

# Why the UN Charter Is Still The Basis for International Law Today: The Legacy of Franklin Roosevelt

*This is an edited transcript of a presentation given by Gerald Rose, a collaborator of Lyndon LaRouche for over half a century, to the May 31, 2025 LaRouche Organization Manhattan Project meeting.*

We had gotten a report that Russian President Vladimir Putin, in front of a meeting of 100 nations (the “13th Meeting of High Representatives for Security Issues” May 27-29, 2025), issued a statement. Many of you who’ve been following the LaRouche movement will immediately recognize what this is. Quoting from President Putin:

“We [the Russian Federation] also uphold the principle of sovereign equality and the right to their own model of development. As far as Russia is concerned, its approach remains principled and unchanged. I have said many times and I’ll repeat it: we are convinced that the new security architecture should be equal and indivisible. That is, all states should receive firm guarantees of their own security, but not at the expense of the security and interests of other countries.”

He went on to reference the United Nations, and particularly the UN Charter as the basis to implement such a proposal. I asked to be on the Manhattan Project Podcast for this week, because I wanted to add something very important to this ongoing, profound, dialogue.

Recently, [nuclear arms expert] Ted Postol, in a [discussion](#) with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, indicated that he had not known of the drone attack on Putin’s helicopter. But when he heard it, he said, “these people are insane. Putin is the most reasoned, most measured leader on the planet.” Given the cumulative effect of all the betrayals, all the lies, all the attempts to provoke Russia, and particularly him as the leader of Russia, he is completely measured in his response.

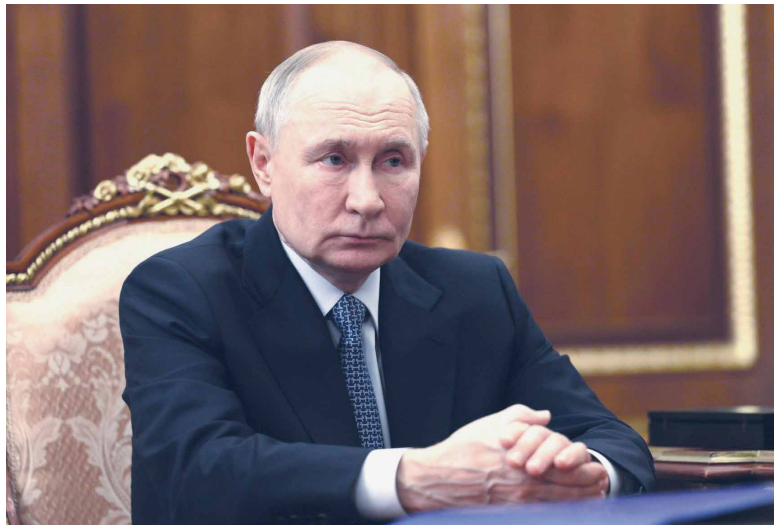
People can understand how crucial the role of the Schiller Institute has been, and Helga in particular, in terms of identifying what would be called the higher hypothesis, or, the way we describe it, what seems to be the coincidence of opposites—in the sense that this

war can only be solved on a higher plane, with a higher idea of man, as Helga developed, in her [Ten Principles for a New Security and Development Architecture](#).

## The Intent of the United Nations

Now, the reason I wanted to speak is because I’ve heard many discussions of the United Nations and its Charter. The Charter cannot be understood fully if you leave out the mission and the intention of the man who founded the UN: Franklin Roosevelt!

Everything I’m going to tell you is documented,



kremlin.ru

*Russian President Vladimir Putin*

even though you never get taught this. If you read Elliott Roosevelt’s discussion reported in his book *As He Saw It*, what I’m going to tell you is absolutely irrefutable. And it pervaded everything that Franklin Roosevelt did previous to and during World War Two.

In Elliott Roosevelt’s first-hand account, Franklin Roosevelt was clear, and passionately so, that both world wars were caused by the British Empire and colonial rule. It is completely unmistakable that he knew this and described it in passionate detail to Elliott. There is a famous scene in the book where Franklin hits the roof talking to Elliott, because Elliott tries to say [French leader Charles] de Gaulle had some claim to demanding Indo-China [Vietnam] back as a colony

after the war. Franklin exploded: They have no claim! What claim could a nation have over the rights and future of other nations? When France ruled Indo-China, they looted and destroyed it! He said the reason the Japanese came in on Indo-China so easily is because the people of Indo-China thought, how could it be worse than the French colonial rule?

And then FDR says to his son, if we don't end colonial rule— Your son is five years old. He will be in war. And indeed, I think the figure from the point of the end of World War Two until now— American engagement has been over 30 different wars that we have been involved in since 1945. They're not world wars, but

dependence and economic development of previously colonially-ruled countries, including India, the so-called jewel of the British Empire. Churchill literally choked on his cigar!

This is the idea and the reason why the United Nations Charter is the basis for these kinds of higher negotiations and discussions today. As Putin indicated in his speech to the May meeting, the stated intention, the whole fight for the UN, was explicitly the end to colonial rule.

### **FDR's Vision for a Post-War Architecture: American Methods of Development**

Now, you have heard lie upon lie about the Yalta meeting. You know: that Roosevelt went to Yalta and was tired, and he gave away Eastern Europe to the Soviets, to Stalin. That's one of the biggest frauds in history, which gets repeated and repeated again and again. It's all a lie. Franklin Roosevelt knew that he had to go to Yalta when he did, despite his illness. The reason he went to Yalta was to secure from Stalin the agreement for a United Nations after the war. So, Franklin Roosevelt traveled—and he was very sick—with Harry Hopkins. They traveled, I think it was 6,000 miles, sometimes over enemy territory, to go to Yalta. Because he knew what would happen if they did not get an agreement before

the end of the war for a new security architecture that would emerge after the war. Now, this new security architecture was part and parcel of what was called the Bretton Woods agreements. Another complete fraud—it was not about the dollar versus the pound sterling. That was never on the table. The only currency left in post-war Europe was the dollar.

It was not a debate. Harry Dexter White wasn't interested in debating [British economist John Maynard] Keynes, although that's what you read about Bretton Woods. A very effective book called *The Forgotten Roots of Bretton Woods* detailed the kinds of development programs which—and this is 1944—the kinds of post-war development programs [that were proposed].



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*Roosevelt and Churchill at the meeting in Argentia, Newfoundland, Canada.*

[wars] where American troops have been involved and Americans died, because we did not end colonial rule exactly as FDR had warned. And now we are threatened with nuclear annihilation.

So, to understand the United Nations Charter, you have to understand the Argentia meeting, the first wartime meeting with Churchill. Franklin Roosevelt told him there, “we will not fight this war, to maintain your empire.” Remember this is 1941. All of France had just fallen. Britain was bombed to hell. Italy was already fascist by 1926. Spain was fascist. And Roosevelt said, I won't enter the war unless you sign on the dotted line called the Atlantic Charter. The Charter directly challenged the very idea of empire, by insisting on the in-



National Archives

*Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin at the Yalta meeting.*

the monkey slept. So, besides a worldwide TVA, in which Afghanistan was involved, a number of other projects were on the table, but particularly the Danube River issue. At the Bretton Woods meeting, were both the Communist Party [of China] and the Kuomintang, who proposed the Sun Yat-sen 1919 industrial development of China; the 1919 policy of the industrial development of China, through international investment in rail.

There was a whole development plan in 1944, in which Stalin had gone to Dexter White and gotten the okay from Roosevelt, that after the war we had a massive machine-tool capability, which we wouldn't be able to use after the war. Stalin proposed a \$10 billion loan, which the Russians would borrow; they always paid back everything that was loaned; that a

The Indian delegation proposed at Bretton Woods a worldwide authority based on the Tennessee Valley Authority, the most effective development program in world history up until that time. The Chinese have eclipsed it, but up until that time, it was the most effective development program. The first place that they were going to do what in effect was a TVA, was on the Danube River, the Danube river valley. In which both former communist countries, and Western Europe—the Danube also goes through Germany and Austria—were going to work together to develop Central Europe in the post-war period. The TVA was both energy and flood-control. Because of the energy, they created industry. It was like a development corridor that wasn't a train, but it was a major river. And that would integrate the economies of Eastern and Western Europe.

It is interesting that in *The Road to Slavery*, Friedrich von Hayek attacks the Danube River development project as a form of slavery. He insisted that a Romanian farmer and a German farmer had no common interest. Completely insane. But they knew where

\$10 billion loan would be used to modernize Russia in the wake of the war.

It was unmistakably clear that there was going to be, as Roosevelt said in his discussion with Elliott, "We're going to develop the world with American methods." That's what the combination of the security architecture, which was to be the United Nations, and the stabilization of the world currency [was about]; the World Bank was going to be the credit institution to fund these projects, as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation had done for bringing the United States out of the Depression.

If you read the UN Charter, it is not just on security. There's a whole section on development, and the right of development, and the right of economic justice for the world. So, when Putin discusses that the UN would be the venue for such a higher deliberation, the reason that is the case, is because the UN Charter [was Roosevelt's idea], and in fact, Roosevelt spent his life—he died within two weeks after coming back from Yalta—to form the United Nations. It was said that Franklin

Roosevelt never intended to finish his fourth term in office. He had proposed to his friends that he become the first president of the United Nations.

### The Truman Shift

The crap about Yalta, the Polish question—Roosevelt wanted to ensure that there was cooperation and deliberations and negotiations in the context of economic development. And in that context, you could solve the Polish question. This is all documented in Susan Butler’s book, *Stalin and Roosevelt: Portrait of a Partnership*—I’m not going through a lot because we don’t have several hours—but the Susan Butler book on Franklin Roosevelt, dis-

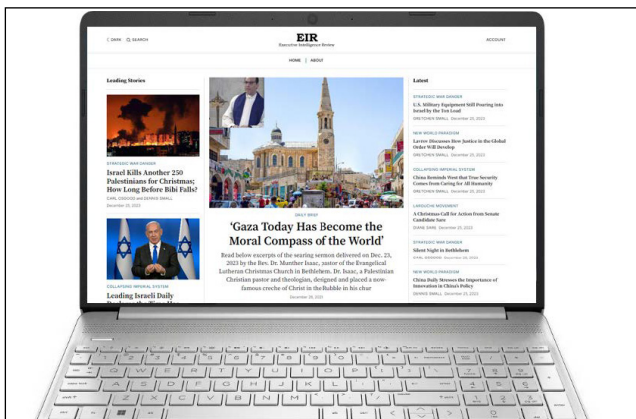


photo courtesy of The Mount Washington Hotel & Resort, Bretton Woods, NH  
*Speaking is U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, president of the conference, at the opening session of the 1944 Bretton Woods International Monetary Conference.*

cusses how, after Roosevelt died, Truman was effectively run by Churchill. At the Potsdam Conference, which is the first conference of the big four powers who won the war, Truman refused to tell Stalin about the atom bomb.

There’s no doubt, and I’m not going to go through the details, but this is fully documented.

Edward Stettinius proposed that Roosevelt’s Cabinet have a meeting, and Truman allowed it to happen. What Stettinius proposed—and Stettinius is the man who crafted the United Nations Charter—the first thing he did after the signing of the UN Charter is call for the United States to share all nuclear secrets with the Russians. The cabinet, except for Harri-man and Forrestal, voted that that should be the case. We should share all nuclear secrets, because it was precisely the dropping of the atom bomb, as a message to Stalin, that ensured that the Cold War was on. And then Stalin did what Stalin would do under such threats. Which Roosevelt knew he would do. He was forced to loot Eastern Europe to save Russia. But who caused it? Who created the Cold War? Susan Butler discusses this in her book on Roosevelt and Stalin; it is brilliant and it’s brilliantly documented. The UN is now emerging again as that kind of institution, and therefore our intervention and cumulative intervention into the United Nations must demand that we establish the actual United Nations that Franklin Roosevelt fought and died for.



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