

Grenadier Guards

The ending of the 2nd World War



The Potsdam Declaration

On July 26, the United States, Britain, and China released the Potsdam Declaration announcing the terms for Japan's surrender, with the warning as an ultimatum: "We will not deviate from them. There are no alternatives. We shall brook no delay." For Japan, the terms of the declaration specified; the elimination "for all time of the authority and influence of those who have deceived and misled the people of Japan into embarking on world conquest";

- the occupation of "points in Japanese territory to be designated by the Allies";
- that the "Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku, and such minor islands as we determine", as had been announced in the Cairo Declaration in 1943;
- that "the Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives";
- that "we do not intend that the Japanese shall be enslaved as a race or destroyed as a nation, but stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon our prisoners".
- On the other hand, the declaration offered that:
 - "The Japanese Government shall remove all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. Freedom of speech, of religion, and of thought, as well as respect for the fundamental human rights shall be established."
 - "Japan shall be permitted to maintain such industries as will sustain her economy and permit the exaction of just reparations in kind, but not those which would enable her to rearm for war. To this end, access to, as distinguished from control of, raw materials shall be permitted. Eventual Japanese participation in world trade relations shall be permitted."
 - "The occupying forces of the Allies shall be withdrawn from Japan as soon as these objectives have been accomplished and there has been established, in accordance with the freely expressed will of the Japanese people, a peacefully inclined and responsible government."
- The mention of "unconditional surrender" came at the end of the declaration:
- "We call upon the government of Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all Japanese armed forces, and to provide proper and adequate assurances of their good faith in such action. The alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction."

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