

Japanese Sign Final Surrender – 1945

Text: *JAPANESE SIGN FINAL SURRENDER!*

Narrator: The battleship *Missouri*, 53,000-ton flagship of Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet, becomes the scene of an unforgettable ceremony, marking the complete and formal surrender of Japan. In the Bay of Tokyo itself, the United States destroyer *Buchanan* comes alongside, bringing representatives of the Allied powers to witness the final capitulation. General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Allied Commander for the occupation of Japan, boards the *Missouri*. Fleet Admiral Nimitz, Pacific Fleet Commander, and Admiral Halsey welcome MacArthur and his Chief of Staff General Sutherland aboard. Admiral Nimitz escorts General MacArthur to the *Missouri's* veranda deck where the 20-minute ceremony is to take place. It is Sunday, September 2nd, 1945.

Cameramen and reporters of many countries record this historic moment, as United Nations military leaders crowd aboard the *Missouri* and examine souvenir cards bearing the Japanese flag, special mementos of the occasion. And now, in a Navy launch, the Japanese surrender party arrives. They are headed by Agent Mamoru Shigemitsu, Foreign Minister of the Japanese surrender Cabinet, who was wounded by a Korean patriot in Shanghai years ago and walks on an artificial leg.

The Japanese delegation lines up on the opposite side of the surrender table from the Allies. A war, which had entered its eighth terrible year in China, which had raged for three years and nine months for America and Britain, which was the brutal, costly eastern half of the most horrible worldwide war in human history, is now within minutes of ending for good. General MacArthur speaks.

General Douglas MacArthur: We are gathered here, representatives of the major warring powers to conclude a solemn agreement whereby peace may be restored. The issues involving divergent ideals and ideologies have been determined on the battlefields of the world and, hence, are not for our discussion or debate. The terms and conditions upon which surrender of the Japanese Imperial Forces is here to be given and accepted are contained in the instrument of surrender now before you. As Supreme Commander for the Allied powers, I announce it my firm purpose, in the tradition of the countries I represent, to proceed in the discharge of my responsibilities with justice and tolerance, while taking all necessary dispositions to ensure that the terms of surrender are fully, promptly, and faithfully complied with. I now invite the representatives of the emperor of Japan and the Japanese government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters to sign the instrument of surrender at the places indicated.

Mr. Shigemitsu comes to the surrender table. These dramatic first pictures were made by newsreel war correspondents and Army and Navy cameramen and were specially flown back from Tokyo. The time is 9:05 a.m. The Japanese have been on board exactly 10 minutes. General Yoshijiro Umezu of the Imperial General Staff signs for the Japanese Army. The surrender documents, by which Japan agrees to lay down arms completely and to obey all Allied orders issued by General MacArthur, were printed by the Army on rare parchment found in a basement in ravaged Manila.

General MacArthur signs as Supreme Allied Commander. The first pen used is presented to General Wainwright of Corregidor. The second pen to British General Percival, commander at the surrender of Singapore. MacArthur uses six pens in all, affixing what will be the most important signature in Japan to the document that ends permanently that nation's regime of terror and aggression.

For the forces of the United States itself, Admiral Chester Nimitz signs. Behind Nimitz are the Third Fleet's Admiral Halsey and Admiral Sherman, famed amphibious commander.

General Hsu Yung-Chang, Chief of Military Operations for the Chinese National Council, signs for China. Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, Commander of the British Pacific Fleet for the United Kingdom. Lieutenant General Kuzma Nikolayevich Derevyanko for Soviet Russia. General Sir Thomas Blamey for Australia. Colonel Lawrence Moore Cosgrave for Canada. General Jacques LeClerc, hero of Africa and Paris, for France. Admiral C. E. L. Helfrich for the Netherlands. Air Vice Marshal L. M. Isitt for New Zealand.

Concluding the brief history-making ceremony, General MacArthur expresses a wish.

General Douglas MacArthur: Let us pray that peace be now restored to the world, and that God will preserve it always. These proceedings are closed.

Swarms of United States aircraft fly in formation overhead as the ceremony ends. The final United Nations victory has been won. The war is over. Peace is here.