

Jefferson davis

Business



Jefferson Davis, the leader of the Confederate states during the Civil War was an overall influential man in the South. As the first president of the Confederate states and a past war hero in the Mexican-American War, Davis was a highly respected, valued and powerful man. The assassination of Jefferson Davis, as well as his Cabinet would provide many benefits to the United States as a whole. Overall, it would allow for the weakening of the Confederate army, the beginning of the slavery abolition, and the avenging of the soldiers who were killed at the hands of the Confederate army. However, the Dahlgren Affair also causes much controversy and debate, as in the papers there is claimed to be forgery and invalidity amongst them. With the assassination of Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet, the Confederates will be defeated and therefore the Civil War would cease to exist.

Without any remaining leaders, the Confederates would be sent into turmoil and would not be an efficient and strong army anymore. As president, Jefferson Davis controls many aspects of the Confederates such as military tactics, adequate supplies, and the overall organization of the army, so taking him down could potentially destroy the Confederate army as well as initiate total war. Essentially, " The targeting of President Jefferson Davis was, in effect, a declaration of total war upon the South." (Guerilla Explorer) Basically, by attempting to assassinate Jefferson Davis, the Union would be declaring total war on the Confederacy and essentially destroying the Confederacy. However, it is disputed that by killing only several of their men, the Union would not have be able to defeat the Confederacy as they were an army with hundreds of strong and capable men.

Despite these claims it's evident that by killing the leaders of the Confederate states, the Confederacy would be thrown into a state of dysfunction and chaos, as they would lack leadership and efficiency. In addition to the termination of the Civil War, the Confederate army had captured and held thousands of Union men in a POW camp, and it was their duty to assure that their men were rescued and avenged. In the early 1860's, the Confederates captured and killed many Union soldiers on Belle Isle in Richmond, Virginia. At Belle Isle, thousands of Union soldiers were captured, and some were even killed by the Confederate army. " The 21-year-old officer and his 500 men illegally donned Confederate garb and marched South over the James River to liberate a POW camp full of Union soldiers on Belle Isle."

(Eddlem) In reference to officer Ulric Dahlgrens' actions before the occurrence of the Dahlgren affair, the quote supports the claim that there were indeed many soldiers held at Belle Isle by the Confederacy. Although there were thousands of Union soldiers held as at Belle Isle, there were also many Confederate soldiers held by the Union at camps such as Fort Warren in Boston. However, in comparison to Fort Warren, the death rate at Belle Isle was very high. With a Union victory, slavery would be one step closer to being abolished throughout the United States. During the Civil War the South was main advocate for slavery.

The South was based off slavery, as it provided major benefits for their economy and overall influenced their everyday life. Most significantly, " With the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 along with the growing demand for the product in Europe, the use of slaves in the South became a foundation of

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their economy.” (Curry) Above, Curry emphasizes just how reliant the South was on slavery and if the Union were to win the war and have the upper hand, then slavery would be one step closer to being abolished. The Union may have won the war, but slavery was a trend that was so instilled in Southern life that it would take more than a Union war victory in order to end slavery for good. However, with a Union victory, the North would then have the upperhand over the South and would have the power to control not just the Northern economy, but the Southern economy as well. In addition to the previous evidence provided, the plan to assassinate Davis was never carried out, as Ulric Dahlgren who carried the plans was killed.

General Kilpatrick gave the orders to Ulric Dahlgren to carry out, but they never were as Dahlgren was killed before he was able to successfully execute them. The plan was for Dahlgren to attack Richmond from the South, and then proceed to follow the remaining instructions on the papers. To summarize,” Kilpatrick had detached a small body of cavalry under the command of the one-legged, socially prominent and daring Colonel Ulric Dahlgren to attack Richmond from the south. He was almost successful, but he was killed in a skirmish.” (Schultz) One can tell from the evidence used above, that Ulric Dahlgren was killed before completing his mission, therefore failing to carry out the plan written on the papers. However, there could have been more than one copy of the papers and more generals attempting to carry them out.

Contrary to the Confederacy’s accusations, the Union solely gave the plans to Kilpatrick and Dahlgren to carry out, and no other generals were instructed to do so. Finally, the Dahlgren papers were invalid as they could

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have been forged and not officially condoned by the Union army. John Dahlgren, the father of Ulric Dahlgren, went public shortly after the affair and made the claim that the papers were forged, as Dahlgren's name was spelt incorrectly. In addition to the forgery claims, Kilpatrick stated that he only authorized the original part of the plans, and that the Richmond raid and assassination were added after the fact. To further prove the invalidity of the papers, " In July 1864, Dahlgren's father went public to declare the Dahlgren Papers " a bare-faced atrocious forgery." He based this upon a photographic copy of the original orders, in which his son's signature was misspelled as " Dalhgren.

". (Meyer) Not only did Dahlgren comment on the potential forgery of the papers, " Kilpatrick responded that he'd endorsed the Papers...or at least part of them. He claimed that the sections about burning Richmond and killing President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet had been added after the fact." (Meyer) Based on the previous quotes one could see that there were indeed plausible claims of forgery, as well as flaws in the authorization of the Dahlgren Papers. Despite the claims made against the papers, there are also claims that the paper used for the documents was thin, so the ink could have leaked through the paper.

Also, there were rumors that another general along the line in the Union army could have authorized the raid and assassination. Due to these flaws in the operation, a true unbiased decision can never be made based off the faulty evidence provided in the case. In conclusion, even though Jefferson Davis was an overall efficient leader of the Confederate states during the Civil War, his assassination would have provided many benefits to the United

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States. Benefits such as the weakening of the Confederate army, the beginning of the slavery abolition, and the avenging of Union soldiers who were killed at the hands of the Confederate army would be achieved. In addition to these benefits, the Dahlgren Affair can never be officially acclaimed as an assassination attempt, as there are accusations of forgery as well as invalidity of the papers.