

1 February 1952



Dear Al,

Thanks for your letter and, again, thanks for the trouble to which you and Grace went in getting the screen. You can tell Grace, Nory has nothing to do with this screen. I bought it for my own bedroom and I love it. We polished it up and gave it a coat of plastic film to keep it from tarnishing and it is really beautiful. The 10,000 franc refund was duly deposited.

Attached is a memorandum which you might use in your reply to Mr. Malowan, who wrote regarding the German title, "It Began at the Weichsel, It Ended at the Elbe."

Enclosed also is a longhand note to Ike, which please hand him.

All the best.

Faithfully,

/s/ Bedell

General Alfred W. Gruenther
Chief of Staff, SHAPE
APO 55, c/o Postmaster
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Personal

The book noted by Mr. Malowan is one of several very subtle Communist propaganda moves which have transpired recently. Another is the widely broadcast story on the bombing of Dresden by the Allied Air Forces. Our Air Force did indeed bomb the cultural center of Dresden, doing frightful damage and inflicting great loss of life but it was only done with the greatest reluctance after repeated demands from the Russians, supported finally by representations from the Kremlin, insisting that the main German supply lines, supporting Nazi troops facing the Russians on that front, bottle-necked at Dresden and that we must assist by stopping this flow of supplies.

There is far less foundation for the "Weichsel-Elbe" story. During the surrender negotiations at Reims, the German representatives after first hinting that we should join forces with them against the Russians, finally and after many delays made the proposal that the German Armies would surrender to the Western Allies while continuing to fight the Russians. This proposal was immediately and unequivocally rejected for the obvious reasons that it would not only have been a gross and flagrant violation of the most solemn commitments made by the Governments of the anti-Nazi belligerents but also in the full knowledge that any hint of such a breach of faith would have been violently repudiated and denounced by the public opinion of every Western Nation. The Germans then threatened that they would force this situation without formal surrender by withdrawing into our lines while continuing the battle on the Eastern front. We knew at the same time that they were engaged in transferring troops and supplies to the so-called National redoubt in the Bavarian Alps and were protracting negotiations for this purpose while American troops continued to suffer casualties from German arms. General Eisenhower informed the German representatives that their surrender must be complete and final on all fronts and that unless the decision to surrender was made within a matter of hours, we would close our lines and would not permit further piecemeal capitulation. The German representatives then signed the surrender documents.

The British Army, of course, being under General Eisenhower's command, acted exactly as the American Army did. There was no difference in attitude toward the Germans nor is there the slightest color of truth in any allegation that civilians, including women and children, were "driven back toward the Russians."

The purpose of this and similar stories is, of course, to attempt to arouse and keep alive throughout Germany a resentment

against the Western Allies and to provide a counter-irritant to German recollection of the attitudes and actions of the Soviet Army. It is difficult for me to imagine how any American who has the slightest recollection of the widely publicized policies of the Western Governments and the discussions and announcements at the Atlantic and other Conferences could be in the slightest degree impressed by stories of this kind except by their propaganda potentialities abroad.

