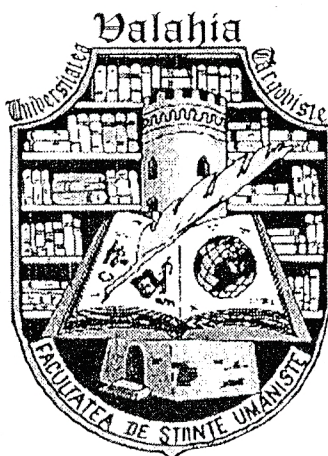


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# TOWARD THE FUTURE : UNITED STATES AND SOVIET UNION GEOPOLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS AT THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO (1944-1945)

*Emanuel Plopeanu\**

Year of 1944 was a decisive one for the outcome of the war. The military evolutions are wellknown. In the same time the policymakers of the main three Powers of the United Nations coalition become more interested in what would follow after the war and especially in regard with the Great Powers connections. In my workpaper I try to emphasize over the views from Washington and Moscow in this matter.

In U. S. the main problem was that of spheres of influence and of future course of U. S. S. R. foreign policy. I bring in discussion a very significant commentary from the *New York Times*, a year before (February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1943): "as Red Army plunge forward they are raising many questions in many minds as to what orders they have written on their banners" (Rappaport 1975: 364).

In Summer of 1944, Secretary of State received an official analysis from U. S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. His main conclusion was that after the war's end military power of U. S. S. R. would prevail in Eastern Europe, Middle East and North Eastern Asia. Also quoted report stated that U. S. and U. S. S. R. would be the only make-decisions countries and „the power and strategical position of those would make impossible the military defeat of one of them by another even in alliance with British Empire" (Gaddis 1987: 24). In this situation U. S. must formulate some policies to assure that above mentioned balance of power was never to be altered. On a Office of Strategic Services' report, in the Summer of 1944, stated that „our interests requires the maintenance of a policy designed to prevent the development of a serious threat to the security of the British Isles (and of the U. S.) through the consolidation of a large part of Europe's resources under any one power" (Gaddis 1987: 24).

Toward the end of this year the U. S. Embassy from Paris reported that „General Eisenhower...doesn't consider that would be in our interest to have a single power dominated Europe, because we would have a very strong Europe, a weak British Empire and ourself" (Gaddis 1987: 24). All these analyses were a warning against a revival of isolationist tendencies in foreign american policy. Above all, President Franklin D. Roosevelt himself, through a speech delivered at Charlottesville in June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1944, stated very clear and firm against such a possibility (Roosevelt 1946: 32).

In the last stages of the war, Washington policymakers became more aware that Germany's defeat would lead into a power vacuum in Eastern Europe in which the best profits would be gathered only by the U. S. S. R., U. K. being too weak to deliver a counterforce. Even so there was no consensus about the idea that U. S. must involve its influence toward Europe because maintaining the balance of power (Gaddis 1987: 49). Anyway, U. S. S. R. appearance as a new decisive player into international relations affairs was entirely recognised. I. g., a week after Japanese surrender, *New York Times* columnist, C. L. Sulzberger, wrote: „the most important political development during the last ten years of localized and finally global warfare has been the emergence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as the greatest dynamic and diplomatic force on the vast Eurasian land mass which stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans" (Gaddis 1987: 25).

Such new reality became sure thing for U. S. diplomacy from the very beginning. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, in a missive to U. S. Ambassador in Moscow, Averell Harriman, from early 1944, expressed his views about this situation: "I am becoming increasingly concerned over the...successive moves of the Soviet Government in the field of foreign relations" (Gaddis 1987: 29). Whatever the legitimacy of Moscow's interests toward Eastern Europe „and as you know we have carefully avoided and shall continue to avoid any disputation with the Soviet Government on the merits of such questions" unilateral actions to secure those „cannot fail to do irreparable harm to the whole cause of international collaboration" (Gaddis 1987: 29). For Cordell Hull it was obvious that Americans would never disposed to sustain any postwar scheme of world organization which would be seen „as a cover for another great power to pursue a course of unilateral action in the international sphere based on superior force" (Gaddis 1987: 29).

Consequently, it was „of the utmost importance that the principle of consultation and cooperation with the Soviet Union be kept alive at all costs, but some measures of cooperation in relation to world public opinion must be forthcoming from the Soviet Government" (Gaddis 1987: 29). Just a year before, in March 1943, Secretary of State used a very sceptical discourse, in a message adressed to his British omologue, Anthony

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\* History and Political Sciences Department, „Ovidius" University from Constantza.

On their part, Soviet diplomats and policy makers expressed their own view about the future of the international relations. Of course, the analysis environment was marked by the Stalin overwhelming dictatorship. In a report from January 10<sup>th</sup> 1944 sent directly to Vyacheslav M. Molotov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Ivan M. Maisky, then Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, in charge of reparation program, marked the future strategic aims of U. S. S. R. foreign policy: „to prevent the formation in Europe of any power or combination of powers with powerful armies. It is in our best interest that the postwar Europe has only one great land power—the USSR, and only one great sea power—England” (Pechatnov 1995: 3). In the Balkans as a whole, the U. S. S. R. should strive to weaken (and ultimately „exclude”) Turkish influence by concluding mutual defense pacts with Romania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. It was also deemed necessary, „to undermine Turkey’s position as a `sentry` at the Straits.” (Pechatnov 1995:4). The Soviet plan for strategically important Iran should be to preserve and expand the British-Soviet-Iranian treaty (with a possible inclusion of the U. S.) in order to maintain and develop communication lines to the Gulf, as well as to „build up Soviet economic, cultural and political presence in the northern part of the country” (Pechatnov 1995:4).

Over six months, at July 14<sup>th</sup> 1944, Andrei A. Gromyko, Ambassador to the U. S. and leading the Soviet team at the United Nations preparatory talks, in a report addressed to Vyacheslav M. Molotov, made his own considerations with regard to what it was and what would be the U. S. foreign policy. The U. S. has broken away from isolationism and will remain actively involved with the world at large; that involvement is likely to remain beneficial for the U. S. S. R. because of strong public support for Roosevelt’s policy and in the longer run because “U. S. essential interests in cooperation” would survive even a possible change of the guard in 1948 (Pechatnov 1995: 6).

Finally, at November 15<sup>th</sup> 1944 Maxim M. Litvinov, Deputy Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Ministry’s special Commission on postwar order and preparation of peace treaties analysed the present and the future of Soviet-British Relations: “The very gravity of this question should strongly push England to reach an accord with us. And that is realizable only on a basis of an amicable separation of security spheres in Europe according to the principle of geographic proximity...our maximum sphere of security should include Finland, Sweden, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, the Slavic countries of the Balkans, as well as Turkey. The British sphere should undoubtedly include Holland, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, and Greece...Norway, Denmark, Germany, Austria and Italy were to constitute a `neutral zone`” (Pechatnov 1995: 11). Later, in January 11 1945 Maxim M. Litvinov bring into discussion a slight modification of above mentioned arrangements: Norway now fell within the Soviet sphere, while British claims were extended onto Sweden, Denmark and Italy. It was also suggested that “these six countries (i.e. Norway, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Denmark, Italy and Sweden) are indeed subject to bargaining and compromise” (Pechatnov 1995:11).

We may conclude that both in Washington and Moscow the policy planners carefully considered, even before the war’s ending, the future of their bilateral relations and the way in which the postwar world was to be shaped. The „dialogue” of reports and analyses from various executive sources showed us a clivage between the U. S. desire to eliminate concepts as *balance of power* and *spheres of influences* and U. S. S. R. effort to pursue their aims in Eastern Europe at least. In the end the U. S. must accept, at the highest levels, that nothing can be done to make a new international relations order accepted by all and that U. S. S. R. impose her will in this region as it pleased. In the same time U. S. S. R. had to abandon his dream to rule Europe in a condominium with U. K. The Cold War beginning left the Great Eurasian Power alone in face of U. S., more determined than never to help and support Europe in peace times.

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