Eisenhower on Leadership

Ike's Enduring Lessons in Total Victory Management

Alan Axelrod

JOSSEY-BASS
A Wiley Imprint
www.josseybass.com

Eisenhower on Leadership

Ike's Enduring Lessons in Total Victory Management

Alan Axelrod

JOSSEY-BASS
A Wiley Imprint
www.josseybass.com

Table of Contents

Eisenhower on Leadership

Ike's Enduring Lessons in Total Victory Management

Alan Axelrod

JOSSEY-BASS
A Wiley Imprint
www.josseybass.com

Published by Jossey-Bass
A Wiley Imprint
989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1741 www.josseybass.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Axelrod, Alan, date.
Eisenhower on leadership: Ike’s enduring lessons in total victory management / Alan Axelrod.
p. cm.
Includes index.
eISBN : 978-0-470-76866-2
1. Leadership. 2. Management. 3. Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969-Military leadership. 4. Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969—Influence. 5. World War, 1939-1945—Campaigns. 6. Generals—United States—Biography. I. Title.

UB210.A94 2006
355.3’3041—dc22
2006006225

HB Printing

Foreword

Peter Georgescu

Intelligence can be defined as the ability to observe seemingly nonexistent patterns. Alan Axelrod has reviewed Dwight David Eisenhower's extraordinarily brilliant deeds in preparation and action on the battlefield and deftly relates them to the business arena.

In a fascinating way, Eisenhower was a "manager" ahead of his time. His strength and style were also extraordinarily well suited for the twenty-first century. In tomorrow's world, businesses will encounter tremendous challenges. The twenty-first century will be defined by global competition and excess supply. The net result will be an explosive increase in the number of enterprises attempting to chase fewer consumers with predominantly commodity products. As a consequence, business will face ferocious price competition and an increasing casualty rate among companies big and small.

In this unforgiving economic environment, Eisenhower's core strengths shine. Clearly and rigorously articulated strategies will become imperative. And every enterprise employee must become a creative contributor, engaged in serving customers and consumers. All egos must be fed yet kept under control, and personal agendas must be sublimated to the common good of the enterprise. This is where Alan Axelrod's *Eisenhower on Leadership* takes on powerful meaning and relevance. The greatest military

invasion in human history required all the twenty-first-century business skills. Unambiguous strategies, flexibility combined with decisive action, fanatical commitment to objectives, and ego management (of Patton and Montgomery, for example)—these qualities and skills, among so many others, make Eisenhower a towering leader in our own times. It is no accident that Ike, for all his position and power, had a low-profile persona. He understood the power of “we” and willingly and capably subjugated the “I” word. In page after page of this book, we see alluring results unfold. It is a masterful tale of competence and wisdom told against the backdrop of the most brilliant and fascinating war history of modern times.

Fate enabled me to appreciate a seldom publicized side of Ike Eisenhower—that of the compassionate human being. I was one of two brothers separated from their parents by the capricious events of the post—World War II era. In 1947, my father and mother, two Rumanian nationals, came to the United States to visit my father’s headquarters offices in New York City. My dad ran the Ploesti oil fields for ESSO International, and had just come out of being imprisoned by the Nazis as an Allied sympathizer in Rumania during the war. While in New York, the Iron Curtain fell. The Communists, with Soviet support, took over Rumania. Instantly my father was labeled a capitalist and an imperialist, and sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment. Obviously, my parents had to remain in the United States. Back in Rumania, my grandfather, an eighty-year-old elder statesman, was arrested and eventually killed in one of the Communist gulags. My brother and I were incarcerated and placed in a hard labor camp. We worked ten-hour days, six days a week, no schooling. I was nine years old when this ugly chapter started.

Then a miracle happened. The Communists went to see my father in New York, demanding that he spy for the

Soviets in return for keeping us alive. After a tortuous day and night, with help from the FBI, my parents refused and went public with the story. A scandal of global proportions exploded. My father had by now become an American citizen, and the Soviet blackmail attempt turned into a political cause célèbre. With the help of Congresswoman Francis Payne Bolton, Ike Eisenhower personally intervened in the case. The story I heard later suggested that President Eisenhower had agreed to trade a couple of Russian spies for my older brother and me, by then a fifteen-year-old.

Indeed, Ike Eisenhower’s lessons in leadership took on a very special meaning in my life.

INTRODUCTION

The Soldier as CEO

Dwight David Eisenhower never led a single soldier into battle. Before World War II, he had never even heard a shot fired in anger. His only “combat wound” was the bad knee, weakened by a West Point football injury, that he twisted helping push a jeep out of the Normandy mud. Yet it was Ike Eisenhower who, as supreme Allied commander in Europe, was responsible for leading the greatest military enterprise in history. Millions of American, British and Commonwealth, Free French, and other soldiers, sailors, and airmen looked to him and answered to him in a struggle for nothing less than the salvation of the world.

Eisenhower was a desk soldier, but he always tried to move his desk as close to the action as he could. Although he was an accomplished strategist, having been educated at the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College, the strategies by which the Allies fought World War II were primarily the work of others. It was others, too, who had the job of executing the strategies, others who actually led the troops into battle. Nevertheless, most of the commanders and politicians who made the history of the war as well as the journalists and scholars who subsequently wrote it agreed: Eisenhower was at the heart of victory.

It was, in a favorite Allied phrase, *total victory.* It could be justly said that Eisenhower led that total victory, but it would be even more accurate to say that he *managed* it. For Ike Eisenhower was a new kind of military leader uniquely

suited to war on an unprecedented scale, a scale that dwarfed even the “Great War” of 1914- 1918. His task was not to lead men into battle but to lead those who led men into battle. As supreme Allied commander, he was the commander of the commanders. Yet nobody knew better than Eisenhower that although he had greater responsibility than any other Allied military leader, he had less absolute authority than any other high-level commander. Whereas any three-star general could order the two-star below him to do this or that, four-star (and, later, five-star) Eisenhower’s “subordinates” were the top commanders of the U.S., British (and Commonwealth), and Free French armies. They answered, first and foremost, to their own political leaders as well as to their own military judgment. By consensus of the Allied heads of state, they agreed to be led by Eisenhower, yet he was ultimately answerable to them as well as to all the political leaders to whom they answered. The authority and the weight of the big decisions finally rested on Eisenhower, but those decisions could be arrived at only through a process of compromise and consensus. Although Eisenhower’s leadership authority derived from the very highest international levels of government, it had no formal legal basis, and ultimately it was sustained by nothing more or less than the ongoing consent of those he led.

If Ike Eisenhower’s situation was unique for a military man, it was—and remains—common enough for leaders in the civilian sphere. His position was analogous to that of a CEO or, indeed, any high-level manager in a large and complex enterprise. It was a position complexly compounded of awesome authority and what can best be described as equally awesome subordination of authority. Both a leader and a servant, he was a servant leader, expected to act as master while answering to many masters. He was, in short, a manager, in the most modern

sense of the word, charged with leading, coordinating, prioritizing, judging, and cajoling others toward the common goal of total victory.

That term, *total victory,* also has a significantly modern connotation. Beginning about a quarter century after the end of World War II, Total Quality Management (TQM) became both the mantra and the Holy Grail for a growing number of managers at all levels. Although highly technical tomes have been devoted to TQM, it can be described in a nutshell as a set of systems and policies for doing the right thing, on time, all the time, in an effort to achieve both continual improvement and consistent customer satisfaction. General Eisenhower never heard of TQM, of course, but he did develop a unique approach to the unprecedented command responsibility that had been assigned to him. The purpose of his approach was to ensure that as commander of commanders—effectively the CEO of the European campaign—he and his vast command would do the right thing, on time, all the time. Ike would probably have called this nothing more or less than his “duty” or, even more simply, his “job.” We might call it Total Victory Management, and it is what makes the supreme Allied commander so enduring and compelling an example of leadership for managers today.

◆ ◆ ◆

But what qualified this U.S. Army officer above all others for the job? A fair question—it was surely on the minds if not the lips of the 366 officers senior to Ike Eisenhower when General George C. Marshall, the army chief of staff, jumped him over them and into the top command slot.

In contrast to, say, George S. Patton Jr. or Douglas MacArthur, Eisenhower did not possess a distinguished

military pedigree. There was nothing in his heritage that "destined" him either to a military career or military greatness. He was born on October 14, 1890, in the little town of Denison, Texas, the third of seven sons of David Jacob and Ida Elizabeth (Stover) Eisenhower. David Jacob tried to make a go of a hardware business in Denison, but, stubborn and restless, he gave up and found instead a menial and dirty job as an "engine wiper" for the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway at the rate of $10 a week.

Before Dwight David was a year old, the family left Denison to return to Abilene, Kansas, where they had roots in a Mennonite colony. Here David Jacob installed his wife and children in a tiny rented house near the Union Pacific tracks and found work in a creamery.

The Eisenhower boys became intimate with poverty as well as the austere Mennonite faith, but Dwight David—whom high school classmates nicknamed "Little Ike" to distinguish him from his brother Edgar, dubbed "Big Ike"—earned a reputation as a fine athlete and an indifferent student with a sunny smile and usually happy-go-lucky demeanor that concealed a quick temper liable to come over him, from time to time, like a storm. His apparent lack of interest in his studies also belied an able mind and an extraordinary memory, which eagerly devoured facts and figures as well as ideas.

After graduating from Abilene High School in 1909, Ike went to work for nearly two years at various odd jobs, including a full-time position at his father's employer, the Belle Springs Creamery, to support his brother Edgar's studies at the University of Michigan. Bored with dead-end labor in Kansas, Ike was enthralled by stories about the U.S. Naval Academy his friend and former high school classmate, Everett Edward "Swede" Hazlett Jr., now an Annapolis midshipman, told him. Ike wrote to his congressman and his

senator, asking for a nomination to either Annapolis or West Point, and, after taking examinations for both academies, he secured a nomination to West Point from Senator Joseph L. Bristow. Against the wishes of his mother, who held dear the pacifist philosophy of the Mennonite faith, he enrolled in 1911 as a member of the Class of 1915, which would prove to be one of the most remarkable in the history of the institution, producing 59 generals out of 164 graduates.

In that class, Ike Eisenhower was no standout. Although he made a splash as a football player, he tore up his knee in his second year and not only had to quit playing but even faced the possibility of a disability dismissal from the academy. Fortunately, that did not come to pass, and Ike graduated just above the academic middle of the class, at 61st, and very near the bottom in discipline, at 125th out of 164.

As a brand-new second lieutenant, he was posted to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. There he met Mamie Geneva Doud, daughter of a wealthy Denver meat packer, who wintered with his family in an exclusive San Antonio neighborhood. Ike and Mamie married in 1916 after a quick courtship and would have two sons: Doud Dwight, known as Ikky, who was born in 1917 and succumbed to scarlet fever just four years later, and John Sheldon Doud, born in 1922.

Like other young army officers of the era, Ike longed for a war. Advancement in the peacetime American military proceeded at a glacial pace, and only by distinguishing himself in action could a second lieutenant hope to rise through the ranks. In 1916-1917, President Woodrow Wilson ordered a large-scale “punitive expedition” against the Mexican revolutionary and social bandit Pancho Villa, whose small army had raided a New Mexico border town. Ike hoped to get in on that assignment, but was passed over, and when the United States entered World War I in April 1917,

he was not sent to France, as he wanted to be, but was assigned instead to a series of Stateside training missions, including one at a tank training center. In all of these duties, he received high marks from superiors and was promoted to captain, despite his lack of combat experience. At Camp Colt, adjacent to the Gettysburg battlefield in Pennsylvania, he created on a shoestring a highly effective tank training program, an achievement for which he received the Distinguished Service Medal, the highest noncombat award the army could give. But by the time he was in line for duty overseas, the war had ended.

In 1919, after the armistice, Ike reported to Camp Meade, Maryland, as a tank officer. Here he became a close friend of another apostle of the still-emerging armored branch, George S. Patton Jr. Although Patton had fought in France and returned a decorated hero, he did not look down on Ike Eisenhower as a peacetime officer, but regarded him as a kindred spirit who shared his passion for the future of armored warfare. The pair spent long nights discussing everything from the evolving role of the tank and the nitty-gritty of mobile warfare to the mysterious nature of war and warriors. These discussions and the strong friendship with so dashing an officer as Patton had a profound influence on Eisenhower, as did his involvement in an epic public relations venture known as the 1919 transcontinental convoy. During an era when very few roads, let alone highways, existed in the United States, the army decided to stage a demonstration of long-distance overland military transport. On July 7, 1919, eighty-one assorted military vehicles embarked from Washington, D.C., on a 3,251-mile trek to San Francisco. Ike volunteered to serve with the expedition, which arrived in the City by the Bay sixty-two days after it had left the nation’s capital. Completed just five days behind schedule, the expedition was counted a spectacular success. The experience impressed Eisenhower

with the enormous potential of mechanized warfare, and it also impressed upon him the nation's great need for decent roads. It is no accident that thirty-seven years later, as president of the United States, Dwight David Eisenhower would sign into law the Interstate Highways Act of 1956, authorizing construction of the modern interstate highway system.

As influential as Patton was in the development of Eisenhower as an officer, it was a far less famous man, Brigadier (later Major) General Fox Conner, who served as Ike's most important mentor. Conner was Ike's commanding officer when he served in the Panama Canal Zone from 1922 to 1924. Conner instilled in Eisenhower what West Point, despite formal course work, could not: a love of military and general history. This awakened passion prepared in Ike the commanding perspective from which he viewed and interpreted the unfolding events of World War II. Thanks to the education Conner began, he was better able to appreciate, when the time came, the wants, needs, and points of view of the British and French allies as well as those of the German and Italian enemies.

Conner also had the ear of army high command and, greatly impressed with Ike Eisenhower, he successfully lobbied for his enrollment in the army's Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas—the stepping-stone for officers ear-marked for senior-level staff duty. Ike's good friend Patton lent him the voluminous notebooks he had compiled when he had been a student at the school, and Patton confided to his diary that it was his notes that propelled Eisenhower, now a major, to the head of his class: first of 275 graduates in 1926.

From the Command and General Staff School Eisenhower went on to the even more prestigious Army War College. Whereas the Fort Leavenworth school trained officers to

serve on the staffs of commanding generals, the War College groomed future generals, imparting the art of war at its most advanced and comprehensive level, including how armies are organized, mobilized, supplied, and used in combat. Eisenhower graduated in June 1928 and left for France to serve on the American Battle Monuments Commission. This assignment gave him two opportunities: one was to serve on the staff of the army's most senior commander, John J. Pershing, who had led the American Expeditionary Force in the Great War, and the other was to tour all the battlefields of western Europe and write a guidebook to these places. He concentrated on the sectors in which American troops had fought, but his travels encompassed the entire Western Front. These explorations and the authorial task that accompanied them gave Eisenhower an intimate familiarity with territory and terrain that would, within a matter of years, become a great battlefield yet again—*his* battlefield.

In 1929, Eisenhower returned to the United States and served in the War Department as assistant executive officer to Brigadier General George Van Horn Moseley, principal adviser to the secretary of war. He was also tapped at this time by General Pershing to edit his wartime memoirs, a task that proved largely thankless, except that it introduced him to Lieutenant Colonel George C. Marshall, Pershing's aide-de-camp and one of the army's rapidly rising stars.

In 1933, Ike Eisenhower came into the orbit of yet another key officer when he was appointed principal aide to Douglas MacArthur, U.S. Army chief of staff. From the perspective of an outsider, it was a plum job for a rising young officer, but MacArthur was notoriously difficult. A mercurial autocrat, he kept conspicuously unmilitary hours (rising late, taking long lunches, and retiring even later) and heaped mountains of work on his aides, especially Eisenhower. Ike became indispensable to MacArthur, whom he accompanied to the

Philippines in 1935 to assist in the organization of the commonwealth's army. His years with MacArthur were among the most arduous and frustrating of his military career; they also kept him glued to a staff assignment when what he most wanted was to command troops in the field. Staff officers are among the most powerful people in the army, but they rarely reach the highest levels of distinction; serving "in the rear with the gear," they don't get combat medals. Nevertheless, Ike learned extraordinarily valuable lessons under MacArthur in the Philippines. He learned about the nature of power from one of the world's most powerful military figures while simultaneously gaining hard, practical experience in working successfully with a monumentally difficult, ego-driven personality. He also learned firsthand how to build an army from scratch and with the most meager of resources.

MacArthur was loath to release Lieutenant Colonel Eisenhower, who had become his strong right hand, and Manuel Quezon, president of the Philippines, felt very much the same way. But by the autumn of 1938, it became clear to Eisenhower that the attempt of the western European democracies to "appease" Adolf Hitler would ensure rather than prevent war, and to Quezon's pleas that he remain in the Philippines, Eisenhower replied, "I'm a soldier. I'm going home. We're going to go to war and I'm going to be in it." Ike asked to be relieved of duties in Manila effective as of August 1939. Quezon tried to buy him off with a handsome salary from the Philippine treasury. "Mr. President," Ike replied, "no amount of money can make me change my mind." On the day before he left, Eisenhower was guest of honor at a luncheon given by Manuel Quezon, who presented him with the distinguished Service Star of the Philippines in recognition of his "exceptional talents ... his breadth of understanding [and] his zeal and magnetic leadership."

By the time Eisenhower returned to the United States, World War II had begun in Europe with Hitler's September 1939 invasion of Poland. Ike was thrilled to be appointed both regimental executive officer and commander of the First Battalion, Fifteenth Infantry, Third Division, at Fort Lewis, Washington, in January 1940. He was training recruits and commanding troops—in the field—at last.

In March 1941, Ike was promoted to full colonel and in June was transferred to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, as chief of staff of the Third Army. In this capacity, promoted yet again, to the rank of temporary brigadier general, he served as one of the principal planners of the Louisiana Maneuvers, which took place in September 1941. The most ambitious war games the U.S. Army had—or has—ever staged, they involved more than half a million troops, and Eisenhower's key role in them drew the attention of army chief of staff Marshall. When the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor propelled the United States into World War II on December 7, 1941, General Marshall summoned Eisenhower to Washington, D.C. There Marshall quickly summed up the catastrophic situation in the Pacific—the fleet at Pearl Harbor smashed, Wake Island under heavy attack, Guam fallen, the possessions of Britain and the Netherlands fallen or falling, and the Philippines under attack and about to be invaded. This summary concluded, he posed one question: "What should be our general course of action?"

It was, Ike realized, a question that defied practical answer. But after asking for a few hours to formulate a reply, he returned to Marshall's office to lay out what he believed was the only immediately viable course: do everything militarily possible, no matter how little, by establishing a base of operations in Australia. In his postwar memoir, Crusade in Europe, Ike recalled his rationale: "The people of China, of the Philippines, of the Dutch East Indies will be watching us. They may excuse failure but they will

not excuse abandonment." Marshall agreed, and he recognized in Eisenhower an officer who was willing and able to provide realistic solutions even to apparently hopeless situations—hard answers rather than evasive excuses or alibis. Marshall named Eisenhower assistant chief of the Army Operations Division, a post in which he served through half of June 1942, having been jumped in rank, as of March 1942, to major general.

Marshall assigned Eisenhower to prepare strategy for an Allied invasion of Europe, a plan that would, however, be put on hold as the Americans yielded to British prime minister Winston Churchill's proposal to fight Germany and Italy first in North Africa, then step off from there to assault Europe by way of what Churchill called its "soft underbelly," mainland Italy and the Mediterranean coast via Sicily. That Ike's plan was temporarily shelved did not mean he was sidelined. Quite the contrary. In May, Ike was sent to London to study issues related to joint defense. On June 15, 1942, General Marshall chose him over 366 more senior officers to be commander of all U.S. troops in the European theater of operations (which included North Africa), and the following month came promotion to temporary lieutenant general.

On the eve of America's entry into World War II, Eisenhower had been so obscure an officer that he was widely misidentified in press reports of the Louisiana war games as "Lt. Col. D. D. Ersenbeing." Now, less than a year later, he was America's top commander in North Africa and Europe. As chief of staff, George C. Marshall was solely responsible for choosing a top theater commander, and what he saw in Ike Eisenhower was a unique combination of an aptitude for strategy and strategic planning, a talent for logistics and organization, and an extraordinary ability to work with others—to get along with them, to persuade them, to mediate among them, to direct them, to encourage them, and to correct them. And there was more. Ike was no

small-talker or glad-hander. He was all business. Yet he possessed an infectious smile that seemed to broadcast a combination of humility, friendliness, and unassailable optimism, no matter the odds against his side. Did this reflect his true personality ? Some who believed they knew him well said it most certainly did, but others, who probably knew him even better, said that Dwight D. Eisenhower was actually a difficult man with a hair-trigger temper, a man who often doubted himself, yet a man who had somehow learned to set these traits and doubts aside, to submerge them in the appearance of sunny geniality and self-confident optimism. Ultimately, the issue of whether Eisenhower the commander, the manager, and the leader was the same as Eisenhower the man matters very little. All that really matters is that he brought to bear in his command decisions and leadership style all the elements Marshall saw and recognized as indispensable in an officer given ultimate responsibility for the direction of a mission as complex as it was desperate.

◆ ◆ ◆

On November 8, 1942, Eisenhower commanded the commencement of Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa, which was successfully completed in May 1943, despite some serious errors and setbacks, for which Eisenhower willingly assumed responsibility. During the North African campaign, Ike made the difficult and controversial decision to work with the Vichy French admiral Jean-François Darlan rather than treat him as an enemy. Although the decision brought a storm of protest from some Allied officials, it received the full support of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and doubtless saved Allied lives.

Having been promoted to temporary four-star general in February 1943, Eisenhower next commanded the amphibious assault on Sicily (July 1943), followed by the invasion of the Italian mainland (September 1943). The fighting in Italy would prove heartbreakingly costly and would not end until very near the end of the war in Europe; however, on December 24, 1943, Ike had to leave others to direct the Italian campaign, as he was appointed supreme commander of Allied expeditionary forces and placed in command of Operation Overlord, the invasion of Europe via the English Channel. In January, he arrived in London to finalize plans for what the world would come to call D-Day, the largest, most dangerous, and most consequential invasion in the history of warfare.

A significant portion of this book is devoted to the many leadership decisions Ike had to make during this dauntingly complex operation, beginning with the calculated risk of launching the invasion on June 6, 1944, to take advantage of a very narrow window of acceptable weather during a period of unanticipated storms. At stake were the lives of more than 156,000 troops in the initial assault and, indeed, the very outcome of a war between the forces of democratic civilization and Nazi totalitarianism.

The success of the Normandy landings was only the beginning of what Ike himself called (in the title of his postwar memoir) the “crusade in Europe.” All decisions relating to the day-to-day conduct of the campaign as well as its overall objectives either required his judgment or rested entirely with him. He had to confront not only the Allies’ common enemy, Germany, but, often, elements within the Allied forces—political leaders as well as generals—whose national or personal goals differed sufficiently to create perpetual friction if not outright ruptures. The alliance that defeated the forces of Adolf Hitler was the most complex and difficult in history. While others

determined political and diplomatic policy, it was Ike's responsibility to implement policy in ways that furthered rather than hindered the war effort. He had to harmonize conflicting ideologies as well as conflicting personalities. He also had to reconcile his own constitutional and personal allegiance to the United States with the requirements of the international alliance. It was a staggeringly difficult task of leadership and management.

Militarily, once the invasion beachheads had been firmly secured and the principal Allied forces had broken through the treacherous bocage, or hedgerow country, of Normandy, the invasion of Europe proceeded with remarkable speed. By the end of 1944, Ike faced a new problem. He called it "victory fever," a sense of invulnerability born of success, which readily led to complacence. It was victory fever that contributed to American vulnerability in the Ardennes when the Germans, supposedly beaten, launched a devastating counterattack, dubbed the Battle of the Bulge, in December. Ike's steadiness and rapid response during this crisis converted a potential Allied catastrophe into the beginning of the culminating phase of Allied total victory.

After winning the Battle of the Bulge, the Allies crossed the Rhine on March 7, 1945. Advances on all fronts resulted at last in the surrender of Germany on May 7-8, 1945, bringing the war in Europe to an end. Ike was hailed as a hero, although he also faced fierce and bitter criticism for what was only partly his decision: to allow the Soviet Red Army to capture Berlin. The political aspect of this decision was the responsibility of the Allied heads of state (who had promised Berlin to the Soviets at the Yalta conference of February 1945), but, militarily, Ike agreed: Berlin was best left to the Russians, who were closer, who had more troops, and, even more important, who were willing to lose large numbers of men in order to capture the Nazi capital. Ike's objective was never to take territory or take cities. (It was