

# Baltimore News-Post, Monday May 7, 1945

World War II had become a long, terrible nightmare and everybody was just simply waiting to wake up from it. It was an anxious wait for what seemed like a very elusive end. People were waiting to wake one day and discover that everything really had been a nasty nightmare. And the end came at 2.41 am on May 7 in a small red schoolhouse in Reims (France) where General Eisenhower, the Allied Supreme Commander, had his headquarters. There, General Alfred Jodl, the German emissary, signed the instrument of unconditional surrender, delivering Germany into the victors' hands, represented here by general Walter Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's Chief of Staff. Shortly afterwards, at 14:00 European time, the news was broadcasted by the German Foreign

Minister who said that "after a heroic fight of almost six years of incomparable difficulty, Germany has succumbed to the overwhelming power of her enemies. To continue the war would only mean senseless bloodshed and futile disintegration". Germany was exhausted, defeated, unable to put conditions to its final surrender and only eager to allow as many soldiers and refugees as possible to give themselves up to the Western Allies rather than to the Russians who were ready to destroy everybody and everything they found on their way to victory.

As this spectacular front page of the Baltimore News-Post said: "Joy at the news was tempered only by the realisation that the war against Japan remains to be resolved, with many casualties still ahead. The end of the European warfare, the greatest, bloodiest and costliest war in

human history –it has claimed at least 40,000,000 casualties on both sides in killed, wounded and captured—came after five years, eight months and six days of strife that overspread the globe. Hitler's arrogant armies invaded Poland on September 1, 1939 beginning the agony that convulsed the world for 2,319 days".

Now that the Allies had a free passage across the Reich, the horrors of the holocaust were beginning to emerge and the world was shocked afresh to learn about them.

In London, in the midst of the celebrations, Churchill was still grave: "We might allow ourselves a few moments of rejoicing but let us not forget the tasks that still lie ahead".

The war was still going on in the Pacific. Japan had yet to be stopped.

