Private

C.S. Senate
Nov 11th 1863

Mr. President,

I trust you will agree in the action which prompt me to suggest, by which I mean the request for the call of the President to attend in matters of which I am ignorant, but of which I have had some experience in matters of similar kind in the Senate. The result of seizing such a measure upon the President.

It occurs to me that our territory is too extensive and our numerical force is too weak to defend all the points now threatened by the enemy. Hence the necessity of transferring our forces in defense of vital points. There are many important points, but Richmond and Washington are vital.

H. D. Johnson to Davis
11th
Both are great Centres. The fall of Richmond, would be disastrous. It must convey the impression abroad that we are menaced. Conquered. It would work the capture and destruction of the vast material goods which are here. It would probably involve the loss of Virginia, and if of Virginia, then certainly that of North Carolina. Hence Richmond should be defended at all hazards. North Western Georgia is equally vital. For its occupation by the enemy, especially if he should advance to Atlanta, would prove most disastrous to us by enabling him to strike a fatal blow upon the agricultural strength of Georgia, the entering spring. Without intending to
In a military move, it strikes me that the necessity of avoid-
ing such a calamity is imper-ative, and that a force sho
to be thrown in front of Chatto-
coga, as soon as possible, suf-
ficient to dispose the enemy.

In this army, that prompt en-
ergetic & irresistible offensive
operation, at that place, or
at any other points, in the
campaign of Tennessee, at which
the enemy is collecting to estab-
ish himself, in the view of
invading Georgia, should be
at once decided upon. It
may uncover Charleston, Saa-
ramah & other points. In case
of necessity, the head of one
division should be de-
fended at all hazards. Send
a force to join in Comman-

equal to the necessity and the occasion. There should be no delay; every day lost will render the achievement more difficult.

I heartily reached here that the enemy is leaving Shattaogoo. I do not believe he will live it; but if he does, he will be followed, if possible, and expelled from Tennessee, by the next planting season.

It seems to me the President that our fate may depend upon regaining Tennessee, by the next spring, and hence, my great solicitude. If we can feed an army, we cannot
is conquered, but Harve-
town will do the fatal
work if the enemy should
destroy or materially
curtail the crop of the
next year in Georgia.

I beg you not to consid-
er me an intermeddler or
obstinate. My opinions are
not worth much, but in
what I have said, I ex-
press the undivided senti-
ment of the people of
my State. I think so, at least.

I remain faithfully yours,

H. W. Johnston

Ely, Jeff Davis

Col. Va.