"The mountains of western North Carolina would be the center of the Confederacy, as they have been one of the chief prospers of the American Union, and connected with every part of the South as a whole, to which they were centers of manufacturing for the Southern market. But they alone can give the strength and wealth of their region, educate their people, and are probably made better by the war."

William H. Thomas in his will, June 12, 1863

"The importance of the point (Hatteras) cannot be overrated. From here the whole coast of Virginia and North Carolina can be reached by sea or by land in a safe and rapid manner." Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, U.S. Army, Aug. 30, 1861