



IPI BOOK LAUNCH

***AMERICA, HITLER AND THE UN:
How the Allies Won World War II and Forged a Peace***
by Dan Plesch
(I.B. Tauris, 2011)

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TRANSCRIPTION

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Speaker:

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Commentators:

Ambassador Alexander A. Pankin

First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

Sir Brian Urquhart

Former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs

Edward C. Luck:

Thank you all for joining us. It's a particular pleasure, and a somewhat unusual one, to have a book and a series of ideas to talk about that is not only about 2011 and forward, but – Ambassador Antonio, there's some seats up here, if you like – but a book that I think in very important ways ties the history of the UN, the very concept, even before the organization existed, to very current issues, including, of course, the question of the Security Council itself, but very importantly, there's theme after theme, I found in chapter after chapter of the book, which seemed very, very contemporary, and some, I think, are sometimes we learn, about the future by reading about the past.

And I'm very pleased not only to have Dan Plesch here to present his book, but two quite extraordinary commentators who I'll introduce later. Dan has some audiovisuals, so there is a little bit of 21st century about this, so he will occupy the stage by himself initially, and then I'll return with our two commentators.

The book, of course, *America, Hitler, and the UN: How the Allies Won World War II and Forged a Peace*, if you're tempted, there are copies out in the back, which I'm sure they would be happy if people wanted to purchase, I assume, and Dan has a very interesting background in security affairs, and I think one which is quite eclectic in some ways. One of his earlier books is *The Beauty Queen's Guide to World Peace*. I thought that's a terrific title. I wanted to read it just to find out what it was about, but quite provocative to be sure.

He founded BASIC, the British American Security Information Council, which is based in Washington, and many of you knew the important work that BASIC did in arms trade, on NATO issues, on nuclear security, and other things. He has written a good deal on the Middle East, he has left his mark in many places. He's now director of the Center for International Studies and Diplomacy at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies. I think you'll find this to be an interesting book and I'm sure an interesting presentation of the book. I was particularly taken by, I think it's chapter 5, which talks about the UN War Crimes Commission, which is something I had just heard about vaguely and never really seen treated in a systematic way before, and many things that we're dealing with these days, it's very interesting and important to see that early history. So with that, I'll leave you and leave the stage to Dan, and we'll be followed by Alexander Pankin and Brian Urquhart, and then a full discussion. So thank you.

Dan Plesch:

I am delighted with your attendance. I will show you a little bit of video, and a lot more of which is available on the web, on our website, and then I will talk a little bit about the book. But this is a compilation made for me by a colleague of newsreels broadcast to the public in cinemas across the U.S. and in the UK and elsewhere during the Second World War, and it summarizes much of what I say in the book. So hopefully, with the great help of people here, this will work.

[video presentation]

Plesch:

Thank you. There was some other material, but my purpose here today is to illuminate, rather than to keep you in the dark. So I'll truncate the other material, but as I say, there is a host of other video material and images, some in the book, but also a good deal on the web, including, we saw the images of United Nations Day in, with images of this huge parade in London in 1942, there was a similar one with millions on the streets of New York, there were celebrations in the Soviet Union, and both the United States and the Soviet Union printed United Nations postage stamps during the Second World War, and the point of this history, it seems to me, not only does it open up some very interesting new insights into the conduct of the war, but it, I think, says two very important functions for our considerations of the UN today.

The first is that many of the practices, as I talk about it in a minute; we're really quite advanced by contemporary standards. *The Economist*, in a pleasant review of my book, which I've left a few copies out in the back, picked up one such example, which was that this lost United Nations War Crimes Commission, unknown even to people such as Richard Goldstone, had a purpose, not only of developing what international crimes should be, and without it, there would have been no Nuremberg in anything like the form we know it, but also in assisting up to 17 national tribunals in making judgments, *prima facie* judgments, as to whether the cases brought to it by those tribunals at the end of the war could be brought to court.

And there is indeed an official history--a little obscure, of course, now--of the commission, and that details a good many of these stories, including the development of the idea that environmental crimes could be war crimes. I could elaborate, but we wouldn't get into other areas. So a great deal of the practice of the time and the political outlook, particularly in economic and social affairs, which can strongly inform and reinforce the work of the UN today, at least in the idea espoused by Churchill and others of having standing forces available to the Security Council United Nations Air Force, in Churchill's formula. But also to deal with some of the criticism of the UN, particularly, one might say, more fashionably in the Anglo-American sphere, and this is a moment to maybe talk to that audience that frankly, if, in the common parlance of the Greatest Generation, fought World War II as the UN, and to create the UN, it becomes, frankly, rather less reputable to take the memory of the war and use that to justify unilateralist foreign policies, any denigration of the UN that we have today. That, I think, in a

nutshell is why I bother to spend the time and energy investing in the book, not simply because it was an interesting historical chapter, but that's all, and of course, there is a huge interest in the public still in the war, in Hitler. And without Hitler, as one of my German colleagues, diplomatic colleagues remarked with a wry humor, there would be no UN. So thanks for that.

And in this respect also, I, and we need your help, because, not just to help put shoes on my children's feet by buying the book, but by helping use this book and other web tools and other material which one can now find to engage the positive debate that I described, and also the negative critique. Hopefully these tools can enable you, enable us collectively, to do a better job in both these respects than we've been able to, because, in a sense, we've been, one way or another, robbed or robbed ourselves, of what I argued at a conference is, in a sense, the Genesis chapter of the post-war historical bible. My respondent said it isn't Genesis, it's the whole Old Testament, but I wouldn't perhaps go that far. One chapter will do.

A couple of points I just want to make illuminating some of the points in the film. The UN Day we see there arose directly from a document which you find a brief mention of on the UN homepage, something called the Declaration by United Nations, which was initiated by Roosevelt and Churchill, but in coordination and direct involvement of the Soviet Union, and then the Chinese, but was issued at the beginning of 1942 with 26 countries. Two points, I think, two or three points very briefly for the contemporary UN: one was the significance of elevating China to this level. Anthony Eden wrote to his colleagues, "It may seem ridiculous to ask to treat China as a proper country, but the Americans are determined to, and we have no alternative." His language is even more terse than mine. In the telegram, "we have no alternative but to go along."

And in the racial atmosphere of white supremacy at the time, this was no mean feat. Similarly, Roosevelt insisted that India sign as a separate country, like Australia or Canada. Anathema to the English, but they weren't in any position to object, and at all the wartime conferences then, India, with some form of interim flag, participates and signs as a separate country, and I think this is very important as we look at the UN's involvement in colonial politics. And the last point on this, during the war, it now appears Roosevelt determinedly sought, but on this occasion failed, until his death, anyway, to get the British to agree that the European empires should be dismantled according to a timetable, which is a very different outlook for the post-colonial, the postwar decolonization story than the one in which we in fact experienced. Rather, like the War Crimes Commission, these are just important insights into the politics of the war and how it impacts the present time.

I should just say a couple of points about the war itself and the role of the UN in that process. As far as I can see, Roosevelt in particular was determined to avoid the debacle of the failure of the League, and with that in mind, used the same branding for the allies, United Nations, as was to be for the peace organization, the peace organizations that developed during the war, and by giving them the same name, made it far more difficult for people in the United States to oppose them, and also, starting with the Four Freedoms speech, used these ideas to rally Americans to deal with those in America who frankly didn't mind Hitler running Europe, to put it at its bluntest, who were in the ascendancy in the American Congress.

And that domestic political battle is, I think, much underestimated as also is the difficulty of winning the war, winning it so absolutely, and winning it so quickly, that we now take for granted. We have now been, in our present era, engaged in conflicts that drag into the decades, and we are told will go on for decades. The fact that this war was brought to a conclusion so rapidly was in significant part because of the mobilization of these ideas to persuade the Americans to send weapons free of charge to the British and to the Soviets, and to head off the continuing right-wing opposition. It is no small point that the Republicans, and a former British Admiral wrote to me on reading the book, the Republicans don't come out of this awfully well, do they? No, indeed they don't. Not the isolationist ones, anyway, leaving aside Henry Stimson, the Secretary of War, but three months after Stalingrad, on the spurious and nonsensical grounds that the Soviets weren't grateful enough for the supply of weapons, the Republicans voted on party lines to cut off supplies to the Soviet Union. Now had they even been remotely successful, the outcome of the war in the East would have at the very least had been much more long drawn out if, as we often tend to teach our children nowadays, the war is about saving the Jews, there would have been even less of them surviving at the end had they got their way. And this is one example of a sorry

chapter of Congressional Republicanism engaged with international politics, and the difficulty of not only dealing with them but of holding the allies together.

And I'm aware that we have other participants, and we want to get into questions, but I will just pick up these few points as an indication that there is a... I wouldn't say a revision of the history, but a restoration of the history that we would do well to look at, and I would encourage you, not only perhaps to help with the dissemination and development of these ideas with, I think we should have a determined effort to mark the declaration by United Nations of '42, the 70th anniversary is coming up in a few months time, but the subsequent anniversaries of the wartime United Nations, but also to do your own research. Nowadays in the digital world, a few clicks will take you into *The New York Times*, which has 15,000 references to the United Nations before we get to San Francisco, and every other accessible archive has a similar wealth of detail, and in my book, I have not, simply to reach out in this country, I have not sought to quote *The New York Times* very much, but have rather favored the front pages of the newspapers of Brownsville, Texas, who are typically adamant that it is the United Nations that is fighting the war, and the United Nations which is preparing the peace.

Now I've talked a little about issues of economics, of refugees, of war crimes, but I guess I would just end with two points about the UN, and a quote. One has to, being British by birth, I always end with Churchill; it seems a necessity I can't avoid. There's an old nursery rhyme in England, "held on to nurse for fear of worse," which perhaps is the minimalist approach for my take to the UN. There is, I think, in the world of—my colleague, Tom Weiss is here, so I should say something about the theory of international relations, that in a nutshell, this history reinforces the idea that we should regard the United Nations, not as some liberal accessory, some bauble attached to the victory, but as a realist necessity, and in the words of Churchill, in the height of the Battle of Arnhem, dismissing one of his skeptical admirals about the future of the UN, he brushed him aside with the remark I'll leave you with, which is, "It is the only hope of the world." Thank you.

Luck:

I must say, one of the times I heard that quote from someone else as the UN being the only hope in the world, actually, was Benjamin Netanyahu when he was ambassador here. So I guess it's a quote that different people have used on different occasions, but the UN that can survive the Cold War, can survive many things. Well, thank you, Dan. That was terrific, and thank you for the news clips.

We now have a real privilege to have two excellent commentators. Alexander Pankin is the First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations. I was very, very pleased to be able to persuade him to join us, because I think very often, this tale is sort of an Anglo-American tale, and I think something that Dan points out, several points in his book, and very graphically in a chart on page 10, is if you look at casualties, the casualties in the Soviet Union are equal to those in the rest of the world at the war. So obviously, the Soviet viewpoint is enormously important, and I think it's also interesting to see that on certain issues, Moscow and Washington were closer than London and Washington, particularly on, obviously, the decolonization. Alexander Pankin, in addition to being First Deputy Perm Rep, has served many capacities in Moscow, in New York, both with the UN, and with the Russian mission. He has a strong background in economic issues as well as security issues, and we're just delighted to have you with us. So Ambassador, you have the floor.

Alexander A. Pankin:

Thank you. Colleagues and friends, thank you so much. Directly to the subject, I must tell you that this is really an interesting book to read. It's not just a dull historian telling you, merely in facts, in a manner that you want to sleep after 10 pages. It's a real fiction, it's a good fiction based on good historic facts, and I admire your research, how many things you dugged out of those archives, although you say it just takes a click to go to 15,000 articles, but you need to choose the right one for your right purpose, and at the moment, I asked you what inspired you to write a book at this moment, you said that you wanted to change the subject, and it was timely, it's really timely, because in our view, when last year we celebrated the 65th anniversary of the Second World War, of the termination of the Second World War, it was a historic moment, and you know that these days, and us as Russians, and many other nations, we stand to fight the falsification of history, because many generations, three or four generations during these 70 years that were brought up in completely different atmosphere. Maybe our children do not know

or do not remember the things which we heard from your grandfathers, mothers, and so on. So it has a purpose. It serves definitely a purpose; it's a timely book.

And the second purpose which it serves is defending the UN, not in blunt terms, saying that the UN is the best we have today. Probably not, but you cannot do without the UN. You show the transformation of the UN at war to the UN at peace, and how our grandfathers managed within a very limited timeframe to move the ideas, which were quite strange 10 years before that war, and you expect from me the Russian perspective. Definitely, I was personally impressed by many facts which you bring in your book about the strong bonds between Churchill and Roosevelt and their intimate relationship in terms of forging the terms of peace and future coexistence and security atmosphere.

You mentioned that, if not Hitler, the UN would not be there. Well, yes, but again, the ideas of having a world peace organization were not new, even before the League of Nations, even before the First World War; there were many lawyers in Britain, in Russia, in France who were trying to invent the vehicle and the mechanism for securing the peace in the world. The situation was changing rapidly, definitely after, during the war, and after the war, it became inevitable that you need a mechanism to safeguard against new conflicts, global conflicts which would lead to destruction.

Were the Russians active or not? Well, I don't want to go on propaganda, but you understand that the situation in Russia in 1941 and 1942 and 1943 was different from the situation in Britain, and especially in the U.S. The U.S., I mean, I told you about the book, which, can I advertise it? No, I'm not advertising, but I love Somerset Maugham, and I read a book about Somerset Maugham from completely different perspective, it's called *Irregulars*. It's written by an American journalist here. It was published last year. It's about the Brits who worked in the U.S. and persuaded, through the embassy and information channels, the Americans to step in with their efforts.

In Russia, we had war in our territory. Much of this territory, at least much of European territory, Russia, was conquered. Let's put it in plain words. It was conquered, it was destroyed, we had to evacuate the industries, the planes, the people, children, we suffered not only lives, we suffered destruction, and I cannot imagine how—and I give you the facts now—but I cannot imagine how, in 1941, when the enemy was at the door of Moscow, at the door of Leningrad, and Leningrad, the siege and blockade continued for more than one year, and Stalingrad happened in 1943, how the people in Kremlin and around Kremlin, they could think of victorious postwar era. It's unimaginable. It was—Britain suffered, Britain suffered the air strikes, Britain was at war. America was less at war in military terms.

So the signals, definitely the signals which came from Moscow that could be seen as weaker ones, but we had to fight for existence. We're on the brink of non-existence. It was not only Jews, as you can imagine. It was also Slavs, the Slavic nations which were put as number 2 on the list for extermination, or maybe number 3 after the gypsies. There was a long list. And that's why that, in comparison, the Russians, or Soviets, they do fade compared to British/American alliance and work on the UN, on the future peace UN. But already, 1941, in September, we signed a declaration about the UN, and well said, a bilateral declaration was posed in December, and then in January, we joined in, and the diplomats were working on that.

It's also hard to imagine sitting in places like London or U.S. territory when the full-fledged war, the war which we cannot imagine these days, goes on. With the destruction, there was no hope for the future, can't believe in your future, but sometimes, there was no hope for a bright future and peace, and of course, there were... you should not forget that it was the Soviet Union, it was ideologist state, and Britain was an empire, it was also an ideologist state, and U.S. was capitalism. It was also an ideologist state, and these three were different. I mean, Anglo-Saxon alliance was good, but probably some U.S. researchers will tell you, yeah, America was peace loving, Britain was still an empire and wanted to expand. Maybe it wanted to expand the empire. That's why I was really fascinated by your, by bringing the facts that Roosevelt was trying to give Haines some strong signals that you need to decolonize before it happens, you need to have some planned approach to this, and definitely Soviet Union, being, as you called, at that time, a Bolshevik state, being a Communist state, let's say, like China today, we were dedicated to seek

freedom for nations to seek equality for all countries, and that was the, that was probably a bit of contradictory to the approach of Brits and the U.S. at that stage in '41 and '42. But then when these nations started working on the charter, on the charter of the organization, all these differences showed up, but luckily, and thanks to God, these three nations, and China, and others who were invited later, they managed to come to a consensus about the consensus, about the equality of nations within the Security Council and within the United Nations, about the freedoms.

I believe that the Soviet Union's role was, even if it was ideologically driven, and you cannot exclude that ground, because that was part of the country's policy. It played a good role in creating the principles, in establishing the principles of the UN and creating the framework for its major bodies, like Security Council and International Court of Justice and others, and there is a presumption that the UN was the product of victorious nations. Yes, it was. Yes, it was, but is something wrong about that? We don't think it's wrong, because there was, we call it a holy war, holy war for your existence, and we believe that it was a war for morale, for values. You know, you remember, I mean the words we use today now are vocabulary to describe our wishes about a future peace in this world, and the structure of the UN and its Security Council and the powers of the Security Council and the powers of the UN in military, and also non-military areas.

And you mentioned it right, absolute right, that the advantage of the new system was that it did not cover military alliance only, it covered humanitarian, social, economic, and other issues, justice, and our country was, our diplomats were participating to full extent of these negotiations, and it's interesting. I mean, due to time limitations, I will not go into details, but you cannot imagine if some positions were quoted today, you would say, oh, Soviets again. No, it was sometimes Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians, the words which you might expect from the Soviet Union were coming from Americans, even. Interference, non-interference, sovereignty, non-sovereignty, I mean, there was a lot of play, because there was definitely wartime trust among the allies, and there was a distrust among the nations which were different in their socioeconomic and political systems, and there was hatred standing back to back with the need to fight the Hitlerism. So I believe that Russia's view of the United Nations was not really cautious, because we understood that we needed to stand together with our allies, with our partners all over the world, to not allow these things to happen again, the next world war, and luckily, for 70, for 65 years now, we preserved that peace, with the exception of regional conflicts which we regret, but we make every effort through this organization to prevent the major global war. And thanks to you, and again, I'm really fascinated with your book, and I would definitely recommend it, not only to academicians, but also to all diplomats and all those who want to know what happened 70 years ago in this world. Thank you.

Luck: Thank you. Very well put, and very helpful.

It's always a pleasure to introduce Brian Urquhart. I think it was about three years ago or something like that, we celebrated your 90th birthday in this room, and I don't know how many columns in *The New York Review of Books* and other places you've had since that time, but Brian continues to be a prolific and very thoughtful author. I always think of Brian when I think of the UN, and I think of the best of the UN, because I think he has embodied the best of the UN's history through the years, and recently I had the privilege to read again Dag Hammarskjöld's famous lecture at Oxford on the independence of the international civil service, and I think if there's anyone who epitomizes that, it certainly is Sir Brian. So it's always terrific to have you here, and someone who is the second person hired by the world organization, and we look across the street when the curtains went up, which is being reconstructed one more time as we talk, it's always a terrific honor and privilege to have you, Brian, so the floor is yours.

Brian Urquhart: Thank you very much, Ed, for those much too kind words. I think that Dan Plesch's book is very important and also inspiring, and may I also say, extremely readable, unlike so many books we know, addition to international history.

Personally, I'm rather grateful to him, because when I left the UN 25 years ago, I used to boast that I had worked for the UN for 41 years, and now, having read his book, I can say that I've worked for it for 45 or even 47, so that's nice.

I think that the theme running, one of the many themes running through this book is the way that post-war planning, as it was called, which went on throughout the war, right from the beginning, was mostly inspired by the horror of the results of the Treaty of Versailles after the First World War. And that is why, I think, right at the beginning, even before the United States came into the war, two basic documents, the Four Freedoms speech and the Atlantic Charter, had already become the sort of embryo of the charter that was going to be written for the organization after the war, the peacetime United Nations.

The United Nations declaration on the 1st of January, 1942, I must say, seems to me to be a brilliant psychological move. After all, in January, 1942, we were steadily losing the war at a great rate on both fronts. We had none of the equipment, virtually none of the manpower to even begin to get back, let alone win, and yet Roosevelt and Churchill summoned the 26 countries who were, in one way or another, at war, either with Japan, Italy, or Germany, and in an incredibly short period of time, got them to agree on a very far ranging and extremely important declaration. It must be a record for an international document! And I think, instead, among other things, underlies the ghastly cliché that war is much more easily to manage than peace.

The effect of that declaration--well I can only, I was then in the army, and the last two years had been, in the British Army, at least, had been pretty pathetic, and we were more and more isolated and lonely, and I must say, though nobody thought we were going to lose, nobody could figure out how we were going to win, and it was... it had been fairly depressing. But suddenly, here we were after January 1, 42, adopting this wonderful mantle of the far-seeing, pure-hearted, and benevolent victor when nobody knew how on earth we were going to get there! And I think this was a brilliant political move. It completely destroyed the feeling of isolation and lack of purpose. We were on the right side, it was the side of civilization and decency, it was the United Nations, and it was the right side to be on, therefore, it would win. Of course, in a shorter term, it also deflected public attention from the extraordinary shaky military situation, which both the United States and the United Kingdom find themselves in worldwide.

This account of Dan Plesch's, is, I think, a marvelous account of all the sort of non-wartime things that went on during the war, and it is fascinating stuff. I didn't know, for example, that on the 24th of August, 1940, when we were all waiting for the German invasion of Britain, Winston Churchill declared that the United Kingdom would provide relief and would be rehabilitation to all liberated territories. That's, I must say, an amazing stretch, if you come to think of it. It's also surprising to me how quite radical some of the ideas that were discussed were.

Ed and others have mentioned the importance of the United Nations War Crimes Commission. And if you look at what actually happened in Dan's book, you'll see that the War Crimes Commission not only took a lot of identifying of war criminals, but it also proposed that the international tribunal at the end of the war would try Germans for offenses against Germans, and both the British War Office and the United States State Department strongly objected to this on the grounds that it infringed the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of states, and it took the revelations of the concentration camps in late 1944 and early 1945 to get them to change their minds. I think that is an extraordinarily interesting and important historical fact, and of course, also the War Crimes Commission has been having all sorts of good effects to this day. It set the legal precedents for the later UN tribunals, and also for the International Criminal Court.

I think the humanitarian side is slightly better known, but not much. By 1946, UNRRA, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, which had been established in November 1942, was the largest exporter of goods in the world. It was literally a worldwide organization, and Dan also points out that UNRRA had a huge importance, but for some extraordinary and perverse reason, the Marshall Plan, which succeeded it, has almost completely eclipsed UNRRA. You don't really hear very much about UNRRA. There are books about it, most of which nobody's read, and it is--it was--a most extraordinary undertaking, an international undertaking in which everyone who could take part, and it really, it dealt, among other things, with refugees, repatriation of displaced populations, of whom there were millions, health and medical organizations, food, and the restoring of infrastructure. That's not a very small mandate. And it also was the basis for future parts of the UN system, and particularly the High Commissioner for refugees, FAO, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the United Nations Development

Programme, and it was a very important basis for those more permanent organizations that succeeded it.

And then, of course, there was the financial and economic side, Bretton Woods. The Versailles Treaty made no provision whatsoever for the rehabilitation of the European economy, and John Maynard Keynes was on the British delegation at Versailles, warned that there would be “social hysteria, collapse of civilization, and war.” Nobody paid this voice attention, and Keynes resigned. And how right he was. So again, the lesson of World War II was a huge imperative for the Bretton Woods conference in the summer of 1944, which produced the bank of funds and GATT.

I think a poignant note for us today is that at Bretton Woods, nobody was in the smallest doubt that the world economy had to be regulated. Of course, peace and security was the overwhelming priority, as it would be in any war, and here, I think the transition from war to peace is a little more problematic. In World War II, during the war, the “united” in United Nations was the key word, and very shortly after the war stopped, nations, all 50 of them in those days, the members, was the key word, and their differences, and the charter was drafted in war, and therefore, its most innovative parts were giving a very strongly military foundation for future peace and security, particularly in chapters 6 and 7 of the charter. I remember vividly, when I joined the proprietary commission of the UN in August 1945, that everything seemed to be possible, and it was just a wonderful feeling, and it all seemed very obvious and very simple, and we learned rather early on in the next year or so how actually hopefully unrealistic that feeling was.

The star innovation of the new United Nations, the new international organization that was going to preserve the peace of the world was the Military Staff Committee, and it was called the teeth of the United Nations charter in a rather unfortunate tabloid invention. Well, the teeth unfortunately fell out very early on, and I think that what happened, really, we have been wrestling, really, with this sort of dichotomy between a wartime state of mind and a peacetime state of mind ever since. It isn't just the subsequent and strong disillusionment with the UN, both in the United Nations, and with many governments, but it's also in all sorts of attitudes, both public and governmental. I mean, ever since, it seems to me that we've been wrestling with this with some success, and with some very notable failures. Problems like the definition of aggression, or the use or non-use of force, which we know quite a lot about just at the minute, and the value of nonviolence if it has solid support, or the balance between national sovereignty and international responsibility.

These are all problems which many of you wrestle with every day, and I think we make a little progress every now and then, and sometimes we go take a couple steps back as well, but it does seem to me that a lot of this does come from the fact that the plan for the UN was very much a wartime plan transposed into a very different set of circumstances in peacetime. I'm not saying this just to criticize any, but I do think that it is, why this book is important, is it tells you how easily some things could be done when the institution was being set up and how difficult it has been to make them a reality. That is why I think this wonderfully readable and extremely important book is so valuable and so timely. Thank you.

Luck: Nicely done, Brian, and very much to the point. So we've had three excellent expositions. We have endless expertise in the audience, and both comments and questions are equally welcome, particularly if they're concise, and we would appreciate it if people would identify themselves so that the panel knows who the inquisitors might be. So who would like to start? I know, half an hour from now when we have to end, all the hands will be up! Please, Stephen, who's done a very well known book on San Francisco.

Stephen Schlesinger: Stephen Schlesinger. I want to address Ambassador Pankin. Stalin's role in the UN was a little ambiguous, because he wasn't really thinking of the organization as a whole; he was thinking more of keeping the five allies, or three allies together as a kind of triumvirate for the postwar period, and I think he--is it fair to say he was less interested in the other parts of the UN, it was mainly just to keep that alliance going? Or am I being a little cynical about that?

Luck: Okay, we'll take several comments. I saw Tom Weiss had his hand up.

Tom Weiss: Thanks, Tom Weiss from the graduate center of the City University of New York. This is just a comment, no particular question, because I think what I've learned from my own work recently, and reading Dan, for sure, is the necessity to get out of our current preoccupation with currency, that is that the UN history goes back before Libya last week, and long-term horizon is more than 5 or 6 weeks, it's back to 70 years, and it seems to me the one thing that--one Brian mentioned that I keep coming back to--is how much more imaginative, radical, to use your word, Brian, some of the thoughts were during the Second World War. We can quickly dismiss some of the security stuff as being totally off the charts, standing armies and all this stuff, but if you go back and look at all of the other events as well, I'm thinking most importantly about Bretton Woods, because today we look upon, critics look upon the IMF, for example, as a really powerful, too many teeth, what an organization! And if you look back to what Keynes said, Keynes said, well, what do you think we need? We need, well, an organization that has reserves of something like 50% of world imports. Well, the IMF, even at present, with the new fusion of \$750 billion is below 2% of world imports. So I'm constantly reminded that maybe we need to think in sort of larger, more imaginative, more radical terms, Brian, to use your term.

Luck: That's amazing how calamity produces clarity of mind. Who else would like to join the queue? I think everyone wants to hear the panel talk, they're so good! Who would like to respond to the panel to the first comments, or to each other's comments? Dan, would you like to come back on?

Plesch: I think a lot more work needs to be done on the Soviet files of the period. I certainly found, in looking at those, I have looked at it from other perspectives that so many of my preconceptions have turned out to be misplaced when looking at the documentary record. I hesitate to say what the view from the Kremlin actually was, but certainly, I think the priority of preventing a generational succession of global wars was front and center in everybody's mind. I do agree with Tom about imagination, despite a perversity of human nature, that we need to overcome to try to implement imagination when we don't face certain death or the collapse of our societies. But those would be the two comments I would make, so you can bring other people.

Luck: Terrific. Alexander?

Pankin: As you imagine, it's difficult to answer the question what Stalin was thinking or plotting or doing, especially for me. I'm not a historian, and I didn't have any chance to dig in the archives like you did, Dan, but I don't think that... I mean, I can speculate that the images you have of troika sitting together would not necessarily mean that it was limited to troika, troika meaning the Soviet Union, UK, and U.S. in whatever order you like, but probably in military sense, these were the allies, because in Russian terms, I mean, it was interesting for me to know, I grew up in the years when we did not have those posters of the United Nations fighting together. In Russian vocabulary, you mostly use allies, allied forces, allies. That was a cliché which came to '60s, '70s, and later. I don't know what was the cliché, real '40s or '50s. But the military alliance of the three was probably the strongest one. So definitely, Stalin, together with Roosevelt and Churchill might consider themselves to be a stronghold of the future system, but from indirect sources, I do know that were for expansion of the broader membership of the organization, because of course, there were probably some expansionist plans, ideological plans, to make the more allies among those who are not yet your direct allies, and, as I said, there was a mistrust.

Of course, with the second, the opening of the second front, the delays, the immediate threat of reversing the forces against the Soviet Union if Soviet Union was not to, did not behave the way the alliance wanted, I mean, the U.S. or Brits. I mean, you know that better. I mean, it was always, it was not as fast, as straightforward, that fast-forward movement in those days. It was a difficult balance, so I might presume that some countries were kept at bay, some countries were pulled in in the future structures of the United Nations, but I really... it's not based on a plethora of facts or citations. I probably have access to Russian archives, but I cannot do it, I don't have time to do it, but I would agree with you that it was, I would not, I would disagree with you that it was his intention to keep, to run the world through this troika, let's say.

Luck: Brian said he wanted to pass for the moment. Who would like to -- please.

Hilding Lundkvist: Thank you very much. I'm Hilding Lundkvist, legal advisor at the Swedish mission and first of all, thank you very much to the author and to the panelists for a really interesting presentation. I'm

looking forward to reading your book, but I haven't so far, so I can't comment on it in detail, of course, but I would be interested in hearing your take, then, on another book I read, which I think came out two years ago by someone who's named, I don't know if I pronounce his name correctly, Mazower, which addresses also the, perhaps the ideological origins of the United Nations, and he puts forward the argument that part of it was part actually to preserve the interest of empire. It's just interesting--if you'd read it and if you have a comment on it in relation to your studies.

Luck: I'll also ask Brian to comment on that, because I remember Brian did a review of that book, and he and I conspired a little bit before that. Please.

Nicholas Wapshott: If I could just add a related question, which is that the United Nations, of the three wartime leaders, Roosevelt seemed much more of an architect in terms of demanding things which the other two might not agree with. Certainly the end of the British Empire was something which Roosevelt was always keen on, and it was interesting that he built that into the first discussions about the UN over Churchill's profound misgivings. I'd be interested to know exactly how that worked in a way, because he plainly didn't make any anti-imperialistic demands upon Stalin, who, of course, was expansive in the immediate postwar period, which lasted then for the next 35 years, and also, at the same time, he didn't, upon DeGaulle and the French leadership, because when it came to Vietnam, for instance, the French still had a colony which they could keep hold of, which led America into profound problems during the course of the '60s and '70s.

Luck: There's another hand here. Oh, please. Christoph?

Christoph Mikulaschek: Christoph Mikulaschek, International Peace Institute. The United Nations has survived so many major upheavals in the international system. First, the breakup of this wartime alliance and the start of the Cold War, and then the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a new world order. Which institutional features can explain this extraordinary resilience of this institution? So often, the organization has been, well, the demise of the institution has been predicted, I remember, in the editorial in *The Wall Street Journal* of 2003 titled "Au Revoir Security Council." What explains that the United Nations is still striving and developing after all those years?

Luck: If I could add one small question, we're talking about archives and research, a couple of years ago, I was writing a piece on the origins of the Security Council, and I had a very hard time finding anything on the Chinese side or on the French, and the French, of course, France was not a convening power in San Francisco, but, and there was very scant material to be found. I wonder if you tried, or if you found anything much on the Chinese viewpoint. Obviously when they're at Dumbarton Oaks and whatever, there's a lot of secondhand accounts of their performance there, and obviously you can go back to the archives for San Francisco, but it's very hard to find anything on their actual planning and thinking at that time, so Dan.

Plesch: I think we'd need more help to look at the archives. I've looked at some, but there's a range of other national perspectives, and indeed, it'd be interesting to know what the Swedish perspective was on, from a neutral standpoint, on the development of the United Nations and how that evolved over the three years of the war. I came across one or two things from Chan Kai Shek I wasn't able in the end to include, not least, his continual messages to Roosevelt saying that Roosevelt should publicly support the independence of India, that these were the principles that we were fighting for, these were the principles in the Atlantic Charter and the UN Declaration, this is what China had signed up to, and that we risked India falling into the Japanese lap, because we would not support Indian independence from the British. So there was this intense dialogue going on, which leads me to the question about Mazower. Brian, I think, did a tremendous review, and he can speak for that. I think he has a very partial view and a couple of vignettes with a couple of pieces of evidence that he builds his arguments on, and I think a wider consideration of the evidence would lead him to very different conclusions. Had Roosevelt survived, I think we would have seen him continue the anti-colonial policy in the economic negotiations with his allies at the end of the war. It doesn't all seem to me to be the case that, as is often alleged, that Roosevelt gave all these weapons to the Soviets and got nothing in return, brackets, never mind the piles of dead and the defeat of the Wehrmacht. We discount those in this right wing account, but that he got nothing politically—this, to my mind, is not supported by the evidence that I've encountered. I won't take the time, but variously, the rehabilitation of religion in Russia was widely

supported, I'd widely said at the time, by people in Russia and by neutrals have been, to assuage British and American concerns, and not simply for internal reasons. That's the participation of the Soviet Union, and joining capitalism at Bretton Woods, which again, is not part of the normal discourse of Bretton Woods, but there is a picture in the book of Keynes sitting next to the Soviet representative, they were there, they did join, belies the idea of rampant Communism having nothing to do with the capitalist system, and similarly, in more than symbolic terms, the closing of the common turn, and looking at the discussions of his confidants that have been published with Stalin, reining in local communist parties at the end of the war.

I think many things changed with Roosevelt's death, with Truman, and with the bomb, and there is a quote from Herbert Lehman, who ran UNRRA, that I put in the book, who puts it more succinctly than I ever found anywhere else, which is, after the bomb was dropped, and when it became clear that the Americans intended to retain it, even under the Baruch plan, the Soviets distrusted the Americans, and the only strategic response to allied air power with nuclear weapons was to prepare for the immediate occupation of Western Europe, and that the strategic interplay then drove large parts of Soviet policy in the region. Now like it or not, I think that that very succinct summary of the strategic standoff that emerged by 1946 is one that isn't given sufficient credence in most of the histories. Hopefully I've covered most of the ground. I would just say one thing about the war crimes commission, along with other things; we badly need your help to have these archives opened. They are still almost effectively classified for unknown reasons emanating in the Cold War, and I think we need the help of states and civil society to get these opened and to get the archives of the UN during the war digitalized and accessible.

Luck: If I could add one small comment about, everyone struck this in reading the book, there's almost no mention of the Holocaust at San Francisco, and the declaration, I think it was December 1942 that you mentioned.

Plesch: Could I mention, get back to that?

Luck: Yeah, I mean, because I actually had not known of that, but I know going through San Francisco again and again, it just isn't there, and it is very striking if, you know, 2½ years before, they had made a declaration on the topic.

Plesch: One of the things which the Jewish paper in England, *The Jewish Chronicle*, picked out very strongly in reviewing my book was not only the War Crimes Commission and the development of crimes against Germans, but this statement by the United Nations, 11 states simultaneously, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt, at the height of the battle of Stalingrad, what we now call the Holocaust was happening, which I think really undermines this whole discussion which we have about who knew what when. Once you look at this document, it says in terms that the German authorities are now implementing Hitler's oft-stated goal of exterminating the Jews of Europe. They're doing it. And that Poland has been chosen as the principal slaughterhouse. Their phrase, not mine, and this is a multinational statement put out as a UN statement at the end of 1942. Now this could not be more categorical to my mind. So, quite, why people... there is so much energy spent on the discussion, for example, there's a PBS special done about 10 years ago on this question. Really, it ignores this. One might posit that anything in America, written in America in the '50s and '60s with Stalin's name on it could not be a source, I guess, but at any rate, if we're looking at Holocaust scholarship, this certainly undermines that oft-repeated discussion.

Luck: And it also raises a question, why was it apparently deliberately downplayed in San Francisco? I don't know whether, Steve, you came across that in your research, but it's just not there. Alexander?

Pankin: Your last question, I believe that Dan has more experience with the documents, but don't forget that it was a tragedy of all nations, and singling out the Holocaust, which did not exist as a term at that time, I understand, would not reflect the reality of many Slavic and non-Slavic Europeans dying in concentration camps, in labor camps, just exterminated in their villages, partisans, and underground resistance in Germany itself, not only Jewish, but German resistance, so maybe it was inappropriate to single out this fact, and numbers, I mean, I don't know, I don't want to go in numbers, but if you ask Belarussians and Ukrainians how many ethnic Belarussians and

Ukrainians died, not as soldiers, but as civilians, as we say today, peaceful civilians, who are taken to concentration camps, the numbers could outnumber the total numbers, and Yugoslavs and others, so maybe that was the reason for not singling out this particular event, planned Holocaust here.

Luck: Brian?

Urquhart: Okay, I'd just like to say one word about the question about why the UN continues and is resilient and appears to gather strength in many ways. It seems to me it's very simple. And again, it's the peacetime/wartime thing. In peacetime, people forget how bad things can get, and they do it in a very short time, even now, and the UN is, after all, a concept which has been developed over the years as being absolutely necessary, and the right concept in view of successive wars and their ghastly consequences.

And secondly, of course, as a practical matter, it's a very, very useful thing for governments. It's a place where, particularly in critical times, you can share the problem and pass the buck, and nothing is more necessary for many governments than that, including the most powerful. And thirdly, I think sometimes forgotten that the Security Council is a very important source of legitimacy, what we've just seen last week over Libya. But it's a source of legitimacy in all sorts of other ways, including the recognition of states and all these, all sorts of very important basic matters, and I can't think of another global organization of this kind which has that quality of being a source of international legitimacy. And fourth, of course, there's always our old friend, the global problems, and it's clear to me at my age that global problems which come and go out of fashion in an alarming way, at the minute, need global organization and global measures in order to do anything about them, and I think I'm right in saying that the UN is the only absolutely global governmental organization that exists for that purpose. Whether it's used in the right way for that purpose or not, I don't want to get into.

Luck: Thank you, Brian. That's terrific. One more question, and then, please.

Harriet Mandel: Harriet Mandel. Thank you very much for this very, very interesting presentation. You started at the beginning by saying that you've done the research, I hope I'm not misquoting you, in order to have some application to today, so I want to come to today a little bit and talk about several of the factors that have changed since the very beginning concept of the United Nations, and I think that underlying all of this is there was the political will there amongst nations, and that seems to be one of the answers to this last question about why it survived, but the world has changed, even though maybe human nature hasn't, and the nation of states hasn't, and so you've had an ideological time of the Cold War which deeply divided the United Nations, you have a proliferation of states, and you have the rise of powers that have yet to be defined and what kind of a world we are facing now, multiglobal, multi-power centers, and lots of regional conflicts while the war, the big war on the continent, the peaceful existence, which we always hear from our European friends, has really been a fulfillment, but how do you see these big changes in the structures of the world as affecting some of the basic concepts that set the United Nations in motion, not to be prophets for the future, but currently as the world is engaging in so many difficult issues, how this will impact on some of these very fundamental pillars that you described.

Luck: Okay, terrific. Any other quick comment? Question? If I could pose two, if I might, in your concluding statement, Dan. One: chapter 8 doesn't come through very strong in terms of regional arrangements, and when the Secretary-General was giving this lecture in Oxford last month, he departed from the script quite often, and one of the times when he departed, which for some of us is a less happy experience to see this, but one of the times is rather interesting, all of the sudden, he stopped, started talking about chapter 8, which we mentioned in passing in the script, but was not the centerpiece of it. The lecture was on human protection, and he said, "You know, those founders of the UN, they really were farsighted! Take this chapter 8," he said, "We didn't have regional organizations at that point, and yet, they devoted a whole chapter of the charter to the relationship between the UN, particularly the Security Council, and regional arrangements." So, he said, "It was a visionary vision!" Which I can assure you, no writer would have said, but it's really quite striking, so how does a visionary vision fit in, in a sense? I know that Churchill wanted to have the whole thing based on regional units rather than the global.

The other is the tension between the sort of core alliance and perpetuating the core alliance, and then bringing in others, the other peace-loving, to the table, and the idea of universality and the universal organization and universal values and the rest, because there's two different narratives now about what the organization was to be all about: the one that was always meant to be universal organization, and that has certain implications for structures and decisions and other things, and the other that it was basically a perpetuation of an alliance, plus whatever other layers of countries they could bring aboard, so to what extent do you see that tension playing out? Brian, did you have anything else you wanted to add? Did you, Alexander?

Pankin: Can I ask –

Luck: And then we'll leave it to Dan –

Pankin: Can I ask a counterquestion? Do you remember what was the shape of those states? This was one empire, British, another was French, France was colonies, so they, I mean, you covered half of the world, so you can't speak that this was a core alliance of a few states. These were big states which covered half of the planet, and then, if I remembered, 26 countries were drawn in, negotiations on the charter, not in a way that the ready made document was imposed on them, telling them, take it, think a bit, and give your okay. The charter, I read that in historic books that, unlike the League of Nations documents, the founding documents, the charter was broadly discussed with the states. If you didn't want the states to be equal with you, you would just have a different way. You would say, we agreed on these things, you have 24 hours, please bring your small notes, as I understand, there were tons of amendments to the charter coming from these 26 nations, and then the four, without, who wanted not to derail the process and get flooded by all this, small amendments which deviated the organization from its core conceived functions, they reworked the amendments, they accommodated as much as possible these amendments, and then built them into the charter. So there was, as we call today, broad public process with the involvement of the states, so my view is that, no, it was not intended to be an organization of core states plus a few others joining them. That was, at least I know from the Soviet sources that that was the line of the Soviet negotiators to have the organization based on completely new route, all equal, all equal within the Security Council, all equal among the permanent members of the Security Council, and all equal in the organizations when acting together in different bodies, so that was a different principle, and you ask the question, why it happened that way, but I believe that the wartime was different from today, and thinking in wartime is completely from the way of thinking in peacetime when you really face the tragedy and you don't want to face this tragedy again. I believe Sir Brian can be a witness to those developments and way of thinking.

Luck: Dan, your conclusions?

Plesch: Well, again, thanks Ed, and to the other speakers, the very distinguished panel that I find myself on. Bretton Woods speaks to the range of discussions here, the United Nations military and financial conference, as we saw, perhaps can remember, this is not a G8 or a G4 or even a G20, this is a G44, and I think that, in a sense, tells us all we need to know about how inclusive we should be today. There's a lot of self-satisfaction about the fact that the G8 is now a G20. If we could manage to operate as a G44 in 44, perhaps we can manage rather better today, and on your broader point, I think that the, Henry Stimson, stalwart Republican Secretary of War, in his memoirs, as you... it was absolutely understood that what we now call neoliberalism free-market economics had been a principal cause of conflict, a principal driver for the war, and that a light level of regulation of the international global economy was critical to war prevention and stability, and I think this is a lesson that we sorely need to relearn, and if we have exported a good deal of this instability to the developing world, the architects of the UN system saw the need for the ability of developing economies to be able to protect themselves from the depredations of the industrialized world as part of a decolonization process, so there is a good deal that we can and should relearn that has been lost. So in a sense, there is a mythology of just the big three dictating, and that is not the UN we want today. Actually, their vision was a good deal more inclusive and genuinely multilateral, then it became, by the high Cold War, and later. The question of regional arrangements, I think it is, the way things have turned out, it is fortuitous, not least, the OSCE, the Cinderella of European Security, but the other organizations as well that we can draw upon. I think more work needs to be done on how chapter 8 happened. Received

wisdom is it was that the Latin Americans wanted it to preserve the OAS role. I think one may be more cynical and say that there were already Anglo-American documents about the need for a western block, and that there was some thinking of that, even at that time. I quote a Canadian diplomat saying, I know we all think the Canadians are wonderful and peace-loving, but a Canadian official saying we need to reconstitute the Wehrmacht and march east in the middle of San Francisco, and his view was not atypical of, and one of the key points about the UN I think we need to remember is that it prevented the immediate occurrence of World War III emerging from the ashes of World War II. This is a point that the AP reporter, Sigrid Arne, who I quote as, use as a commentator in the book, makes repeatedly in the book she wrote in '45, about the concerns to hold everything together because there was an already emerging capitalist/Communist conflict.

I think that probably covers most of the ground, but inclusiveness, I think I've probably talked about this in a general sense, but you do get statements from all three major leaders saying that in the fullness of time, the Germans can rejoin the family of nations, and that we are not going to exterminate the Germans as, "they've tried to exterminate us," and that while we have a lot of written, rightly with this gust about Soviet rape in Berlin, the story of the Soviet Union in Eastern Germany is not one of the wholesale extermination of a people and the mass deliberate starvation of the German people, which would have been well within the ability of the Red Army to do, had they wished to do so. It is of a much more humane story, and lastly, I finished before with Churchill, we're at the UN, so I'll finish with Nelson Mandela, he writes in his memoirs of how inspirational the Atlantic Charter and the ideas of the wartime alliance were to him in the development of African claims, and in general, to the anti-colonialist movement. So at the time, there was a perception that these were universalist ideas of universal application and appeal.

Luck:

Terrific. Thanks for starting us off so well and ending the discussion so well. So I think we'll continue to reinterpret history and hopefully have a few more historical meetings in this room as well as current topics, and to Dan for providing the book and providing so much useful commentary to Ambassador Pankin, to Sir Brian, if you'd all join me in thanking them for a terrific performance.