George C. Marshall At Harvard: A Study of The Origins and Construction of the "Marshall Plan" Speech

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Abstract

George C. Marshall's "Harvard Commencement Address" provides a broad focus to properly examine the construction of a foreign policy speech for this historical period. Significant primary documents are considered relating to Marshall's speech that have been previously ignored by other researchers. This expanded rhetorical analysis reveals how carefully foreign policy speeches are crafted and then justified to a number of different audiences.

In a 1980 survey of the status of foreign policy argument, Robert P. Newman suggested that this field suffers from the maladies of "chaos and inadequacy."[1] Newman's judgment echoes Robert T. Oliver's 1950 study of diplomatic rhetoric. Oliver noted that diplomatic discourse, as a research field, had been "largely undefined and unsurveyed."[2] Newman and Oliver agreed that this area of study may have been neglected by rhetorical critics because of the "special difficulties" that this type of scholarship presents. Despite unique research problems, these rhetoricians strongly *urged* that foreign policy discourse be examined by critics because, as Oliver concluded, "of its increasingly vital significance to human survival."[3]

Writing in 1972, Larry Ehrlich analyzed the June 5, 1947, address given by Secretary of State George C. Marshall before the Harvard Alumni Association.[4] It was apparent that Ehrlich tried to minimize some of the critical difficulties originally outlined by Oliver and Newman. Instead of offering a comprehensive critique of Marshall's speech text, Ehrlich focused upon only one primary aspect of the discourse. He suggested that since the content of the address was an "engineered rhetorical effort" for this occasion, then events surrounding its construction should be studied to understand how the Harvard Alumni platform became an "international forum."[5]

The narrow focus of the Ehrlich study, however, presents several problems. By concentrating mostly upon the immediate antecedents for the speech, Ehrlich's work ignored many of the vital elements involved in the background of the speech. The historical information that is presented reflects little concern with how the State Department came to recognize and then justify taking action on the economic problems of Europe. Although Ehrlich's analysis is sound in pointing out how the Harvard Alumni platform became "international" in its intended audience, he offered

little evidence on how this address was constructed for appealing to an American audience. Ehrlich does suggest that the Marshall speech was designed to "break with explosive force and overcome the isolationist opposition" in this country,[6] but he failed to document how this address was crafted to respond to this attitude in the American audience.

Ehrlich indicated in his footnotes that he consulted the *Memoirs* of George F. Kennan as *his* only primary source in the writing of the essay. Since other significant primary documents are available that can provide a clear chronological tracing of how the Harvard speech came to be written, many of them available prior to Ehrlich's research, the analysis presented by Ehrlich is not as well supported as it could have been. In addition, by omitting the autobiographies of the two key State Department speech writers during this time, Joseph M. Jones and Charles E. Bohlen, Ehrlich's critique missed an opportunity to study the methods by which the State Department struggled to justify, for several different audiences, this particular initiative in American foreign policy. A consideration of these sources would also add valuable insights for scholars of rhetoric and public address as to how such speeches were constructed during this period.

Since Ehrlich placed too little emphasis on the historical context of Marshall's speech, this study will consider primary sources as they relate to the construction of the Harvard address. Once a chronology of the events in the construction of the speech has been outlined, a more complete analysis of the text of this discourse will be offered. Ehrlich's critique of the text will not only be expanded, but Marshall's speech will be studied in the broader context of how American foreign policy is crafted and then justified to a number of different audiences. The reconstructive tools of history will be combined with an argumentative analysis provided by rhetorical criticism to better understand the design of the Marshall Plan speech and its national and international effects.

The Rhetorical and Historical Background

George Catlett Marshall was appointed Secretary of State on February 21, 1947, by President Harry Truman. The Senate rapidly confirmed Marshall, despite some public criticism of this action because of the long tradition against career military personnel assuming such a high "civilian" office.[7] The President, however, remained firmly behind Marshall's appointment because as Senator, Truman had received regular briefings from Marshall as to the conduct of American military operations during World War Two. Concerning these Congressional briefings, Truman wrote that "out of these continuous contacts grew my high regard for him as a man and as a soldier."[8]

Immediately after assuming duties as Secretary of State, Marshall began devoting most of his time to preparation for a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers. The meeting was to take place in early March of 1947 in Moscow and was to deal with the future of Germany and Eastern Europe. The Red Army had remained in these areas since the end of war, and the Western Allies believed that the Soviets had broken their promise to withdraw their troops.[9] As former chief of staff for the

United States Army during the war, Marshall was well aware of post-war tensions. The day after taking office, Marshall spoke to an audience at Princeton University, describing his view of the war's aftermath:

> The war years were critical, at times alarmingly so. But I think the present period is, in more respects, even more critical . . . the more serious aspect is the fact that we no longer display that intensity, that unity of purpose, with which we concentrated on the war task and achieved the victory.[10]

Before leaving for the Soviet Union, the Secretary acted to reorganize the State Department. Marshall's goal was to establish a group of specialists who, although working outside the regular Department hierarchy, would still remain under the Secretary to "analyze trends in foreign policy and formulate policy from ten to twenty-five years into the future."[11] According to Marshall's undersecretary, Dean Acheson, the primary function of this new "Policy Planning Staff" was to "look ahead, beyond the smoke and crises of current battle" and ultimately to "see the emerging form of things to come and to outline what should be done to meet these situations."[12] To head this important group, Marshall selected George F. Kennan, a career diplomat, with a long personal and scholarly familiarity with Soviet affairs.

Marshall departed for Moscow on March 4, 1947. After landing in Paris, the Secretary was given a copy of a speech President Truman had just delivered before a special joint session of Congress. In the address, Truman spoke of the "urgent appeal" he had received from the Greek government for "financial and economic assistance." This aid was needed, the President argued, because no other nation was willing to help. Since the end of the war, Greece had been strongly supported by Great Britain. This support, however, had become very costly to the British government because of growing internal violence in northern Greece.[13] The primary catalyst for this civil turmoil was the communist supported ELAS, or National Popular Liberation Army. The presence of British troops was required to help put down the efforts of the ELAS to subvert the Greek government. The civil war, which began in March of 1946, waged into February of 1947. On February 21, 1947, the British Foreign Office informed Washington that they had to withdraw from Greece.[14]

In his speech, President Truman tried to make the facts of the Greek "crisis" clear to Congress and the American people. Besides suggesting the economic seriousness of the situation in Greece, Truman expanded the scope of the problem by proclaiming that "if Greece should fall . . . the effect upon its neighbor Turkey would be immediate and serious. Confusion and disorder might well spread throughout the Middle East."[15] This argument, implying an inevitable chain of "falling dominoes," was the first statement of what was termed in the 1950's as the "domino theory." Truman implied that this chain reaction could ultimately affect the West when he said that "totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States."[16] The President concluded this speech with the phrase that came to be known as the "Truman Doctrine." As an extension of American foreign policy, he said, "I believe it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugations by armed minorities or by outside pressure."[17]

After reading the copy of Truman's speech on his Paris stop, Marshall became concerned that there "was a little too much flamboyant anti-communism alluded to in the address."[18] Marshall and his counselor/interpreter, Charles Bohlen, cabled back to Washington requesting that the White House "tone down" the "powerful rhetoric" aimed at Moscow. Truman's aides responded that "in the considered opinion of the Executive branch, including the President," the $400 million requested for Greece and Turkey would not have been approved by the Senate "without the emphasis on the communist danger."[19]

From President Truman's perspective, it is important to note that the presence of communists in Northern Greece served to reinforce an attitude toward the Soviet Union that had been developing within Washington for about one year. On February 22, 1946, the State Department received a long telegram from the American Chargé in Moscow, George F. Kennan. In this message, Kennan attempted to explain the Kremlin's "neurotic view of world affairs" and to justify specifically the values that controlled Soviet conduct. According to Kennan, the Soviet Union was a very insecure nation that was burdened with an archaic government. As a result, the Soviets felt it imperative to keep expanding "in order to guarantee external security of their internally weak regime."[20]

The rhetorical strategy of appealing to a "communist threat" would later be a key issue considered by Bohlen and Marshall in drafting the Harvard speech. It is important, however, to see how even at this early stage, appeals to a fear of Moscow's intentions became a significant part of Washington's rhetorical arsenal. The main goal of this strategy was summarized by Arthur Vandenberg, The Republican Senate Majority Leader, in his recommendation to Truman as the President planned to speak to Congress. After hearing of the President's $400 million plan to aid Greece, Senator Vandenberg remarked "if that's what you want, there is only one way to get it. That is to make a personal appearance before Congress and scare the hell out of the country."[21]

By exploiting the fear of Moscow-inspired communism, the "Truman Doctrine" speech outlined for the first time the "Cold War" policy of the United States.[22] As for prospects at the Moscow Conference, Marshall and his advisors "realized that the President's message . . . would anger the Russians and would increase problems."[23] Despite the negative impact of the speech, Marshall continued "unflinchingly" to Moscow. During a special meeting with Josef Stalin on April 19, 1947, near the end of the Conference, Marshall and Bohlen became very disturbed by the Soviet Premier's attitude. The purpose of the Conference was to bring together the Foreign Ministers of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union to help work out joint solutions to the economic problems of Europe. Marshall, in his personal meeting with Stalin, became convinced that the Soviets were "waiting for Europe, harassed and torn by the war . . . to collapse and fall into the communist orbit."[24] The Moscow Conference ended without any agreement except to hold another meeting in Vienna later in the year.

As Marshall and his advisors flew back to Washington, the meeting with Stalin was the key topic of conversation.[25] The Soviet position created special concern

because the diplomats were all aware of the recommendations from a special committee established by the State, War, and Navy Departments.[26] The committee had been formed by order of Dean Acheson to look beyond the Greece-Turkey problem and study "situations elsewhere in the world which may require analogous financial, technical, and military aid on our part."[27] The full report of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee was made available on April 21, 1947. After reviewing the shortfalls of "vital commodities" in Western Europe, such as food, coal, and steel, this Committee concluded that:

> A planned program of assistance to foreign countries should enable the U.S. to take positive, forehanded, and preventative action in the matter of promotion of U.S. national interests by extending assistance under a system of priorities where it will do the most good from the standpoint of promoting U.S. security and other national interests.[28]

Forty-eight hours after returning from Moscow, Marshall spoke to a national radio audience concerning his efforts at the Moscow Conference. The speech, written by Marshall himself on the plane, stressed his concern for the lack of action on the economic crisis facing Europe.[29] The content of the speech indicated the Secretary's consideration of the figures provided to the State Department by the special State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee. After listing specifically the many problems brought about by the shortages of food and coal in Europe, Marshall concluded:

> The recovery of Europe has been far slower than had been expected. Disintegrating forces are becoming evident. The patient is sinking while the doctors deliberate. So I believe that action can not await compromise through exhaustion. . . . Whatever action is possible to meet these pressing problems must be taken without delay.[30]

The day after Marshall delivered this speech, he summoned George Kennan to his office. As head of the Policy Planning Staff, Marshall ordered Kennan to concentrate upon the "European mess" and to produce constructive recommendations "as to what he ought to do."[31] Kennan was given two weeks to come up with proposals and the Secretary gave him only one bit of advice: "avoid trivia." As the Policy Planning Staff pondered their assignment, Undersecretary of State Acheson responded to a very special request from President Truman. On April 7, Truman had discussed with Acheson the possibility of giving a speech that he had promised to make before the Delta Council at the Delta State Teacher's College in Cleveland, Mississippi. The undersecretary agreed to make this speech on May 8.

The Delta Council, originally expecting a speech from the President himself, agreed to allow Acheson to speak in his place if he made an "important foreign policy address."[32] In the planning for this speech, Acheson decided that his goal was not to "put forward a solution," but to carefully state the problem and emphasize the facts about the worsening situation in Europe.[33] Since Acheson and President Truman had kept in close contact with Marshall while he was in Moscow, the undersecretary was well aware of the Soviet position. Acheson was also quite familiar with the

specific economic problems facing Europe because he was one of the first State Department officials to read the report of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee. As a result of this background information, Acheson was acutely aware of the "disintegrating" forces that Marshall spoke about when he returned from Moscow. President Truman specifically approved Acheson's request to deliver this "important foreign policy" message because he hoped that these remarks would "shock the country into facing this crisis."[34] The same speech writing team that had drafted the "Truman Doctrine" speech was assigned to compose the Delta Council address. Joseph M. Jones and Francis Russell produced a draft of this speech shortly after Marshall returned from Moscow. Before the actual writing of the speech began, Acheson "outlined the type of speech he wanted" and gave Jones and Russell the authority to "commandeer help from anyone working on the problem."[35] It is evident from the work of Joseph Jones that he considered the report of the Coordinating Committee in the preparation of this speech.[36]

Dean Acheson arrived in Cleveland, Mississippi, on May 7 with Jones' draft of the speech in his pocket. The next day, he delivered the speech in the gymnasium of the Teacher's College. In keeping with his goal, Acheson began the speech with a description of the "physical destruction and economic dislocation" that plagued Europe. After indicating that the "greatest workshops" of the world, Germany and Japan, were not even able to begin reconstruction, Acheson reminded his audience that the United States had already started "responding to this highly abnormal relationship between production" in this country and "production in the rest of the world" by beginning to aid Greece and Turkey.[37] Acheson went on to point out that since Truman had committed this country to aid free peoples "seeking to preserve their independence" against "totalitarian pressure," it might be necessary to extend financing "beyond existing authorizations."[38] In his conclusion, the undersecretary provided a clear statement of the intentions of American diplomacy when he said:

> European recovery cannot be complete until the various parts of Europe's economy are working together in a harmonious whole. And the achievement of a coordinated European economy remains a fundamental objective of our foreign policy.[39]

Acheson's speech, with its carefully argued position, helped to set the stage for George Marshall's speech at Harvard on June 5. In fact, the Harvard speech represented a logical extension of the arguments that Acheson presented before the Delta Council. President Truman specifically noted that Acheson's address provided the "prologue" for the Marshall speech which "contained the basic elements of the proposal" later presented by the Secretary.[40]

On May 16, George Kennan circulated a memorandum to the hierarchy of the State Department summarizing the recommendations of the Policy Planning Staff on the European problem. Concerning the immediate requirements of the situation, Kennan noted that the State Department must realize that "the most important and urgent element in foreign policy planning is the restoration of hope and confidence in Western Europe."[41] While most historians have stressed the "long-term" implications of this important memorandum, Kennan's "short-term" recommendations had

an immediate impact within the State Department.[42] The Kennan memorandum urged the United States to take "immediate action" on the European problem which would serve to "convince the European peoples that we mean business, to serve as a catalyst for their hope and confidence, and to dramatize for our own people" the seriousness of the situation.[43] Kennan summarized these short-term goals by arguing that "unless something . . . is done at once, the result may be a further deterioration of morale in Europe."[44]

Another State Department planner during this time also became very concerned about bolstering the morale of the European community. William Clayton, an Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, had spent a significant amount of time in Europe attempting to negotiate for multilateral reduction of trade barriers. After returning to Washington on May 27, Clayton submitted a memorandum to Secretary Marshall outlining his thoughts on the "European Crisis." After citing the statistics indicating a worsening European economy, Clayton emphasized that "it will be necessary to the President and the Secretary of State to make a strong spiritual appeal to the American people" on this particular problem.[45] He concluded his recommendations by suggesting that this "problem can be met only if the American people are taken into the complete confidence of the Administration."[46]

The day after Clayton presented his memorandum, Dean Acheson submitted his own assessment of the short-term goals of the State Department directly to Marshall. Acheson was very explicit with his recommendations for action:

> Within the next two or three weeks you should make a speech which you would not undertake to lay down any solutions but would state the problem and that the immediate problem is not an ideological one, but a material one.[47]

Marshall responded the very next day to the note from Acheson. Not only did he agree that this was a good idea, but Marshall already had an idea as to where he could deliver this proposed speech.[48] Marshall reminded Acheson that during the war, Harvard University had offered him an honorary degree that he had never accepted. The Secretary, therefore, proposed that he give a speech during the impending commencement exercises. Acheson advised against this idea saying that "commencement speeches were a ritual to be endured without hearing." But Marshall, who apparently felt honored to finally be able to go to Harvard, accepted the invitation and decided to give a speech before the Alumni Association.[49] This setting was notable because it was the first regular commencement since before the war.

Once the decision had been made to give a speech explaining the American position on European economic recovery, Marshall asked Charles Bohlen, his Department Counselor, to draft a speech to deliver at Harvard. According to Bohlen, he spent two days working on the first draft of the speech and he primariy relied upon the Kennan and Clayton memoranda in the construction of the address.[50] After Bohlen submitted his draft to Marshall, the speech was worked over in several staff meetings. Even after this careful effort, Acheson reported that Marshall departed for Cambridge with "an incomplete text" of the address and "never informed the State Department of its final form."[51]

The Harvard Speech

Marshall's speech, as delivered, "was one of the shortest commencement addresses ever given to the Harvard Alumni."[52] The Secretary delivered the speech in his "typically soft and almost inaudible voice" that revealed his "marked southern accent."[53] During the delivery of the speech, Marshall stared "doggedly" at the manuscript, "playing with his spectacles" and never looking at his immediate audience. The content of the address, according to Acheson's personal perspective, managed to overcome the weaknesses in Marshall's delivery and presented a "brilliant" statement of a "purpose and a proposal adapted to the necessities of the situation."[54]

Secretary Marshall began the Harvard speech by stressing the seriousness of the economic situation in Europe. The first paragraph of the address emphasized that all "intelligent people" can see the broad outline of the problem, but he pointed out that since the matter is of such "enormous complexity" that it is exceedingly difficult for the "man in the street to reach a clear appraisement of the situation."[55] In this passage it is apparent that Marshall has accepted Clayton's advice to present this problem to the American people in a very straightforward manner. The Secretary was especially concerned that since the "people of this country are distant from the troubled areas of the earth," he would explain the "plight and consequent reactions of these long-suffering peoples." There was also a hint that Marshall would explain how the suffering of the European populace could directly affect the average American.

While the opening paragraph suggested that Marshall would outline the causes of the European problem for an American audience, it is especially interesting to note whom he omitted. Except for a passing reference to "gentlemen," Marshall effectively ignored the immediate audience in Harvard Yard. The Secretary's concentration clearly was upon what Robert Oliver has termed "the home audience."[56] In Oliver's perspective, this home audience is often appealed to at the beginning of most diplomatic discourse. Marshall's use of this strategy seemed warranted not only because of the average American's lack of knowledge of the European crisis, but because the Secretary knew that this audience must ultimately sanction any State Department action.

In the second paragraph of the speech, Marshall offered to clarify just how serious the problem had become. The requirements for rehabilitating Europe had been "correctly estimated," he pointed out, but a statistical accounting of the mine output and railroad capacity seemed insignificant and "less serious than the dislocation of the entire fabric of the European economy."[57] This abnormal situation, Marshall contended, had been the case for the past ten years in Europe.

Marshall devoted his third paragraph to a description of how the "preparation" and "maintenance" efforts for World War Two effectively leveled most of Europe's economic base. The Secretary made this point by referring metaphorically to a "fever" that swept through Europe both before and during the war. Blame for most of the destruction was placed squarely in the hands of the "arbitrary and destructive Nazi rule." Like the debilitating fever that can accompany a disease, Marshall emphasized that the German war machine reduced most of the prime commercial and private industrial institutions in Europe to ashes.

The Secretary continued his review of the effects of the war on Europe into the fourth paragraph. Not only had the "breakdown of the business structure in Europe" been complete, but Marshall argued that in many of these countries "confidence in the local currency has been severely shaken."[58] The cause for the delay in these aspects of European recovery was attributed to the absence of a peace settlement with Germany and Austria. Despite this lack of agreement, however, Marshall stressed that the rehabilitation of Europe required "a much longer time and greater effort than had been foreseen."

In this passage of the speech, Marshall seemed to be appealing to the "neutral" audience that Oliver had identified in diplomatic discourse.[59] By presenting these facts in such a sympathetic manner, the Secretary tried to demonstrate to the European audience that the United States really understood the complex nature of the recovery process. The time-table for economic revitalization might have been underestimated, but Marshall strongly argued that these economic recovery problems had not been ignored. Thus, it is apparent that Kennan's recommendation to try and "bolster the morale" of the European population was indeed a major goal of Marshall's speech.

To fully explain the complexity of the economic situation in Europe for his home audience, Marshall used the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth paragraphs of his address to describe the "vicious circle" that characterized the depth of the breakdown. First, Marshall outlined the basic interdependence between rural farmers and city dwellers. This careful division of labor, he contended, was the "basis of modern civilization." After establishing this relationship, Marshall suggested that the European farmer now had "withdrawn many fields for crop cultivation" because there was little for him to exchange with the city dwellers. Since the people in the cities thus had little food to buy, the European governments were therefore forced to "use their foreign money and credits to procure these necessities abroad."[60] Using these limited financial resources to purchase basic supplies had, according to Marshall, exhausted funds that were "urgently needed for reconstruction."[61] The problem was so serious that besides having no financial resources on which to rebuild, Marshall pointed out for the American audience that these European countries would need American aid for the next three or four years just to keep their populations from going hungry.

The image suggested by Marshall of the European economy through his eighth paragraph would have been somewhat familiar to some Americans because of two previous speeches. The facts presented about the physical condition of the European industrial base, the severe shortfall in production of basic commodities, and the breakdown in financial support all came clearly from the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee report and Kennan's memorandum. The tone of the message was very close to that presented earlier by Marshall himself in the speech he delivered after returning from the Moscow Conference. After reading the first half of Marshall's speech, Acheson commented that this section "came straight from" the Clayton memorandum.[62] While it is evident that the description of the breakdown in the "exchange of products" between nations was clearly supported in the notes from Kennan and Clayton, Acheson was too modest in his reference to this description

of Europe's economic problems. Acheson's Delta Council speech certainly broke ground for the interdependence argument and allowed Marshall to extend, for the American audience, the State Department's position on this issue.

Marshall offered a remedy to the vicious circle that entrapped Europe in paragraph nine. Since the key to economic recovery was to be found in "restoring the confidence of the European people in the economic future of their own countries and of Europe as a whole," Marshall argued that it was only "logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world."[63] This action seemed especially reasonable in the wake of President Truman's speech concerning sending aid to Greece and Turkey. Marshall concluded this paragraph by stressing the basic premise of the Truman Doctrine which argued that without political stability in a region, there would be no assured change for peace.

The intent of America's effort, Marshall continued in paragraph ten, was "directed not against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos." Since both the Secretary and Charles Bohlen had made an earlier effort to "tone down" the anti-communist fervor of Truman's speeches, and since Kennan also commented in the Policy Planning Staff report that this was a most "delicate issue," this statement offered some hope to the Eastern European countries who wre still under Soviet control. In the very next sentence, however, Marshall proclaimed that the "purpose" of this policy was to stimulate a revival of a working economy in the world "so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist."[64] This apparent paradox in the speech reflected the division within the State Department as to whether or not to include the Soviets in this plan. The particular phrasing of this passage reflected the compromise recommended by Kennan that the decision for aid must be ultimately decided by the European nations involved.[65]

In addition to a "home" and a "neutral" audience Robert Oliver also contends that an "enemy" audience is also considered in the formulation of any diplomatic discourse.[66] In Marshall's speech, the enemy audience was referred to most directly in paragraphs ten and eleven. President Truman had used the phrases "confusion and disorder," "armed minorities" and "outside pressure" to refer to Soviet intervention in Greece in his "Truman Doctrine" address. At Harvard Yard, when Marshall added the term "chaos," it suggested a direct reference to the Greek crisis. However, the Secretary's statement that "governments, political parties or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit there from politically . . . will encounter the opposition of the United States," amounted to a very strong warning to the Soviet Union.[67] This passage may have reflected more of Bohlen's or Marshall's attitude about the European crisis since both diplomats came away from Moscow with grave concerns about Stalin's intentions. For the home and the neutral audiences, the "enemy" audience would have been easy to identify from these passages in Marshall's speech.

To solve the problems and to aid European recovery, Marshall, through the pen of Bohlen, lifted liberally from Kennan's recommendations. In his early memos,

Kennan had warned that "piece-meal" aid would not be effective. Marshall agreed and stressed that "there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation."[68] Once the Europeans took the initiative, the United States' role, according to Marshall, was to "consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so long as it may be practical for us to do so." Since no limit on aid was mentioned nor any specific date in which this promise of aid would expire, Marshall, in effect, appeared to offer the Europeans the kind of "morale boost" or "sign of hope" that Kennan and Clayton recommended.

Marshall concluded his speech by reminding his home audience of their importance to this decision to help Europe. Once the American people have come to understand the "character of the problem," he argued, then they can "face up to the vast responsibility which history has placed upon our country."[69] This mission, however, must be based upon "foresight and willingness" and not upon "passion and prejudice." Marshall was convinced, like most of his staff, that this was a delicate situation to bring before the American people. The key elements of Kennan's and Clayton's memoranda had warned that while there was a need to act energetically and incisively to demonstrate the American government's concern for the problems of Europe, the home audience must also become interested and involved as well.[70] In the final draft of the speech, it was clear that not only did Bohlen and Marshall appeal primarily to the American "home" audience, but also to many neutral and enemy audiences with careful sensitivity.

The effect of Marshall's speech in Europe was especially rapid and positive. Shortly after receiving a copy of the speech from Washington, Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Minister, announced his approval in a lengthy speech delivered in Parliament.[71] Bevin quickly arranged a meeting with Georges Bidault, the French Foreign Minister. Within two weeks, Bevin and Bidault met with V.M. Molotov, the Russian Foreign Minister, in Paris, to "devise a European recovery plan, its requirements, and the parts they would play."[72] Although Molotov eventually walked out of this meeting, Bevin and Bidault continued to work on a proposal that would be acceptable to Washington and to the American people.[73] Even though the sixteen nations of Europe did not present a formal request to the United States until August, the evidence is clear that Marshall's speech provided a catalyst for this action and was "the turning point in the context of what came afterward."[74]

The effect of Marshall's Harvard speech upon the home audience was not quite as immediate as the response in Europe, but public opinion gradually moved to support the "Marshall Plan." A public opinion poll of July 23, 1947, indicated that 57% of the population approved of this proposal.[75] While Marshall's speech on June 5 can be credited with generating public support for aid to Europe, the Truman Doctrine speech as well as Acheson's Delta Council speech must be considered to have had an impact on making this plan acceptable to a large percentage of Americans. After Truman's speech on March 13, 68% of those surveyed agreed that if "other nations find themselves in the same fix as Greece," then "the United States should do something about it."[76] It is apparent that most of the American audience could

have seen the Marshall Plan as a "logical extension" of the ideas presented by Truman and Acheson. Not only was his use of a direct link with the Greek crisis effective, but Kennan's advice to Marshall to be direct with the American people and use "hard" facts improved his overall appeal.

Conclusion

In his *Memoirs*, Harry Truman is careful to mention that George C. Marshall deserved "full credit for the brilliant contributions to the measure which he helped formulate."[77] A review of the available documents demonstrates that the Secretary had a significant amount of help in formulating what came to be called the "Marshall Plan." Dean Acheson, George F. Kennan, William Clayton, and Charles Bohlen all had a hand in crafting this policy and of suggesting the rhetorical strategies that Marshall later employed in the Harvard address. The study of this formulation process reveals a careful consideration of such rhetorical elements as timing, situation, and a high respect for all three "audiences" that would be the primary receivers of this message. A study of the chronology of events leading to the June 5, 1947, speech, and an analysis of the speech itself, provide an understanding of the flow of ideas and values inherent in American foreign policy that can be traced by the rhetorical critic. Without an understanding of these elements, the full implications of the "Marshall Plan" cannot be considered in the detail that its historical significance would dictate.

Notes

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13. Paterson, p. 450.
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20. George F. Kennan, "Long Telegram 1946," in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy: Volume II, Since 1914* (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1978), p. 275.
21. As cited in Bert Cochran, *Harry Truman and the Crisis Presidency* (New York: Funk and Wagnells, 1973), p. 187.
22. Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War 1945–1980*, fourth edition (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1980), p. 28.
23. De Conde, p. 451.
24. Charles E. Bohlen, *The Transformation of American Foreign Policy* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1969), p. 28.
25. See Bohlen, *Witness to History*, p. 263; and Graebner, p. 253.
26. De Conde, p. 253.
27. U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1947 III, p. 197.
28. Foreign Relations of the United States, pp. 205–206.
29. Notes on the composition are provided in the headnote in A. Craig Baird, ed., *Representative American Speeches 1946–1947* (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1947), p. 89.
30. Baird, p. 101.
31. George F. Kennan, *Memoirs 1925–1950* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), p. 326.
32. Acheson, p. 227.
33. Acheson, p. 227.
34. Acheson, p. 227.
35. Acheson, p. 227.
36. Joseph M. Jones, *The Fifteen Weeks* (New York: The Viking Press, 1955), pp. 24–25.
37. Dean Acheson, "The Requirements of Reconstruction," *Department of State Bulletin* 16 (May 18, 1947), p. 991.
38. Acheson, "The Requirements of Reconstruction," pp. 993–994.
39. Acheson, "The Requirements of Reconstruction," p. 994.
40. See Truman, p. 113.
41. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, p. 220.
42. For a typical analysis of the long-term impact of Kennan's memo, see William C. Mallalieu, "The Origin of the Marshall Plan," *Political Science Quarterly* LXXIII (December 1958), pp. 486–487.
43. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, p. 225.
44. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, p. 226.
45. A copy of this memo was first made available by William Clayton himself in "GATT, the Marshall Plan and the OECD," *Political Science Quarterly* (December 1963), pp. 496–498. Besides the official text in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, pp. 230–232, it is also in Frederick J. Dobney, ed., *Selected Papers of Will Clayton* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), pp. 201–204.
46. See Clayton, "GATT, the Marshall Plan and the OECD," p. 498.
47. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, p. 233.
48. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p. 233.
49. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, pp. 232–233.
50. Bohlen, *Witness to History*, p. 263.
51. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p. 233.
52. See Ehrlich, p. 4. A complete text of the speech is available in *The New York Times*, 6 June 1947, p. 2; and in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, pp. 237–239.
53. See Payne, p. 299; and Robert H. Ferrell, *George C. Marshall* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1966), p. 110.
54. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p. 233.

55. The paragraph numbers refer to the text in *The New York Times*, 6 June 1947, p. 2.
56. Oliver, pp. 25–26.
57. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
58. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
59. Oliver, pp. 25–26.
60. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
61. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
62. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p. 233.
63. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
64. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
65. See *Foreign Relations of the United States*, p. 228.
66. Oliver, pp. 25–26.
67. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
68. This paragraph as well as the next to the last paragraph of the speech was taken almost verbatim from the Kennan memo. See Ehrlich, p. 5; Kennan, p. 336; and *Foreign Relations of the United States*, pp. 226–228.
69. *The New York Times*, p. 2.
70. See Kennan's final recommendations in the Policy Planning Staff memo in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, pp. 222–223.
71. Payne, p. 300.
72. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p. 234.
73. See Stephen Ambrose, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy, 1938–1980* (New York: Penguin Books, 1980), pp. 138–139.
74. Harry B. Price, *The Marshall Plan and Its Meaning* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1955), p. 27.
75. "Reconstruction," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 11 (Fall 1947), p. 495.
76. "Greece-Turkey Question," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 11 (Summer, 1947), p. 286.
77. Truman, p. 114.