Box - 33

Folder 3. MR 310 West Front Offensive on
East Bank of the Rhine,
28 March–15 April 1945.

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WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER
INCOMING CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

[redacted] TOT

[redacted]

URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

To: War Department

Nr: FWD 19274 15 April 1945

FWD 19274 TOP SECRET to for action Military Mission Moscow to for info AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff, AMSSO for British Chiefs of Staff from SHAEF Forward signed Eisenhower. For Combined Chiefs of Staff and British Chiefs of Staff this is SCAF number 282.

1. In answer to your inquiry my proposals were confined strictly to the tactical phases of this campaign. It is my conviction that when the Red Army and my troops make contact on any part of the front we should adopt the simplest possible coordinating practices in order that we may devote our full energy to concerted action on other parts of the front until the enemy's organized resistance has completely dissolved. Your assurances to Antonov are confirmed.

2. Those portions of your telegram dealing with specific markings for tanks are being studied immediately to determine whether we can carry out the proposal with respect to our units that are widely scattered over a long front and in most cases are moving rather rapidly. Definite answer will be sent to you as quickly as possible.

End.

See CM-IN-13297 (14 Apr 45) CC/S

ACTION: CC/S
INFO : Adm. Leahy; Gen. Arnold; Gen. Hull; Gen. Bissell; Adm. King; C of S

CM-IN-14051 (15 Apr 45) DTG 151930B brw

[redacted]

25

COPY NO.

THE MAKING OF AN EXACT COPY OF THIS MESSAGE IS FORBIDDEN 24-75734

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SECRET

WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER

INCOMING MESSAGE

[redacted]TOT

URGENT

From: US Military Mission, Moscow, Russia

To: War Department
United Kingdom Base Section, London, England

Nr: MX 23875 14 April 1945

To SHAEF Fwd for Eisenhower, to AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff, to Central Base Section UK for the British Chief of Staff from Archer and Olsen. [redacted] MX 23875.

At a meeting tonight between Antonov and Archer, Olsen and Roberts, Antonov proposed the following action in reference to Eisenhower's FWD 19003 of 12 April:

"It is suggested that the following identification signals be agreed upon between the Soviets and the Anglo-American troops:

(1) The overall recognition signal: Soviet troops (Infantry, tank, aviation) identify themselves by a series of red rockets; Anglo-American troops (Infantry, tank, aviation) identify themselves with a series of green rockets.

(2) Addition to the rockets, tanks to be identified as follows: Soviet by one white stripe all the way around the center of the turret and a white cross on top of the turret: Anglo-American tank by two white stripes all the way around the turret, one at the top and one at the bottom of the turret, and a white cross on the top of the turret.

(3) Aside from the rockets, planes to be identified by the regular markings".

Antonov emphasized that these were suggestions only

CM-IN-13297 (15 Apr 45)

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

33

[redacted]

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WAR DEPARTMENT
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[redacted] TOT

URGENT

From: US Military Mission, Moscow, Russia

Nr: MX 23875 14 April 1945

and that the Soviets were quite willing to accept any better system of identification. He said, however, that it was essential to conclude the arrangements at the earliest possible date.

Antonov raised a question with regard to paragraph 3 of the reference message, saying that he did not understand clearly the meaning of the expression, "The division of responsibility should be defined by boundary lines to be agreed upon between groups of armies." He inquired if this indicated any change in the Zones of Occupation previously agreed upon by our respective governments. He was assured that the reference was to tactical areas and that no change was implied in the Zones of Occupation. Antonov requested that confirmation be obtained from Eisenhower on this point. In discussing this subject Antonov indicated that he understood that upon completion of tactical operations the Anglo-American Forces would withdraw from the previously agreed Soviet Zone of Occupation.

As regards the question of more rapid intercommunication between SHAEF and Moscow, he stated that the Soviet General Staff were satisfied with present link through the Mission in Moscow. On our intimating that quicker communication was desired on lines given in FWD 18394 dated 31st March, he stated that he would raise the matter again with his General Staff and infrom us of the answer.

Your paragraph four. Antonov did not consider it feasible for one of your senior staff officers to come to Moscow in view of the urgency of deciding immediately on an identification system.

End

FWD 19003 is CM-IN-10857 (12 Apr 45) CC/S
FWD 18394 is CM-IN-33281 (31 Mar 45) CC/S
ACTION: CC/S
INFO : Adm. Leahy; Gen. Arnold; OPD; Gen. Bissell; Adm. King; C of S

CM-IN- 13297 (15 Apr 45) DTG 142150Z hrw

[redacted] COPY NO.

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DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By NHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

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SECRET

WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER

OUTGOING MESSAGE

TOP SECRET
EYES ONLY

Operations Division, War
Executive Office
General Hull, 2204.

12 April 1945

TOP SECRET
EYES ONLY

Supreme Headquarters,
Allied Expeditionary Forces,
Forward Echelon, Rheims, France.

Number: WAR 66921

TOPSEC to Eisenhower for His Eyes Only from Marshall

The British, in making their proposal in connection with WARX 66731, stated they objected for both military and political reasons to using inter-zonal boundaries as references during hostilities. They also proposed that your message to the Russians include a proposal that respective armies will stand fast upon cessation of operations until they receive orders from their governments. In reply, the U.S. Chiefs proposed the message you have received, stating they would comment further on the method of control of U. S. and British forces after hostilities cease. Request your comments on the problem set forth above.

End

ORIGINATOR: General Hull

INFORMATION: Adm Leahy, Gen Arnold, Adm King, C of S.

CM-OUT-66921 (April 45) DTG: 121634Z hb

EYES ONLY
TOP SECRET

310 W. F.
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GPO 16—63564-1

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET AMUG

URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

To: War Department

Nr: 18966 SCAF 274 11 April 1945

Reference is made to SCAF 264. FWD 18966 to AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff and to AMSSO for British Chiefs of Staff signed Eisenhower. This is SCAF 274. TOPSEC.

I have just received a report from General Twining of five encounters between American and Russian aircraft on 2nd April. In all of these encounters the American aircraft were fired upon, and in one or two cases the fire was returned. So far very little damage has occurred because of our extreme precautions, but unless some action is taken along the lines recommended in my SCAF 264 at the earliest possible moment, it is inevitable that some serious incident will occur with regrettable results. I wish to emphasize the importance which I attach to this matter.

I have withheld action as requested in British Chiefs of Staff 2183 of 6th April, but I hope that I may very soon receive directions which will enable me to obtain the coordination which is urgently necessary.

End

NOTE: SCAF-264 is CM-IN-4239 (5 Apr 45) CC/S
ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Gen Arnold, Adm Leahy, Gen Hull, G en Bissell
Adm King, C of S

CM-IN- 10059 (11 Apr 45) DTG 111845B mlc

TOP SECRET

310 (5)

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WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER

RO

OUTGOING MESSAGE [redacted]

[redacted]

Combined Chiefs of Staff
Col. C.R.Peck W.D.Ext. 7[redacted]

11 April 1945

WS

Supreme Headquarters,
Allied Expeditionary Forces,
Forward Echelon,
Rheims, France.

British Joint Staff Mission,
Washington, D.C.

Number: WARX 66731

[redacted] book message to SHAEF Rheims for Eisenhower for action, to AMSSO pass to British Chiefs of Staff for information, FACS 176 from the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff request that you change paragraph 3 of your proposed message in SCAF 264 to read as follows and dispatch the message without delay: "While hostilities continue, it does not seem practicable to restrict our operations or areas by a demarcation line prepared in advance. Both fronts should be free to advance until contact is imminent. Thereafter, the division of responsibility should be defined by boundary lines to be agreed between groups of Armies".

atchd

End.

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

ORIGINATOR : CC/S

INFORMATION: Adm Leahy, Gen Arnold, Gen Hull, Gen Bissell, Adm King, C of S.

CM-OUT-66731 (Apr 45) DTG: 112358Z rjl

[redacted]

[redacted]

COPY No. 33

~~377~~
310 W. F.

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GPO 16—32664-1 24-75724 25M

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WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER

OUTGOING MESSAGE

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Combined Chiefs of Staff
W.D. 77500 Col. C.R. [illegible]

9 April, 1945

Supreme Headquarters
Allied Expeditionary Forces
Forward Echelon
Rheims, France

British Joint Staff Mission
Washington, D.C.

Number: WARX 65684

TOPSEC book message to SHAEF Rheims for Eisenhower for action, to AMSSO pass to British Chiefs of Staff for information, FACS 173 from the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

1. Recent intelligence indicates that German garrisons in inactive theaters may continue some degree of resistance even after collapse in north German plain. Dependent on the date of this collapse, some 6 to 10 German divisions may remain in Norway, with sufficient supplies and equipment to oppose an Allied entry into any of the south Norwegian ports. Although these troops will probably be of low calibre, they may, under determined commanders, offer resistance which may not, however, be prolonged.

2. It appears to us that in such a situation, the use of Swedish bases and cooperation of Swedish armed forces would obviate necessity for a direct opposed entry into the Norwegian ports and would enable considerable economy to be effected in Allied troops and resources. There have been indications that in these circumstances such assistance would be forthcoming from Sweden, but we consider it premature to approach the Swedes until we can make firm proposals for their participation.

3. Two Swedish divisions are already mobilized and it is estimated that a further six could be mobilized in about a week.

CM-OUT-65684 (Apr 45)

TOP SECRET

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GPO 10—33664-1

24-75724 25M

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It might therefore be reasonable to plan on four being available for initial operations. The Swedish Air Force of some 650 aircraft should be capable of lending effective support to the land forces in view of the weak German Air Force position.

4. You should accordingly prepare an appreciation and broad outline plan additional to APOSTLE (Roman numerals) I and II on the assumption that organized resistance will be offered by the Germans in Norway and that Swedish bases and armed forces will be available for the conduct of the campaign, if your plan requires them. This plan should be prepared as soon as possible to enable a timely approach to be made to Sweden if necessary.

End.

ORIGINATOR: CC/S

INFORMATION: Adm. Leahy, Gen. Arnold, Gen. Hull, Gen. Bissell, Adm. King, C of S

CM-OUT-65684 (Apr 45) DTG 100058Z wk

TOP SECRET

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TOP SECRET

April 8, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

In view of our recent disagreements with the British over General Eisenhower's right to communicate with the Soviet High Command, the attached message from General Eisenhower will be of interest.

I have furnished Field Marshal Wilson an extract copy of this message.

A copy of my message to General Eisenhower, and to which he refers in the last paragraph of his message, is also attached.

Incidentally, in the last U. S. Joint Chiefs of Staff paper to the British on the subject, the suggestion was made (to meet British opposition to direct communication with the head of state, even though in his other capacity as immediate director of the Army) that Eisenhower might communicate with Antonov.

Chief of Staff

TOP SECRET

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TOP-SECRET
TOP SECRET
COPY

7 April 1945

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.
To : War Department

Nr : FWD 18710

PERSONAL from Eisenhower FWD 18710, to General Marshall, EYES ONLY.

For your personal information I give you the following as background in my reluctance from the military viewpoint to lay down Berlin as a major objective of our operations. In the first place, through bombing as well as through partial transfer of German governmental offices, Berlin has lost much of its former military importance. Next, as a means of insuring the complete practical division of the enemy on the western front, I believe that my central thrust should be in great strength to the area including Leipzig. You will note that in Stalin's reply to my message he agreed that the best place for us to meet was in the Dresden-Leipzig-Erfurt area, which is deep into that part of Germany that the Russians are eventually to occupy.

The success of that thrust having been assured, it seems obvious that we should get our left flank firmly established on the coast near Lubeck, which is not only on the boundary of the British occupational zone, but the holding of it would prevent Russian occupation of any part of the Danish Peninsula. To this extent I thoroughly agree that the northern thrust is the most important one. Another move that seems most important is a thrust through the southern mountainous areas, as suggested in one of your telegrams.

If we succeed in doing all these things a mere glance at the map will show you what enormous areas will be in our possession and consequently how much of our force will be engaged in keeping order in the rear, and how badly our maintenance facilities will be stretched. Our front will then be a bit thin.

I have tried to emphasize that my drive into the Leipzig area is not only the proper direction for the decisive thrust since it almost completely divides enemy, but gives me the maximum flexibility. At any time that we could seize Berlin at little cost we should, of course, do so. But I regard it as militarily unsound at this stage of the proceedings to make Berlin a major objective, particularly in view of the fact that it is only 35 miles from the Russian lines. I am the first to admit that a war is waged in pursuance of political aims, and if the Combined Chiefs of Staff should decide that the Allied effort to take Berlin outweighs purely military considerations in the Theater, I would cheerfully readjust my plans and my thinking so as to carry out such an operation. I urgently believe, however, that the capture of Berlin should be left as something that we would do if feasible and practicable as we proceed on the general plan of:

(A) Dividing the German forces by a major thrust in the middle,
(B) Anchoring our left firmly in the Lubeck area, and,
(C) Attempting to disrupt any German effort to establish a fortress in the southern mountains.

ACTION: Gen. Hull
INFO : Gen. Arnold, CofS

TOP-SECRET

CM-IN-6277 (7 Apr 45) DTG 071450B

Regraded Unclassified

7 April 1945

TOP-SECRET

From: General Eisenhower
To : General Marshall for his EYES ONLY

Nr : FWD 18707

The message I sent to Stalin was a purely military move taken in accordance with ample authorizations and instructions previously issued by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Frankly, it did not cross my mind to confer in advance with the Combined Chiefs of Staff because I have assumed that I am held responsible for the effectiveness of military operations in this theater and it was a natural question to the head of the Russian forces to inquire as to the direction and timing of their next major thrust, and to outline my own intentions.

We are now holding up a message to the mission in Russia, the purpose of which is to establish some concrete arrangement for mutual identification of air and ground troops and to suggest a procedure to be followed in the event our forces should meet the Russians in any part of Germany, each with an offensive mission. It is critically important that this question be settled quickly on a practical basis. Our respective tactical air forces will soon be meeting each other daily.

I hope it will not be forgotten that some of the ablest members of my staff are from the British Army. Such men as Tedder, Morgan, Whiteley and Strong possess great ability and are absolutely unimpeachable in their objective approach to every question. Tedder was freely consulted in developing the outline of our major plan and on the necessity of communicating with the Russians in the attempt to achieve coordination. Due to his absence from headquarters he did not see the exact terminology of the message. He completely agreed in principle with the action taken.

I thoroughly agree with the message sent by the U.S. Chiefs of Staff in your WAR 64349 and am hopeful of soon receiving the message from the Combined Chiefs of Staff quoted in the last paragraph of that message.

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TOP-SECRET

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TOP-SECRET

6 April 1945

To: General Eisenhower
From: General Marshall

Nr : WAR 64349

In most recent CCS paper, the British Chiefs of Staff concede that you had considered the issues which they set forth in their first papers on the subject as causing them anxiety. They requested, however, that you be given additional guidance on two points:

A. The desirability of maintaining momentum in the north, with a view to the capture of Berlin (before the Russians can get there), and

B. Concerning future procedure to be followed in presenting to the Russians matters of high military policy.

The U.S. Chiefs of Staff replied in substance as follows: Eisenhower's present plan is sound as is the strategic thought on which it is based. Berlin probably will be within the center of impact of the main thrust, but it is emphasized that the destruction of the German armed forces is more important than any political or psychological advantages which might be derived from possible capture of the German capital ahead of the Russians. Eisenhower's dealings with Marshal Stalin have been directed to him in his capacity as Commander in Chief of forces on the eastern front and not as that of Chief of State. Possibly it might be desired that Eisenhower should communicate with Antonov, the Chief of Staff. Experience, however, has shown that contact on any lower level than Stalin is impracticable because of the inevitable incidental delays. In view of the present state of the battle, review of operational matters by Committee action is impracticable. Only Eisenhower is in a position to make decisions concerning his battle and the best way to exploit successes to the full.

The U.S. Chiefs consider any further guidance on the scope or direction of offensive unnecessary. On the question of procedure, we stated we believed no present necessity for further guidance. The U.S. Chiefs proposed dispatch of a message to Eisenhower stating: "The CCS consider you should proceed with the communications with the Soviet military authorities required to effect coordination between your operations and theirs."

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RP.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET - TOT

URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

To: War Department

Nr: FWD 18616 SCAF 264 5 April 1945

To AGWAR for the Combined Chiefs of Staff and to AMSSO for the British Chiefs of Staff signed Eisenhower. FWD 18616 this is SCAF 264. TOP SECRET.

Unless you think it inadvisable, I intend to send the following message to the Military Mission to Moscow within 48 hours. We have already had minor incidents due to air contact, which have been magnified and have resulted in recriminations, and I believe it is of the utmost importance to do everything possible from this side which will safeguard us against more serious incidents in the future.

Message begins:

1. Paragraph 6 of your MX 23588 of 1 April is the subject.

2. I consider it of the utmost importance that all possible arrangements are made to insure identification of air and ground troops on both sides, as our units approach the Russians, in order to prevent errors and possibly tragic incidents resulting in later recriminations. In spite of the best will in the world on both sides, such incidents are likely to occur in heat of battle unless we make concrete arrangements in advance.

3. It does not seem practical to restrict our operations to a demarcation line prepared in advance. Both

CM-IN-4239 (5 Apr 45)

TOP SECRET

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INCOMING CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET - TOT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

Nr: FWD 18616 SCAF 264 5 April 1945

fronts should be free to advance until contact is imminent. Thereafter, however, suggest that agreement should be reached on the following lines:

A. Subject to the dictates of operational necessity, either of our forces will be withdrawn behind the inter-zonal boundary agreed in the European Advisory Commission PROTOCOL, at the request of the other, by mutual arrangement.

B. Submission or acceptance of such requests not to be made below Army group level.

4. Urgently recommend that the studies of the Russian general staff referred to in paragraph 6 of your message take into consideration the difficulties of identification. If it would be of assistance, I am prepared to send Air Chief Marshal Tedder or some other senior officer of my staff to Moscow to confer on this subject.

5. Please try to obtain agreement to this policy and advise of any counter proposals.

End

ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Adm Leahy, Gen Arnold, Gen Hull, Gen Bissell, Adm King, C of S

CM-IN-4239 (5 Apr 45) DTG 051240B da

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4 April 1945

TOP SECRET
COPY

FROM: THE PRESIDENT.
TO : THE PRIME MINISTER.

NR : 733.

I have given your personal message No. 931 a very careful reading and have gone over the various papers involved, some of which I had not previously read. Further, I have just received a copy of Eisenhower's directive to his Army Group Commanders, dated April 2.

I personally, as you do, deplore any misunderstanding between us in general, particularly at a time of great victories by our Armies. I think you have misunderstood the presentation of the American Chiefs of Staff regarding the matter of Eisenhower's prestige and especially regarding the achievements of the 21st Army Group. In the first instance they were endeavoring to make a point of their argument by enunciating a military principle well known to us all, and not making any accusation.

Regarding the implications that you find in the references to the 21st Army Group, I know that in general the same explanation can be given; the U.S. Chiefs of Staff were discussing a problem in possibly too technical a manner, without going into details with which we are all familiar as to the character of the military obstacles, the strength and quality of the German opposing forces, etc.

As to the "far-reaching changes desired by General Eisenhower in the plans that had been concerted by the Combined Chiefs of Staff at Malta and had received your and my joint approval," I do not get the point. For example, the strength and all the resources agreed upon for the northern Group of Armies were made available to Montgomery. Following the unexpected Remagen bridgehead and the destruction of the German Armies in the Saar Basin there developed so great a weakness on those fronts that the secondary efforts realized an outstanding success. This fact must have a very important relation to the further conduct of the battle. However, General Eisenhower's directive of April 2, it seems to me, does all and possibly a little more to the north than was anticipated at Malta. Liepzig is not far removed from Berlin which is well within the center of the combined effort. At the same time the British Army is given what seems to me very logical objectives on the northern flank.

As to the Ninth Army, it is a matter of record that Eisenhower previously placed the Ninth Army and a large portion of the First Army under Field Marshal Montgomery during the Ardennes affair; he again placed or continued the Ninth Army under the command of Montgomery for the crossing of the Rhine. In all probability he intends to again place the Ninth Army under Montgomery for the operation to the north once the general advance has broken through the German resistance.

I appreciate your generous expressions of confidence in Eisenhower and I have always been deeply appreciative of the backing you have given him and the

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fact that you yourself proposed him for this command. I regret that the phrasing of a formal discussion should have so disturbed you but I regret even more that at the moment of a great victory by our combined forces we should become involved in such unfortunate reactions.

It appears reasonable to expect that under Eisenhower's present plans the great German Army will in the very near future be completely broken up into separate resistance groups, while our forces will remain tactically intact and in a position to destroy in detail the separated parts of the Nazi Army.

You have my assurance of every cooperation.

* * * * * * * * *

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2 April 1945

TOP SECRET
COPY

FROM: AMBASSADOR HARRIMAN
TO : THE PRESIDENT

NO : 020820Z

The British Ambassador and I took Deane and Head of British Military Mission to see Stalin Saturday night to deliver General Eisenhower's message. We all agreed that this was the only way to insure a quick and satisfactory answer.

We were met at the outset I felt with a somewhat colder atmosphere than has been the case in my various meetings during the last year with Stalin but after reading Eisenhower's message and after Deane and Archer answered his questions freely as was possible Stalin opened up. He discussed the situation and answered our questions with candor insofar as he was able to do so on such short notice. He has since fulfilled his promise to give us his reply the following day. Deane and Archer have sent a full report of the conversation to Eisenhower and the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Clark Kerr and I both feel that this personal conversation with Stalin was useful at this particular time.

I regret that your last message regarding the Gerne meeting, which I have sent to Marshal Stalin by letter Sunday, came after our talk. I feel that if I had delivered your message to him personally I might have been able to get at the bottom of the strange behavior of the Soviets in connection with this incident. It has been my experience that Stalin always reacts immediately one way or the other to matters that are put up to him personally and we are thus able to obtain more understanding of his attitude than is possible from his written replies alone.

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2 April 1945

TOP SECRET
COPY

FROM: ADMIRAL BROWN
TO : THE PRESIDENT

NO : MR-OUT-322

The following is offered as background material for clarification of messages from Harriman and the Prime Minister which follow immediately on the general strategy being persued by Eisenhower:

"On 28 March, General Eisenhower sent a personal message to Marshal Stalin proposing that main effort on both Western and Eastern Fronts be made to effect a junction in the Leipzig area and that a possible secondary junction be made in the Regensburg-Linz area. He requested the views of the Soviet General Staff on this operation. The British Chiefs of Staff expressed immediate concern over this proposed operation, claiming that (1) General Eisenhower should not have made a direct approach to Marshal Stalin, and (2) the plan departed from the plan agreed upon by the Combined Chiefs of Staff at Malta to make Berlin the main objective and thus to secure most rapid opening of northern German ports, maximum effect on U-boat war and rapid assistance to Denmark and Norway.

In a message to General Marshall, General Eisenhower expressed his belief that the objectives in northern Germany which the British desired could be achieved best through the plan of action which he had proposed to Stalin. The United States Chiefs of Staff informed the British that they were in agreement with General Eisenhower's plan.

On 1 April, Marshal Stalin notified General Eisenhower that the Soviets were in complete agreement with the proposed plan. He stated that the Red Army would be able to make the main effort towards Leipzig about the second half of May and that his staff would indicate later its views on the best method of establishing communications between the two fronts as requested by General Eisenhower.

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET AMUG

URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

To: War Department
CG, 6th Army Group Main, Vittel, France
CG, 21st Army Group, Main
CG, 12th Army Group, Main
Headquarters, First Allied Airborne Army
Headquarters, Communications Zone, European Theater of Operations, US Army, Paris, France.
Provisional Allied Naval Commander EE Overseas.
Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Versailles, France
Headquarters, 1st Tactical Air Force, Provisional
CG, US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, St. Germain, France.
CG, 9th Army Air Force, France.

Nr: FWD 18475 SCAF 261 2 April 1945

FWD 18475 to for action CINC EXFOR, CG 12th Army Group, CG 6th Army Group to for info AGWAR for CCS, AMSSO for BCOS, CG FAAA, CG USSTAF, ANCXF, OIC in C 2nd TAF, CG 9th Air Force, CG 1st TACAF, CG COM ZONE, SHAEF Main from SHAEF Forward signed Eisenhower cite SHGCT. TOP SECRET For CCS and BCOS this is SCAF number 261.

1. Limit distribution of this message to absolute minimum. Delivery only to addressee or his appointed representative.

2. Preparations to isolate the Ruhr as directed in my FORWARD 18179 (SCAF 247) of 25th March 1945 having been completed, it is my intention to divide and destroy the

CM-IN-1690 (2 April 45)

TOP SECRET

12

310

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET AMUG

URGENT

Sy.38 - 9.36
S1.42 10.14

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

Nr: FWD 18475 SCAF 261 2 April 1945

enemy forces by launching a powerful thrust on the axis Kassel-Leipzig. It is hoped that this advance will make a junction with the Soviet forces in that area.

3. Effective 040001B April, Ninth United States Army will revert to operational command Twelfth Army Group.

4. Northern Group of Armies:

A. Will continue, without pause, its advance to the ~~general line Hanover-Bremen~~ River Leine and Bremen (see Para 5A);

B. Will, thereafter launch a thrust to the River Elbe in conjuntion with and protecting the northern flank of Central Group of Armies (see Para 5B);

C. Will seize any opportunity of capturing a bridgehead over the River Elbe and be prepared to conduct operations beyond the River Elbe.

D. The question of opening the port of Bremen will have to be decided as the situation develops.

5. Central Group of Armies will:

A. Mop up encircled enemy forces in the Ruhr. During this phase it will protect the southern flank of Northern Group of Armies so as to ensure the latter's advancement without pause, to ~~Hanover~~ the River Leine. It will firmly establish its

CM-IN-1690 (2 April 45)

TOP SECRET

12

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TOP SECRET

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URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

Nr: FWD 18475 SCAF 261 2 April 1945

left flank in the Deister Gebirge (X2010) for this purpose. (see Para 4A).

B. In conjunction with Northern Group of Armies, launch a thrust with its main axis: Kassel-Leipzig, establishing the right flank of its advance on the line: Erz Gebirge Mountains-Bayreuth (see Para 4B);

490 1134

C. Seize any opportunity of capturing a bridgehead over the River Elbe and be prepared to conduct operations beyond the Elbe.

6. Southern Group of Armies:

A. Will protect thruout the right flank of Central Group of Armies west of the Bayreuth area, where it will connect up with Central Group of Armies;

B. Will without prejudice to 5A above, be prepared to launch a thrust on the axis: Nurnburg-Regensburg-Linz, to prevent consolidation of German resistance in the south.

7. Boundaries, subject to adjustment in detail by commanders concerned, effective 040001B April:

A. Between Northern and Central Groups of Armies: present boundary between Ninth Army and Second Army as far as Alpen thence Wesel-Brunen-Raesfeld-Heiden-Velen-Coesfeld- all inclusive to central group of armies

CM-IN-1690 (2 April 45)

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12

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URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

Nr: FWD 18475 SCAF 261 2 April 1945

Munster-Melle ~~(All to Central Group of Armies) thence (all inclusive to Northern Group of Armies) Lubbecke-Minden-Bundtlagen-Emmer-Celle-Stendal. Remaine highways to Central Group of Armies in Mitelbau north of Hanover.~~
Lubbecke-Minden-Wunstorf-Celge-Eldingen-Wittingen-Salzwedel-Wittenberge.

B. Between Central and Southern Groups of Armies: present boundary extended from Meiningen-Coburg-Bayreuth (all to Central Group of Armies).

8. Acknowledge.

End.

NOTE: All typed insertions made per SCAF 262

SCAF 247 is CM-IN-26992 (26 Mar 45) CC/S
Receipt acknowledged by WD SCB

ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Adm Leahy; Gen Arnold; Gen Hull; Gen Bissell; Adm King; C of S

CM-IN-1690 (2 April 45) DTG: 021440 ejc

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12

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1 April 1945

TOP SECRET
COPY

FROM: THE PRIME MINISTER
TO : THE PRESIDENT

NO : 931

1. You will have read the telegrams between the British Chiefs of Staff and their United States Colleagues, number COS (W) 723 from us and the U.S. COS reply CCS 805-2. I think there is some misunderstanding on both sides which I am anxious to disperse without more ado.

2. We are very much obliged to the U.S. COS for their Para. 9 which gives time for a reasonable interchange of views between our two Chiefs of Staff Committees.

3. I am however distressed to read in Para. 3 of CCS 805-2 that it should be thought that we wish in the slightest degree to discredit or lower the prestige of General Eisenhower in his increasingly important relations with the Russian Commanders in the field.

All we sought was a little time to consider the far-reaching changes desired by General Eisenhower in the plans that had been concerted by the Combined Chiefs of Staff at Malta and had received your and my joint approval. The British Chiefs of the Staff were naturally concerned by a procedure which apparently left the fortunes of the British Army, which though only a third of yours still amounts to over a million men, to be settled without the slightest reference to any British authority. They also did not fully understand from General Eisenhower's 252 what actually was intended. In this we may be excused because General Deane was similarly puzzled and delayed delivery of General Eisenhower's message to Stalin for 24 hours in order to ask for background. I am in full agreement in this instance with the procedure proposed by your Chiefs of Staff in the last sentence of Para. 3 of 805-2 and I am sorry we did not think of it ourselves.

4. At this point I wish to place on record the complete confidence felt by His Majesty's Government in General Eisenhower, our pleasure that our armies are serving under his command and our admiration of the great and shining qualities of character and personality which he has proved himself to possess in all the difficulties of handling an allied command. Moreover, I should like to express to you, Mr. President, as I have already done orally in the field to General Eisenhower, my heart-felt congratulations on the glorious victories and advances by all armies of the United States centre in the recent battles on the Rhine and over it.

5. Having thus, I trust, removed to your satisfaction any misunderstanding of our action that may have given any cause of offence on our part, I should like to say that I thought that the implications of the references to the work of the British and Imperial forces in the northern advance in Para. 4 and in the second sentence of Para. 6 did not quite do justice to our efforts or contributions.

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Both at Caen in the Normandy battle and lately on the front north of Wesel, we have had the task of forming the hinge to the main American swing. Therefore it could not be expected that in discharging this duty very spectacular results could attend our indispensable action. In the Rhine battle we had to fight onwards alone in the northern hinge for 13 days longer than was arranged on account of the opening of the dams by the Germans which inevitably delayed the coming into action of the Ninth U.S. Army. During this period it was natural that the enemy should transfer as many paratroops and other corps d'elite as possible to confront us, and this conjoined with the state of the ground and the weather made our effort a very hard one. From February 9th, when we began, down to March 30th (the latest date of which I have figures) the 12 or 13 divisions of His Majesty's forces which were engaged suffered a loss of over 20,000 casualties. I do not think any of the American armies to the southward suffered more, and some of them, thank God, suffered very much less. Therefore I feel sure that you will not feel discontented with our efforts and that the actual speed of our advance to date will not be contrasted invidiously with the splendid advances made by the United States Armies in the centre. We even think we may have aided them by our work, and we hope that now we are in the open plains of northern Germany we may be able to more more rapidly.

6. Having dealt with and I trust disposed of these misunderstandings between the truest friends and comrades that ever fought side by side as allies, I venture to put to you a few considerations upon the merits of the changes in our original plans now desired by General Eisenhower. It seems to me the differences are small and as usual not of principle but of emphasis. Obviously, laying aside every impediment and shunning every diversion, the allied armies of the north and centre should now march at the highest speed towards the Elbe. Hitherto the axis has been upon Berlin. General Eisenhower on his estimate of the enemy's resistance, to which I attach the greatest importance, now wishes to shift the axis somewhat to the southward and strike though Leipzig, even perhaps as far south as Dresden. He withdraws the Ninth U.S. Army from the northern group of Armies and in consequence stretches its front southwards. I should be sorry if the resistance of the enemy was such as to destroy the weight and momentum of the advance of the British Twenty First Army Group and to leave them in an almost static condition along the Elbe when and if they reach it. I say quite frankly that Berlin remains of high strategic importance. Northing will exert a psychological effect of despair upon all German forces of resistance equal to that of the fall of Berlin. It will be the supreme signal of defeat to the German people. On the other hand, if left to itself to maintain a seige by the Russians among its ruins and as long as the German flag flies there, it will animate the resistance of all Germans under arms.

7. There is moreover another aspect which it is proper for you and me to consider. The Russian armies will no doubt overrun all Austria and enter Vienna. If they also take Berlin, will not their impression that they have been the overwhelming contributor to our common victory be unduly imprinted in their minds, and may this not lead them into a mood which will raise grave and formidable difficulties in the future? I therefore consider that from a political standpoint we should march as far east into Germany as possible and that should Berlin be in our grasp we should certainly take it. This also appears sound on military grounds.

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8. To sum up, the difference that might exist between General Eisenhower's new plans and those we advocated, and which were agreed upon beforehand, would seem to be the following, viz, whether the emphasis should be put on an axis directed on Berlin or on one directed upon Leipzig and Dresden. This is surely a matter upon which a reasonable latitude of discussion should be allowed to our two Chiefs of Staff Committees before any final commitment involving the Russians is entered into.

9. I need hardly say that I am quite willing that this message, which is my own personal message to you and not a Staff communication, should be shown to General Marshall.

- - - - - - - - - -

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WAR DEPARTMENT
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INCOMING MESSAGE

[redacted]T

URGENT

[redacted]

From: US Military Mission Moscow Russia

To: War Department

Nr: MX 23588 1 April 1945

To SHAEF Fwd for General Eisenhower, AGWAR for the Combined Chiefs of Staff, and Central Base Section UK for the British Chiefs of Staff from Archer and Deane MX 23588.

[redacted]

We have been requested to deliver the following message from Marshal Stalin to General Eisenhower:

"Personal and most secret telegram from Marshal Stalin to General Eisenhower.

I have received your telegram of 28th March 1945.

1. Your plan to cut the German Forces by joining up the Soviet Forces with your forces entirely coincides with the plan of the Soviet High Command.

2. I agree with you also that the place for the joining up of your forces and the Soviet Forces should be the area Erfurt, Leipzig, Dresden. The Soviet High Command considers that the main blow of the Soviet Forces should be delivered in that direction.

3. Berlin has lost its former strategic importance. The Soviet High Command therefore plans to allot secondary forces in the direction of Berlin.

4. The plan to form a second additional ring by joining up Soviet Forces and your forces somewhere in the

CM-IN-983 (2 Apr 45)

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

13

[redacted]

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INCOMING MESSAGE

[redacted]T

[redacted]

URGENT

From: US Military Mission Moscow Russia

Nr: MX 23588 1 April 1945

area of Vienna, Linz, Regensburg is also approved by the Soviet High Command.

5. The beginning of the main blow by the Soviet Forces is approximately the second half of May. As regards the additional blow in the area Vienna, Linz, it is already being executed by the Soviet Forces. However, this plan may be subject to alterations depending on change of circumstances, for example, in case of a rapid retreat of the German troops the dates may be moved forward. Much depends also on the weather.

6. The question of perfecting communications between our troops is being studied by the General Staff and the relative decision will be communicated later.

7. As regards enemy troops on the Eastern Front, it has been established that their number is gradually being increased. In addition to the 6th SS Tank Army the following have been transferred to the Eastern Front: three divisions from Northern Italy and two divisions from Norway.

Signed Marshal J Stalin "

End.

Note: This message has been relayed by WD Code Center to SHAEF Fwd and UK Central Base Section as per originator's request.

See CM-IN-173 (31 Mar 45) CC/S
ACTION: CC/S
INFO : Adm Leahy; Gen Arnold; Gen Hull; Gen Bissell; Adm King; C of S
CM-IN-983 (2 Apr 45) [redacted] DTG: 012253Z ejc

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

13

[redacted]

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RP

EYES ONLY

[redacted] TOT

URGENT

FOR GENERAL MARSHALL'S EYES ONLY

WB

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

To: War Department

Nr: FWD 18393 31 March 1945

To AGWAR for General Marshall's eyes only from Eisenhower ref FWD 18393.

Your cable W 61337, I have today replied to FACS 170 amplifying SCAF 252. This reply is basically the same as my personal cable FWD 18345 dispatched to you on 13 March.

You can be sure that in future policy cables passing between myself and the Military Mission to Moscow will be repeated to the Combined Chiefs and the British Chiefs of Staff reference your WX 61011 to Deane.

End.

FWD 18345 is CM-IN-31866 (30 Mar 45) General Hull.
SCAF 252 is CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45) CC/S

ACTION: General Hull

INFO : Adm Leahy, General Arnold, Adm King, C of S

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

CM-IN-33048 (31 March 45) DTG 311755A da

[redacted]

EYES ONLY

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310-

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[redacted]

TOP SECRET TOT

PRIORITY

WB

From: US Military Mission, Moscow, Russia

To : War Department

Nr : MX 23572 31 March 1945

Book message (1) copy to War Department (2) WAR pass copy to Central Base Section UK to SHAEF Forward for General Eisenhowers EYES ONLY to AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff and to Central Base UK for British Chiefs of Staff from Archer and Deane, [redacted] MX 23572.

Meeting with Stalin tonight at the Kremlin. Molotov was present. Stalin was given an English and Russian text of the message contained in SCAF 252. After Stalin had read Eisenhower's message, we pointed out the operations described in the message on the map. Stalin immediately reacted and said that the plan seemed to be a good one, but that he of course could not commit himself definitely until he had consulted his staff.

He said that he would give us an answer tomorrow. He seemed to be favorably impressed with the direction of the attack in central Germany and also of the secondary attack in the south. We emphasized the urgency of obtaining Stalin's views in order that the plans could be properly concerted.

We called attention to Eisenhower's proposal that Liaison Officers from SHAEF be attached to Stalin's Headquarters in Moscow and suggested in that connection that a radio teletype channel should be set up at once between SHAEF and Moscow.

We then said that Eisenhower would like to have Stalin's current estimate of the enemy situation. Stalin stated that he could not give his estimate then but would do so in his answer tomorrow. He asked us if we were prepared to give Eisenhower's estimate during the present meeting.
CM-IN-173 (1 Apr 45)

[redacted]

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JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

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PRIORITY

Page [redacted]

From: US Military Mission, Moscow, Russia

Nr : MX 23572 31 March 1945

We then gave the negative highlights of Eisenhower's estimate of the enemy situation. Stalin asked if Eisenhower had any knowledge of prepared positions toward the center of Germany to which we replied in the negative. Stalin then asked if we knew of German withdrawal of troops from Norway. We stated that Eisenhower had not given us any indication of this.

Stalin asked whether the advance of the secondary attack in the south would come from Italy or from the western front. We said that we understood it would come from the western front. We then went over the present German order of battle on the western front with Stalin as he indicated that he was interested in having us do so.

Stalin asked if we could verify Soviet information that there were 60 German Divisions on the western front. We replied that we had counted 61, but gave him the most recent changes that have been received from you. Stalin wished to know if the Germans had any additional reserves on the western front, and we replied that apparently they had not.

Stalin was much impressed with the number of prisoners that had been taken in the month of March and said certainly this will help finish the war very soon. Harriman asked Stalin about the weather conditions on the front in Eastern Germany. Stalin replied that it had considerably improved.

Harriman then pressed him further by asking if his previous estimate that the operations might be bogged down at the end of March still held good. Stalin replied that the situation was much better than he had anticipated.

CM-IN-173 (1 Apr 45)

[redacted]

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JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

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[redacted]OT

PRIORITY

TOP [redacted]

From: US Military Mission, Moscow, Russia

Nr : MX 23572 31 March 1945

The floods came early this year, and now the roads are in the PROCESS OF DRYING * * *. He left us all with the impression that the Russians are not tied down because of weather. Stalin said that the Germans were resisting strongly in the mountains of Czechoslovakia, but that the resistance was of such character that it could be overcome. He said that the Germans had concentrated 10 armored divisions northeast of Lake Balaton, but that these had been defeated.

He said that the Germans are now centering their resistance in the Bratislavia gap but that he felt confident in overcoming it. The Germans still had 16 divisions in Latvia, but he thought at best that they could only move out three divisions without their artillery and that would take a month.

Clark Kerr commented on the valuable contribution by the Red Army in capturing Gdynia and Danzig. Stalin said that it took about a week to reduce Danzig. Evidently there was only about a third of the Germans who wanted to fight. The SS Troops shot down in sight of the Red Army those Germans who wished to surrender.

Stalin had apparently been considering Eisenhower's message all through the discussion, and at this point he reverted to it and said that the plan for Eisenhower's main effort was a good one in that it accomplished the most important objective of dividing Germans in half. He felt that the direction of the attack would also be favorable for a juncture with the Red Army. He felt that the Germans last stand would probably be in the mountains of western Czechoslovakia and Bavaria.

CM-IN-173 (1 Apr 45)

[redacted]

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JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

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[redacted] TOT

PRIORITY

TOP SECRET

Page [redacted]

From: US Military Mission, Moscow, Russia

Nr : MX 23572 31 March 1945

The meeting ended with Marshal Stalin assuring us that he would give a reply to Eisenhower's message tomorrow.

End

* Being serviced

This message has been relayed by WDCC to UK Base and SHAEF Main per originator's request.

FOOTNOTE; SCAF 252 is CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45) CC/S
See CM-IN-32973 (31 Mar 45) CC/S.

ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Adm. Leahy, Gen. Arnold, Gen. Hull, Gen. Bissell, Adm. King, C of S.

CM-IN-173 (1 Apr 45) DTG: 312050Z ngr

[redacted]

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Colonel Park

[redacted] TOT

URGENT

From: US Military Mission, Moscow

To: War Department
CG United Kingdom Base Section, London, England

Nr: MX 23565 31 March 1945

[redacted] book msg for General Eisenhower, Combined Chiefs of Staff and Central Base Section UK for British Chiefs of Staff from Archer and Deane MX 23565

Receipt acknowledged of SHAEF Forward 18372. Meeting with Stalin at 1700Z this date at which time message contained in SCAF 252 will be given to him.

End

SCAF 252 is CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45) CC/S
18372 not identified in WDCMC

ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Adm Leahy
General Arnold
OPD
General Bissell
Adm King
C of S

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JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

CM-IN-32973 (31 March 45) DTG 311430Z da

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WB

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URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

To: War Department

Nr: FWD 18403 SCAF 260 31 March 1945

This is SCAF 260 replying to FACS 170. To AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff from SHAEF Forward info AMSSO for British Chiefs of Staff, SHAEF Main ref FWD 18403. TOP SECRET signed Eisenhower cite SHGCT.

A. Firstly. Further details requested by General Deane had already been dispatched. On receipt of your cable I told him he must not pass them on to Marshal Stalin.

B. Secondly. The following paragraphs amplify the views expressed in SCAF 252.

1. Once the present offensives of the northern and central group of Armies have joined hands and the encircled enemy is incapable of offensive action against our lines of communication we shall be in a position to drive on eastward.

2. My object still remains to divide and destroy the main German forces, as when this is achieved the rest will follow. Manifestly it will be greatly to our advantage if we can join hands with the Russians.

3. Clearly the areas in which we meet the Russians must depend to some extent on their intentions. However, from our point of view alone there are three

CM-IN-33260 (31 Mar 45)

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TOP SECRET TOT

URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

Nr: FWD 18403 SCAF 260 31 March 1945

principal strategic areas concerned, namely in the north, the Hamburg - Kiel area, in the center, the Leipzig area, and in the south, the Nurnberg - Regensburg - Munich area. Berlin as a strategic area is discounted as it is now largely destroyed and we have information that the Ministries are moving to the Erfurt - Leipzig region. Moreover, it is so near to the Russian front that once they start moving again they will reach it in a matter of days.

4. Of these three strategic areas, the central one has great advantages as the main objective of our eastwards advance. It would divide the enemy roughly in half and would give us the principal industrial area remaining to him. We should advance across a plateau which offers better going at this time of the year than the German plains. Moreover, if, as we expect the Germans continue the widespread destruction of bridges, experience shows it is better to advance across the headwaters than to be faced by the main streams - and on the Leipzig axis it is improbable that we should have to cross the Elbe at all before joining with the Russians.

5. The importance of the northern strategic area is also considerable. It is desirable to open a sea line of communication to the North Sea German ports, though we cannot rely on this being quickly developed because the fortified Frisian Islands and Heligoland may hold out. These must be reduced before the sea lanes can be used, and the enemy Naval Forces in the Dutch ports must be neutralized before mine sweeping can be undertaken further east. In

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TOP SECRET TOT

URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

Nr: FWD 18403 SCAF 260 31 March 1945

addition the early liberation of Denmark and Norway is desirable in order to remove the U-boat threat and release valuable shipping at present lying idle in Swedish waters. This would not necessarily be achieved by a northerly drive unless the German will to resist were entirely broken.

6. The principal importance of the southern area lies in the fact that an early junction with the Russians there would prevent the establishment of a Nazi fortress in southern Germany.

7. Until it is clear that the enemy is so reduced in strength that simultaneous drives against the strategic areas are possible, one must be selected on which our effort will be concentrated, if necessary at the expense of the other. Besides the advantages already listed of seizing the Leipzig area and there joining the Russians, by putting our main weight in the center we shall retain the ability to switch forces rapidly to strengthen the northern and southern drives when the time is ripe. My immediate plans are therefore to concentrate my effort on a drive to the Leipzig area as the main operation, retaining the flexibility to reinforce firstly, if feasible, a northern drive and secondly a southern drive, or both, depending on the development of a very fluid situation.

8. To carry out this plan the central group of Armies, in whose zone the main operation lies, will resume command of the Ninth Army in addition to their present

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URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

Nr: FWD 18403 SCAF 260 31 March 1945

forces once the isolation of the Ruhr is effected. The central group of Armies will then be responsible for opening an easterly drive on the Kassel - Leipzig axis as soon as conditions permit, the northern group of Armies will protect the left flank, advancing with their right along the general line Hanover - Stendal, and the southern group of Armies will protect the right flank.

9. When the Russians are joined, or sooner if the situation permits, the northern group of Armies may again be reinforced if this proves necessary and the Ninth Army may be moved up to assist the British and Canadian Armies in clearing the whole coastline to the westward of Lubeck.

10. A drive by the southern group of Armies will be made as soon as situation permits, to prevent Nazi occupation of a mountain citadel.

11. To sum up.

I plan at the earliest possible moment to divide and destroy the German forces by launching my main attack from the Kassel area. This will be directed eastwards toward the heart of what remains of the German industrial power until that thrust is assured of attaining the general area of Leipzig, unless the Russians meet us west of that point. Manifestly if this drive coordinates closely with Russian plans the division of the enemy will be complete.

CM-IN-33260 (31 Mar 45)

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URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

Nr: FWD 18403 SCAF 260 31 March 1945

The second main feature of the battle is to have the bulk of my disposable strength concentrated in the center ready to move firstly, if feasible, north, and secondly south, or both, in accordance with the situation.

Objectives beyond the Elbe and operations towards Denmark and Norway comprises a later phase of operations.

Naturally, my plans are flexible and I must retain freedom of action to meet changing situations. Maximum flexibility will result from a concentration initially of maximum force in the center.

End.

FACS 170 is CM-OUT-61296 31 Mar 45
SCAF 252 is CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45) CC/S

ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Adm Leahy; Gen Arnold; Gen Hull; Gen Bissell; Adm King; C of S

CM-IN-33260 (31 Mar 45) DTG: 311930A ejc

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[redacted]AMUG

URGENT

[redacted]

Col P.

From: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France.

To: War Department

Nr: 18394 SCAF 259 31 March 1945

To 30 Military Mission Moscow for Deane and Archer to for info AGWAR for CCS, AMSSO for BCOS, SHAEF Main ref nr FWD 18394 from SHAEF Forward signed Eisenhower cite SHGCT [redacted]

1. M-23546 of 30th March refers.

2. Agree desirability of immediate establishment RTT radio channel between Supreme Headquarters and Moscow. If Stalin requests similar circuit between his General Staff and Liaison Officers at Supreme Headquarters, this is entirely acceptable.

3. One each 133 and two each 19 sets teletype writer equipment are available here for shipment to you.

4. For CCS and BCOS this is SCAF number 259.

End

M-23546 not identified in WD CMC

ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Adm Leahy; Gen Arnold; OPD; Gen Bissell; Adm King; C of S

CM-IN-33281 (31 Mar 45) DTG: 311605A ejc

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

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OUTGOING MESSAGE

TOP SECRET

Operations Division, War Dept.
Strategy & Policy Group,
Gen G A Lincoln, 5032

30 March 1945

Supreme Headquarters
Allied Expeditionary Forces
Forward Echelon
Rheims, France

Number: WAR 61337

TOP SEC personal Marshall to Eisenhower.

British Chiefs of Staff sent from London to Combined Chiefs today their views on SCAF 252. They deny any desire to fetter the hand of the Supreme Commander in the field but mention wider issues outside the purvue of SCAEF (U boat war, Swedish shipping, political importance of saving thousands of Dutchmen from starvation, importance of move into Denmark and liberating Norway) and request delay in the submission of further details to Deane until you hear from the CCS.

The US Chiefs replied today in substance as follows: The US Chiefs are not in agreement with the views of the British Chiefs expressed in their 2 CCS papers. SCAEF's procedure in communicating with the Russians appears to have been an operational necessity. Any modification of this communication should be made by Eisenhower and not by the CCS. The course of action outlined in SCAF 252 appears to be in accord with agreed strategy and SCAEF's directive, particularly in light of present developments. Eisenhower is deploying across the Rhine in the north the maximum number of forces which can be employed. The secondary effort in the south is achieving an outstanding success and is being exploited to the extent of logistic capabilities. This should quickly make it possible for northern effort to accelerate its drive eastward into Germany. The US Chiefs are confident that SCAEF's course of action will secure the ports and everything else mentioned by the British more quickly and more decisively than the course of action urged by them.

CM-OUT-61337 (Mar 45)

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TOP SECRET

The battle of Germany is now at a point where it is up to the Field Commander to judge the measures which should be taken. To deliberately turn away from the exploitation of the enemy's weakness does not appear sound. The single objective should be quick and complete victory. While recognizing there are factors not of direct concern to SCAEF, the US Chiefs consider his strategic concept is sound and should receive full support. He should continue to communicate freely with the Commander in Chief of the Soviet Army.

The US Chiefs proposed the dispatch of a message to SCAEF requesting an amplification of the plan set forth in SCAF 252 and the SCAEF delay sending further details regarding SCAF 252 to Deane until hearing further from the CCS. Commenting on their proposed message, the US Chiefs gave their opinion that SCAEF's amplification of SCAF 252 will not cause any revision of their views already expressed. This ends substance of US paper.

It is suggested that in your message to the CCS, the inclusion of the gist of your FWD 18345 personal to Marshall might give the British Chiefs of Staff a better understanding of your plans and intentions.

End

FOOTNOTE: SCAF 252 is CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45)

ORIGINATOR: Gen Hull

INFORMATION: Adm Leahy
General Arnold
Adm King
C of S

CM-OUT-61337 (Mar 45) DTG 310134Z aj

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WAR DEPARTMENT
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OUTGOING MESSAGE [redacted]

Combined Chiefs of Sta[redacted]
77500 Capt. E.D.Graves, [redacted]

30 March 1945

Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward Echelon, Rheims France.

British Joint Staff Mission, Washington, D C

Number: WARX 61296

TOPSEC Book Message to SHAEF Rheims for Eisenhower for action, to AMSSO pass to British Chiefs of Staff for information, FACS 170 from the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff request you furnish them with an amplification of the views expressed in your SCAF 252.

They further request that you delay in furnishing further details regarding SCAF 252 in response to message of inquiry to you from General Deane until you hear further from the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

End

NOTE: SCAF 252 is CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45)

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date APR 24 1974

ORIGINATOR: CC/S

INFORMATION: Gen Arnold, Adm Leahy, Gen Hull, Gen Bissell, Adm King, C of S

CM-OUT 61296 (Mar 45) DTG 310047Z mlc

[redacted]

[redacted] COPY No. 33

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WAR DEPARTMENT
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INCOMING MESSAGE

TOP SECRET

TOPSECRET TOT

URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

To: War Department

Nr: FWD 18345 30 March 1945

This is in reply to your W-60507. FWD 18345 to AGWAR personal for Marshall from SHAEF Forward from Eisenhower TOP SECRET cite SHGCT.

The same protests except as to "procedure" contained in that telegram were communicated to me by the Prime Minister over scrambler telephone last night.

I am completely in the dark as to what the protests concerning "procedure" involve. I have been instructed to deal directly with the Russians concerning military coordination. In the first place, there is no change in basic strategy. The British Chiefs of Staff last summer always protested against my determination to open up the Frankfurt route because they said it would be futile and would draw strength away from a northern attack. I have always insisted that the northern attack would be the principal effort in that phase of our operations that involved the isolation of the Ruhr, but from the very beginning, extending back before D Day, my plan, explained to my staff and senior officers, has been to link up the primary and secondary efforts in the Kassel area and then make one great thrust to the eastward.

Even cursory examination of the decisive direction for this thrust after the link up in the Kassel area is complete, shows that the principal effort should under ex-

CM-IN-31866 (30 Mar 45)

TOP SECRET

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From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

Nr: FWD 18345 30 March 1945

isting circumstances be toward the Leipzig region, in which area is concentrated the greater part of the remaining Germany industrial capacity, and to which area the German Ministries are believed to be moving. My plan does not draw Montgomery's British and Canadian Forces to the southward. You will note that his right flank will push forward along the general line Hanover-Wittenberg. Merely following the principal that Field Marshal Brooke has always shouted to me, I am determined to concentrate on one major thrust and all that my plan does is to place the Ninth US Army back under Bradley for that phase of operations involving the advance of the center from Kassel to the Leipzig region, unless, of course, the Russian forces should be met on this side of that area. Thereafter, that position will be consolidated while the plan clearly shows that Ninth Army may again have to move up to assist the British and Canadian armies in clearing the whole coastline to the westward of Lubeck.

After strength for this operation has been provided it is considered that we can launch a movement to the southeastward to prevent Nazi occupation of a mountain citadel.

I have thoroughly considered the Naval aspects of this situation and clearly recognize the advantages of gaining the northern coastline at an early date. It is for this reason that I have made that objective the next one to be

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From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

Nr: FWD 18345 30 March 1945

achieved after the primary thrust has placed us in a decisive position. The opening of Bremen, Hamburg and Kiel involves operations against the Frisian Islands and Heligoland and extensive minesweeping. All this and operations into Denmark and Norway form part of a later phase.

It is my earnest belief that a concerted drive, put on at the earliest possible moment by the Twelfth Army Group, comprising the Ninth, First and Third Armies, with Sixth Army Group protecting the right flank and Twenty First Army Group protecting the left and moving forward north of the line Hanover-Wittenberg, is the surest way of quickly accomplishing the paralysis of the German war effort.

May I point out that Berlin itself is no longer a particularly important objective. Its usefulness to the German has been largely destroyed and even his government is preparing to move to another area. What is now important is to gather up our forces for a single drive and this will more quickly bring about the fall of Berlin, the relief of Norway and the acquisition of the shipping and the Swedish ports than will the scattering around of our effort.

As another point, I should like to point out that the so-called "good ground" in northern Germany is not really good at this time of year. That region is not only badly cut up with waterways, but in it the ground during this part of the year is very wet and not so favorable for

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From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

Nr: FWD 18345 30 March 1945

rapid movement as is the higher plateau over which I am preparing to launch the main effort. Moreover if, as we expect, the German continues the widespread destruction of bridges, experience has shown that it is better to advance across the headwaters than to be faced by the main streams.

The Prime Minister and his Chiefs of Staff opposed "ANVIL"; they opposed my idea that the German should be destroyed west of the Rhine before we made our major effort across that river; and they insisted that the route leading northeastward from Frankfurt would involve us merely in slow, rough-country fighting. Now they apparently want me to turn aside on operations in which would be involved many thousands of troops before the German forces are full defeated. I submit that these things are studied daily and hourly by me and my advisors and that we are animated by one single thought which is the early winning of this war.

To sum up: I propose, at the earliest possible moment, in conjunction with the Soviets to divide and destroy the German forces by launching my main attack from the Kassel area straight eastward toward the heart of what remains of the German industrial power until that thrust has attained the general area of Leipzig and including that city, unless the Russian advance meets us west of that point. The second main feature of the battle is to bring Montgomery's

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From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

Nr: FWD 18345 30 March 1945

forces along on the left and as quickly as the above has been accomplished to turn Ninth Army to the left to assist him in cleaning out the whole area from Kiel and Lubeck westward.

After the requirements of these two moves have been met, I will thrust columns southeastward in an attempt to join up with the Russians in the Danube Valley and prevent the establishment of a Nazi fortress in southern Germany.

Naturally, my plans are flexible and I must retain freedom of action to meet changing situations. Maximum flexibility will result from a concentration of maximum force in the center.

End

ACTION: Gen Hull

INFO : Adm Leahy; Gen Arnold; Adm King; C of S

CM-IN-31866 (30 Mar 45) DTG: 301342A ejc

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TOP SECRET TOT

URGENT

EYES ONLY FOR GENERAL MARSHALL

TOP SECRET

EYES ONLY

From: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

To: War Department

Nr: FWD 18331 30 March 1945

FWD 18331 to for action AGWAR from SHAEF Forward from Eisenhower to General Marshall for EYES ONLY.

I am preparing an immediate answer to your W 60507 which should reach you in a few hours.

Frankly the charge that I have changed plans has no possible basis in fact. The principal effort north of the Ruhr was always adhered to with the object of isolating that valuable area. Now that I can foresee the time that my forces can be concentrated in the Kassel area I am still adhering to my old plan of launching from there one main attack calculated to accomplish, in conjunction with the Russians, the destruction of the enemy armed forces.

To disperse strong forces along the northern coast before the primary object is accomplished will leave me too weak to launch a powerful thrust straight through the center. My plan will get the ports and all the other things on the north coast more speedily and decisively than will the dispersion now urged upon me by Wilson's message to you.

End.

ACTION: General Hull

INFORMATION: Admiral Leaby, General Arnold, Admiral King, CofS

CM-IN-31723 (30 Mar 45) DTG 301052A bjm

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EYES ONLY

EYES ONLY

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TOP SECRET

Operations Div WDGS
Executive Office
General Hull 2904

29 March, 1945

Supreme Headquarters,
Allied Expeditionary Forces,
Advance Echelon,
Rheims, France.

Number: WAR 60507

TOPSEC personal to Eisenhower from Marshall.

The following is quoted from a memorandum handed me by Field Marshal Wilson --

"The British Chiefs of Staff have instructed us to say that they are concerned at the contents of SCAF 252, both as regards the procedure which has been adopted by General Eisenhower and, what is more important, the change of plan which is implicit in his message to Marshal Stalin. The British Chiefs of Staff are examining the telegram as a matter of urgency and have promised us a full exposition of their views tomorrow. Meanwhile, apart from the method of procedure, the reasons why they feel strongly that the existing strategy, i.e. that the main thrust should be made across the open plains of N. W. Germany, with the object of capturing Berlin, should be adhered to are as follows:

(A) By this means we can open German ports in the west and north, thereby obtaining a good sea line of communications to and from Germany and sever all German communications with Holland.

(B) We should also to a great extent annul the U-boat war.

(C) We should be free to move into Denmark, open a line of communication with Sweden and liberate for our use nearly two million tons of Swedish and Norwegian shipping now lying idle in Swedish ports. We should also be able to assist Norway."

CM-OUT-60507 (Mar 45)

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Number: WAR 60507 29 March, 1945 Page 2.

Prior to your dispatch of SCAF 252 had the naval aspects listed by the British been considered? Your comments are requested as a matter or urgency.

End.

SCAF 252 is CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45)

ORIGINATOR : GEN HULL

INFORMATION: ADM LEAHY
GEN ARNOLD
ADM KING
C OF S

CM-OUT-60507 (Mar 45) DTG 292131Z mcs

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TOP SECRET

Shown to Pres by Col P.

TOP SECRET TOT
URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

To: War Department

No: FWD 18264 SCAF 252 28 March 1945

Ref nr FWD 18264, TOP SECRET; to for action: Military Mission to Moscow to for info: AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff, AMSSO for British Chiefs of Staff, SHAEF Main. For Combined Chiefs of Staff and British Chiefs of Staff this is SCAF 252 from SHAEF Fwd signed Eisenhower.

Our operations are now coming to a stage in which it is essential that I should know the Russian plans in order to achieve the most rapid success. Will you therefore transmit the following personal message from me to Marshal Stalin, and do anything you can to assist in getting a full reply?

Personal message to Marshal Stalin from General Eisenhower.

1. My immediate operations are designed to encircle and destroy the enemy forces defending the Ruhr, and to isolate that area from the rest of Germany. This will be accomplished by developing offensives around the north of the Ruhr and from Frankfort through Kassel, until the ring is closed. The enemy enclosed in this ring will then be mopped up.

2. I estimate that this phase of operations will terminate in late April or even earlier, and my next task will be to divide the enemy's remaining forces by joining hands with your forces.

CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45)

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET TOT
URGENT

From: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward, Rheims, France

No: FWD 18264 SCAF 252 28 March 1945

3. For my forces the best axis on which to effect this junction would be Erfurt-Leipzig-Dresden; moreover, I believe, this is the area to which the main German Governmental departments are being moved. It is along this axis that I propose to place my main effort. In addition, as soon as the situation allows, a secondary advance will be made to effect a junction with your forces in the Regensburg-line area, thereby preventing the consolidation of German resistance in a redoubt in southern Germany.

4. Before deciding firmly on my future plans, I think it most important that they should be coordinated as closely as possible with yours both as to direction and timing. Could you, therefore, tell me your intentions, and let me know how far the proposed operations outlined in this message conform to your probable action?

5. If we are to complete the destruction of the German Armies without delay, I regard it as essential that we coordinate our action and make every effort to perfect the liaison between our advancing forces. I am prepared to send officers to you for this purpose.

End

Note: This message has been relayed to USMILMIS.

ACTION: CC/S

INFO : Adm Leahy; Gen Arnold; OPD; Gen Bissell; Adm King; C of S

CM-IN-29759 (28 Mar 45) DTG: 281600A ejc

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