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Summary - Surrender of

Mye. I think S/W
would like to see this
first thing today.

McCarthy

May 10, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE:

In accordance with your telephone request to the Secretary of War, I am inclosing two copies of a chronology of messages concerning the negotiations for the signing of the Act of Military Surrender by the German High Command at Rheims, France, on 7 May 1945.

This chronology has been prepared from War Department messages and does not include either State Department and White House messages or transcripts of transatlantic telephone conversations.

It is understood that you requested that this chronology start at the time when the first contact was established between representatives of the German High Command and representatives of the Allied Forces. Accordingly, the negotiations conducted by Count Bernadotte and Himmler are not included.

This information is still classified Top Secret, and I should like most especially to call attention to the fact that much of it is from the files of the Combined Chiefs of Staff and is therefore not entirely property of the War Department nor of our own Government.

(sgd) G. C. MARSHALL

Chief of Staff

S/W.

Col. McCarthy has reported that the Under Secretary of State was highly pleased with this report and that Mr. Brew was passing it on to the President immediately. You may not wish to read it except as a reference. WSHC 10 May.

cc. Sec of War

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DOB Dir. 5200.9, Sept. 27, 1958
NMW by AK date 12/1/62

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By JA NARS, Page 2 1/13CHRONOLOGY OF MESSAGES CONCERNING NEGOTIATIONSFOR THE SIGNING OF THE ACT OF MILITARY SURRENDERBY THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND AT RHEIMS, FRANCE.ON 7 MAY, 1945NEGOTIATIONS IN GERMANY

On 2 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that the German Army Group Commander at Lubeck, General Blumentripp, has indicated an intention to be at the Headquarters of the 2nd British Army on 3 May to surrender his Group. General Eisenhower stated that he has issued orders the surrender must be unconditional, that he was treating this as a tactical matter and would inform the Russian General Susloparoff accordingly. He further stated that it is possible the Germans may offer a complete surrender of North-western Germany, Denmark and even Norway; in which case he will arrange for a formal ceremonial surrender, with the Russian representative present.

On 3 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that there had been an alteration in the German plans and that Admiral Friedeburg had arrived with written authority from Marshal Keitel to discuss military matters, in place of General Blumentripp. He reported that Friedeburg went to Montgomery's Headquarters where he asked to surrender the 3rd Panzer and the 12th and 21st Armies, which were then facing the Russians, and for permission to pass German refugees through the Allied Lines to Schleswig-Holstein. General Eisenhower reported that both of these requests were refused but that Friedeburg had been informed that individual soldiers of these Armies would be accepted as prisoners. After being advised that only unconditional surrender would

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be accepted, the German party stated it was not empowered to surrender any other forces and returned to Keitel's Headquarters to report the results of their mission. They are expected to return on 4 May 1945. General Eisenhower stated that he had advised General Montgomery that an offer to surrender Denmark, Holland, the Frisian Islands, Heligoland and Schleswig-Holstein could be regarded as tactical and closed on the spot but that any larger offer would require the emissaries being sent to Eisenhower's Headquarters. Susloparoff was informed of this.

On 4 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that the Germans had surrendered all forces in Holland, Northwest Germany and Denmark to Montgomery; effective 8 A. M., 5 May 1945. He also advised that a representative of Doenitz would arrive at his Headquarters on 5 May 1945 to negotiate surrender of remaining forces and he was advising the Russian High Command that he proposed to instruct this representative to advise the German Government that it must surrender all forces facing the Russians to the Russian High Command and all forces facing General Eisenhower's front, including Norway, to him, and that the surrender on both fronts must be simultaneous.

On 5 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Allied Mission in Moscow that Friedeburg had arrived at his Headquarters and attempted to surrender the German Forces on the Western Front to him but that it had been refused. Friedeburg was then given the essentials of the existing situation and stated a desire to make a full surrender but that he was without authority. General Eisenhower anticipated that he would request such authority from Doenitz.

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On 5 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff Admiral Friedeburg had arrived at his Headquarters and stated his object was to clarify a number of points. He was told that nothing less than unconditional surrender was acceptable and he replied that he had no power to sign. The hopelessness of the situation was pointed out and he was given the Act of Military Surrender to study.

On 5 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that Admiral Friedeburg had sent a message to Doenitz requesting that he be authorized to sign an act of unconditional and simultaneous surrender in all theaters of operation or that representatives of the German High Command be sent to do so.

On 6 May 1945, General Eisenhower requested the Allied Mission in Moscow to advise the Russian High Command concerning the instruments which had been given Friedeburg to study.

On 6 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that General Jodl and Admiral Friedeburg had arrived at his Headquarters to continue negotiations but that they were stalling for time in order to evacuate German soldiers from the Russian Front and they continued their efforts to surrender on his front, separately. General Eisenhower reported that he had advised the Germans he would break off negotiations and not allow the westward movement of German civilians and soldiers if they did not agree with his terms. They immediately sent a message to Doenitz requesting authority to sign and stated that actual fighting would cease forty-eight hours after the time of signing. General Eisenhower stated that for all practical purposes, fighting would cease

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immediately on his front and if the arrangements went through as planned, proclamation would be made on 8 May 1945, announcing Wednesday, 9 May 1945 as V-E Day. He concluded with a statement of a hope of having the formal signing take place on 7 May 1945.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that the mission of his Allied Forces was fulfilled at 0241, local time, May 7, 1945. *W*

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that a representative of the German High Command unconditionally surrendered all German Land, Sea and Air Forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Forces and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command. *W*

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that he would send a detailed report of the signing immediately and he believed that an announcement should be made at the earliest possible hour when coordination could be achieved.

On 7 May 1945, President Truman sent a message to Prime Minister Churchill referring to General Eisenhower's message concerning the announcement and stating that, if agreeable to the Prime Minister, he would announce the surrender at 9 a. m. Washington time on Tuesday, 8 May 1945, as recommended by General Eisenhower.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Allied Mission in Moscow that the German representative had signed the instrument of military surrender, that hostilities would end at midnight, May 8/9, that official announcement should

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follow closely and that no release would be made from his theater until after release by the three Governments. He pointed out that it was not possible to keep this secret until 8 May 1945, and suggested that the Governments reconsider the time of announcement.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Allied Mission in Moscow that General Susloparoff had informed the Soviet Government that he signed the unconditional surrender.

On 7 May 1945, the Allied Mission in Moscow advised General Eisenhower that they had been delayed two hours in giving the Russians the information about the surrender because of the Russians' refusal to meet them sooner.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower requested the Allied Mission in Moscow to advise the Russian High Command that he would include up to ten (10) correspondents in his party to Berlin if arrangements are finalized.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower requested the Allied Mission in Moscow to advise the Russian High Command that if it accepted his proposal made in an earlier message, he was prepared to proceed to Berlin accompanied by Marshal Tedder, ten (10) officers from his Headquarters and by eleven (11) members of the press and two (2) signal personnel.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower requested the Allied Mission in Moscow to obtain consent of the Russian High Command to General Susloparoff's accompanying him to Berlin; as Susloparoff did not feel he could make the trip without this permission.

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On 7 May 1945, the Allied Mission at Moscow asked General Eisenhower for information as to the number on the planes which would carry the party. The Mission stated that, although approval of the trip had not been obtained, they were confident the Soviets would approve.

On 7 May 1945, the Allied Mission in Moscow advised General Eisenhower that his plan for proceeding to Berlin had been approved in all details, that Marshal Zhukov would be the Soviet representative, that Archer and Deane would be present and that travel of Susloparoff was approved.

On 7 May 1945, the Allied Mission in Moscow advised General Eisenhower that they had received a letter from General Antonov in which he stated that the Red Army High Command is not sure that the German High Command will carry out the unconditional surrender and, therefore, they wish to withhold public announcement until 9 May 1945 at seven o'clock in the evening, Moscow time.

On 8 May 1945, General Eisenhower requested the Allied Mission in Moscow to furnish the Soviets with the information concerning the number on his planes.

On 8 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Allied Mission in Moscow that General De Lattre De Tassigny would also go to Berlin.

On 8 May 1945, General Eisenhower sent a message to the Allied Mission in Moscow requesting the Russian High Command to make certain arrangements with respect to the air cover for planes proceeding to Berlin.

On 8 May 1945, General Eisenhower sent a message to the Combined Chiefs of Staff reporting that all members of his party arrived safely in Berlin, that the preliminary meeting on procedure had proceeded satisfactorily and that the final meeting would take place late that afternoon.

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JCS DECLASSIFICATION BRANCH
DATE: 10/7/93

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On 8 May 1945, the Allied Mission in Moscow advised General Eisenhower that Deane and Archer had departed for Berlin.

On 8 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that, since the Russian High Command feared that the Germans would continue to fight against the Russians, he recommended transmittal by American and British Governments of a message to the Russian High Command in substance as follows: The unconditional surrender was made jointly to Russia and the Allied Forces and any forces that continue hostilities commit an offense jointly against Russia and the Allies and therefore would not have status as soldiers. In this event General Eisenhower would continue to cooperate with the Red Army in eliminating such forces.

On 8 May 1945, the Combined Chiefs of Staff requested the Allied Mission in Moscow to advise General Antonov that the unconditional surrender of Germany was made jointly to Russia and the Allied Forces and continuation of hostilities was an offense against Russia and the Allies. If any large bodies of German Forces attempt to continue hostilities, they will no longer have the status of soldiers and General Antonov may be assured that General Eisenhower will continue to cooperate actively with the Red Army in eliminating such bodies.

On 9 May 1945, the Allied Mission in Moscow advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that the above message had been delivered to General Antonov.

On 9 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that final signing took place in Berlin between 2315 and 2345.

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On 4 May 1945, General Alexander, AFHQ, reported that on 3 May 1945 he received a message from General Kesselring, asking for earliest information as to which Allied Headquarters he should negotiate with for surrender of the North Alpine area. Alexander reported that he had referred this message to Eisenhower and was awaiting his instructions.

On 4 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that he had informed Alexander that Kesselring should negotiate unconditional surrender for North Alpine area with General Devers' Headquarters.

On 5 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that he had received a message from Kesselring requesting permission to send an emissary. This message did not indicate the extent of the surrender and General Eisenhower reported he was advising Kesselring that unless the surrender included all forces in the south and was simultaneous with the Russians, he would not receive his emissary.

On 5 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Allied Mission in Moscow of receipt of message from Kesselring to the effect that he understood Eisenhower was willing to receive his plenipotentiary and would appreciate confirmation of this information. The message continued with a statement that General Eisenhower had advised Kesselring that unless his surrender involved all German Forces in Army Groups Center, South, E and G, and all outlying garrisons, including islands still held by Germans, and all German Forces facing the Red Army, it was useless to send a plenipotentiary. If he is authorized to do this, he should proceed to Salsburg to meet a representative of General Devers, who will

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conduct him to SHAEF. If plenipotentiary was only to arrange a local surrender, he should make arrangements with General Devers.

On 5 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised Combined Chiefs of Staff that he had received advice from General Devers that German Army Group G had surrendered to the Sixth Army Group, that the capitulation would take effect at noon, 6 May 1945, and that this was a battle field surrender.

NEGOTIATIONS IN SWEDEN

On 5 May 1945, the Combined Chiefs of Staff advised General Eisenhower that the Swedish Foreign Minister had met the British and U. S. Ministers in Stockholm and advised them that General Schellenberg would arrive in Stockholm on 5 May 1945 to arrange for surrender of German troops in Norway to the Swedes. The British and U. S. Ministers considered that General Eisenhower should send qualified representatives at once.

On 5 May 1945, The Combined Chiefs of Staff advised General Eisenhower that the American Minister at Stockholm had reported that Schellenberg had arrived that day with full powers from Doenitz to negotiate with the Swedes regarding the Germans in Norway and that Schellenberg considered he was empowered to deal with SHAEF for the same purpose. The American Minister stated that the Swedes felt that SHAEF should immediately dispatch a mission to Stockholm. The message reported that the State Department had advised the American Minister that the U. S. is agreeable to the Swedes informing the Russians and has instructed him to repeat all messages to General Eisenhower.

On 5 May 1945, the British Chiefs advised General Eisenhower that the British Foreign Office was most anxious for a Norwegian representative to be present at

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the signature of the surrender of the German forces in Norway, that the Norwegian Government would like to send General Hansteen to France at once and that if surrender is accepted in Norway, the Foreign Office considers it important to associate a Norwegian representative with it. If the surrender was effected on a high level, the Crown Prince could act as a representative and if on a low level the Norwegian Military Attache at Stockholm could act.

On 5 May 1945, Prime Minister Churchill, as Acting Secretary of State, sent a message to the British Minister at Stockholm stating that General Eisenhower already had the matter in hand and it would only cross wires if the Swedish Government were to start discussions with Schellenberg and he asked the Minister to advise the Swedish Minister of this in strict confidence.

On 6 May 1945, the U. S. Military Attache in Stockholm advised General Eisenhower that he was awaiting arrival of SHAEF Mission whose expected time of arrival had not yet been announced.

On 6 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that he did not intend to take any action on the Swedish developments pending negotiations with the Doenitz' representatives. He stated that if the negotiations at his headquarters broke down, he would immediately advise the Russians, that he was sending a representative to Stockholm, and he requested that the U. S. and British Ministers in Stockholm be instructed to ask the Swedish Government to play for time pending the results of present negotiations.

On 6 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the British Chiefs that it appeared the surrender of the German troops in Norway would be covered in the general surrender then under discussion at his headquarters. He stated it was desirable

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to adhere to the present limited personnel who were presently conducting the negotiations and he could not adopt the British Chief's suggestion. He further stated that the appropriate commanders had been instructed to insure association of Norwegian officials as conspicuously as possible, if surrender took place in Sweden. In this message he instructed SCOFAR to include appropriate Norwegian representation when meeting with German delegates.

On 6 May 1945, the War Department reported to General Eisenhower that the State Department had advised the American Minister in Stockholm of General Eisenhower's intention not to take action at this time in Sweden, pending overall negotiations, but that if these discussions broke down he would immediately advise the Russians that he was sending representatives to Stockholm. The message further directed the American Minister to ask the Swedes to play for time, to communicate directly with General Eisenhower and to be guided by his wishes.

DISCUSSIONS WITH RUSSIANS CONCERNING SURRENDER

On 5 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that on 4 May 1945 he had wired the Allied Mission in Moscow that representatives of Doenitz were proceeding to his Headquarters to negotiate a surrender of the remaining forces and he proposed to instruct these representatives to advise their Government to surrender all enemy forces facing the Russians to the Russian High Command and to surrender all forces facing his front, including Norway, to him, General Eisenhower. He suggested that if this is agreeable to the Russians, the surrender on both fronts should be made simultaneously at the earliest possible hour and stated that he would notify the Russian representative now in his theater to be present at the negotiations. General Eisenhower reported receipt of a reply

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from the Russians to the effect that the Soviet Command does not object to the plan of surrender provided Doenitz accepts the condition of simultaneous surrender and provided his representatives would be sent back and all negotiations broken off if this condition was not met. The Russians went on to authorize General Susloparoff to take part in the surrender negotiations at SHAEF since it is not possible to send other officers, in view of the shortness of time. General Eisenhower stated that he would include in the surrender terms a simple paragraph requiring the German High Command to meet the Russian High Command at once and to make the surrender on both fronts simultaneously and he pointed out with positiveness that the Russians had agreed to the proposal in his message that he was to accept the surrender in Norway.

On 6 May 1945, General Eisenhower instructed the Allied Mission in Moscow to advise the Russian High Command that he had presented the following documents to Doenitz' representatives on 5 May 1945:

a. A draft of an agreement between the Allied High Command and certain German emissaries which provided that certain named German officers will arrive with plenary powers to sign an act of unconditional surrender of the German Forces at a date and time to be specified; that the Allied High Commands would issue orders for their troops to cease operations at a date and time to be specified and to remain in positions occupied by them provided similar orders were issued by the German High Command and that if the German plenipotentiaries failed to arrive, the truce would become null and void.

b. The act of military surrender.

General Eisenhower further reported that Friedeburg considered these documents and then transmitted a message to Doenitz asking that he be authorized to sign

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unconditionally a simultaneous surrender in all theaters or that the Chief, OKW, and others be sent to sign. The Friedeburg message gave certain details of the surrender. Eisenhower stated that Doenitz' reply was expected 7 May 1945 and if authority is given Friedeburg, he would proceed to sign the act of surrender. He asked whether the Russian High Command desired to make any addition or modification of the terms, whether it wished the formality of the signing to be repeated before any other Russian representatives in any other place, and whether it desired to participate in the more formal ratification meeting to follow. He stated that General Susloparoff had been present and kept fully informed.

On 7 May 1945, the Allied Mission in Moscow reported receipt of a letter from General Antonov to General Eisenhower replying to the above message from General Eisenhower and stating that in spite of negotiations being carried on, Doenitz continued to urge his troops to fight the Soviet forces and not to resist the Allied forces, that such conduct creates an impression on the Soviet public that Doenitz has already made a separate truce in the west and that this cannot be permitted as it would be a violation of our Allied relationships. Therefore, the Soviet Command wishes to exclude from the agreement between the Allied Command and certain German emissaries the words "The truce between the respective forces will become null and void" and the Soviet Command also considers it necessary to deal with the German High Command since they do not recognize that a German government exists. The Soviet also requests certain other detailed changes in the proposed agreement by the Allied Command and certain German emissaries. The Soviet Command wish the signing of the Act of Military Surrender to take place in Berlin, as it should be signed by Marshal Zhukov also. The Allied Mission in Moscow reports that this message was handed them by Slavin, who emphasized the

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desire that there should only be one signing in Berlin and who stated that they would not approve of Susloparoff's signing a preliminary agreement for the Russians. The Allied Mission replied they were sure General Eisenhower would not delay longer.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower instructed the Allied Mission in Moscow to inform the Soviet High Command that a representative of the German High Command signed the unconditional surrender at 0141 on 7 May 1945 and that General Susloparoff had signed for the Russians.

On 7 May 1945, the Allied Mission in Moscow advised General Eisenhower that they had been delayed two hours in advising the Russians of the surrender because of the Soviet refusal to meet them sooner.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Combined Chiefs of Staff that he had just received a message from the Russian High Command reversing their initial approval for the signing of the Act of Military Surrender at his Headquarters. He stated that he was replying immediately expressing his willingness to go to Berlin on 8 May 1945 where a formal ratification can be made by the German High Command if they desire it and he pointed out that the document made provisions for this. General Eisenhower stated that in view of this development his original recommendation with respect to public announcement should be held up until the Russians are entirely satisfied.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower instructed the Allied Mission in Moscow to further advise the Russian High Command that in addition to the Act of Military Surrender the German plenipotentiary, General Jodl had signed an undertaking that specified German officers would execute a formal ratification of the Act of

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Unconditional Surrender at a time and place to be specified by SCAEF and that certain orders had been issued by SCAEF to the German High Command relative to the German Ground Force, Air Force and Naval Forces.

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower requested the Allied Mission in Moscow to advise the Soviet High Command that he repeats his scrupulous adherence to the engagement for no separate truce and reminds the Russians that he offered to keep on advancing until he met the Red Army but refrained from doing so because the Soviet High Command had advised that their commitment of large forces in this area would certainly result in confusion and entanglement. He further stated that a brief instrument of surrender was signed that morning before he received the message from the Russian High Command but that the surrender instrument provides for a more formal signing by the German High Command at a time and place to be designated and he would be happy to proceed to Berlin for this purpose. ✓

On 7 May 1945, General Eisenhower advised the Allied Mission in Moscow that his message of 4 May 1945 asked the Soviet High Command if the suggested procedure was acceptable and General Antonov's reply was understood to mean that the Soviets did not object provided the surrender was simultaneous and that the Russian High Command had authorized Susloparoff to take part in the negotiations. With reference to Antonov's comments concerning the truce, General Eisenhower stated that this document had not been used as provision had been made for a formal ratification at a later date. General Eisenhower repeats his sole wish to act quickly, in full coordination with the Russian High Command, and he gives the text of the surrender instrument as signed.

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