

1988

## George C. Marshall: Statesman 1945-1959

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### Recommended Citation

Bottoms, Albert M. and Pogue, Forrest C. (1988) "George C. Marshall: Statesman 1945-1959," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 41 : No. 2, Article 15.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol41/iss2/15>

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as a reconciliation between Germany and France.

Stalin's failure to honor promises given Roosevelt in 1933 when recognition of Soviet Russia was granted; the treatment accorded the population of the U.S.S.R., including the murders of nonbelievers; and the purges, described in horrifying human terms, that consolidated Stalin's power, all prevented any meaningful pre-war U.S. initiative toward cooperation with Russia in opposing the Germans. Had the Germans believed such cooperation possible, the war might have been averted.

The events surrounding the Nazi-Soviet pact that ensured the invasion of Poland are also described firsthand and it is here that Henderson places Soviet goals in focus. During the war Stalin proclaimed to have abandoned the search for world domination in favor of more immediate self-interest. But, once the war was over, he quickly returned to the domination theme. Henderson's perspective of history and his recall of the statements of the leaders he met are extremely useful in placing current Russian efforts in context.

The men and events seen and witnessed by Henderson have been examined thoroughly in other publications, but no portraits appear fresher or more keenly observed than here. And Henderson's account is made even more appealing by the number of anecdotes he includes, such as the memorable story of Colonel Isabel, the chief of staff of the "American-Lithuanian Legion."

Isabel was sent to ensure the independence of that country between the wars. Concerned that the British would not consider the Americans real fighters, he acted to allay those fears at a dinner party given in his honor. To the horror of a British general's wife seated on his right, he finished a toast by chewing his glass down to the stem, and then stuck hat pins through both arms and cheeks, all the while staring at his lucky omen, which he had leaned against his saucer—a shrunken head from South America. Needless to say, his performance was convincing. So, too, are Henderson's and editor Baer's. It is only unfortunate that the price of this fascinating volume is so high, otherwise, it might reach a much wider audience.

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Pogue, Forrest C. *George C. Marshall: Statesman 1945-1959*. New York: Viking, 1987. 603pp. \$29.95

With this volume, Forrest Pogue cements his place alongside such giant biographers as Douglas Southall Freeman and Carl Sandburg. Pogue's task is particularly challenging in that he is forced to place relatively recent and complex events into an integrated historical context. He is successful and this volume reminds us of the stage that was set for the uncertain world in which we live today.

At Princeton in 1947, Marshall called for understanding the lessons

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of historic events and periods. In that same speech, he also put forth a credo that strikes a responsive chord in those of the uniformed services when he pointed out that "action requires conviction and conviction depends upon understanding . . . a general understanding of the past history and an understanding that action is a basic necessity of man's nature." The author chronicles the rich efforts of this man of action in such various capacities as Special Envoy to China, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense.

The immediate post-World War II world was one in which civilization was threatened by enormous political and economic forces. Pogue reminds us of the near simultaneity of cataclysmic events—the Fall of China, the Truman Doctrine, the announcement of the European Recovery Program (the Marshall Plan), the emergence of Israel, the Berlin Crises, the formation of NATO, and the Korean War—that occurred in a period of about five years. Each event has left its mark on the nature and character of our professional military activities.

On 26 November 1945, as Marshall retired from the position of Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, President Truman, who regarded Marshall as the greatest military man this country has ever produced, said "Millions of Americans gave their country outstanding service. General of the Army George C. Marshall gave it victory. . . . To him as much as any individual, the United States owes its future." The very next day

the President asked Marshall to go to China!

When one reflects upon the impact that the Communist defeat of Chiang Kai-shek has had upon American politics even to this day—McCarthyism, the John Birch movement, and a generally paralyzing fear of seeming to appease Communism in Asia and Latin America—Marshall emerges as possessing even greater will, patience, and conciliatory powers than had ever been called upon during his term as architect of victory in World War II. Stilwell, Wedemeyer, Chiang, Chou En-Lai, Truman, the group known as the China Hands, and those early members of the restless right, all march through these pages. As in other postwar arenas, individual and group hatreds and attempts to seize advantage made stable arrangements impossible. Perhaps this initial diplomatic assignment in China was the training ground for the great leadership initiatives that Marshall used in securing acceptance of the Marshall Plan by the Europeans and ratification of the treaty by a politically divided U.S. Government.

The Truman Doctrine saved Greece for the free world. Marshall and Senator Vandenberg, the Republican leader in the Senate, began a period of bipartisanship in foreign policy, the likes of which we have not seen in decades. Men and egos can destroy, as in China, or they can build, as was done in Greece, in NATO, and in the European Recovery Program. Selflessness is a major, if not predominant, ingredient

for success. Those seeking solutions to U.S. problems in formulating courses of action in the Middle East and in Central America today could well ponder the blueprints for building constituencies demonstrated by Marshall in 1948. In the events described by Pogue in this volume, confrontational rhetoric was a companion of failure for both sides.

In formulating American policies for China, Korea, and Palestine, Marshall kept clearly in sight the predominance of the U.S. national interests. Once again Marshall sought to minimize U.S. entanglement in regions from which withdrawal might be difficult, embarrassing, or impossible. Pogue sketches the impact on U.S. foreign policy of ethnically motivated election year politics in 1948. Again the parallels to the present situation are striking.

The fifties brought the cancer of McCarthyism. Violent attacks were made upon Marshall by Senator McCarthy, Senator Jenner, and, regrettably, by some former comrades-in-arms. Some individuals felt the need to seek personal vindication for courses of action earlier rejected. Even General Eisenhower was caught up in the furor of the rhetoric and seemed to turn against Marshall. During this most difficult passage, the inner grace of Marshall shone like a beacon—a reminder of the necessity to maintain civility of discourse if our democratic processes are to survive. It was in this environment that Marshall, as Secretary of Defense, was a major figure in the drama surrounding the relief of

Douglas MacArthur. Nothing that has happened in the seventies or eighties matches the passion of that event; however, one can trace the origins of many of the attitudes held by current military and civilian leaders to the events of 1951.

The past is indeed prologue and throughout this volume Pogue elegantly portrays Marshall the soldier, Marshall the statesman, and Marshall the man.

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Klachko, Mary and Trask, David F.  
*Admiral William Shepherd Benson: First Chief of Naval Operations.*  
Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1987. 268pp. \$24.95

This is the first biography of the first Chief of Naval Operations—who headed the U.S. Navy in World War I. Benson, a mediocre student at the Naval Academy, attained the rank of captain in 1909 after 32 years of service. After commanding the new battleship *Utah* (commissioned in 1911) he was placed in command of the Philadelphia Navy Yard. It was during this period that he cultivated the favor of Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels. Daniels had alienated many of the senior officers in the Navy, including its leading reformer, Rear Admiral Bradley A. Fiske. As Benson's biographers point out, while "Fiske and other activists lost favor" Benson's relationship with the Secretary improved. The culmi-