

Senator Joseph McCarthy

The History of George Catlett Marshall, 1951

Speech delivered by Senator Joseph McCarthy before the Senate on June 14, 1951

How can we account for our present situation unless we believe that men high in this Government are concerting to deliver us to disaster? This must be the product of a great conspiracy, a conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man. A conspiracy of infamy so black that, when it is finally exposed, its principals shall be forever deserving of the maledictions of all honest men.

Who constitutes the highest circles of this conspiracy? About that we cannot be sure. We are convinced that Dean Acheson, who steadfastly serves the interests of nations other than his own, the friend of Alger Hiss, who supported him in his hour of retribution, who contributed to his defense fund, must be high on the roster. The President? He is their captive. I have wondered, as have you, why he did not dispense with so great a liability as Acheson to his own and his party's interests. It is now clear to me. In the relationship of master and man, did you ever hear of man firing master? Truman is a satisfactory front. He is only dimly aware of what is going on.

I do not believe that Mr. Truman is a conscious party to the great conspiracy, although it is being conducted in his name. I believe that if Mr. Truman had the ability to associate good Americans around him, he would have behaved as a good American in this most dire of all our crises.

It is when we return to an examination of General Marshall's record since the spring of 1942 that we approach an explanation of the carefully planned retreat from victory. Let us again review the Marshall record, as I have disclosed it from all the sources available and all of them friendly. This grim and solitary man it was who, early in World War II, determined to put his impress upon our global strategy, political and military.

It was Marshall, who, amid the din for a "second front now" from every voice of Soviet inspiration, sought to compel the British to invade across the Channel in the fall of 1942 upon penalty of our quitting the war in Europe.

It was Marshall who, after North Africa had been secured, took the strategic direction of the war out of Roosevelt's hands and - who fought the British desire, shared by Mark Clark, to advance from Italy into the eastern plains of Europe ahead of the Russians.

It was a Marshall-sponsored memorandum, advising appeasement of Russia in Europe and the enticement of Russia into the far-eastern war, circulated at Quebec, which foreshadowed our whole course at Tehran, at Yalta, and until now in the Far East.

It was Marshall who, at Tehran, made common cause with Stalin on the strategy of the war in Europe and marched side by side with him thereafter.

It was Marshall who enjoined his chief of military mission in Moscow under no circumstances to "irritate" the Russians by asking them questions about their forces, their weapons, and their plans, while at the same time opening our schools, factories, and gradually our secrets to them in this count.

It was Marshall who, as Hanson Baldwin asserts, himself referring only to the "military authorities," prevented us having a corridor to Berlin. So it was with the capture and occupation of Berlin and Prague ahead of the Russians.

It was Marshall who sent Deane to Moscow to collaborate with Harriman in drafting the terms of the wholly unnecessary bribe paid to Stalin at Yalta. It was Marshall, with Hiss at his elbow and doing the physical drafting of agreements at Yalta, who ignored the contrary advice of his senior, Admiral Leahy, and of MacArthur and Nimitz in regard to the folly of a major land invasion of Japan; who submitted intelligence reports which suppressed more truthful estimates in order to support his argument, and who finally induced Roosevelt to bring Russia into the Japanese war with a bribe that reinstated Russia in its pre-1904 imperialistic position in Manchuria-an act which, in effect, signed the death warrant of the Republic of China.

It was Marshall, with Acheson and Vincent eagerly assisting, who created the China policy which, destroying China, robbed us of a great and friendly ally, a buffer against the Soviet imperialism with which we are now at war.

It was Marshall who, after long conferences with Acheson and Vincent, went to China to execute the criminal folly of the disastrous Marshall mission.

It was Marshall who, upon returning from a diplomatic defeat for the United States at Moscow, besought the reinstatement of forty millions in lend-lease for Russia.

It was Marshall who, for 2 years suppressed General Wedemeyer's report, which is a direct and comprehensive repudiation of the Marshall policy.

It was Marshall who, disregarding Wedemeyer's advices on the urgent need for military supplies, the likelihood of China's defeat without ammunition and equipment, and our "moral obligation" to furnish them, proposed instead a relief bill bare of military support.

It was the State Department under Marshall, with the wholehearted support of Michael Lee and Remington in the Commerce Department, that sabotaged the \$125,000,000 military-aid bill to China in 1945.

It was Marshall who fixed the dividing line for Korea along the thirty-eighth parallel, a line historically chosen by Russia to mark its sphere of interest in Korea.

It is Marshall's strategy for Korea which has turned that war into a pointless slaughter, reversing the dictum of Von Clausewitz and every military theorist since him that the object of a war is not merely to kill but to impose your will on the enemy.

It is Marshall-Acheson strategy for Europe to build the defense of Europe solely around the Atlantic Pact nations, excluding the two great wells of anti-Communist manpower in Western Germany and Spain and spurning the organized armies of Greece and Turkey-another case of following the Lattimore advice of "let them fall but don't let it appear that we pushed them."

It is Marshall who, advocating timidity as a policy so as not to annoy the forces of Soviet imperialism in Asia, had admittedly put a brake on the preparations to fight, rationalizing his reluctance on the ground that the people are fickle and if war does not come, will hold him to account for excessive zeal.

What can be made of this unbroken series of decisions and acts contributing to the strategy of defeat? They cannot be attributed to incompetence. If Marshall were merely stupid, the laws of probability would dictate that part of his decisions would serve this country's interest. If Marshall is innocent of guilty intention, how could he be trusted to guide the defense of this country further? We have declined so precipitously in relation to the Soviet Union in the last 6 years. How much swifter may be our fall into disaster with Marshall at the helm? Where Will all this stop? That is not a rhetorical question: Ours is not a rhetorical danger. Where next will Marshall carry us? It is useless to suppose that his nominal superior will ask him to resign. He cannot even dispense with Acheson.

What is the objective of the great conspiracy? I think it is clear from what has occurred and is now occurring: to diminish the United States in world affairs, to weaken us militarily, to confuse our spirit with talk of surrender in the Far East and to impair our will to resist evil. To what end? To the end that we shall be contained, frustrated and finally: fall victim to Soviet intrigue from within and Russian military might from without. Is that farfetched? There have been many examples in history of rich and powerful states which have been corrupted from within, enfeebled and deceived until they were unable to resist aggression. . . .

It is the great crime of the Truman administration that it has refused to undertake the job of ferreting the enemy from its ranks. I once puzzled over that refusal. The President, I said, is a loyal American; why does he not lead in this enterprise? I think that I know why he does not. The President is not master in his own house. Those who are master there not only have a desire to protect the sappers and miners - they could not do otherwise. They themselves are not free. They belong to a larger conspiracy, the world-wide web of which has been spun from Moscow. It was Moscow, for example, which decreed that the United States should execute its loyal friend, the Republic of China. The executioners were that well-identified group headed by Acheson and George Catlett Marshall.

How, if they would, can they, break these ties, how return to simple allegiance to their native land? Can men sullied by their long and dreadful record afford us leadership in the world struggle with the enemy? How can a man whose every important act for years had contributed to the prosperity of the enemy reverse himself? The reasons for his past actions are immaterial. Regardless of why he has done what he did, he has done it and the momentum of that course bears him onward. . . .

The time has come to halt this tepid, milk-and-water acquiescence which a discredited administration, ruled by disloyalty, sends down to us. The American may belong to an old culture, he may be beset by enemies here and abroad, he may be distracted by the many words of counsel that assail him by day and night, but he is nobody's fool. The time has come for us to realize that the people who sent us here expect more than time-serving from us. The American who has never known defeat in war, does not expect to be again sold down the river in Asia. He does not want that kind of betrayal. He has had betrayal enough. He has never failed to fight for his liberties since George Washington rode to Boston in 1775 to put himself at the head of a band of rebels unversed in war. He is fighting tonight, fighting gloriously in a war on a distant American frontier made inglorious by the men he can no longer trust at the head of our affairs.

The America that I know, and that other Senators know, this vast and teeming and beautiful land, this hopeful society where the poor share the table of the rich as never before in history, where men of all colors, of all faiths, are brothers as never before in history, where great deeds have been done and great deeds are yet to do, that America deserves to be led not to humiliation or defeat, but to victory.

The Congress of the United States is the people's last hope, a free and open forum of the people's representatives. We felt the pulse of the people's response to the return of MacArthur. We know what it meant. The people, no longer trusting their executive, turn to us, asking that we reassert the constitutional prerogative of the Congress to declare the policy for the United States.

The time has come to reassert that prerogative, to oversee the conduct of this war, to declare that this body must have the final word on the disposition of Formosa and Korea. They fell from the grasp of the Japanese empire through our military endeavors, pursuant to a declaration of war made by the Congress of the United States on December 8, 1941. If the Senate speaks, as is its right, the disposal of Korea and Formosa can be made only by a treaty which must be ratified by this body. Should the administration dare to defy such a declaration, the Congress has abundant recourses which I need not spell out.

Source:

The Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 82nd Congress, First Session, Volume 97, Part 5 (May 28, 1951-June 27, 1951), pp. 6556-6603.

This text is part of the [Internet Modern History Sourcebook](#). The Sourcebook is a collection of public domain and copy-permitted texts for introductory level classes in modern European and World history. Permission is granted for electronic copying, distribution in print form for educational purposes and personal use only.

© Paul Halsall, July 1998
halsall@murray.fordham.edu