

730.

Charleston S. C.  
May 2d 1863.

Dear Col.

Your several letters to the 29th inst - relative to heavy guns & "Torpedo Rans" have been received. I regret the difficulties about procuring the first - for the defence of this Harbor, but can well understand the pressing wants of other localities. It is an error however to suppose that the Enemy will not make another effort to take Charleston. I see by their papers that they will have at least six monitors, even more formidable than their present ones, ready by Sept or October. they will then have about 15 monitors or Iron clads with which to renew their attempt for the destruction of this City. - Once before I could not convince the War Dept that the late preparations were intended especially for this place, & not for Wilmington! why so much opposition to believing,

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Boile's  
Porcher  
S. C.  
Richmond  
Va.

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what was evident to all, is more than I can understand.

If we cannot get the heavy guns can we not get "Torpedo Rams"? I again repeat these with proper speed are the only true & effectual way of fighting successfully the enemy's Iron clads. Sooner or later we will have to adopt them - then why not do it at once?

What is the use of spending so much money & losing so much time, in constructing Iron clads gunboats which cannot go to sea & get drawn into much water to navigate in shallow waters!

Moreover, they are armed with long ranged guns, & to my surprise (as I am informed by Capt. Tucker) those here are so constructed, that their guns cannot get elevation for long ranges! in other words, they cannot be elevated more than about 5 or 7° instead of 20° or more! then why not put shorter ranged guns but of large calibre

on board of them? Moreover they ought to fight only at close quarters being shot-proof.

Since we cannot get the iron plating to finish my poor unfortunate Torpedo Boat, now ready to be launched - why not have some built in England which could cross the seas? half dozen for this place & one dozen for the Mississippi River, would be worth to us a whole fleet & a large Army - N. C. & the control of the Miss. Valley would soon be ours again! the cost of those boats would be much less than a common iron clad gunboat, & the time required to build one would be about half as long.

I will send Capt. Lee in a few days to Richmond, to lay before the War & Navy Depts his plan for a sea-going "torpedo boat", which I think right to be adopted at once! I hope all lovers of our Cause & Country will give him a helping hand - I feel with regard

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to "Porpedo Rainis" in general as Columbus must have felt, when he maintained that there was a new world in the west, across the Atlantic, but could find no one to believe him or assist him in determining the fact - with 2 doz vessels of that description, possessing speed & little draft; we could laugh our Enemy's to scorn & probably destroy all their blockading fleets. But - I have not time to say more.

(Signed)

Yours very truly,  
F. W. Beauregard.