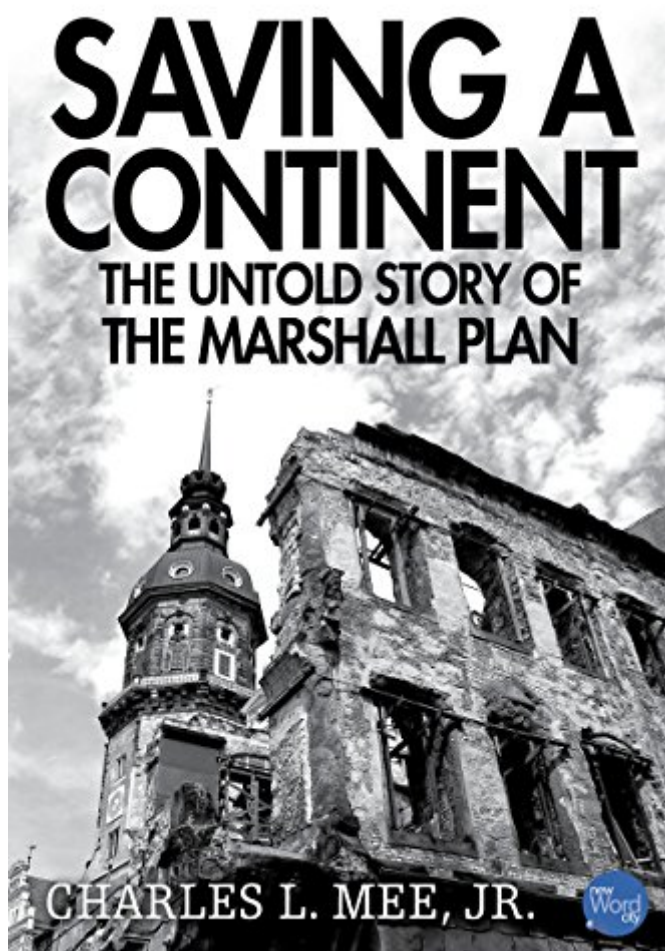


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Saving A Continent: The Untold Story Of The Marshall Plan



Synopsis

The imperial powers of the nineteenth century, having weakened one another in World War I, destroyed themselves in World War II. In the aftermath of the war, Europe was in shambles. Nearly all of France, Germany, Italy, and Poland had been devastated. Bridges and roads were gone. Rivers and canals were clogged with sunken ships and fallen bridges. Unexploded bombs and shells littered fields. Postwar inflation whipsawed the survivors: cigarettes, coffee, and chocolate were better currencies than Deutsche marks. Prices rose in Italy to thirty-five times their prewar level. Before the year was over, disastrous harvests across the continent would leave Europeans hungry, and, in some places, even starving. Only two great powers remained strong enough to consider taking over, or materially influencing, Europe - the United States and the Soviet Union. United States Secretary of State George C. Marshall had a plan. Here's the story of that plan and the fascinating man who put it together.

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Customer Reviews

Better known as a playwright than as a historian, Charles L. Mee Jr specializes in succinct,

comprehensible summations of complex events, civilisations, and people. He is a summarizer more than a historian, but as such he provides a useful service to those wanting more than the "Cliff Notes on Mayan Civilisation" or "Rembrandt for Dummies" but who are not interested in reading a dozen in-depth studies. Nonetheless, when a writer flubs simple facts, however insignificant, it throws the validity of the entire work into question. In this history of the Marshall Plan he describes the cathedrals within the Kremlin walls as "Greek Orthodox" when even a very, very casual student of Russian history knows they are Russian Orthodox. Just a few pages later he describes Churchill in 1947 as Truman's "old friend;" as the two men never met before 1945 this is exaggeration at best. Neither fact or statement is in itself significant, but the mistakes (and, several others that are equally insignificant but annoying such as confusing the word "cache" for "cachet") make a reader doubt other statements and "facts" given in the book, which is a shame because the book is readable and provides a good introductory overview of the subject. There are a few larger mistakes, such as Mee's astonishing assertion that the Communist government of Czechoslovakia was "indisputably" freely voted into office, but most of the mistakes are small and serve as a reminder of how rare good editors have become.

Detailed account of the struggle to get 16 countries to learn to work together for the common good, which meant getting over their traditional narrow Nationalistic viewpoints. The Marshall Plan saved Europe after the chaos of WWII, but without the tireless work of many heretofore unknown people, it might not have happened and the Europe we know today would not exist

I remember hearing about the Marshall Plan from history classes, but I didn't know how much political wrangling, and diplomatic maneuvering was involved to make it happen. Nothing involving money is ever simple!

Interesting details of America's largess to a devastated Europe to bring about recovery and to block communism.

I lived during this time, and was aware when the Berlin wall went up and down. I remember the Army McCarthy hearings on TV, but I was not old enough to understand the politics at the end of the war. This Book is most telling in light of the Greek Financial Crises today. Our Fear of the Communist takeover in eastern Europe which helped push acceptance of the Marshall Plan and the inducements to the Greeks, before they were ready, explains Reams.

A great book about an important period in our history when our politicians still had "guts". It is a story about which most American of the current generation are woefully ignorant.

Very readable! Like a good detective story. The statistics for what was needed to pull Europe up and to get these countries running again were mind boggling. I knew very little about this period of American history--feel I am a little better educated. Have recommended this book to friends who love a good read.

For those who enjoy political history this is an easy to read account of the development of the Marshall Plan

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