

TOP SECRET

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Record of private talk between the Prime Minister and Generalissimo Stalin after the Plenary Session on July 17th 1945 at Potsdam.

The GENERALISSIMO said that as his party was leaving MOSCOW, an unaddressed message was delivered to the Generalissimo through the Japanese Ambassador SATO. It was assumed that the message was intended for either the Generalissimo or President KALININ or other members of the Soviet Government. It was from the Emperor of Japan who stated that "unconditional surrender" could not be accepted by Japan, ~~but~~ if it was not insisted upon, Japan might be prepared to compromise with regard to other terms. The Emperor was making this suggestion in the interests of all people concerned.

The Generalissimo had not spoken of the message to anyone except the Prime Minister, but he wanted to bring it up at the next session of the Conference.

The Prime Minister thought the Generalissimo should send the President a note on the subject in order to warn him before the next Session.

The Generalissimo pointed out that he did not wish ~~to suggest~~ the President to think that the Soviet Government wanted to act as an intermediary, but he

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would have no objection if the Prime Minister mentioned it to the President.

The Prime Minister agreed to do so, pointing out that he also did not wish the President to feel that we were not at one with the United States in their aim^{of} achieving complete victory over Japan. America had helped us enormously in the war against Germany and we intended to help her now to the full. At the same time people in America were beginning to doubt the need for "unconditional surrender". They were saying: was it worth while having the pleasure of killing ten million Japanese at the cost of one million Americans and British?

The Generalissimo remarked that the Japanese realised our strength and were very frightened. Unconditional surrender in practice could be seen here in Berlin and the rest of Germany.

The Prime Minister asked: Where was Germany?

The Generalissimo said Germany was nowhere and everywhere.

The Generalissimo went on to say that he could not understand German up-bringing. The Germans were like

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sheep and had always needed a man who could give them orders. They never thought for themselves.

The Prime Minister agreed and said that the Germans had always believed in a symbol. If a Hohenzollern had been allowed to reign after the last war, there would have been no Hitler. They certainly were like sheep.

The Generalissimo observed that the need for a symbol applied only to the Germans.

To illustrate the German sense of justice, the Generalissimo then ~~talked~~ spoke of an incident which had recently occurred in Berlin. An SS man had fired at a Russian soldier from a house. Soviet troops immediately surrounded the house. A crowd of Germans approached the troops and said they had heard that, in retaliation, their rations would be stopped for a week. Instead of stopping their rations they offered 40 or 50 hostages. When the Russians refused the hostages, the Germans immediately entered the building and seized the SS man and handed him over.

The Generalissimo observed that there were several questions he would like to discuss with the Prime Minister and it was agreed that they should meet at the

Generalissimo's house at 8.30 p.m. on July 18th.

The Generalissimo told the Prime Minister that he had taken to smoking cigars.

The Prime Minister replied that if a photograph of the Generalissimo smoking a cigar could be flashed across the world, it would cause an immense sensation.

On the subject of working late hours, the Generalissimo said he had become so accustomed to working at night that now that the need had passed he could not get to sleep before 4 a.m.

The Prime Minister thanked the Generalissimo for the welcome which Mrs. Churchill had received during her visit to Russia.

The Generalissimo replied that the visit had been a great pleasure to him.

The Prime Minister spoke of whom Mrs. Churchill had seen and the women workers in Stalingrad/ who had said they were glad to work hard as they were reconstructing the city for their husbands who would soon be coming home.

The Generalissimo appeared to be touched.

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The Prime Minister said that Britain welcomed Russia as a Great Power and in particular as a Naval Power. The more ships that sailed the seas the greater chance there was for better relations.

The Generalissimo replied that he also wanted good relations. As regards Russia's fleet it was still a small one, nevertheless, great or small, it could be of benefit to Great Britain.

The Prime Minister asked Marshal Stalin whether in future he should call him Premier, Marshal or Generalissimo. Stalin replied that he hoped the Prime Minister would call him Marshal as he always had done in the past.

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