

THE SHADOWS OF POWER

speech in 1947. Conventional history presumes Marshall initiated the concept, which, not surprisingly, had its actual birth at the Council on Foreign Relations.

In their study of the CFR, *Imperial Brain Trust*, Laurence Shoup and William Minter reported:

In 1946-1947 lawyer Charles M. Spofford headed a [CFR study] group, with banker David Rockefeller as secretary, on Reconstruction in Western Europe; in 1947-1948 that body was retitled the Marshall Plan. The Council's annual report for 1948 explained that even before Secretary of State George C. Marshall had made his aid to Europe proposal in June 1947, the Spofford group had "uncovered" the necessity for aid to Europe and "helped explain the needs for the Marshall Plan and indicated some of the problems it would present for American foreign policy. Moreover, a number of members of the 1947-1948 group, through their connections with . . . governmental bodies were in constant touch with the course of events."²

Originally, it was to be called the Truman Plan, but this was scrapped because it was felt that the name of Marshall — who was Chief of Staff during the war — could elicit more bipartisan Congressional support.³ Thus was Marshall selected to introduce the proposal publicly.

The Marshall Plan, overseen by the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), transferred \$13 billion from the U.S. taxpayers to Western Europe. But where did the dollars end up? In 1986, Tyler Cowen observed in *Reason* magazine: "[A]ll of the aid channeled through the ECA was linked to purchases of particular US goods and services. In this regard, the Marshall Plan subsidized some US businesses at the expense of the American taxpayer."⁴ Cowen entitled his article "The Great Twentieth-Century Foreign-Aid Hoax." Firms that could not get Americans to buy their products now *forced* them to pay through surrogate European consumers. Some of the goods sent were overstocked, overpriced, or inferior in quality — but the Europeans took what the ECA stipulated. And why not? For them, it was free.