Charleston S. C. April 8th 1861

To The President

Under the foregoing orders I left Washington at 6 P.M. Saturday April 6th, 1861, in company with Capt. Theodore Talbot, U. S. Army, and arrived at Charleston, S. C. on Monday at the same hour. Finding that Fort Sumter had neither been surrendered, evacuated nor attacked, I immediately thro' Capt. Talbot, requested an interview with Governor Pickens, which was at once accorded to me, and I then read to him the portion of said orders in italics, and delivered to him the copy of the same which was furnished to me for that purpose, in the presence of Capt Talbot. Govr. Pickens received the Copy and said he would submit it to General Beauregard, he having, since the ratification of the Constitution of the Confederate States by South Carolina, been placed in charge of the Military operations in this vicinity— Genl. Beauregard was accordingly sent for, and the Governor read the paper to him.

In reply to a remark made by Governor Pickens in reference to an answer I informed him that I was not authorised to receive any communication from him in reply—

Respectfully submitted

R. S. Chew

War Department

Washington, April 6, 1861.  

2 The instructions to Chew and the message he carried to Governor Pickens were drafted by Lincoln.

Sir:
You will proceed directly to Charleston, South Carolina, and if, on your arrival there, the flag of the United States shall by flying over Fort Sumpter, and the Fort shall not have been attacked, you will procure an interview with Gov Pickens, and read to him a follows:

“I am directed by the President of the United States to notify you to expect an attempt will be made to supply Fort Sumpter with provisions only, and that, if such attempt be not resisted, no effort to throw in men, arms, or ammunition, will be made, without further notice, or in case of an attack upon the Fort.”

After you shall have read this to Governor Pickens, deliver to him the copy of it herein enclosed, and retain this letter yourself.

But if, on your arrival at Charleston, you shall ascertain that Fort Sumpter shall have been already evacuated, or surrendered, by the United States force, or shall have been attacked by an opposing force, you will seek no interview with Gov Pickens, but return here forthwith.

Respectfully

Simon Cameron

Secy of War

I am directed by the President of the United States to notify you to expect an attempt will be made to supply Fort Sumpter with provisions only, and that, if such attempt be not resisted, no effort to throw in men, arms, or ammunition, will be made, without further notice, or in case of an attack upon the Fort