

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

WASHINGTON

8 August 1945

My dear Mr. President:

It is my opinion that the matter of common direction and command for the final operations against Japan in the Pacific is still not satisfactorily settled. I am reluctantly forced to this view as a result of conversations with officers returning from the theater of war as well as by communications such as the enclosed. (Lawrence, who writes this letter, as you can gather from its moderate tone, is not a trouble-making reporter.) It is my opinion that Admiral Nimitz could direct these final phases against the Japanese homeland. It is not a question, however, of whether an Army or a Navy man is picked -- it is far too important a matter and bears too heavily on the loss of American lives for pride of Service to enter, and I would therefore suggest that you give serious consideration to the selection of either General Marshall or General Eisenhower to assume the over-all command.

I am writing this letter because I think that the constitution of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as well as the matter of personalities in the Pacific Theater makes this a difficult problem for that body to deal with. It is my opinion that it will have to be dealt with by you.

Respectfully yours,

James Forrestal

The President,
The White House.

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