

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority NND 730069  
By AB NARA Date 7/6/85

~~TOP SECRET~~

WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON

*WVS*

*for comparison with...*  
*WVS*

*Min. V.* 15 JUN 1945  
*Hold in file*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

There is attached a memorandum by the Staff, with which I am in substantial agreement, containing analysis of and comment on the paper on "ending the Japanese war," which you gave to General Handy.

Incl

*[Signature]*  
Chief of Staff

~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED  
 Authority NMD 730069  
 By AB NARA Date 7/8/85

GAL - 14 June 1945

MEMORANDUM OF COMMENTS ON "ENDING THE JAPANESE WAR": 1425

1. The Secretary of War has given to General Handy a second memorandum concerning ending the Japanese war, asking for comments and analysis by his Staff.

2. In the memorandum under consideration it is proposed that the U.S. and Great Britain (joined, if practicable, by China) jointly state their war aims in the Pacific war. The author gives his view of American war aims which should be included in the declaration and suggests face-saving points for the Japanese. The author points out the value to the U.S. if the Japanese accept the declaration, and, if they do not, that it would still have a remunerative psychological effect on the world.

3. Before considering the memorandum point by point, it seems we should recognize the following as being basic considerations:

a. The Japanese know they are licked for this generation and must be searching for a way to get out of the war which will leave them the maximum strength and possibilities in future generations.

b. The military objectives of the U.S. must reasonably include an assurance that Japan will not be the focal point of another war even as soon as the next generation.

c. The U.S. has entered into certain contracts with other nations and with the world, which, from the military standpoint, must be taken into account in any proposed formula for peace with Japan. The Cairo declaration, for instance, provides specifically for Formosa and Korea being freed from Japan.

4. From the military standpoint, the first six points in the proposed declaration of American objectives appear satisfactory. All these points should already be clear as a result of specific declarations, such as the Cairo declaration, or other public statements by responsible Americans. From the standpoint of a public declaration, the psychological soundness of stressing the point about trial of Japanese violating the rules of war appears questionable since the Japanese officials responsible for capitulation might reasonably feel they might eventually be included in the list of war criminals. Concerning the point providing for listing

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NMD 730069

By AB NARA Date 7/18/85

~~TOP SECRET~~

Japanese Islands to be ceded, there are two difficulties: the first being that the U.S. has not yet determined what islands, if any, it wants in the chain north of the Marianas and the Ryukyus; the second being we must face the fact that Russia enters into this problem and now is a very inappropriate time to start listing possible Russian requirements on Japan. Finally, a public declaration listing several islands, which, while of great strategic significance, are unheard of by the American people and at the same time probably dear to the Japanese people, seems psychologically unsound. It should be noted that the accomplishment of unconditional surrender of the Japanese armed forces and assurance of continued disarmament will almost certainly require a supervision which will include at least temporary occupation of selected areas.

5. The face-saving proposals of the author of the paper include retention by Japan of Korea and Formosa under the world trustee system. It seems questionable that this is an adequate implementation of the contract in the Cairo declaration, although this point is a purely political matter. From the military standpoint, Formosa is a strategic area with relationship to the entire central coast of China and also the Philippines. Japanese retention of Formosa under any conditions is militarily unacceptable. Japanese retention of Korea might well be militarily unacceptable to China and Russia, one or both, and is also contrary to existing agreements.

6. A point to be remembered in these considerations is that the return of Manchuria to China cannot be guaranteed without Russian agreement unless the U.S. occupies Manchuria. Military plans do not contemplate this at present and any such project might seriously involve us with the Russians, whose deep military, as well as political and economic, interest in Manchuria we are compelled to recognize.

7. With reference to the proposal that any declaration include a statement that if the terms are not accepted, we will proceed to the "ultimate destruction" of the Japanese people, this seems undesirable since it is militarily almost impracticable to destroy a whole people. Furthermore, it would be unacceptably costly in American lives unless we use gas

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NMD 730069

By AB NARA Date 7/18/05

~~TOP SECRET~~

extensively and resorted to a long campaign of starvation.

8. The author cites certain interesting points which he believes indicate the Japanese might accept the terms. His point that the appointment of Suzuki as Prime Minister is encouraging seems an extremely doubtful one, as does his point about the liberal minded large middle class in Japan. The War Department Intelligence people believe that the Japanese leaders, such as Suzuki, do not differ materially in their national ambitions, their idea of Japanese destiny, and their ruthlessness from the so-called militarists. They have differed only in the means they thought best to attain the ultimate ends, which are the same as those of the militarists. In effect, their difference has been not on objectives but on national strategy in attaining the objectives. As to the middle class, the best information we have is that this is a small group of questionable influence and not very articulate. It is doubtful that they should be classified as "liberal minded." Probably they are little different from the so-called militarists except that they had a less narrow view of the world, particularly the power of the U.S., and this gave them more caution and put a brake on their enthusiasm for open aggression. The strongest point listed by the author is undoubtedly the Jap fear of complete destruction. The comment on this is that the Jap navy and the Jap air force have already experienced a large taste of complete destruction, but the Japanese army, whose leaders have a very strong influence, is still fairly intact.

9. The author lists four points which would be gained if his proposed declaration were accepted. On the positive side he considers we would gain every worthwhile U.S. objective. This seems substantially true from the military standpoint, except for Formosa and except for the apparent lack of any adequate guarantee of Jap disarmament and prevention of aggression in the next generation. As to the three points on the negative side, the estimate of 500,000 to 1,000,000 American lives for carrying the war to a conclusion appears to deserve little consideration. Perhaps if the author looked at this estimate in its equivalent form of between 2 and 5 million

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NMD 730069

By AB NARA Date 7/18/85

casualties, he would revise his estimate downward.

10. As to the point of "exhaustion of our resources," this seems highly questionable and the thought might be interpolated that use of U.S. resources at this time to prevent a war in the Pacific in the next generation might be of more value to the world than using these same resources for immediate relief for Europe. There appear to be no grounds for a statement that the establishment of military government "is an impossible task," even though it is admittedly undesirable, particularly if done on a combined basis.

11. SUMMATION.

The proposal of a public declaration of war aims, in effect giving definition to "unconditional surrender," has definite merit if it is carefully handled. It seems that any declaration should stem from agreements and statements already made, such as the Cairo declaration and the recent statement of the President. It should be hard and firm in the nature of an ultimatum and must not be phrased so as to invite negotiation. Otherwise, there is the danger of seriously impairing the will to war of the people of the United States, with consequent damaging effect on our war effort, prolongation of the war and unnecessarily increased cost in human lives; or alternately acceptance of a compromise peace. A serious point for consideration in this connection is the effect on Britain, China and particularly Russia, whose aid we need to press the war to the quickest possible conclusion. With this in mind, any governmental declaration which leaves out Russia, China, or both, seems fraught not only with political but also military implications. Perhaps a way to handle the matter would be for a statement to be made by a responsible American as an individual. We must make certain our military operations and preparations continue with undiminished pressure, even though we bring increasing political and psychological pressure on the Japanese to persuade them to capitulate.