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**CONGRESSIONAL-MILITARY RELATIONS DURING PERIODS
OF DEMOBILIZATION: STRATEGIC CHALLENGES FOR
STRATEGIC LEADERS**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Periods of demobilization in the US military often follow great military victories. The nation's leaders, quick to return to peace and prosperity, find large military forces are too resource intensive, given domestic demands. Competition between military advocates and domestic-minded politicians in post-conflict eras puts a heavy burden on military leaders who must argue the case for adequate armed forces. This paper examines the relationship between one General of the Army and two Chiefs of Staff of the Army and the Congresses they served in order to determine the effectiveness of senior military leaders in meeting the challenge posed by demobilization. The lessons drawn from their experience have a direct application for our current leaders as they struggle with Congress to determine the shape of the Army in the future.

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INTRODUCTION

"The Congress shall have Power...To raise and support Armies...To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions..."¹

"The President shall be the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States..."²

These words from the United States Constitution represent a remarkable subordination of military power to civilian control. This cumbersome, yet symbiotic relationship between the civilian government and the military has stood the test of time for 200 years. However, this formula has often pitted advocates of a strong military against political leaders frequently preoccupied with domestic needs rather than the looming specter of tyranny so feared by our founding fathers.

Throughout the history of the United States, the civilian government and its military have debated the efficacy of defense policy, the level of budgets, and the manning of the armed forces. However, it has been during periods of demobilization that this relationship is most tested. Demobilization efforts are predictable after major military conflicts finding Congress anxious to return to an

era of normalcy where a so called "peace dividend" can be distributed to a domestic agenda which had been interrupted by the high cost of military operations. The military also competes for the same dividend, determined to address the shortfalls of recent conflicts in order to avoid past mistakes. Likewise, military leaders seek adequate funding to avoid "knee-jerk" rearmament later.

While there is no precise formula for senior military leaders faced with these circumstances, there are lessons to be learned from the actions of past leaders. This paper will examine the performance of three former Army leaders, Generals William T. Sherman, Douglas MacArthur, and George C. Marshall as they attempted to meet the challenge of dealing with the Congress amid pressures to reduce military spending.

In doing so, the focus will be on the military leader's personal relationship with the Congress, and tangentially with the President each served. Of central importance is whether the leader was effective in articulating a vision for the Army to congressional leaders when the latter had turned their attentions toward domestic concerns. Finally, what lessons can be drawn from the experience of these three

leaders that can be appropriated for the current leadership of the Army as it wrestles with Congress over the shape and scope of the future Army?

THE CONSTITUTIONAL SETTING

Our founding fathers understood from the beginning that a military, albeit one of limited size, was necessary to preserve our hard-earned freedoms. As , congressional scholar Elias Huzar observed,

"An American standing Army was intended to discourage aggression against this country. With it the nation might be spared the necessity of creating a larger military establishment."³

Equally important to the drafters of the Constitution was a check on that same military power.

"Congress alone could authorize the raising of armies and by affirmative action or mere inaction it could put them down. The sword was placed in the hands of the executive, but the purse was kept in the hands of Congress the representatives of the people"⁴

An army beholden to the control of Congress for both its funds and its manpower would by definition be limited. As the Federalist remind us,

"The batteries most capable of repelling foreign enterprises on our safety are happily such as can never be turned by a perfidious government against our liberties."⁵

The sagacity of the founding fathers is clearly seen in granting to Congress the power of the purse. Tyranny would be kept at bay by a construct which gave Congress the right to shape an Army the executive would employ consistent with legitimate purposes.

THE REALITIES OF CONGRESSIONAL CONTROL

Congress was given the power of the purse so that the nation would not be "crushed between standing armies and perpetual taxes".⁶ In practice Congress has focused more on domestic politics rather than checking military power, "stressing economy rather than liberty".⁷ This is particularly true when there is no imminent threat. Congress has seen as their fundamental duty not the "protection of the country from the Army, but as procurement of security without waste".⁸ As such, the conflict between politicians and military advocates have often hinged on budgetary issues, particularly in periods of demobilization. As Huzar has noted;

"In periods of retrenchment and peace...the review of budget by the [Congress] has been primarily a process of probing for "soft spots" in the military administration, of searching for "good places" to make cuts in order to bring appropriations to levels tolerable to Congress and the country"⁹

Congress has always closely scrutinized military budgets for areas to cut when combat operations have not demanded greater generosity. Consequently, Military leaders have often found themselves in a rear guard action to preserve their funds, living under a dictum well expressed by a congressman who once noted,

"I have usually found that over a period of years you can always get a little more fat out of a piece of pork when you fry it a little longer and a little harder"¹⁰

Of course, it depends on whose bacon is in the fire, and during periods of demobilization, that pork often comes from "commissary stores". With these realities in mind, how have senior leaders fared in this contest? What are the lessons they have left behind?

GENERAL WILLIAM T. SHERMAN: THE POST WAR YEARS

William T. Sherman was one of the most experienced combat officers that ever served as the Army's senior leader. In March 1869, he was named by President Grant as Commanding General of the United States Army, a position he held until November 1883. Sherman did not seek leadership in Washington. In January 1868, he wrote his wife concerning his possible elevation to Secretary of War and his disapprobation for Washington life.

"The president yesterday again wanted me to take the office of Secretary of War, but in a letter today I have declined pretty firmly... It [Washington] is full of spies and slanderers who stop at nothing to make game, and I should regret even Grant's elevation [to President] as that might force me to this position.¹¹

Yet his sense of loyalty to nation would not permit him to reject Grant's subsequent offer to become General of the Army.

The political environment on Capital Hill during the post war years were characterized by petty fights among politicians, some of whom were still angry over promotion denials at the end of the War for which Sherman was blamed. Efforts to reduce officer pay in 1870, and elimination of general and lieutenant general ranks were proposed by Congress. Sherman took this personally and considered the efforts "damned mean treatment."¹² Regrettably, from the beginning of his tour as the Army's top leader, he was not predisposed to work amicably with Congress.

The size of the post Civil War Army was continuously under assault. Army strength declined from just over 1 million men in 1865 to just under 37,000 in 1869.¹³ In the same period, the Army's budget shrank from just over \$1 billion to \$78 million, a decline of 92 percent.¹⁴ Times

were hard, and Sherman found himself pressed to maintain the strength of the Army. During House committee hearings in 1872, he argued in vain to keep the Army from being reduced to 25,000.

"If reduction is forced upon the Army by the financial condition of the country..., I unhesitatingly say...that you had better cut off at the head than at the foot; that the valuable part of our military establishment is in the inverse order of its general arrangement. I look upon two cavalry regiments or even infantry regiments as worth more than the whole general staff, myself, included."¹⁵

Despite his protestations, the bill passed.

Frustrated with his failure to sway a recalcitrant Congress and increasingly unhappy with his limited role under Secretary of War Belknap, Sherman moved his Army staff headquarters to St. Louis in the Spring of 1874.

Purportedly designed to centrally locate his headquarters where it could respond to crises across the country, in truth, Sherman had grown disgusted with life in Washington and simply left. When Belknap departed Washington following a major financial scandal in 1876, Sherman returned to the Capital. Soon his battles with Congress renewed on the heels of the controversial election of Republican Rutherford B. Hayes over Democrat Samuel J. Tilden.

The election of 1876 ended in deadlock and was decided by Congress the following March. Angry Democrats, now in possession of the House, were furious and passed an appropriations bill to reduce the Army to 17,000 men as well as a provision to prevent the Army's use in supporting reconstructed state governments.¹⁶ This punitive legislation reflected Southern bitterness over Army enforcement of state governments composed of former slaves. The Republican Senate eventually blocked House efforts, but so much time was consumed in this partisan debate, that the Congress failed to pass an Army appropriations bill prior to the May recess. Hayes, wanting tempers to cool, did not hold Congress in session. Consequently, a bitter pill was delivered to the officers of the Army on May 19, 1877 in the form of General Order No. 51.

"The Army is advised that until Congress shall have made provision for pay purposes for the next fiscal year, no payment whatever can be made by Paymasters for services rendered, or as reimbursement of expenses incurred, for time subsequent to June 30, 1877."¹⁷

For the enlisted troops, garrison conditions were sufficient to meet their basic needs. But officers were left to provide for themselves, relying in part on interest

charged loans from various banks.¹⁸ Given the Army's preoccupation with Indians in the West and rioting railroad strikers elsewhere, the notion of not paying the troops was very unsavory to General Sherman.

When a special session did not occur, Sherman complained to his daughter that Congress "has got meaner and meaner".¹⁹ Sherman did little to resolve the issue, a pattern evident from the first year of his leadership as General of the Army. In his first report to the Congress in 1869, Sherman demonstrated a remarkable lack of vision and a negative attitude in dealing with the Congress.

"Sherman [sought] essentially to please the legislative branch by rationalizing the shrinkage of the military they had imposed, while pleading with them to pass new regulations that would strengthen rather than further weaken his authority over the Army bureaus. Yet his tone toward Congress was defensive and plaintive".²⁰

According to Sherman biographer, James Merrill, he "never displayed an ability to work effectively with politicians, and often remained silent rather than risk being drawn into heated arguments".²¹ Sherman's reluctance to work personally with members of Congress was a function of his low regard for politicians in general. As he wrote to his wife in November 1877,

"You had better overhaul all the muskets and pistols in the attic, for a time will soon come when every householder must defend with fire-arms his own castle. This may seem absurd, but such an ending are we drifting. Also the country will soon conclude that the Congress is a nuisance to be suppressed...".²²

Two weeks later, Congress resolved the pay issue and the Army issued General Order 107 authorizing paymasters to resume payments.²³

Sherman's efforts to shape the post-Civil War Army during times when such a vision was much in need was no better. When reform minded Emory Upton advanced forward-looking concepts in his manuscript "The Military Policy of the United States", Sherman supported the ideas of a proper general staff and a "strong core regular army".²⁴ But again, Sherman failed to move these needed reforms forward. As Merrill notes, Sherman's inability to engage political leaders reached a "low point" in 1878 when support for the Upton reforms flagged.²⁵ Frustrated, Sherman again left town "on one of his prolonged vacations showing his contempt for politicians by withdrawing his support at the critical moment".²⁶ By his petulance, Sherman failed to exercise strategic leadership in shaping the Army of his time. He

lapsed into resignation as noted in this January 1879 letter to his wife.

"After every war-of the revolution, 1812, and Mexico, the Army underwent the same process of "reduction". Instead of cutting off the leg, once for good, Congress cut off the foot, then the knee, and finally the hip joint. We are undergoing the same process now. The people who were so grateful in 1865 for military service now begrudge us every cent of pay and every once of bread that we eat."²⁷

He finished with this piteous conclusion.

"Therefore, instead of waiting to be killed out for age and infirmity, I have it the part of wisdom to get out gracefully with an allowance amounting to a generous pension... Whoever expects gratitude of a republic is simply a fool."²⁸

In 1883, Sherman left the Army in a condition considerably worse than when he assumed leadership of it 14 years earlier. Sherman struggled with an Army over-taxed and under strength. The Congress he faced was, in ways, vindictive and determined to reduce the Army's role in society. Sherman clearly lacked the personal skills to work effectively with the Congress and looked upon its members with disdain. They, in turn, were aware of his sentiments and gave little regard to his concerns or positions. Indeed when the Army went unpaid for six months, General Sherman had virtually no effect on the process. When realistic and

needed reforms for the Army were within legislative grasp, General Sherman failed to demonstrate the resolve to persevere when support for these initiatives flagged on Capitol Hill.

Moreover Sherman, aware of the immediate needs of the Army, did little to shape the future of his force at a time when a well-articulated vision was essential. Instead, the Army was allowed to languish amid congressional infighting and Presidential indecision. Because he lacked personal skills and vision, the venerable general was of little value to the Army when it needed senior leadership the most. In sum, Sherman was a superb combat leader who failed to make the leap to the strategic leadership level and squandered an opportunity to lead.

GENERAL DOUGLAS MacARTHUR: THE INNER-WAR YEARS

There are few military leaders more possessed of intellectual ability to lead the Army than General Douglas MacArthur. Born of a rich military tradition, MacArthur rose to the position of Chief of Staff of the Army in November 1930. During his tenure he was compelled to deal with the personnel and materiel deficiencies in the Army following demobilization after World War I.

That war saw the Army grow from 108,399 in 1916 to 2,395,742 two years later when US troops entered the fight in Europe.²⁹ In that period, the Army's budget climbed from \$183 million to over \$9 billion. In 1930 when General MacArthur became Chief of Staff, the Army's strength was 139,486 with a budget of \$487 million, slightly above pre-war levels.³⁰

When MacArthur became Chief of Staff, there was considerable mistrust of the Army by some Congressmen. Joined by a popular press decrying "merchants of death", Congressmen believed that military leaders and defense industrialists were attempting to "war scare" the people.³¹ As one senator complained,

"They arouse the people by their appeals for what they call "preparedness" and in that they demand larger appropriations for the Army and Navy."³²

MacArthur, concerned about "preparedness", made his feelings known in testimony to Congress.

"The responsibility for the skeketonization of all elements of the Army rests squarely upon those two groups, the Budget [Office] and the Congress. That fact is thoroughly known by everyone."³³

To be sure, this rhetoric won MacArthur few friends in either Congress or the Executive branch.

MacArthur's frame of reference for an appropriate force structure was that National Defense Act of 1920 which called for a regular Army of 280,000, with a strong reliance on the "citizen soldier" in time of war. But no sooner than the ink was dry on this legislation, in 1921 Congress reduced the Army to 150,000.³⁴ The nine regular Army divisions envisioned under the act were also neutered. The "citizen soldier" structure fared little better.

MacArthur understood the challenge he faced and sought to "make the people believe, and to conceive, describe, shape, and build a modern American Army".³⁵ In a speech at the University of Pittsburgh in 1932, he fired a salvo toward intransigent opponents.

"Pacifism and its bedfellow, Communism, are all about us...Day by day, this canker eats deeper into the body politic...Any nation that would keep its self-respect must be prepared to defend itself...History has proved that nations once great, that neglected their national defense are dust and ashes."³⁶

The response was sure and vigorous when Congressmen and pacifists denounced him. Undeterred, he criticized the Congress for its 1933-34 Army budget as funding "only the naked framework" of a proper structure.³⁷ He ominously warned political leaders of the "folly and danger of undoing

what we have laboriously accomplished at expense of blood and treasure".³⁸ He blasted critics of a strong defense and worked to achieve his broad plan to prepare the nation for war. MacArthur used research laboratories, the Army school system, his staff, and his own intellectual capital in shaping a vision of future warfare and preparing for it. According to MacArthur, a "new surge of vitality" replaced the fear and apathy that characterized the Army's morale.³⁹

But the Army budget and readiness continued its downward spiral. MacArthur spoke out. "There is nothing more expensive than an insufficient army", he declared.⁴⁰ He reminded political leaders that "There is no such thing in war any more as a glorious defeat".⁴¹ His popularity in Congress was not helped by these remarks. Indeed, President Roosevelt, according to MacArthur, once said, "Douglas, I think you are our best general, but I believe you would be our worst politician".⁴²

After a trip to Europe in 1932, he was certain war would come and that it would employ maneuver and air forces with far greater alacrity than witnessed during World War I. He pleaded and pressed for more forces for the Army, but Congress remained opposed.

"I stormed, begged, ranted, and roared; I licked the boots of certain gentlemen to get funds for motorization and mechanization and air power. I humbled myself seeking allotments to replace leaking, slum-like barracks housing for our soldiers. I called for increased speed, increased fire power, fast machines, airplanes, tanks, guns, trucks, and ammunition."⁴³

Despite his arguments, the Congress continued to chip away at readiness. When Congress moved to drastically reduce the officer corps and cut military pay by half, MacArthur told the House Military Affairs Committee,

"The foundation of the Regular Army is the officer...If you have to cut everything else... the last element should be the officer corps... They are the only ones who can take this heterogeneous mass and make it a homogeneous group"⁴⁴

In this case MacArthur was successful in forestalling Congressional cuts only to be disappointed by the new administration's effort to cut personnel in other areas.

This was a low water mark for MacArthur as he found himself in violent opposition to President Roosevelt. Frustrated with the President's obdurate position in restoring major cuts in personnel, MacArthur lashed out.

"I spoke recklessly and said something to the effect that when we lost the next war, and an American boy, lying in the mud with an enemy bayonet through his belly and the enemy's foot on his dying throat, spat out his last curse, I wanted the name not to be MacArthur, but Roosevelt."⁴⁵

Roosevelt was furious and after a firm dressing down, MacArthur calmly went outside where he vomited on the White house steps. While this anecdote involves the President, it fairly represents MacArthur's total frustration with politicians in general.

General MacArthur ended his stewardship of the Army in 1935, having presided over its continuing demise at the hands of a budget-minded, depression era Congress. The period after World War I had been one of hope and optimism. But by 1930 when General MacArthur became Chief of Staff, the nation was beset with a depression that shattered all optimism. Pacifism, fueled by efforts to make war illegal or unlikely through treaties and disarmament measures, took a heavy toll on the readiness of the armed forces of the United States, making discussion of rearmament an almost insuperable task.

MacArthur led the Army at a time when any effort to prepare it for future wars would have been difficult. Yet

unlike Sherman, he had a vision for a better, more organized Army, equipped and trained to adapt to the changed nature of war. MacArthur clearly saw future wars characterized by highly mobile and lethal forces. Equally clear was his intuition that war clouds were gathering. He argued forcefully and logically for an Army ready for the violent future that awaited it. But he fell short in realizing that vision in large part due to his impolitic strategy to sell the program to the President and Congress during tough times. Impediments to his ability to do this were his aristocratic leanings and his belief that the rightness of his views were sufficiently obvious for anyone to see. Simply put, MacArthur lacked the diplomatic skills and professional humility to implement a well-conceived vision. In this regard, he shared with Sherman an inability to work effectively with civilian leadership.

MacArthur once complained of the Congress, "after using the motor as a weapon of argument against the horse, they gave us no motors either."⁴⁶ However, MacArthur could have been more successful had he subordinated his sense of self-importance to the task before him. In effect, MacArthur was

clearly strategic minded, but failed to function as a strategic leader in his dealings with Congress.

GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL: CALL TO ARMS

The day Germany invaded Poland, 1 September 1939, George C. Marshall assumed his duties of Chief of Staff of the Army. Widely regarded as the principal architect of the Allied victory in World War II, Marshall inherited an Army ill-prepared for the role it would embrace from 1941 to 1945. From the time MacArthur left in 1936 to Marshall's arrival three years later, the Army's budget had risen only slightly from \$618 to \$695 million.⁴⁷

Marshall acknowledged his lack of political skills. Indeed, he was so careful not to involve himself in politics throughout his career, he reportedly never voted in an election. Nonetheless, unlike his predecessors discussed earlier, he knew that the task ahead of him would require that he work closely and effectively with the Congress and the President.

His chief ally in this effort was his impeccable strength of character and authority. These traits were, in no small part, key in swaying Congress toward rearmament. As one politician later noted, "The war department...or

General Marshall...virtually dictated the budgets".⁴⁸ But this was not the case early on. Shortly after the invasion of Poland, the sense of urgency for military preparedness subsided among some Congressmen. Talk of the "phony war" in Europe was heard in the halls of Congress and across the nation. Marshall knew better and placed his priority on strengthening the Regular Army to 227,000, the National Guard to 235,000, while adding another 500,000 reserves for emergency call up.

In December of 1939, he addressed the American Historical Association and captured the headlines when he announced that the Army was less than 25 percent ready for combat.⁴⁹ In a February 1940 radio address, he issued a warning that time was running out for America and that modern warfare could not be improvised.⁵⁰ These public pronouncements put politicians on notice that General Marshall could be depended upon to speak his conscience. Yet he proceeded carefully in his dealing with Congress. He prompted his staff to "be patient" in their approach to Congress noting that Army bills might proceed easier if Congress took them up at the last possible date.⁵¹ In some respects, Marshall knew that time was both an enemy and an

ally in his dealings with Congress. The more time America remained unprepared, the stronger its enemies would grow further accentuating the unpreparedness. Marshall's challenge was to use time effectively, encouraging the Congress to swallow readiness problems without putting too much on their plate at one time. It was no easy feat. Indeed, in April 1940 the House Committee cut the Army's budget by almost 10 percent. A week later, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway.

These events caused Marshall to turn up the heat. He knew that success in building military might would require a two front campaign, one involving the President, and the other the Congress. Of his relation with Roosevelt, he noted,

"I never haggled with the President...I swallowed the little things so that I could go to bat on the big ones. I never handled a matter apologetically and I was never contentious. It took me a long time to get to him. When he thought I was not going for publicity and doing things for publication-he liked it."⁵²

In public, he supported the President, but in private he vigorously argued his points at the White House. Years later he shared his strategy.

"While it would be difficult at times and [there] would be strong pressures for me to speak to the public, I thought that it was far more important in the long run that I be well established as a member of a team and try to do my convincing within the team than to take action publicly contrary to the desires of the President and certain members of Congress..."⁵³

Central to his relation with the President in this two front campaign was Marshall's association with Harry Hopkins, the President's closest confidant. Marshall was the personal antithesis to Hopkins, who was a disheveled and disorganized insider, with enormous political skills. Nevertheless they developed a friendship that would serve Marshall well in maintaining his access to the President and other key power players of the era. Hopkins was essential in Marshall's effort to rearm the nation. As Forrest Pogue has noted,

"An honest broker, a necessary catalyst for men of different nationalities and temperaments, the impudent poser of hard questions, the relentless driver in rearmament programs...the gadfly of the Grand Alliance, Hopkins pushed the war effort when at times it seemed that he survived on drugs and will and a flickering vital spark."⁵⁴

Indeed, this "vital spark" was essential to Marshall in dealing with important power brokers, not the least of whom was the President. Marshall would say years later,

"He was invaluable to me. I didn't see Hopkins very often, because I made it a business not to go to the White House [often]...But whenever I hit a tough knot I couldn't handle...I would call him up and he would either arrange a meeting with the President for me or he and I together would see the President. He was always a strong advocate..."⁵⁵

Of equal need were men who could open both Congressional doors and minds. For this, Marshall turned to Bernard Baruch, a well-connected stock speculator whose contributions to politicians gave him access to the President and Congress. Baruch had a nimety of ego, and Marshall made sure to call him for counsel.

In 1940, when Marshall was struggling to obtain an adequate budget, Baruch offered help. Marshall provided him with background information and Baruch contacted his friends in Congress, including the powerful Senator Alva B. Adams, and set up a meeting with General Marshall. On the evening of 10 April 1940, Marshall and Baruch sat down with a dozen or so powerful Congressional leaders for a meeting that would run to the wee hours of the morning. Baruch began the meeting by making the case for the Army. But shortly thereafter, Marshall was moved to make an emotional plea. As Forrest Pogue relates the scene,

"Marshall interrupted "Let me take over, Baruch," he said as he rose to his feet to plead the Army's cause. Eloquently he outlined the situation. At the end he said, "I feel culpable. My job as Chief of Staff is to convince you of our needs and I have utterly failed. I don't know what to do".⁵⁶

Marshall's plea had captured the moment. When he concluded, those in the meeting understood the task that faced the nation. Baruch later characterized this meeting as "a turning point in convincing such critics of preparedness as Senator Adams of the urgent need for speeding the rebuilding of our defenses".⁵⁷

Marshall also found it necessary to sell his program to cabinet members. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, anxious to present the President with one unified defense budget plan and to move lend lease forward, asked Marshall to brief him on the Army's needs. Marshall seized the moment, and "minced no words" as he ticked off the Army's needs from men to machines.⁵⁸ It was a convincing effort and Morgenthau was "appalled" by the necessity of the hour.⁵⁹ Marshall again sensing the importance of the moment, gained Morgenthau's support for Marshall's strategy to "sell" the Army program. First, the program should not stampede Congress. A bill would be devoted to the

mobilization issue, a subject of great emotion among politicians. The appropriation for other vital needs would be handled separately. Second, only General Marshall, speaking for all of the Army including the air corps, would make the case on Capitol Hill.

Committed to Marshall's approach, Morgenthau was ready to see the President in May 1940. In that meeting, Marshall asked to expand the Army to 280,000 by September, and to 750,000 the following year. Roosevelt was uncertain and dominated the discussion, a technique he used to forestall action. He brushed aside Marshall's idea of going alone to Capitol Hill. As the meeting grew closer to an unsatisfactory end, Morgenthau asked the President to permit Marshall to speak. Roosevelt initially refused. But Marshall, undeterred, walked over to the President, and "demanded with quiet intensity" to have his say.

"His voice sibilant with frustration, anger, and intense concern, Marshall exceeded his allotted time in pouring forth the Army's critical requirements. More money, better organization of production, effective control of defense developments-these were all set forth before the astonished President, quiet before the force of an unexpected torrent."⁶⁰

Marshall firmly concluded with emotion, "If you don't do something...and do it right away, I don't know what is going

to happen to this country".⁶¹ Roosevelt was impressed and permitted Marshall to draft the President's message to Congress. Some years later, Marshall would refer to this meeting as the "breaking of the logjam".⁶² It was a testament to his vision and personal skill. As Forrest Pogue has observed,

"Drawing on the experience gained as Pershing's aide during the hearings on the National Defense bill of 1920, he impressed congressmen by his frankness, his grasp of bedrock essentials, and his refusal to be drawn into partisan discussions. He found useful illustrations from his experiences and knew the art of easing tension with an anecdote."⁶³

It was Marshall's perspicuity and well-conceived alliances in Washington that convinced those in power to move forward with the rearmament of America. Marshall would remind Congress of the "accounting history would require of them" while assuring them that his requests were based on the national interests and not politics.⁶⁴ As Huzar notes,

"In no small measure the [War] Department's success in selling its manpower programs to Congress was a result of the latter's great confidence in Chief of Staff Marshall, which was re-enforced by his directing the Army to success in the field."⁶⁵

When war came, politicians did much collective soul searching as to the nation's unpreparedness exhibiting "a

little *mea*, but much *tua culpa*".⁶⁶ None of this phased Marshall, who always kept his eye on the goal: the ability of the nation defend itself.

General Marshall assumed his duties as Chief of Staff, when war was on the horizon. Yet a skeptical Congress and a mercurial President clung to the view that war was avoidable. Like MacArthur, Marshall knew otherwise and moved quickly to shape a successful strategy to rearm America. He knew that political skill was not his strong suit. But he knew that if he were to be successful in preparing America for war, he would need to win the sentiments of Congress and the President. Through the artful use of men like Hopkins and Baruch, Marshall was able to gain the access he needed. He then relied on his own firm but assuring character to win the hearts and minds of America's leaders. Credibility was his constant ally, and he worked to ensure that partisan politics never damaged his relationship with the legislative and executive branches. Moreover he spoke his mind with conviction, not zealotry.

This brilliant strategy was highly successful in attaining a strong regular Army, well equipped and trained and backed up by a force able to quickly mobilize. Taken

together, Marshall's personal and visionary skills were essential in preparing a reluctant nation for the war they would be compelled to fight. He was a strategic leader in every regard.

"THE RIGHT STUFF"

As the record of these three famous Army leaders, Sherman, MacArthur, and Marshall, demonstrates, all were concerned with the welfare of the Army. However the results of their efforts were quite different.

Despite his enormous talent, Sherman failed to effectively lead the Army. The reasons for this are twofold. First, Sherman was unwilling to work effectively with Congress. It is possible that he simply lacked the personal skills to do so, but clearly his contempt for Congress was a greater impediment. Second, Sherman lacked a clear vision of how to maintain the Army's readiness beyond fleeting ideas. When faced with resistance, he acted plaintively. When dealt a set back, he withdrew from the fight, a characteristic he abhorred in actual combat. The Army under Sherman was consigned to languish because its leader never transitioned to the strategic level.

Unlike Sherman, MacArthur had a clear vision of what the Army needed. He clearly saw the gathering clouds of war and mustered all the right arguments to prepare the nation for conflict. He was articulate and clear-minded. But his confrontational and aristocratic manner made him ineffective. In this regard, MacArthur shared with Sherman an inability to work with civilian leadership to attain an efficacious result. That MacArthur was strategic-minded is not in question. Equally clear is that he failed to lead strategically.

Like MacArthur before him, Marshall had a clear vision of what had to be done to defend the nation. He knew what had to be done and moved to attain it. But unlike Sherman and MacArthur, Marshall understood that a strategic leader must be able to make his case to the civilian leadership without alienating them. His public pronouncements were well crafted, and while hard hitting, designed to preserve good will with the civilian government. His use of political surrogates in keeping communications to the leadership open and productive was enlightened. He was assiduously non-partisan. But most of all, he understood that in democracies, the art of persuasion rests soundly on

the pillars of integrity, patience, and an accurate rendering of reality. In sum, George Marshall made the leap to strategic leadership, clearly exhibiting the "right stuff" at the right time.

ENLIGHTENED ENGAGEMENT

What can be learned from the experience of these three distinguished senior leaders for the Army's current leadership as they make the case for the Army today? General Marshall's example is our departure point. As he did, the current leadership should following a strategy that markets the threat, articulates the Army's case to a wide audience, and effectively edifies the political leadership to the needs of the Army: in other words, enlightened engagement.

First, the Army's leadership must publicize or market the threat. With the fall of the USSR, we now find ourselves facing a multipolar world that is multi-dangerous and a threat which is difficult to quantify. International terrorist are more sinister than ever. Rogue states are determined to arm themselves with weapons of mass destruction. Failed states are on the rise with the attendant ethnic hatred, economic deprivation, cross-border

fighting, and dislocation. In addition, the Army continues to face the very real likelihood that it will be called upon to fight at least two major regional contingencies (MRCs) amid the possibility of limited regional contingencies (LRCs).

In their effort to design our future force, the Army's senior leaders must devote their full energy to marketing this threat to the American people in a way that they will understand. It is not enough to simply profile a "trained and ready force". Even the most security-minded American will question the efficacy of an expensive military force for which there is no potential threat. To be sure, the American public is the audience in this marketing effort. While politicians may chafe under public comments by the Army, they must inevitably prove that the Army's assessment of the threat is wrong. Given the nature of this very dangerous world, it will be difficult at best to paint a rosy picture.

Second, the senior leadership must articulate the need for a strong Army, robust enough to sustain and attract effective coalitions as well as meet potential threats. Lectures at major universities, appearances on television

and radio news shows, and articles in professional journals are but the superstructure of a publicity effort to make America aware of the necessity of military readiness. That senior leaders will receive pressure to forego such publicity is certain. Consequently, it is essential that such an effort be non-partisan, frank, and respectful of those who disagree with the Army position.

In some cases, disgruntled politicians may call for the resignation of those who speak out. However, this is an ever-present threat for those who will not conform to views they do not believe are in the best interest of the nation they defend. Senior Army leaders must be ever mindful of the line between disagreement and disrespect and not seduced into seeing the former as leading to the latter. A non-partisan Marshall gave us the example--don't back politicians into a corner, but don't back away from a fight if one is necessary.

Third, senior Army leaders must engage the political leadership and keep them engaged over time. Congressmen are like military leaders. They do not want to be surprised. They want to know the facts. A major effort must be made to bring increased numbers of congressmen and senators to the

field to see both the threat we face and the Army as it trains to do its mission against that threat. Senior leaders must see the Congress as a combat multiplier, not an adversary.

Finally, the Army's leadership must broaden its circle of advocates who can assist in gaining access to political leaders. In doing so, a cross section of industry and academia, including those without major interests in defense spending, will increase the Army's credibility in making its case to Congress. Reliance on "think tanks", professional associations, and former military officers alone, while helpful and important, runs the risk of being discarded as so much expected advocacy.

CONCLUSION

Few times in recent history has the weight of historical evidence been more on the side of retaining a robust Army than at this hour when we face a multitude of threats. Current senior leaders must argue for a robust military. If the Army's leadership permits the discussion to devolve to "the minimal force needed in a post-Cold War era", they will have missed a major opportunity to set realistic defense priorities. We are not in a post-war era,

rather we are in a state of seamless conflict spread across a world that is increasingly unstable and unpredictable as it adjusts to the present multipolar situation.

Moreover unlike the battle at the Little Bighorn where word did not reach Washington for a week, or the attack of Pearl Harbor where leaders were unaware until hours later, today the actions of one soldier on a faraway outpost can be beamed across the world before his First Sergeant is aware of the event. It is the nature of our times and the nature of our threat that we must be able to respond rapidly and overwhelmingly. We have an opportunity to follow Marshall's remarkable example in building an armed force sufficient to our needs before events demand we do so thereby avoiding the unpreparedness that is the bedfellow of demobilization.

A congressman once mused "trust in God and General Marshall".⁶⁷ How much better it will be for us if we are able to say that we trusted in God and anticipated the need for a robust Army.

ENDNOTES

¹The Constitution of the United States of America as amended, Article I, Section 8 (1787).

²Ibid., Article II, Section 1 (1787).

³Elias Huzar, The Purse and the Sword: Control of the Army by Congress Through Military Appropriations 1933-1950 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950), 5.

⁴Ibid., 22.

⁵Ibid., 9.

⁶Ibid., 6-7.

⁷Ibid., 375.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., 209.

¹⁰Ibid., 84.

¹¹M.A. DeWolfe Howe, ed., Home Letters of General Sherman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), 369.

¹²James M. Merrill, William Tecumseh Sherman (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1971), 337.

¹³Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967), 567.

¹⁴Ibid., 561.

¹⁵Merrill, 351.

¹⁶Frederick B. Weiner, "This Was the Army: Service Without Pay," Infantry Journal 58 (February 1946): 38.

¹⁷Headquarters of the Army, General Order No. 51
(Washington: War Department, 19 May 1877), 1.

¹⁸Weiner, 41.

¹⁹Merrill, 366.

²⁰Michael Fellman, Citizen Sherman (New York: Random
House, 1995), 280.

²¹Merrill, 367.

²²Howe, 386-387.

²³Headquarters of the Army, General Order No. 107,
(Washington: War Department, 27 November 1877), 1.

²⁴Fellman, 291.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Howe, 388.

²⁸Ibid., 389.

²⁹Weigley, 561, 568.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Huzar, 152.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid., 143.

³⁴Weigley, 400-401.

³⁵MacArthur, 90.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Huzar, 138.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹MacArthur, 91.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid., 96.

⁴³Ibid., 99.

⁴⁴Ibid., 100.

⁴⁵Ibid., 101.

⁴⁶Huzar, 72.

⁴⁷Weigley, 561.

⁴⁸Huzar, 58.

⁴⁹Forrest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope
(New York: The Viking Press, 1966), 17.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., 23.

⁵³Ibid., 24.

⁵⁴Ibid., 25.

⁵⁵Ibid., 26.

⁵⁶Ibid., 28.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid., 28-29.

⁵⁹Ibid., 29.

⁶⁰Ibid., 31.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., 32.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid., 33.

⁶⁵Huzar, 262.

⁶⁶Ibid., 156.

⁶⁷Ibid., 162.

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