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GENERAL DWIGHT EISENHOWER AND THE SOVIET ALLIANCE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

When Dwight David Eisenhower ran for President in 1952, he, along with his Democratic competitor Adlai Stevenson, was the first presidential candidate to make campaign commercials for television. One of the most notable ones depicted Eisenhower standing next to Soviet Marshal Georgi Zhukov in Berlin in 1945, when the narrator assured viewers: "Ike knows how to handle the Russians," and that he would effectively lead the American government in the Cold War. Interestingly, nearly all of Eisenhower's initial experiences with Russian military and government leaders came during a time when the United States and Soviet Russia were allies, during the Second World War. This essay will examine Ike's complicated views towards the Soviet Union before, during, and after the Second World War, and how they translated into American military and occupation policy. Ike moved from the traditional suspicion of the Soviet government by most American army officers to seeing the Soviet army an essential ally in the attempt to destroy Nazism. After the end of the war, Ike frequently expressed hope the Soviets would be a valuable partner in securing global peace, before finally moving towards Cold War hostility towards the regime in Moscow, although later than many other American military, diplomatic, and political leaders.

Key words: Eizenhauer, Soviet Union, World War II, Cold War, "Berlin question", Nazis.

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Екінші дүниежүзілік соғыстағы Генерал Дуайт Эйзенхауер және Кеңестік альянс

Дуайт Дэвид Эйзенхауэр 1952 жылы президенттікке үміткер болған кезде, ол өзінің демократиялық қарсыласы Адлай Стивенсонмен бірге теледидар роликтерін жасаған алғашқы президенттікке үміткер болды. Соның ішіндегі ең маңыздыларының бірі – 1945 жылы Берлиндегі Кеңес маршалы Георгий Жуковтың жанында тұрған Эйзенхауэр, диктор көрерменді сендірген кезде: «Ике орыстармен қалай күресу керектігін біледі» және ол «қырғи қабақ соғыста» Америка үкіметін тиімді басқарады. Бір қызығы, Эйзенхауэрдің ресейлік әскери және үкімет басшыларымен жасаған алғашқы тәжірибесі, Екінші дүниежүзілік соғыс кезінде АҚШ пен Кеңестік Ресей одақтас болған кезде пайда болды. Бұл эссе Екінші дүниежүзілік соғыстың алдындағы, одан кейінгі және одан кейінгі жылдардағы Кеңес Одағына деген күрделі көзқарастарды, сондай-ақ оларды американдық әскери және басқыншылық саясатқа аударады. Американдық армия офицерлерінің көпшілігі Совет үкіметінің дәстүрлі күдіктерінен Кеңес әскерінің нацизмді жою әрекеті кезінде маңызды одақтасқа айналды дегенге көшті. Соғыс аяқталғаннан кейін Ике Кеңес Одағының АҚШ-тың көптеген әскери, дипломатиялық және саяси жетекшілеріне қарағанда, Мәскеудегі режимге қарсы қырғи қабақ соғыстың дұшпандығына қарсы өтуіне дейін жаһандық бейбітшілікті орнатуда құнды серіктес болады деген үмітін жиі білдірді.

Түйін сөздер: Эйзенхауэр, Кеңес Одағы, Екінші дүниежүзілік соғыс, қырғи қабақ соғыс, «Берлин мәселесі», нацистер.

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Генерал Дуайт Эйзенхауер и советский альянс во время Второй мировой войны

Когда Дуайт Дэвид Эйзенхауэр баллотировался на пост президента в 1952 году. Он и его конкурент-демократ Адлай Стивенсон были первыми кандидатами в президенты, и сделали рекламные ролики для телевидения. На одном из них – Эйзенхауэр, стоящий рядом с советским

маршалом Георгием Жуковым в Берлине в 1945 году, при этом рассказчик заверил зрителей: «Айк знает, как обращаться с русскими», и что он эффективно возглавит американское правительство в «холодной войне». Интересно, что почти весь первоначальный опыт Эйзенхауэра с российскими военными и правительственными лидерами пришелся на то время, когда Соединенные Штаты и Советская Россия были союзниками во время Второй мировой войны. В этой статье рассматривается сложное отношение Айка к Советскому Союзу до, во время и после Второй мировой войны, а также их трансляция в американскую военную и оккупационную политику. Айк перешел от традиционного подозрения в отношении советского правительства со стороны большинства офицеров американской армии к тому, что советская армия стала важным союзником в попытке уничтожить нацизм. После окончания войны Айк часто выражал надежду, что Советы станут ценным партнером в обеспечении глобального мира, прежде чем, наконец, двинуться к враждебности холодной войны по отношению к режиму в Москве, хотя и позже, чем многие другие американские военные, дипломатические и политические лидеры.

Ключевые слова: Эйзенхауэр, Советский Союз, Вторая мировая война, холодная война, «берлинский вопрос», нацисты.

Introduction

The Background to December 1944: Eisenhower's Early Views of the Soviet Union and his efforts to keep the Soviet Army in the War. Until the early 1940s, Eisenhower had paid little attention to the Soviet Union, or its potential as an American military ally against the Germany. Given his Republican political sympathies, Eisenhower accepted to the general anticommunist political consensus in much of American politics, although that did not lead to any public statements attacking the Soviet regime. However, from 1929 to 1939 Eisenhower served directly under two of the most outspoken anticommunist officers in the United States Armed Forces, General George Van Horn Moseley from 1929 to 1931 and General Douglas MacArthur from 1931 to 1939, both men frequently were prone to making lengthy diatribes against Communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular, and Ike, if not agreeing whole-heartedly with them, certainly did not offer any strenuous objections, despite his disagreements with his superiors on other matters. Indeed, Moseley spend considerable time and effort with his staff planning for how the US Army could be used to crush a potential Communist revolution in the United States (Ambrose, 1983, p. 399). Despite his own anticommunism, he supported FDR's decision to extend Lend-Lease aid in the Soviet Union following the Axis invasion of that country in June 1941, which Ike actively supported from his position as Deputy Chief of the US Third Army, now a Brigadier General following his success at the massive army maneuvers in Louisiana in that summer (Smith, 2012, p. 183).

Following the formal entry of the United States into the Second World War in December 1941, the chief designers of military policy for the United States were President Franklin Roosevelt and his Chief of Staff General George Marshall were as follows. Their central priorities were: 1. The defeat of Germany had to take priority over the defeat of Japan 2. The resources of the US Armed Forces on Air, Land, and Sea would pursue military, as opposed to political objectives.

The Soviet Union would be kept in the war against Germany at all costs by American support. These priorities did not always coincide with America's British allies, despite the creation of a unified command structure following a two-month summit between FDR and Churchill from December 1941 to January 1942. Eisenhower, until the ultimate surrender of Germany three years and four months later, fully accepted and shared these sentiments, despite his own limited contacts with Soviet military and political leadership until 1945. As early as December 1941, Eisenhower privately criticized Lend-Lease Aid to the Soviets has not being adequate enough (Ambrose, 1983, p. 147).

Unlike Churchill and his principle military advisor Field Marshall Alan Brooke, who wanted to postpone a Cross-Channel invasion until 1943 or preferably 1944, Eisenhower wanted one as soon as possible, and argued the reason for specifically in terms of aiding the Russians. His diary entry on January 22 1942 contains the following:

We've got to go to Europe and fight, and we've got to quit wasting resources all over the world and still worse, wasting time. If we're to keep Russia in, we've got to begin slugging with air at Western Europe, to be followed by a land attack as soon as possible (Ferrel, eds., 1981, p. 44).

Eisenhower continued this critique in his diary entry on February 17, arguing that the "slow, indecisive, laborious form of warfare currently being pursued by us will prevent us from coming to Russia's

aid on time." (Ferrel, eds., 1981, p. 48) Two days later, he made this point even more strongly: "We must build up our land and air forces in England and use them to go after Germany's vitals and we've got to do it while Russia is still in the war, in fact, only by doing it soon can we keep Russia in. The trickle of supplies we can send through Basra and Archangel is too small to help her much." (Ferrel, eds., 1981, p. 48).

This set that stage for an early dispute on Eisenhower and Marshall on one side and Churchill and Brooke on the other, concerning Operation SLEDGEHAMMER. The plan called for a cross-channel invasion of northern France, targeting the ports of Cherbourg and Brest, by British, American, Canadian, and Australian soldiers who would attack and hold them in the late summer or early fall of 1942. They would then break through to Paris in the spring of 1943 after they were reinforced by further landings. Marshall and Eisenhower explicitly argued for the plan as necessity because it would force Hitler to divert his military strength away from the Eastern front and alleviate pressure on the Red Army. Feeling the landing would be premature and end disastrously, Churchill strongly objected to SLEDGEHAMMER, instead calling for a series of Allied invasions to the "soft underbelly" of Nazi-dominated Europe, starting in North Africa in the fall of 1942 and continuing to Sicily and Italy in 1943. Brooke agreed with Churchill on this proposal, and ultimately won over FDR as well. Neither Marshall nor Eisenhower were happy with this decision, Marshall admitting that even if SLEDGEHAMMER failed it was necessary for aid the Soviets, and Eisenhower wrote to him, "if we lost the support of 8,000,000 Russian soldiers due to our delays, it would be a military disaster (D'Este, 2002, p. 289).

Following the success of Operations TORCH, HUSKY, and AVALANCHE from November 1942 to September 1943, Churchill and Brooke finally agreed to Marshall and Eisenhower's cross-channel invasion of northwestern France for the summer of 1944. Ike was placed in charge of the Allied Expeditionary Force in December 1943 as opposed to his superior George Marshall, whom FDR insisted stay in Washington DC. The AEF which would launch the invasion at Normandy, and, having succeeded in doing so, would destroy Germany's military strength in the West. While planning for the invasion, the importance in maintaining the alliance with Soviets was never far from Ike's mind. While Winston Churchill's tendency to view military planning during the Second World War with an eye on containing the advance of Soviet armies and the European political situation after the war is well known, another military commander whom Ike dealt with on a regular basis who shared these views was the chief of the Third Army, General George S. Patton, which led to continual clashes between the two men that lasted until the end of the war. One of the first examples of this was Patton's statement at the beginning of April 1944, when Patton, at an opening ceremony for a club for American servicemen in the village of Knutsford, England, made remarks that the United Kingdom and the United States were destined to dominate the postwar world in general, explicitly leaving out the Soviet Union. The remarks provoked an angry reaction among many American newspapers and congressmen, and Patton was privately yet strongly rebuked by Eisenhower for his remarks a week later (Smith, 2012, p. 340).

Even on the eve of D-Day, in Eisenhower's diary entry for June 3, 1944, Ike mentioned one of the necessities of not only the success of Operation Overlord and also to make sure it was not delayed any longer, was the disastrous effect it might have on the Russians, especially given the fact that the landings in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, while successful, had not achieved the objective of drawing German soldiers from the Eastern front (Ferrel, 1981, p. 120). Following the success of the invasion by the AEF, and the subsequent liberation of Paris and battles of the Huertgen Forest and the Bulge in the fall of 1944, Ike made the decision, with Marshall's approval, to send his deputy commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, British Air Marshall Arthur Tedder to Moscow to coordinate plans with the Soviet government for the final defeat of Germany in the spring of 1945. This marked the beginning of a more formal collaboration between the Americans, British, and the Soviets that would last until the end of the war (Eisenhower, 1948, p. 366-367).

Relevance

January 1945 to September 1947: The Race to Berlin and the Hope of a Permanent Peace Between East and West. Thus, the race for Berlin was officially on, in the minds of Churchill, Patton, and Montgomery, but not, by this point, for Eisenhower, who continued to prioritize the destruction of Germany's Armed Forces and to prevent the creation of a "Nazi redoubt" in the Bavarian and Austrian Alps. It would not be accurate to say, however, that Eisenhower did not have his own concerns about dealing with the Soviets after the war. In May 1944 he wrote to one his deputies Walter Bedell Smith that it would

be a mistake to give Britain and America separate occupation zones in Germany, because the Soviets might try to play off one against the other. In a letter sent to Marshall in September 1944, Eisenhower also expressed concerns that postwar occupation of Germany with the Soviets might create considerable difficulties (Charus, 1999, p. 59-82). Throughout the autumn of 1944, Ike worried about what would potentially happen when the AEF and the Red Army finally did link up and had encouraged Patton and General Mark Clark to "seize as much of Austria as you possibly can." He also assured Montgomery "if I could take Berlin with minimal cost, and do it quickly, I would not hesitate to do so." (D'Este, 2002, p. 692) It was clear by March 1945 that taking Berlin "quickly and cheaply" would certainly not be the case, and Ike was moving towards destroying Germany's remaining military strength as opposed to taking its capital. Despite his own German ancestry, Eisenhower had developed a profound hatred of the Germans in general and the Nazis in particular, not only because of their ruthless persistence in fighting a hopeless war, but also due to the horrors he witnessed at liberated Nazi concentration camps. In addition, despite his own suspicion of the Soviets and his conservative political views, he was determined that the alliance between Washington and Moscow needed to be maintained until unconditional surrender of Germany, and hopefully afterwards, and thus he would do nothing to endanger it (Ambrose, 1983, p. 400).

Therefore, Ike made the controversial decision to contact Stalin directly on March 28 with a personal letter. Eisenhower informed Stalin that after the AEF destroyed the remaining German forces in the Ruhr valley, it would focus its next efforts southwest of Berlin, with the ultimately goal of linking up with Soviet forces in the Erfurt-Leipzig-Dresden area. This effectively gave a green light to Stalin and Zhukov to take the German capital. In sending this letter, Eisenhower had completely bypassed the Combined Chiefs of Staff, in an unprecedented manner. Montgomery and Brooke were furious, as was Churchill, not only because Ike had ignored them, but also because they believed Berlin could still be taken by the AEF as opposed to the Red Army. Churchill sent telegrams to both FDR and Marshall questioning Eisenhower's decision and urging them to still consider Berlin to be a viable military target, especially given the political significance of the German capital. Eisenhower, with the backing of both Marshall and FDR, and with the knowledge of the agreements made at the Yalta conference a few months before, stood his ground on this issue, and ultimately Churchill deferred to Ike's judgment, writing to FDR, "The only thing worse than fighting with Allies is fighting against them." (Smith, 2012, p. 428-429)

Theoretical-methodological base

This was not only controversy of the war's ending days, as Eisenhower found himself in another controversy with Patton and Churchill, over the possibility that the AEF could liberate Prague and perhaps all of Czechoslovakia before the arrival of the Red Army. On May 1, Patton, backed by Churchill and British Chiefs of Staff, asked Eisenhower for formal permission to liberate the Czech capital. Churchill contacted the new American President Harry Truman as well to compel Eisenhower to allow the US Third Army to move into Czechoslovakia. Truman passed the question to Marshall, who once again backed Eisenhower's decision to leave Prague, where the Czech population revolted against the Nazi occupiers, to liberation by the Red Army. Marshall, later wrote regarding Prague, that he would be "loath to risk Allied lives at the end of the war for purely political objectives." (D'Este, 2002, p. 699)

In his new role as the US military governor of Germany, Eisenhower at times found himself at odds with official policy set by Washington, although at other times strictly enforced it. On one hand, Eisenhower removed Patton from command of the Third Army and as military governor of Bavaria for his refusal to implement denazification policies. At the same time, both Eisenhower and his chief deputy in occupied Germany, General Lucius Clay, believe the Morgenthau plan to dismantling much of Germany's industrial potential, especially given the desperate humanitarian situation in the country, was madness (Ambrose, 1983, p. 425). Nevertheless, Eisenhower also strove to assure the Soviets that there was no risk of what Ike correctly knew was their greatest fear, the possibility of America and Britain immediately reviving German military strength and directing it against the USSR. Eisenhower continued to believe at this point that there was no fear that the United States and Soviet Union could not live together in peace, as "the alternative was too horrible to contemplate." Eisenhower fully supported a separate unconditional surrender ceremony between the Soviets and the Germans on May 8, and soon afterwards began to turn over German soldiers who had fled westward to avoid surrendering to the Russians. Eisenhower also scrupulously followed a policy of repatriating Soviet POWs and

other Soviet citizens who had fled to the west with the Germans at the end of the war (Ambrose, 1983, p. 428).

In August, Eisenhower received a personal invitation from Stalin to visit Moscow, which Ike accepted. The commander of the Soviet zone of Germany and the primary architect of the Red Army's victory, Marshal Georgi Zhukov, escorted Eisenhower from Berlin to Moscow and served as his host during Ike's visit. On August 12, Eisenhower stood on top of Lenin's tomb with Stalin, Zhukov, and other high-ranking Soviet military and government officials to observe National Sports Parade. In his memoirs on the Second World War, Eisenhower noted how he had never seen a spectacle like this in his entire life, noting the various colored costumes and thousands of performers from different nationalities all moving in unison for a performance that lasted hours (Eisenhower, 1948, p. 461). What followed including a long meeting with Stalin, who had an endless series of questions for Eisenhower about American military, scientific, industrial, and educational achievements, as well as optimistic requests for American financial aid with the resumption of Lend-Lease. Ike also had a chance to view a soccer match in Moscow in Zhukov's company and to attend a massive reception at the American embassy with Soviet and American officers, where news of Japan's unconditional surrender came in, leading to a joyous celebration. Eisenhower then visited Leningrad, as he wanted to view the site of "the greatest siege in history" before his ultimate return to Berlin (Eisenhower, 1948, p. 463-465).

A few months later Eisenhower returned to the United States to replace Marshall as the Army Chief of Staff. Before his departure he urged his replacement General Lucius Clay to try to compromise with Zhukov and the other Soviet authorities in Germany about the question of reparations from the Western zones, perceptively arguing that this was the main issue that could divide the British, French, and Americans from the Soviets going forward (Ambrose, 1983, p. 430). He remained for the most part optimistic in 1945 and 1946 regarding American-Soviet relations. He informed a congressional committee soon after his official appointment in Washington that "There is no one thing, I believe, that guides the policy of Russia more today than to keep friendship with the United States." A few months later, in a speech to American veterans, Ike continued in the same manner, arguing that the very different nature of the American and Soviet governments was not an insurmountable obstacle for maintaining peaceful relations, and that the United States government would make every effort to ensure peace was maintained between the two great powers (Charus, 1999, p. 60).

Discussion

September 1947 to November 1952: The End Grand Alliance and the Emergence of a Cold Warrior. By the fall of 1947, as the Cold War had begun in earnest, Ike's public and private statements about the Soviets began to change. In his diary entry on September 16 1947, Ike, in a manner not dissimilar to FDR before his own death in April 1945, despaired of maintaining a cooperative relations with the Soviets. Pointing to actions in the Baltic States, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, and of course Poland, Eisenhower that Russia seemingly wanted to "communize the world", and that the two systems now seemed destined to "fight until the extinction of them." The best long-term solution was to prevent Russian aggression by "direct conquest and pressure" and "by infiltration." Then the West could win back all of territory that was overrun at the end of the Second World War, and finally create a true peaceful accord that could "end war for all time." (Ferrel, eds., 1981, p. 145)

By 1952, following his securing of the Republican nomination for the Presidency, Eisenhower critiqued Truman's containment policy as not doing enough to deter Soviet aggression, and instead campaigned on "Rollback" of communism. He was still dogged by the question of failing to secure Berlin first before the Red Army, arguing the political decisions made by FDR and Churchill at Yalta basically took the matter out of his hands and thus it was not worth American and British lives when they would have to return to the agreed-upon borders of the occupation zones anyway. He also treated many of his optimistic pronouncements in 1945 and 1946 with considerable embarrassment (Ambrose, 1983, p. 533).

Conclusion

While most Americans saw Eisenhower's relations with the Soviet Union in a positive light, driven by necessity of defeating the Nazis, the "Berlin question" continued to dog him until almost the end of his life. On February 11 1965, four years before his own death, he wrote a letter to Virginia Senator A. Willis Robertson, who an asked him for a full inquiry on the US Army's actions at the end of the Second World War. Eisenhower repeated the same arguments he made almost twenty years earlier,

arguing the objective of the AEF was to destroy Germany's military strength, not to take certain targets, including its capital. He also noted how the Yalta agreements left Berlin 150 miles in the Soviet zone, and thus it would be foolish to risk American lives to take a city that they would inevitably have to withdraw from anyway a few months later, pointing out how American forces did take Leipzig and Weimar but were then had to withdraw from them as well. Eisenhower concluded by stating that it was not as if FDR refused him permission to take Berlin, but the political and diplomatic decisions made at the end of the war which closed the German capital off from the AEF (Eisenhower, 1967, p. 313).

Despite his own political conservatism and anticommunism, Eisenhower effectively buried those sentiments once America joined the Second World War in favor of keeping Soviet Russia in the war and maintaining the military alliance with them. Despite his own occasional misgivings about problems with the Soviet government that might emerge after Germany was defeated, Ike, like his bosses FDR and Marshall, resisted entreaties from those like Churchill, Montgomery, and Patton who wanted to make military decisions based on political calculations of what Europe would be like after the war ended. His pragmatism towards the Soviet alliance continued to the end of the war and afterwards, as he hoped Moscow and Washington could establish a genuine partnership to keep the peace in the world after the surrender of the Axis powers. Although

Eisenhower's views on the Soviets ultimately darkened, which was partially the product of his own conservative political views as well as the Soviet actions in Eastern Europe, his decision as President to maintain Truman's policies of containment in Cold War as opposed to "rollback" points back to his WWII pragmatism with regards to America's alliance with the Soviet Union.

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