



"It is not enough to fight. It is the spirit which we bring to the fight that decides the issue. It is morale that wins the victory."

George Marshall

DID YOU KNOW

Marshall was born in Uniontown Pennsylvania.

He graduated from Virginia Military Institute.

He was a military teacher between wars.

He was a five-star general.

He grew the American army from 200,000 to 8,000,000 men.

He developed the European Recovery Program which was later call the Marshall Plan.

He was the first soldier to ever win the Nobel Peace Prize.

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DUTY NEVER ENDS

By J. Bolling Williamson

The attack on Pearl Harbor thrust George Marshall into the position of President Roosevelt's top advisor. His strategic vision, credibility and ability to grasp the facts enabled him to build an international coalition that could bridge the different—and conflicting—agendas held by the British, French and Russians in developing a coordinated strategy for winning a global war fought on multiple fronts. Winston Churchill called him the "organizer of victory."



Churchill, Marshall, & Eisenhower

When the war ended, Marshall retired from the Army in November, 1945, and on the next day President Truman asked him to undertake a mission to China. The assignment lasted over a year, and several months after his return, the President asked him to serve as Secretary of State, a post he held for two years. During his term at State he proposed the European Recovery Plan (the "Marshall Plan") which hastened the recovery of Western Europe from the war and prevented those countries from falling under the domination of the Soviet Union. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace for this action – the only professional soldier ever to receive the award. He stepped down in 1949; the next year he was asked to serve as Secretary of Defense. He retired for the third and final time in 1951.



Marshall and Eisenhower

George Marshall embodied a sense of duty seldom seen today, and when he was asked why he continued to serve when he yearned for retirement, he responded that when the President "tells me of his difficulties, he has me at a disadvantage." Likewise, his selflessness is practically unparalleled: he repeatedly declined awards and decorations offered him during the war unless doing so would cause a diplomatic problem, believing that such attention should be directed to those serving in the field. He also declined many lucrative offers for his memoirs, stating that no one should profit from public service.

Possibly his greatest disappointment came when refused to acknowledge to the President that he wanted to command the Normandy invasion, insisting that he would have to make that selection based on what was best for the country, not for George Marshall. "The issue was simply too great for any personal feeling to be involved," he said later on reflecting on his refusal to ask for the appointment.

Delivering Bad News

BLOGS

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'Moral Courage'



One particular statement made by Marshall comes close to describing the character of the man. During a heated discussion in 1940 concerning a critical piece of legislation, he was presented with a politically-expedient amendment which would have gained passage, but he rejected it because it would have amounted to a semi-ethical trick: "I want to go right straight down the road, to do what is best, and do it frankly and without evasion.

Would that we had more public servants like him today.

Our guest columnist, J. Bolling Williamson, is a VMI graduate, like his idol, George Marshall. Mr. Williamson served as a Marine officer in the Viet Nam war, then became a bank officer in Richmond and a banking instructor for the Graduate School of Retail Bank Management. Now retired, Mr. Williamson is writing a leadership course based on the life of George Marshall.

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