

Abraham Lincoln papers

From Abraham Lincoln to Joseph Hooker [Draft]¹, June 10, 1863

¹ Upon learning that Robert E. Lee was moving his army north, General Hooker proposed to move the Army of the Potomac south to place it in a position to attack Richmond and thus halt Lee's advance. Lincoln repeats here, as he had before, that Lee's army, not Richmond, should be Hooker's objective. See Hooker to Lincoln, June 10, 1863.

"Cypher"

United States Military Telegraph

War Department—

Washington D.C. June 10, 1863.

Major General Hooker

Your long despatch of to-day is just received. If left to me, I would not go South of the Rappahannock, upon Lee's moving North of it. If you have Richmond invested to-day, you would not be able to take it in twenty days; meanwhile, your communications, and with them, your Army would be ruined— I think Lee's Army, and not Richmond, is your true objective point— If he comes towards the Upper Potomac, follow on his flank, and on the inside track, shortening your lines, whilst he lengthens his— Fight him when opportunity offers.— If he stays where he is, fret him, and fret him—

A Lincoln

[Endorsed by Lincoln:]

Gen. Hooker, June 10. 1863.