War of the Rebellion
Official Records
Series II Vol VII

CITY POINT, VA., *August 18, 1864.*

Major-General BUTLER, *Commanding, &c.:*

I am opposed to exchanges being made until the whole matter is put on a footing giving equal advantages to us with those given to the enemy. In the meantime I direct that no flags of truce be sent to the enemy nor any arrangements or agreements entered into with him without my first being fully advised of what is being done and yielding my consent to it.

The steamer New York will not be permitted to proceed to Aiken's Landing until I receive a report of the full object of the mission and the load she now has on board.

U. S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

BUTLER'S HEADQUARTERS, *August 18, 1864—7 p. m.*

Lieutenant-General GRANT:

Telegram received. No exchange has been or will be made which will give the enemy any advantage. To show that my views and the lieutenant-general's are in exact accordance, I will send letter written to General Hitchcock to-day upon this subject with the indorsements referred to.

I have exchanged nobody but wounded men since the 1st of May, except surgeons, non-combatants, and a few cases of special exchange. A full report will be made to the lieutenant-general of all that was intended to be done in the matter.

BENJ. F. BUTLER,
Major-General, Commissioner of Exchange.

[Inclosure.]

HDQRS. DEPT. OF VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA,
In the Field, Va., August 18, 1864.

Major-General HITCHCOCK,
Commissioner of Prisoners, Washington, D. C.:

GENERAL: I have received one or two indorsements from you which say in substance that "it is desirable to have all our prisoners exchanged." I agree [to] that if all means all. But do the Government intend to abandon the colored troops? That is the only question now pending. All others can be settled. From my conversation with the lieutenant-general he does not deem it desirable to move from the position taken on that question. I will again call the subject to the attention of Mr. Ould and obtain an interview with him if possible.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
BENJ. F. BUTLER,
Major-General and Commissioner of Exchange.

CITY POINT, VA., *August 18, 1864.*

Major-General BUTLER, *Commanding, &c.:*

I am satisfied that the object of your interview had the proper sanction and therefore meets with my entire approval. I have seen from Southern papers that a system of retaliation is going on in the South which they keep from us and which we should stop in some way. On the subject of exchange, however, I differ from General Hitchcock. It is hard on our men held in Southern prisons not to exchange them, but it is humanity to those left in the ranks to fight our battles. Every man we hold, when released on parole or otherwise, becomes an active soldier against us at once either directly or indirectly. If we commence a system of exchange which liberates all prisoners taken, we will have to fight on until the whole South is exterminated. If we hold those caught they amount to no more than dead men. At this particular time to release all rebel prisoners North would insure Sherman's defeat and would compromise our safety here.

U. S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

HDQRS. DEPT. OF VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA,
August 18, 1864.

Lieutenant-General GRANT,
Commanding Armies of the United States, City Point:

GENERAL: I have the honor to inclose to you a few of the applications and orders about special exchanges, to which I wish to call your attention;* also a copy of a letter written this morning to Major-General Hitchcock, commissioner of exchange at Washington, upon the subject of his indorsement "that an exchange would be very desirable,"† and also a direction from the Secretary of War upon the necessity of making some arrangement about the treating of our prisoners in cases of supposed retaliation.

As these papers are original may I ask you the favor that they shall be returned?

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
BENJ. F. BUTLER,
Major-General and Commissioner for Exchange.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
Washington, D. C., August 18, 1864.

Major-General FOSTER, *Department of the South:*

GENERAL: The Secretary of War directs me to call your attention to the accompanying extract from the Richmond Examiner, stating that the rebel officers sent to you were never placed under fire. You will report whether this statement is true; if so, why the order was not executed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
H. W. HALLECK,
Major-General and Chief of Staff.

[Inclosure.]

MOBILE.

(From the Richmond Examiner, August 9.)

Admiral Buchanan's wound was doing well on the 8th. He, together with other prisoners and the Federal wounded, have been sent to Pensacola. Fort Morgan holds out yet. Fort Gaines is occupied by

* Inclosures not found and not otherwise identified. † See second, *ante.*