyon forced the men at Camp Jackson to surrender, fighting broke out in the streets of the city, and twenty-eight deaths resulted. Governor Jackson then formed a military force and put it under the control of ex-Governor Sterling Price. General William A. Harney, who commanded the Military Department of the West, worked out a truce with Price roughly comparable to the neutrality established in Kentucky. But Lyon, backed by the Blairs, undermined Harney's support in Washington, and Lincoln failed to support the truce. Internecine war resulted.

Lincoln was less involved in attempts to hold Virginia in the Union. Delegates from the strongly Unionist western counties, outraged when the state convention voted to secede, returned to their homes resolved to secede from secession. A Unionist convention held at Wheeling in effect set up a rival government to the Confederate government of Virginia in Richmond and elected Francis H. Pierpont governor. The convention also called for the creation of a new state out of the western counties of Virginia. Since the Constitution provides that no state shall be divided without its own permission, the Pierpont regime was set up as a kind of puppet government that would consent to this proposed partition. Pierpont fulfilled his function. Ostensibly speaking for the entire state of Virginia, he approved the secession of the western counties, which then applied for admission to the Union as the state of West Virginia. The Pierpont administration left Wheeling and spent the rest of the war under the shelter of federal guns at Alexandria. The

whole process of partitioning Virginia was extraordinarily complicated and largely extralegal; and, at a time of great unrest when thieves, bandits, and desperate men roamed the countryside, neither the Pierpont regime nor the new government of West Virginia had the backing of more than a minority of the citizens. Lincoln could do little to shape the course of events. He extended formal recognition of Pierpont's regime as the legitimate government of all of Virginia (though it controlled only a few counties behind the Union lines), and he looked with considerable skepticism on the movement for statehood for West Virginia.

While maintaining a tenuous hold on the border states, Lincoln took steps to increase Northern preparedness. On May 3 he called up additional volunteers, this time for three years. Without waiting for congressional authorization, he also expanded the regular United States Army by adding eight regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and one of artillery and ordered the enlistment of 18,000 seamen in the navy. Earlier, on April 19, he had proclaimed a blockade of the ports of the seven Confederate states, subsequently extended to include those of North Carolina and Virginia. Two days later, with the unanimous concurrence of his cabinet, he dispatched an armed revenue cutter to protect ships from California bearing gold so necessary for Union finances. At the same time, again without congressional authorization, he directed the commandants of the navy yards at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia each to purchase and arm five steamships in order to preserve water communication to Washington. In case that communication was temporarily cut off, he empowered Governor E. D. Morgan of New York and an associate, Alexander Cummings, who was recommended by Secretary Cameron, to act for the government in forwarding troops and supplies. He also authorized the Treasury Department, without requiring security, to advance $2,000,000 to a New York committee headed by John A. Dix, to pay "such requisitions as should be directly consequent upon the military and naval measures necessary for the defence and support of the government."

In the weeks after the firing on Fort Sumter, the demands on the President's time were incessant and exhausting, but now that he could clearly see what had to be done, he bore up well under the strain. When the writer Bayard Taylor visited Washington, he was delighted to discover, contrary to rumor, that Lincoln was not exhausted or sick but instead appeared "very fresh and vigorous . . . thoroughly calm and collected." Even Seward was impressed. "Executive skill and vigor are rare qualities," he wrote his wife in June. "The President is the best of us; but he needs constant and assiduous coöperation."

II

Lincoln's July 4, 1861, message to the special session of Congress offered a full explanation of the course he had pursued in the Sumter crisis, blamed

the Southerners for beginning the conflict, and defended the subsequent actions he had taken to sustain the Union. Valuable as history, the message was more significant as prediction. Taken together with his proclamation of April 15, it clearly defined Lincoln's view of the war and explained how he intended to prosecute it.

The conflict, he consistently maintained, was not a war between the government of the United States and that of the Confederate States of America. So to define it would acknowledge that the Union was not a perpetual one and that secession was constitutional. This Lincoln could not even tacitly admit. Throughout the next four years he sustained the legal fiction that the war was an "insurrection" of individuals in the Southern states who joined in "combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings." Though he sometimes referred to the conflict as a civil war, he usually called it a "rebellion"—a term he employed more than four hundred times in his messages and letters. He never recognized that any of the Southern states was, or could be, out of the Union, and he did not identify the enemy as the Confederate States of America. On the very rare occasions he was forced to refer to that government, it was always as "the so-called Confederate States of America."

In the years ahead Lincoln was not always able to keep to the purest formulation of his interpretation of the war. Had he done so, captured Confederate soldiers would have been treated as criminals and captured Southern seamen as pirates. This, as Jefferson Davis bluntly warned him, could only lead to retaliation. Without any public announcement, the Lincoln administration modified its position. Throughout the war captured Confederate soldiers and sailors were confined in prison camps—camps that were, in both the Union and the Confederacy, overcrowded and squalid beyond belief but were nevertheless preferable to the common jails where these prisoners might have been sent.

Lincoln's view of the war as simply a domestic insurrection was also contradicted by the naval blockade he imposed on Southern ports. As both Secretary Welles and Charles Sumner advised, under international law his proper course was to close all Southern ports. A blockade was an instrument of war between two belligerent powers; by imposing it, the President was tacitly recognizing the Confederacy as a belligerent. But Lincoln was convinced that an order closing the ports would be repeatedly tested by foreign vessels and that conflict with the European naval powers would result, and he ordered the blockade. Thaddeus Stevens, leader of the Pennsylvania Republicans, ridiculed this as "a great blunder and absurdity" because in legal terms it meant "we were blockading ourselves." When he angrily confronted the President over this issue, Lincoln put on his best simple-countryman air and said, "I don't know anything about the law of nations, and I thought it was all right."

"As a lawyer, Mr. Lincoln," Stevens remarked, "I should have supposed you would have seen the difficulty at once."

"Oh, well," the President replied, "I'm a good enough lawyer in a Western law court, I suppose, but we don't practice the law of nations up there, and I supposed Seward knew all about it, and I left it to him." "But it's done now and can't be helped," he added to Stevens's fury, "so we must get along as well as we can."

With these exceptions Lincoln adhered to his definition of the war, and throughout the next four years the implications of his decision were far-reaching. Because, in his eyes, the Confederacy did not exist, there could never be any negotiations leading to recognition or a peace treaty. Because the insurrection was the work of individuals, not of any organized government, the states of the South remained in the Union throughout the war, fully entitled to all the protections guaranteed by the Constitution. Those guarantees covered the right of private property—including slaves. Punishment for participating in the rebellion could be inflicted on traitorous individuals, not on the states in which they resided, and when victory came to the Union cause, the Southern states would be, as they always had been, equal to all others in the United States.

Lincoln's July 1861 message, together with his proclamations, also made it clear that he considered the prosecution of the war primarily a function of the Chief Executive, to be carried out with minimal interference from the other branches of the government and without excessive respect to constitutional niceties protecting individual rights. To carry out his duties as commander-in-chief, he believed that he could exercise powers normally reserved to the legislative branch of government. Proclaiming a blockade, extending the period for volunteer enlistment to three years, increasing the size of the regular army and navy, and entrusting public funds to private persons for the purchase of arms and supplies would ordinarily require the prior approval of Congress, but the emergency required the President to act before such authorization was granted. "It was with the deepest regret," he explained, "that the Executive found the duty of employing the war-power, in defence of the government, forced upon him." "These measures, whether strictly legal or not," he informed Congress in July, "were ventured upon, under what appeared to be a popular demand, and a public necessity; trusting, then, as now, that Congress would readily ratify them." "It is believed," he added, "that nothing has been done beyond the constitutional competency of Congress."

Even touchier was his decision to suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, an action that touched on the power both of the legislative and the judicial branches of the government. In neither law nor precedent was it clear where the authority for such suspension lay. The constitutional provision concerning suspension appeared in Article I, detailing the powers of Congress, but whether the Philadelphia convention had placed it there to identify it as a purely legislative function or for stylistic reasons because it did not fit elsewhere was unclear and subsequently became a matter of great controversy in the Congress and among legal experts.

Belief that only Congress had the right to suspend the writ was the basis for Chief Justice Taney's fulminations against the President in his *Merryman* ruling. Lincoln made no reply at the time, but in his message to Congress the President pointed out that the Constitution was silent as to who was to exercise the power of suspending the writ and claimed that in a dangerous emergency when the Congress was not in session the Chief Executive was obliged to act. "It was not believed that any law was violated," he added. Then he went on to suggest that "such extreme tenderness of the citizen's liberty" as Taney had shown could lead to the danger of allowing "all the laws, *but one,* to go unexecuted, and the government itself go to pieces, lest that one be violated."

The next years would see greater infringements on individual liberties than in any other period in American history. Repeatedly the writ of habeas corpus was suspended in localities where secession seemed dangerous, and on September 24, 1862, and again on September 15, 1863, Lincoln suspended the privilege of the writ throughout the country. Initially control of the arbitrary arrests of civilians was given to the Secretary of State, and by the best count, 864 persons were imprisoned and held without trial in the first nine months of the war. After February 1862, when such arrests became the province of the Secretary of War, the number of cases greatly increased. Most of the persons so arrested were spies, smugglers, blockade-runners, carriers of contraband goods, and foreign nationals; only a few were truly political prisoners, jailed for expressing their beliefs. It was nevertheless clear from Lincoln's first message to Congress that devotion to civil liberties was not the primary concern of his administration.

In his July 1861 message Lincoln palliated such transgressions of constitutional niceties because of the importance of the struggle in which the country was engaged. At issue in the contest was more than the fate of the United States. Anticipating a phrase he would use two years later in the Gettysburg Address, he suggested, "It presents to the whole family of man, the question, whether a constitutional republic, or a democracy—a government of the people, by the same people—can, or cannot, maintain its territorial integrity, against its own domestic foes." More, even, than that, it was a struggle for the rights of man. "This," he told the Congress, "is essentially a People's contest. On the side of the Union, it is a struggle for maintaining in the world, that form, and substance of government, whose leading object is, to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from all shoulders—to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all—to afford all, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life."

III

The Congress that heard Lincoln's message on July 5, when a clerk read it in a dull monotone, was controlled by members of his own party. After the withdrawal of Southern senators and representatives, Republicans held large majorities in both chambers—32 out of 48 members of the Senate, 106 out of 176 members of the House of Representatives. Congressmen from the border slave states who called themselves Unionists generally cooperated with the Republicans during this session. Only about one out of four members of either chamber belonged to the Democratic party, decimated by secession and demoralized by the unexpected death, on June 3 of Stephen A. Douglas, who might have led a loyal opposition to the Lincoln administration.

The reception of the President's message indicated that party lines were, for the moment, unimportant. Few had the heart to engage in partisan bickering, and "irrepressible applause" greeted Lincoln's recommendation that Congress appropriate $400,000,000 to sustain an army of 400,000 men. Converting itself, as one member said, into "a giant committee of ways and means," the Congress promptly went beyond the President's requests and appropriated $500,000,000 to field an army of 500,000 men.

In the country, too, the message was greeted with enthusiasm. Most commended the President's seemingly straightforward account of the events leading up to the attack on Fort Sumter. Several editors noted with pleasure that Lincoln made no mention of slavery or the extension of slavery in the national territories but put the issue before the country simply as one of Union versus Disunion. It was no surprise that a Republican paper like Greeley's *New York Tribune* praised the message for avoiding "episodes and circumlocutions" and going "straight to the hearts of the patriotic millions," but it was a sign of the times when the Democratic *New York World* commended "this excellent and manly Message," which contained "more unborrowed and vigorous thought" than any presidential utterance since the days of Andrew Jackson.

Promptly Congress moved to pass bills retroactively approving most of Lincoln's extraconstitutional actions. There was dissent only on the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, which made many Republicans, as well as nearly all the Democrats, unhappy. Senator John Sherman of Ohio best captured the feeling of many congressmen: "I approve of the action of the President. . . . He did precisely what I would have done if I had been in his place—no more, no less; but I cannot here, in my place, as a Senator, under oath, declare that what he did do was . . . strictly legal, and in consonance with the provisions of the Constitution."

Such discord was muted because the Union army was preparing to advance while Congress debated. Pressure for an offensive had been building ever since Lincoln's initial call for troops, though nobody had a clear idea of what strategy should be followed. Initially Lincoln, who made no pretense of having military knowledge, thought the troops should be used to repossess Fort Sumter and other captured federal installations along the Southern coast, but this thoroughly impracticable scheme would have required large amphibious operations far beyond the competence of either the army or the navy in 1861. General Scott, the most revered military expert in the