



Following orders: Deliberate Defeat at the Little Bighorn

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ABSTRACT: The battle of Little Bighorn in 1876 marked the beginning of the end of conflict between the U.S. and its military against the various Native American tribes west of the Mississippi River. Historians have given us various ideas of why Lieutenant Colonel Custer met with defeat. But none have noted, in connection with the November 3rd “secret meeting” between Grant and his generals, a movement of troops away from the Black Hills even before decisions were supposedly made to no longer keep miners out of that sacred land. When we study attitude and orders in conjunction with what we know about these events, the idea emerges that the government knew that they couldn’t get the Indians to break the Fort Laramie Treaty unless they were attacked. Here, then, is a presentation of the possibility of deliberate defeat by the U.S. government and its military in order to take the Black Hills.

Keywords: The battle of Little Bighorn, conflict between the U.S. the Plains Indians

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