

# Anthony McAuliffe

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General **Anthony C. McAuliffe** (July 2, 1898 - August 11, 1975) was the United States Army general who commanded the 101st Airborne during the Battle of Bastogne, Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge in World War II. He was famous for his single-word reply to a German surrender ultimatum.

Born in Washington, DC on July 2, 1898, McAuliffe was a student at West Virginia University from 1916-17, and graduated from West Point in November of 1918. He advanced up through the grades of Second Lieutenant in 1918 to General in 1955.

McAuliffe was serving as Commander of Division Artillery of the 101st Airborne Division when he parachuted into Normandy on D-Day. In December of 1944, due to the absence of General Maxwell D. Taylor, McAuliffe was forced to serve as acting Commander of the 101st Airborne Division and its attached troops during the siege of Bastogne. It was when they became surrounded and the Germans demanded their surrender that he sent back his now-famous reply to the German commander, General Heinrich von Luettwitz of the XLVIIth Armored Corps: "NUTS!". His forces were able to hold off the German siege until the 4th Armored Division was able to arrive to provide reinforcement. For his actions, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

According to various accounts from those present, when McAuliffe was told of the German demand for surrender he said "Aww, nuts". At a loss for an official reply, those around him said that his first remark summed the situation up well. The official reply: 'To the German Commander, "Nuts!"' was typed and delivered by Colonel Harper to the German delegation. Harper had to explain the meaning of the word to the Germans. Some sources have suggested that McAuliffe's initial remark was in rather stronger language. In an interview McAuliffe gave in his office in the spring of 1954 to a group of ALOs (Air Liaison Officers), McAuliffe was asked what he really said, and McAuliffe replied he said "shit" to the German delegation.

Following the war, McAuliffe held many positions, including the Head of the Army Chemical Corps, and G-1, Head of Army Personnel. He returned to Europe as Commander of the Seventh Army in 1953, and Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army in Europe in 1955.

In 1956 he retired from the Army, and worked for Cyanamid Corporation from 1956-63. He served as chairman of the New York State Civil Defense Commission during 1960-63. He resided in Chevy Chase, Maryland until his death on August 11, 1975, and is buried along with his wife, son and daughter in Arlington National Cemetery.

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