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## Unconditional Surrender, Demobilization, and the Atomic Bomb.

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**Abstract :** In one way or another, George C. Marshall, the U.S. Army's Chief of Staff, had long been expecting a sharp reduction in military morale. He had witnessed, as aide-de-camp to General John J. Pershing, America's mood after World War I. Once Germany asked for an armistice (and before it signed a surrender), Congress and the public had demanded a swift de-mobilization. This indelible memory of November 1918 shaped Marshall's resolve to minimize military responsibilities after the Nazi capitulation. In Europe, this meant an end


to operations in the eastern Mediterranean, where internal political conflicts and instabilities might require a large and long-term occupation by an army about to be drastically reduced in size. In the Pacific, the Japanese would have to be beaten into a position where their surrender would occur shortly after V-E Day. Otherwise, there might not be a capitulation at all, something Marshall predicted in 1943: the collapse of Germany would impose partial demobilization and a growing impatience... throughout the United States. This mood could lead to a compromise settlement along the lines the Japanese Army was hoping to obtain: that is, the retention of the core empire it still occupied (Formosa, Manchuria, and Korea) and no change in the political institutions of Japan.<sup>2</sup> America's military timing was exceptionally good, considering the enormous perplexities of the war. When Germany surrendered in May, the United States had already made what Marshall called the preparation for the final kill. Its armed forces surrounded the home islands of Japan from the south and the east. It had also obtained from Russia a pledge to attack the Japanese Imperial Army in Manchuria, thereby completing the ironclad blockade that the U.S. Navy once planned to execute alone.

**Descriptors :** \*NUCLEAR BOMBS , MILITARY HISTORY , WARFARE , UNITED STATES , MOBILIZATION , JAPAN , MILITARY PLANNING , INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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