

SOVIET FOREIGN RELATIONS DURING WORLD WAR II

I. AMERICAN AND BRITISH RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA BEFORE HITLER'S ATTACK ON USSR.

Had been pretty bad.

1. Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 -- Had linked Stalin with Hitler. 2 of a /kind.

~~2. Russian war against Finland (1939-40) -- further lowered Soviet prestige.~~

2. Soviet Invasion of Poland -- like a vulture picking up the scraps after some predatory beast has eaten its victim.

3. Soviet war against Finland (1939-40) - further lowered Soviet prestige.

4. Annexation of Baltic States, Bessarabia, N. Bukovina --

-- Seemed to be additional proof that Stalin was just as bad as Hitler.

-- Both Germany and Russia appeared to be ruthless, aggressive dictatorships.

5. Battle of Britain --

- Russia had sat and watched while Hitler bombed Britain and tried to force them to surrender.

- Russia gave no aid or comfort to the British, yet only a few months later Stalin was demanding immediate British aid to Russia.

II. BUT HITLER'S ATTACK ON RUSSIA CHANGED ALL THIS

1. Churchill -- Immediately went on the radio, made a speech saying that any country that fought against Nazi Germany was Britain's friend.

- Would cooperate in any way possible.

(Omit from 1942)
(Already covered)

2. British-Soviet Agreement -- (July 12, 1941)

a. "The 2 govts mutually undertake to render each other assistance and support of all kinds..."

X "They further undertake that during this war they will neither negotiate nor conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement."

c. Later this war transformed into a 20 yr. alliance, pledging military assistance. (May 26, 1942).

III. AMERICAN REACTION TO ATTACK ON RUSSIA.

1. Still not in the war. Had become violently anti-Soviet during the recent war with Finland.
But now sentiment veered in favor of Russia.

2. Aid Committee -- Within one week after the attack, formed a committee to act under the State Dept. for purpose of sending aid to Russia.

3. Promise of aid -- August - promised to afford "all economic assistance practicable", including unlimited export licenses and priorities equal to those of Britain.

4. Hopkins to Moscow (July) -- To find out about Soviet needs. See if it was worthwhile sending anything to Russia, or whether it would soon collapse. *Personal emissary of Roosevelt, to convince Stalin of our sincerity in promising aid!*

IV. EXPECTATION OF QUICK SOVIET DEFEAT.

1. Hitler planned 6 weeks. -- *as in France*

2. War with Finland -- had convinced many of *Soviet weakness.*

3. Soviet system inefficient -- *army purges - officer corps liquidated.* Western people who were hostile to Communism wished to ~~believe~~ believe the worst.

4. Gen. Marshall -- Is reported (by Wm Shirer) to have told correspondents confidentially that Russia ~~was~~ would collapse in a few weeks.

5. Gallup Poll -- 70% of Americans expected early ~~defeat~~ defeat.

6. But Hopkins *Joseph Davies* -- Convinced that Russians could hold out, persuaded Roosevelt ~~to~~ that Lend-Lease would be a good bet.

Rep. Martin Dies: "In my judgement, Hitler will be in control of Russia within 30 days." (24 June 1941)

(omit from 192)

V. HARRIMAN AND BEAVERBROOK TO MOSCOW (Sept. 1941)

1. To discuss aid to Russia. Told what they could send.
2. Moscow Protocol -- U.S. promised to deliver approximately \$1 billion of supplies to Russia in the ensuing year.

Roosevelt declared Russia eligible for Lend-Lease, set up a \$1 billion credit for her.

Sent letters to war agencies stating that he wished all material promised ~~in~~ by the Protocol to be released for shipment at earliest possible date, regardless of the effect of these shipments on ~~the~~ any other part of the war program." (Deane, 89)

Britain also promised aid.

But long time before aid came in important quantities.

VI. FIRST GERMAN OFFENSIVE (June 22, 1941 -- Dec. 5)

- 3-pronged drive. *Leningrad +*
1. Stopped on outskirts of Moscow. *(within sight of Kremlin spires.)*
 2. *Russians* Defended selves without ~~much~~ *much* help from abroad.
 3. If the Germans had taken Moscow & Leningrad, this might have led to collapse of morale and end of the war. But not necessarily. *(Napoleon in 1812)*

VII. SOVIET COUNTER-OFFENSIVE (Dec. 6, 1941 -- March 8, 1942)

1. Led by Zhukov. Drove Germans 240 miles west from Moscow.

VI. PEARL HARBOR

Brought U.S. into war. But this of no immediate help to USSR. On the contrary, arming of U.S. now got 1st priority.

~~VIII. SOVIET-BRITISH ALLIANCE (Nov. 26, 1941)~~ *over aid to Russia.*

1. Eden to Moscow -- Dec. 1941. Discussed future boundaries of Europe. Led to treaty.
2. Twenty Year Alliance --
 - a. Pledged "to afford one another military and other assistance and support of all kinds...."
 - b. No separate peace.

Thus put into effect for 20 years. The agreement made the previous July.

DESPITE THE COMMON ENEMY,

EVEN DURING THE WAR THERE WERE DISPUTES, DIFFERENCES OF OPINION.

IX. THE SECOND FRONT DISPUTE.

1. Russia - Demanded a 2nd Front in Europe, right away, in 1941
 - Afraid that otherwise Russia would be defeated.
 - Impossible.

2. Roosevelt -- Foolishly promised a cross-channel invasion of France in 1942.
 - Unable to fulfil the promise until 2 years later, in 1944.

3. Why was the Invasion of France Delayed?

a. Used up men and equipment in other fronts:

- Pacific Theatre.
- China-Burma Theatre. Iran - supply route to Russia.
- Aleutians.
- North African invasion (Nov. 1942) - To prevent Middle East oil from falling into German hands.

- Sicilian invasion.
- Italian invasion

Western troops, ships, and munitions were spread all over the world.

b. We learned that amphibious landings were doomed unless the supplies of planes, ships, and men were overwhelming.

- Amphibious landings in the Pacific and on the Atlantic coast (at Dieppe) were very costly.

~~Churchill's Suspicious~~

- c. Churchill -- Constantly coming up with some kind of scheme for landing somewhere else than in France. Perhaps influenced by his memories of the ~~terrible~~ dreadful blood-letting of World War I in France.

4. Soviet Suspicions -- That we were deliberately postponing the 2nd/ Front.

- Would let the Germans & Russians bleed each other white, and then the West would come in and dictate the peace terms.
- Felt they were bearing the major brunt of the war against Hitler and they were.

X. LEND-LEASE

X. DISPUTES OVER WESTERN AID TO RUSSIA.

1. America and Britain -- both sent huge quantities of goods of all sorts. Especially America. "Lend-Lease".
2. American View -- It was popularly believed ~~that~~ by Americans at the time, and later, that most of Russia's munitions were coming from the U.S. Plus food, clothing, etc.
 - We felt the Russians should be grateful. Thought they should express their gratitude.
 - Instead, the Russians officially showed no gratitude, but always asked for more.
 - American Officials -- Asked the Russians to explain why they needed so many million yards of copper wire, etc., etc.
 - Conscious of the fact that quantities were limited, and that these supplies were needed on other fronts also.
3. Soviet View --
 - They were doing most of the fighting, were shedding priceless blood. Fighting alone against the Germans.
 - Therefore, the least we could do was to send them all the supplies they ~~needed~~ needed.
 - No Gratitude due, since we were sending them supplies out of our own selfish interests. Not because we were generous.
 - American Capitalists -- Were making millions of \$\$\$ off the war.
4. Did Russia get Most of her Munitions from the West? NO.
 - Got large quantities of tanks, planes, guns, shells, etc.
 - But the bulk of these items were produced by the Soviet Union itself.
 - Especially important American items -- trucks.
shoes
food

5. Could Russia have Survived the War without Western Aid?

- Impossible to say.
- Western aid arrived in much larger quantities after Stalingrad than before. After the American industrial machine got into full gear.
 - Amounts arriving before Stalingrad -- relatively small.
- Still, the margin between Victory and Defeat was very narrow.

The planes, Tanks, Trucks, shoes, and food which we sent during 1941, ~~and~~ 1942, and early 1943 may have spelled the difference between ~~the~~ a German victory and a Soviet victory.

(Stalingrad, Aug. 42 - Feb. 43)