

PARIS, FRANCE

GEORGE C. MARSHALL CENTER, HÔTEL TALLEYRAND

The Hôtel de Talleyrand is an elegant example of eighteenth century French architecture, as well as a monument to European and American political and social history. The townhouse's neoclassical design represents collaboration between Jacques-Ange Gabriel and Jean-François Chalgrin. Chalgrin, who was also the architect of the Arc de Triomphe, designed the entrance court wall and the interior. The limestone exterior is a significant component of Gabriel's grand urban scheme for the Place Louis XV, now called the Place de la Concorde. The exterior is protected by Monuments Historiques et Bâtiments de France.

Shortly after the establishment of the First Republic (1792-1804) the townhouse became the residence of the French statesman Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand Périgord, who as Minister of Foreign Affairs implemented Napoleon's foreign policy.

During World War II the Vichy government requisitioned the building, as did the Germans following the fall of France. The façade still has bullet holes purposely left ragged, and in the basement there are prison cells labeled in German. Purchased after the war by the U.S. Government from Baron Guy de Rothschild, the building served as European headquarters for the European Recovery Program known as the Marshall Plan, in which seventeen European nations participated.

The Hôtel de Talleyrand is now home to the offices of World Monuments Fund Europe and a private law firm. The recently restored first floor reception rooms house the George C. Marshall Center and are used for official embassy events such as conferences, receptions, and cultural activities that promote closer ties between the United States and France. The Center also houses a permanent exhibit, The Marshall Plan: The Vision of a Family of Nations, which perpetuates the memory of this exemplary international effort after the war.

"Nearly every day I would have a few people to lunch . . . Occasionally, I would have dinner with some of the Americans . . . These were brainstorming sessions . . . without malice or ulterior motives . . . There soon came to be a real climate of friendship, compounded of trust and respect for each other's point of view."

— French Economist Robert Marjolin, General Secretary, Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), 1948-55, who forged new working relationships vital to future cooperation.

