

The General and the Politician: Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, and American Politics

John W. Malsberger

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As historian and author John W. Malsberger writes in The General and the Politician: Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon and American Politics, no two political figures could have taken more different routes to the Presidency than did America's 34th and 37th Commanders in Chief. Thrown together largely for political convenience by a Republican party struggling to reinvent itself through years of post-Depression, Democratic dominance, Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon came to embody two radically different styles of leadership, simultaneously defining - for the American electorate - where American politics had been, and where they were headed. While debate has raged amongst historians over the level of hostility the two men were rumored to harbor for one another, there is – as Malsberger points out – a more accurate reading of their relationship available to us if we examine all the facts. Taken in a broader context, their relationship was much less a momentary collision of dissident styles and values than a genuine watershed moment in American politics, from which our current political spectrum and electorate can trace their roots. The General and the Politician thoroughly and accessibly details the intersection of two of 20th-Century America's most powerful figures, and examines their tenuous but transformative relationship to reveal the origins of political discussions and debates that we're still having today.

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