

The Home Front and International Affairs

Secretary of State in Alumni Day Message Cites Need for Development Of Sense of Responsibility for World Order

GEORGE C. MARSHALL

Princeton Alumni Weekly
Feb. 28, 1947

I HAD an engagement with your distinguished President to attend this ceremony exactly one year ago. Instead I celebrated Washington's Birthday in China. Now, a year later, I am glad that it is at last possible for me to keep my engagement.

I do not wish at this time to engage in a discussion of specific international questions. But I would like to talk to you about the home front as it relates to international affairs, and about your personal interests as American citizens. I might say I am talking to the students more than I am to the alumni and their guests.

As you all must recognize, we are living today in a most difficult period. The war years were critical, at times alarmingly so. But I think that the present period is in many respects even more critical. The problems are different but no less vital to the national security than those during the days of active fighting. But the more serious aspect is the fact that we no longer display that intensity, that unity of purpose with which we concentrated upon the war task and achieved the victory.

Now that an immediate peril is not plainly visible, there is a natural tendency to relax and to return to business as usual, politics as usual, pleasure as usual. Many of our people have become indifferent to what I might term the long-time dangers to the nation's security. It is natural and necessary, that there should be a relaxation of wartime tensions. But I feel that we are seriously failing in our attitude toward the international problems whose solution will largely determine our future. The public appears generally in the attitude of a spectator—interested, yes, but whose serious thinking is directed to local immediate matters. Spectators of life are not those who will retain their liberties nor are they likely to contribute to their country's security.

There are many who deplore, but few who are willing to act, to act directly or to influence political action. Action depends upon conviction, and conviction in turn depends upon understanding—a general understanding both of the past history of man on this globe and an understanding that action is a basic necessity of man's nature. Justice Holmes said, "Man is born to



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The Secretary of State

act. To act is to affirm the worth of an end, and to affirm the worth of an end is to create an ideal." So I say to you as earnestly as I can that the attitude of the spectator is the culminating frustration of man's nature.

We have had a cessation of hostilities, but we have no genuine peace. Here at home we are in a state of transition between a war and peace economy. In Europe and Asia fear and famine still prevail. Power relationships are in a state of flux. Order has yet to be brought out of confusion. Peace has yet to be secured. And how this is accomplished will depend very much upon the American people.

Marshall and the Marshal

WHEN the degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred upon Secretary of State George C. Marshall at the Alumni Day Convocation, the purple hood symbolizing the degree was draped over his shoulders by Chauncey Belknap '12, Bicentennial chief marshal and alumni trustee of the University.

Several hours later, at the conclusion of his formal address at the Alumni Day Luncheon, Secretary Marshall revealed a previous association with Mr. Belknap—in 1918 during the first World War. Second Lieutenant Belknap, it developed, was serving under Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall at a time when the latter was head of the Operations Section of the First Division. "We shared the same hut," the Secretary of State declared, "but I must confess that I had the better bunk."

Most of the other countries of the world find themselves exhausted economically, financially and physically. If the world is to get on its feet, if the productive facilities of the world are to be restored, if the democratic processes in many countries are to resume their functioning, a strong lead and definite assistance from the United States will be necessary.

THE CRITICAL PROBLEM

WHAT are we going to do about it? That is the critical problem with regard to which I have a heavy responsibility.

We do not lack for knowledge of what to do for our future security. The lessons of history provide plain guidance. But, can we tear our thoughts sufficiently away from the personal and local problems of the moment to see the world picture and our relation to it in proper perspective? We should think now in long terms of years rather than in terms of months and their immediate political issues.

Twenty-five years ago the people of this country, and of the world for that matter, had the opportunity to make vital decisions regarding their future welfare. I think we must agree that the negative course of action followed by the United States after the First World War did not achieve order or security, and that it had a direct bearing upon the recent war and its endless tragedies.

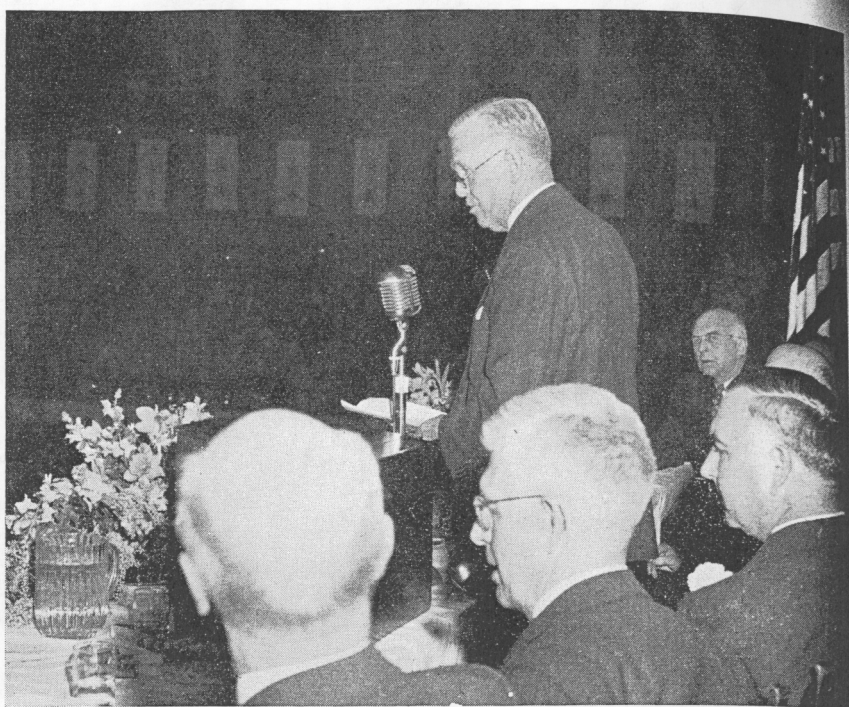
There were people in those days who understood the lessons of history, who knew well what should be done in order to minimize the danger of another world disaster, but their combined voice was a feeble one and their proposals were ignored. Now this, in my opinion, is where you come in.

In order to take a full part in the life which is before you, I think you must in effect relive the past so that you may turn to the present with deep convictions and an understanding of what manner of country this is for which men for many generations have laid down their lives. Therefore, a deep understanding of history is necessary—not merely recent history which concerns itself with the trivia surrounding conspicuous men and events, but an understanding of that history which records the main currents of the past activities of men and which leads to

an understanding of what has created and what has destroyed great civilizations. You should have an understanding of what course of action has created power and security and of the mistakes which have undermined the power and security of many nations, and above all, a clear understanding of the institutions upon which human liberty and individual freedom have depended, and the struggles to gain and maintain them.

It has been said that one should be interested in the past only as a guide to the future. I do not fully concur with this. One usually emerges from an intimate understanding of the past with its lessons and its wisdom, with convictions which put fire in the soul. I doubt seriously whether a man can think with full wisdom and with deep convictions regarding certain of the basic international issues today who has not at least reviewed in his mind the period of the Peloponnesian War and the fall of Athens.

I am therefore greatly concerned that the young men and women of this country, men like yourselves and the students in every university, college



Secretary Marshall Addresses the Alumni Day Gathering

and high school in the United States, shall acquire a genuine understanding of lessons of history as they relate to governments and the characteristics of nations and peoples, and as to the causes of the wars which have destroyed so much of human life and progress. You should fully understand the special position that the United States now occupies in the world, geographically, financially, militarily, and scientifically, and the implications involved. The development of a sense of responsibility for world order and security, the development of a sense of overwhelming importance of this country's acts, and failures to act, in relation to world order and security—these, in my opinion, are great musts for your generation.

It is rather bromidic to say that there is little new in the world or that the world is a very small place. But I think we seldom realize our own ignorance of what has happened in the past except by way of a chronological sequence of events with related dates. There have been wars and revolutions; there have been republics, kingdoms and empires; there has been tribal rule and various experiments in government, till it would seem that there is small possibility of any new departure. But the important thing is to understand the true significance, the lessons of these historic events and periods.

There is another consideration in connection with the course to be followed by the young people of this country today to which I personally attach great importance. And that is that

young men and women should take an active part as workers in one of the political parties so that they will get the feel of government, so that they will become intimately aware of the influence of political organization upon the government of the home town, of the state, and the nation. We have had two wonderful examples of this course in the lives of Theodore and Franklin D. Roosevelt—members of opposing political parties, great Americans who rendered magnificent services to their country. You can do no better in starting your active life as citizens than to emulate their example.

Alumni Trustee Candidates

A FEATURE of the Alumni Day luncheon was the report of Howard M. Sawyer '12, of East Cambridge, Mass., chairman of the committee to nominate alumni trustees, who announced the names of the eight candidates nominated for this spring's election to fill two vacancies on the Board of Trustees.

Five of the candidates were nominated for the alumni trusteeship-at-large, now filled by Neville Miller '16 of Washington, D.C. The other three were nominated for the trusteeship of Region I (New England and Middle Atlantic states) now filled by Chauncey Belknap '12 of New York City.

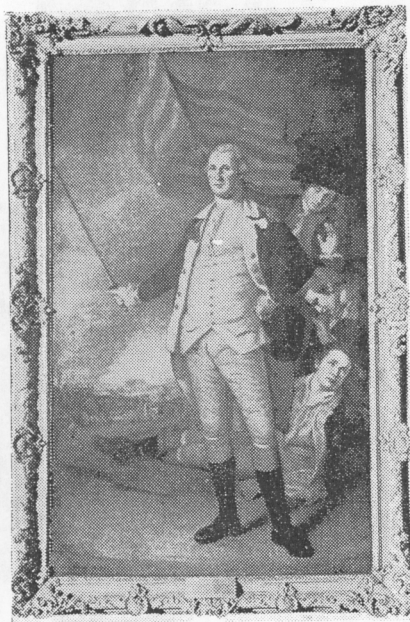
Nominees for alumni trustee-at-large:

Norman Armour '09, Gladstone, N.J.
Richard Bard '15, Port Hueneme, Calif.
Erdman Harris '20, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Thomas H. McCauley '12, New York City.
Livingston T. Merchant '26, Washington, D.C.

Nominees for regional trustee:

Sanford G. Etherington '06, New York City.

Henry A. Laughlin '14, Concord, Mass.
John Stevens '29, Bryn Mawr, Pa.



The Nassau Hall Peale portrait of George Washington, referred to by Mr. Helm in his Alumni Day report, has been reproduced in color. A restricted number of the reproductions, measuring 17½ by 28 inches, have been issued in a limited edition and may be purchased for \$15 from the Princeton University Library. The reproductions are hand colored by means of a stencil process applied to large black and white plates printed by colotype. A detailed description of the portrait, its acquisition and history, with a comprehensive account of the elaborate color process used in the reproductions, will appear in the forthcoming Princeton University Press Bicentennial volume, "Princeton Portraits," by Professor Donald D. Egbert and Mrs. D. M. Lee of the Department of Art and Archaeology.