

'Germany has capitulated' from Le Monde (8 May 1945)

Caption: On 8 May 1945, the French newspaper Le Monde announces that Admiral Doenitz has ordered the unconditional surrender of all German forces.

Source: Le Monde. dir. de publ. Beuve-Méry, Hubert. 08.05.1945, n° 120. Paris: Le Monde. "L'Allemagne a capitulé", p. 1.

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Germany has capitulated

According to the Reuter press agency, German Radio broadcasting from Flensburg (the only official radio station still on air) has announced that Admiral Doenitz has ordered the unconditional surrender of all German forces.

Act of Surrender signed tonight in Reims

Reims, 7 May.

Germany unconditionally surrendered to the Western Allies and Russia at 2.41 this morning. The event took place in the large red brick building of the Reims Technical College which houses the Forward General Headquarters of General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The Act of Surrender was signed for Germany by Colonel General Gustav Jodl, new Chief of Staff of the Wehrmacht, and for the Supreme Allied Command by Lieutenant General Walter Bedel Smith, General Eisenhower's Chief of Staff.

The document was also signed by General Ivan Susloparov for Russia, and by General François Sevez for France.

In Austria, faced by Patch and de Lattre, two armies surrender

Rebellion breaks out in Bohemia and Moravia

During the last 48 hours, events on the various European theatres of war have taken place at an ever quickening pace, indicating that an end to the hostilities is at hand. Grand Admiral Doenitz gave the order to the fleet to return to their bases in Germany. He gave the same orders to the submarine fleet, at the same time announcing the end of the submarine war.

This decision by the Deputy Führer is of major importance, for it signifies that the Nazi military command does not intend to turn Norway into a base for a German Last Stand. Had this been the case, the Reich's numerous submarines would have served as valuable defence weapons.

Moreover, according to a dispatch from a United Press correspondent accompanying the 21st Army Group, two German Air Force generals have offered Field Marshal Montgomery the unconditional surrender of the entire Air Force of the Third Reich.

In the middle of the continent, the enemy Army Group G has surrendered to General Devers, Commander of the Sixth Army Group that includes the American Seventh Army and the French First Army. Further to the East, the American Third Army has captured Linz and is advancing rapidly in the direction of Tolbukhin's armies.

The strong forces of the Third Ukrainian front have not announced an attack since their occupation of Sankt Poelten, which took place some time ago. We can assume that these troops will remain in their positions, leaving the Americans to clear the area that still separates them. In this way, the goal of getting the enemy forces to surrender may be achieved more easily by the United Nations.

In Czechoslovakia, widespread rebellion has broken out. Fierce fighting has erupted in the streets of the capital. Patton's Armoured Corps are only 25 kilometres away, and Soviet paratroopers are said to have landed in the city.

Offer of surrender by General Boehme (?)

According to the Stockholm newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, Mr Thomsen, Germany's Minister in Sweden, has

just signed, in Oslo, the act of surrender of German troops in Norway. This as yet unconfirmed report is quite likely. Yesterday (Sunday), the Scandinavian Telegraph Agency, controlled by the Germans, announced that Montgomery had refused to discuss the offer made by General Boehme to surrender troops in Norway until the offer was also extended to Russia. (This requirement is all the more justified by the existence of a German-Soviet front in the far north of Norway; moreover, this is Norway's only land front.) Doenitz may end up agreeing to Montgomery's condition. For geographical reasons, the proceedings of the surrender will be the responsibility of the British.

In addition, Stockholm has released information that mutinies have broken out in the German garrisons stationed in Norway. On Sunday morning, units from the British Metropolitan Squadron launched an attack on German ships tied up in Norway's northern ports, particularly in Narvik, where several of these vessels were damaged or sunk.

Surrender of Army Group G

It was yesterday at noon when the surrender took place of the German First Army (which had occupied a sector extending from Kirchberg, five kilometres southwest of Linz, to Innsbruck). The surrender of the German 13th Army took place the same day (it had occupied territory extending from Innsbruck to the Swiss border). Together, they had occupied a total of 25 000 square kilometres. The surrender of these armies (including one SS corps) was accepted by General Patch and General de Lattre de Tassigny.

The disorganisation of the Wehrmacht is such that General Foetsch, Commander of the First Army, assessed the strength of Schulz's army group as being anywhere between 200 000 and 400 000 men.

The German 7th Army, which is occupying territory from Chemnitz to Linz, has not surrendered. This army appears to be under the command of Marshal Kesselring.

French troops have reached the Arlberg pass, in western Tyrol.

The towns of Wels and Steyr, southwest of Linz, have been occupied by Patton's and Villach's armies. Carinthia was captured by the British Eighth Army, coming up from Italy.

Uprising in Bohemia and Moravia. Bloody fighting in Prague

A very serious situation is unfolding in Prague, where patriots have decided to rebel without waiting for the help of Allied troops. On Saturday, Prague radio appealed to the police, soldiers and Czechoslovakian civilians, calling on them to assemble in front of the radio station. 'We need your help!'

That evening, the radio station announced that fighting was raging in the capital. The skirmishes continued the next day. On Sunday morning, Radio Prague asked the Allies to intervene; the station announced that large numbers of German troops were gathering in the vicinity of the capital and informed the Russian command of the locations where paratroopers would be landing.

The fighting is most violent in the area around Radio Prague 2, which is controlled by the patriots (Radio Prague 1 is in the hands of the Germans and broadcasts only biased news). The SS are killing the patriots that they capture as 'snipers', despite their wearing armbands that identify them as regular fighters.

Just before midnight last night, we learned that Russian paratroopers had landed in the city: these most likely belong to the airborne troops of General Vlassov (a namesake of the traitorous general). Patton's Armoured Corps are forging ahead. After capturing Plzen (Pilsen) on Sunday, they are now no more than 25 kilometres southwest of Prague.

During the night, Radio Prague 2 announced that German Tiger tanks were breaking down the barricades set up in the town.

The uprising, as far as we can tell, is affecting all of Bohemia and those areas of Moravia that are not yet liberated.

Yeremenko's troops have seized the strategically important railway junction at Olomouc, 205 kilometres east-southeast of Prague, and have joined forces with Malinovski's troops near the city.