

Confidential

HdQr Army Nva  
17th Sept 1864

LtGen J. A. Early  
Comdg L?  
General,

I desire to have your views \_\_\_?\_\_\_ the propriety and expediency of reorganizing the \_\_\_?\_\_\_ of the Valley District. I think it possible to \_\_\_?\_\_\_ its efficiency by a change in its organization. The points to which I call your attention particularly and on which I desire your opinion are as follows:

There is a small Georgia battn in Vaughan's Brigade which I think might be sent to this army with advantage to be placed with the Phillips Legion and constitute a Ga. Regt. The Tennessee troops under Gen Vaughan should be kept together. Part of his command is now in SWVa, and it might be advantageous to send the part with you to that Dept, and let Gen Echols replace it with some Va. troops from his command which might be attached to one of your Va brigades. Or if this cannot be done, Gen E might send such of Vaughan's as are with him to you, and you might replace them from some of your Va troops drawn from his Department, which would enable him to receive them.

It might be well to attach Gilmore's battn to the Maryland cavalry with Gen Johnson & form a Maryland command under an officer from that state.

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Some of the Va brigades might be broken up with advantage, and the regts assigned to others which are better disciplined, but weak in \_\_\_?\_\_\_ say the Brigades of Fitz Lee's Divn. Or \_\_\_?\_\_\_ might be attached to these brigades, \_\_\_?\_\_\_ them so as to form a new division. This is to effect such an organization as \_\_\_?\_\_\_ cure the discipline and efficiency of the \_\_\_?\_\_\_ while I have suggested the foregoing changes, your views on the whole matter, as you see best able to recommend the mode of reorganization.

The force of cavalry in that Dept is large by the Field Returns(?), and if properly officered and organized ought to be very formidable. Having indicated my object, I shall be guided by your advice in carrying it out.

I shall endeavor to send you Rosser's Brigade as soon as it can be spared, and hope that it will add considerably to the strength of your cavalry. It has occurred to me that as it is reported that many Kentuckians are now coming into SWVa, the presence of Gen Breckenridge in that Department would be attended with good results. He would also be of service in the organizing our forces in that district, a thing of no little difficulty, but which is much needed. Please let me have your views on this point also, and say whether can spare Gen B.

Very respy Your obt servt

R E Lee  
Genl