Bragg and Kirby Smith were independent commanders. The latter, believing Bragg could take Louisville alone, dispersed his forces at Lexington, Frankfurt, and Harrodsburg to collect supplies. He did not join Bragg until 10 October at Harrodsburg after the battle of Perrysville. This battle, fought between portions of the armies of Buell and Bragg on 8 October, blunted the Confederate invasion. Neither commander acted aggressively subsequently; Bragg then retreated to Tennessee.

The Battle of Corinth, 3-4 October, marked the last serious attempt by Price and Van Dorn to prevent Grant from reinforcing Buell. Two of the Four divisions Grant sent to Buell.

The Battle of Iuka, 19 September, stopped Price's attempt to move to Bragg's assistance. (forces dispersed on railroads between Columbus, Memphis and Decatur)