Warren Robinson Austin: A Reluctant Cold Warrior

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WARREN ROBINSON AUSTIN: A RELUCTANT COLD WARRIOR

A Thesis Presented

by

Ronald C. MacNeil

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ABSTRACT

Senator Warren Robison Austin (R-VT) was appointed by President Harry S. Truman to be the US Representative to the United Nations in June 1946. While a member of the US Senate, Austin had been a great advocate for internationalism and the United Nations. His tenure as Representative lasted until January 1953. The growing pains of the new organization were complicated by myriad contentious problems, not the least of which was the dawning of the Cold War. Austin was caught between the Soviet delegation, who were bent on opposing virtually all US initiatives at the UN, and members of the Truman Administration who were adamantly anti-communist/anti-Soviet.

This thesis examines the role that anti-communism played in establishing an atmosphere of distrust leading, at least partly, to the Cold War; and Austin’s role at the United Nations as regards three representative issues that confronted the international organization during his tenure. The first issue was how the Soviets and the Western Powers disagreed over the question of unanimity of the permanent five members in the Security Council. Next, I will show how irreconcilable differences between the United States and the Soviets thwarted the functioning of the Atomic Energy Commission of the Security Council. Lastly, the Korean War is examined as the first use of a military response by the United Nations to international aggression.

Austin dutifully represented the administration at the United Nations, but often expressed his own less confrontational views in meetings, speeches outside the UN, and in letters to friends and loved ones. He held the United Nations to be a positive force for peace, while other members of the administration were stridently anti-Soviet and found the United Nations to be the perfect ideological battleground while acting unilaterally outside the organization.

I will show how Austin had an idealistic view of the United Nations and maintained that it was the best vehicle for the maintenance of peace. Also how he was, initially, more even-handed in dealing with the Soviet delegation than his overseers in the Truman administration. He eventually grew weary of Soviet tactics and their alleged aggression in Korea leading him to harden his outlook.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Professor Nicole Phelps, PhD from the History Department of the University of Vermont, for her guidance and patience on a project that took me entirely too long to complete. Professor Phelps diplomatically pointed out the myriad punctuation, grammatical and substantive issues found in my drafts. She has also prompted me to read The Chicago Manual of Style from cover to cover in the hope that I might recover skills that I lost in reading teenagers’ essays during my nineteen years as a history teacher at Burlington High School.

Many thanks to Professor Andrew Buchanan for his insightful criticism of this paper and in other essays that I have written for his classes. I hope that one day he will embrace his Celtic heritage, but I am afraid he will remain a world citizen despite my best efforts.

I would also like to express my thanks to the staff of the Jack and Shirley Silver Special Collections Library at the University of Vermont for all their help with Senator Austin’s archives. They were just finishing their move to the historic Billings Library while I was completing my research. I wish them the best in their new location.
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRUS</td>
<td>Foreign Relations of the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>The United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>The United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>General Assembly of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Security Council of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRA</td>
<td>Warren Robinson Austin Collection at the University of Vermont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEC</td>
<td>Atomic Energy Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROK</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPRK</td>
<td>Democratic People’s Republic of Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSS</td>
<td>Office of Strategic Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIC</td>
<td>(Army) Counter-Intelligence Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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All photographs and images are from the Warren R. Austin archives in the Jack and Shirley Silver Special Collections Library at the University of Vermont
INTRODUCTION

Warren Robinson Austin joined the United States (US) mission to the United Nations (UN) in the summer of 1946. He was full of great hope for the new organization that he had championed through the Senate. He took official command of the US delegation in January 1947 with his retirement from the senate. The post of US representative was not at that time a cabinet-level position, but his personal relationship with President Harry Truman gave Austin direct access to the president, at least initially. For most of his tenure at the UN, however, Austin reported to State Department officials who were stridently anti-Soviet and did not share Austin’s optimism about the UN. He dutifully represented the administration position at the UN, but often expressed a milder rhetoric and a more empathetic view of the Soviets in State Department meetings, in
public speeches, and in his copious correspondence. He never outwardly soured on the United Nations, but the institution’s ineffectiveness must have been disheartening. Austin walked a precarious line between the Soviets and his anti-communist chiefs at the State Department. Austin was an idealist who believed sincerely that the United Nations was the world’s best chance for peace.

Warren Austin was born on November 12, 1877 in the small, dairy farming community of Highgate Center, Vermont (population 2088 in 1880)\(^1\) barely five or six miles from the Canadian border. He was the eldest of three sons born to Ann Robinson Austin and attorney Chauncey G. Austin, Sr. He graduated from nearby Brigham Academy, a regional semi-private secondary school, in Bakersfield, Vermont in 1895. Austin then attended the University of Vermont, playing football and joining the Sigma Nu fraternity. He graduated in 1899. He read the law (still an honored tradition in Vermont to this day) in his father’s office and passed the state bar examination in 1902. While studying law he met and married Mildred Lucas. Austin practiced law in his father’s office in nearby St. Albans, the county seat. He went on to hold several public offices such as mayor of St. Albans, state’s attorney (county prosecutor), and Grand Juror. He became very active in the local and state Republican party which, at that time and until the 1960s, completely controlled state politics.\(^2\) Vermont was so dominated by the Republican Party that it was virtually a one party state.

He worked in his father’s law firm for a number of years until 1918, when he moved to Burlington, the state’s largest city, with a population of about 25,000, and established his own law practice. Austin practiced corporate law with many Vermont businesses including the large Rock of Ages Granite firm in Barre. His grandson, Edward Lucas Austin, however, described the practice as one that included all manner of litigation, with no particular specialty. Edward said that his grandfather loved trials.\(^3\)

Two cases in particular illustrate the eclectic nature of Warren Austin’s legal career. A jury trial in Burlington, \textit{Woodhouse v. Woodhouse} (99 Vt. 91), concerned an alienation of affection suit in which Austin represented the plaintiff, Mrs. Charles Douglas Woodhouse, against her husband and his parents. She alleged that her husband’s wealthy parents did not approve of their son marrying beneath his class and did everything in their power, including disinheri inheritance and introducing him to another woman, to destroy the marriage. The parents hired powerful New York attorneys for the trial and the resulting appeal to the Vermont Supreme Court. Austin won the trial phase in which the jury awarded the plaintiff $465,000, which was thought to be the largest damages award for this type of case in US history.\(^4\) Austin was also victorious in the state Supreme Court when the defendants appealed the jury’s decision.

The other case, \textit{Vermont v. New Hampshire} (289 US 593 and 290 US 579), involved a boundary dispute between the two states. The Connecticut River runs between Vermont and New Hampshire for the whole length of Vermont. In the early 1900s, New Hampshire began to send tax bills to certain businesses and individuals on the Vermont

\(^3\) Edward Lucas Austin, telephone conversation with the author, January 25, 2019.

side of the river, claiming that these entities had buildings that crossed the border into New Hampshire. The river itself is considered to be in New Hampshire, but the dispute at issue was where on the west bank Vermont began. Much of the case revolved around interpretations of colonial era grants documents. New Hampshire argued that the border was the high water mark of the river, and Vermont maintained that it was the low water mark. Austin had been hired by the State of Vermont to represent them in front of the US Supreme Court, which had original jurisdiction in this case. New Hampshire hired two out-of-state attorneys, one of whom was the son of US Supreme Court Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, who recused himself from the case. Vermont, and Austin, emerged victorious.

Austin spent time in China from August 1916 to July 1917 on business for the American International Corporation, negotiating railroad and canal building contracts, and he made a few trips to New York City on business and to the Supreme Court in Washington, DC. Otherwise, his thriving law practice kept him close to home in Vermont. Later, his political and diplomatic career took him to Jerusalem in 1936 as part of a congressional junket, Mexico City for an Inter-American Conference in 1945, and Europe for frequent UN meetings during his diplomatic tenure.

He was quite close with his aging mother, and his departure for Washington in March 1931 prompted a frequent exchange of letters until her death in 1941. Generally, he was very affectionate with his mother and shared both personal news of himself and his wife Mildred; he also explained the work he was doing on Capitol Hill. He often commented on his committee work and his speeches, as well as his frustrations with the New Deal, being the low man on the Senate seniority ladder, and being in the minority
party. He wrote about lengthy minority reports that he had written when he was the only member of his committee to vote unfavorably on a piece of New Deal legislation. He was never as forthcoming with any other correspondent as he was with his mother.

Warren Robinson Austin preferred being called “Senator” even when he became the US representative to the United Nations, which afforded him the appellation of “Ambassador.” He enjoyed his nearly three terms in the US Senate (1931-1946). In early 1937, Austin, as a member of the Judiciary Committee, successfully helped lead the Republican opposition to President Roosevelt’s court-packing scheme.\(^5\) As a member of the Military Affairs Committee, he supported moves to build up the armed forces in the years before World War II. In January 1944, he was appointed to the Foreign Relations Committee, a post he had sought for a number of years. He was anti-New Deal, but an internationalist in a Republican Party dominated by isolationists.

Austin served on a secretive committee, beginning on May 23, 1942, with members or the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who met with Secretary of State Cordell Hull to plan for an international organization that was to be discussed at the Moscow Conference of 1943 and would eventually become the United Nations.\(^6\) In a speech to the Foreign Policy Association, Inc. in New York on October 3, 1942, he said that “Peace without victory” led to the armistice of November 11, 1918, which in turn led to the failure of the Fourteen Points. He maintained that Woodrow Wilson had given only perfunctory hearing to the Senate and was one-sided in crafting his peace plan. Wilson’s

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\(^5\) George Mazuzan, *Warren Austin at the UN*, 18-23.


attendance at the peace conference was unprecedented and consultation with Congress was limited. This all resulted in rejection of the Treaty of Versailles by the Senate and isolation. Austin believed that the international organization for peace and security, and America’s part in it, must have the backing of the people and Congress.

In a broadcast on the National Radio Forum in December 1942, Austin said, “The President, the State Department, the Senate, all of whom participate in the plans for peace, need and desire the views of the people of the United States. This is a people’s war, and the peace shall be the people’s peace. It takes time to obtain their views. Indeed, it takes time for the people to formulate them. Therefore, we should be at work upon such plans immediately and continuously.” Austin was sincere in his faith in the people; he personally answered much of the mail he received from around the country over the years.

Austin maintained that there was an urgency for planning for the peace as it could take place at any time; and the country must be prepared. He wanted people to understand the peace and the process that led to it. The senator said that if the United States meant to take the high road in the peace process, Americans must ready themselves: “it is every citizen’s responsibility at this very instant to inform himself and to discuss foreign policy with his neighbors.” He stated that the people of the United States needed a little “rehearsal” in the give and take of diplomacy and that they needed to “get our own house in order,” notably in regard to the “negro problem.” Never a civil rights activist, Austin

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7 WRA archives, Carton BIV folder 271. Speech at Foreign Policy Association, Inc. in New York, New York on October 10, 1942.
8 WRA archives, Carton BIV speech 274 “Copy of Congressional Record 78th Congress, First Session,” December 30, 1942.
9 WRA archives, Carton BIV folder 291 as quoted in The Waterbury (VT) Record, January 7, 1943.
was, however, sensitive to both civil and human rights. During a discussion over the rights of Indians in South Africa, Austin asked what would happen if the United Nations’ investigatory powers “were applied to the United States.” In the years ahead, the “negro problem” was raised by the Soviets and others when US delegates proselytized in the UN on human rights.

In early March 1945, Austin attended the Inter-American conference in Mexico City, which was attended by twenty nations from the Western Hemisphere. Austin helped draft the conference’s resolution—the Act of Chapultepec—that called for all signatories to help repel an attack on any member state by and outside aggressor. This acted as a model for future security alliances, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Act of Chapultepec was formalized in September 1947 as the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty).

During his Senate days, Austin was an affable colleague who befriended many in the upper chamber from both parties. Austin was also religious, a Congregationalist, and moralistic, counting among his close friends the Roman Catholic bishop of Vermont and a well-known rabbi of Vermont’s largest synagogue. He was often courted by religious organizations around the country that took an interest in government, especially the United Nations.

He was also sincere in his belief in the United Nations, but a realist as well. He said, “I believe we must recognize the fact that man can accomplish nothing by putting

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11 Edward Lucas Austin, Jr. telephone interview.
agreements in writing or engraving them on stone, unless he is willing to abide by them, and it is in his heart to give fidelity to the agreements which he enters into.”12

An accomplished attorney, once considered for the US Supreme Court,13 Austin was also a homespun Vermonter often citing his home state for its sensibility, humility, and compassion.

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12 WRA archives, Carton BVII, speech 490, Speech to Somerset County Community Forum, Bound Brook, New Jersey, May 12, 1950.


14 A song written by Karl Suessdorf and John Blackburn in 1944 that has been recorded by Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole, Willie Nelson and others.
Warren Austin was a prolific correspondent. He wrote to family and friends, replied to letters from constituents, and responded to all manner of official business. His personal letters reveal aspects of his personality that official correspondence never could. These letters are quite revealing of the feelings, humor, prejudices, and the honesty of Austin. They demonstrate his love for his home state of Vermont, for the United Nations, his family, and baked beans.

His letters include formal and informal legal advice to former clients; notes to friends in Vermont, and responses to the thousands of letters he received from constituents and his supporters. Among his more celebrated pen pals were former first lady and UN colleague Eleanor Roosevelt; IBM chairman and CEO Thomas J. Watson, Sr.; Nelson Rockefeller, later governor of New York and vice president of the United States; and author and activist Dorothy Canfield Fischer.

He wrote hundreds of letters to his mother covering all manner of topics from his fondness for her shipments of homemade baked beans and cookies to his distaste for President Roosevelt and the New Deal, which he described to her in 1936 as “three long years of infidelity and apostacy.” In another letter to her, he spoke of the “baptism of an infant Senator” and how the Senate is so different than the courtroom. He wrote to her about a family friend who was in a legal predicament. Austin’s first years at the UN included myriad responsibilities including the planning for a permanent building for the 

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UN, organizing the US Mission to function smoothly, and keeping the Soviets in check, but he always found time to write home.

Austin often wrote to his mother about specific bills that the Senate was considering, including a neutrality bill in 1937 that made him nervous. He wrote, “Don’t be surprised if I vote against it. I am for peace and the bill looks like an invitation to war.” He also expressed concern over the fate of an anti-lynching bill in a letter dated November 16, 1937. He wrote to her about the ban on the sale of helium to Germany, committee hearings with the French and English ambassadors, the debate on the Spanish Embargo and relief, the military acquiring strategic materials, and more.

He could also just talk about ordinary things like the weather. On the second day of spring in 1939, he mentioned, “It is cold – like a Sugar day in Spring,” referring to the running of sap from Vermont’s sugar maples in springtime.

Austin began to comment increasingly on foreign affairs in 1939. He never mentioned Hitler by name but expressed concern over the motives of Germany and Russia and the occupation of neutrals like Denmark and Norway. After a luncheon with US naval personnel and Republican senators, he reflected, “My own views of our foreign policy are not generally shared by those present. I believe and represent the Vermont idea of independence tho’ not isolation. Most of those present were isolationists.”

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21 WRA archives, Carton I, AI-20. Letter to his mother, April 10, 1940.
22 WRA archives, Carton I, AI-20. Letter to his mother, April 29, 1940.
A number of unofficial letters to and from his UN colleague John Foster Dulles concerned Dulles’ request that Austin write a recommendation for his less-than-scholarly niece, Marion Seymour, for admission to Middlebury College. Austin received a letter from the Director of Admissions later saying the Miss Seymour was placed on the “priority waiting list.”

Letters were exchanged with all manner of people on diverse subjects. The Archbishop of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Ricardo Pittini sought support for the Columbus Memorial Lighthouse. There were many letters to and from Quo Tai-Chi and letters to the State Department about Quo’s petition for asylum in the United States and its ultimate rejection.

Some correspondence praised Austin for his morality and ethics. In a personal note, President Truman wrote to Austin, “I think you and I understand each other and I don’t think there is anybody in public service who has a higher brand of ethics than you have.”

Dean Rusk, when leaving the State Department and taking a new position at the Rockefeller Foundation, wrote Austin on January 9, 1952: “As I look back over my tenure at State, I recall instance after instance where my own discouragement evaporated under the influence of your great courage and clear vision.”

Austin also received scores of invitations to address PTAs, manufacturers’ groups, political clubs, and other organizations. He typically responded with regrets that

25 WRA archives, Carton VI, folders 1 & 2. Letters to and from Quo Tai-Chi, July 3-24, 1950.
26 WRA archives, Carton A-V, folder 35. Letter from President Truman, August 27, 1950.
the business of the UN precluded his leaving town. Austin also received an invitation from the Ambassador of the USSR to a celebration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. He sent his regrets on October 20, 1952.\(^{28}\)

In a letter to Raymond J. Meurer, General Counsel of Trendle-Campbell Enterprises, Inc., Austin revealed part of his personal side:

I have always sought to hear The Lone Ranger. It glorifies so many fine qualities of American citizenship in both the red man and the white man. Besides that, I will never get over being a kid (although Mrs. Austin and I recently celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary). I love adventure and would love to engage in it myself, but the nearest to it that I can come is to sit in an armchair and listen to The Lone Ranger and Tonto.\(^{29}\)

Austin went on in his letter to say that Tonto did not get the recognition he deserved nor did the actor (Jay Silverheels, a Mohawk of Canadian citizenship) who portrayed him. Austin took his son and grandson in the fall of 1951 to the World’s Championship Rodeo in New York where they met the Lone Ranger.\(^{30}\)

Austin was an uncomplicated man who was moralistic, religious and empathetic. He was scholarly and legalistic, but also an idealist. He approached his work at the United Nations as the grand finale of his life in public service. He believed deeply in the mission of the United Nations as a guarantor of peace and security.

The United Nations (was founded in June 1945 as an international organization dedicated to peace. It bore some resemblance to the earlier attempt at an international

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body, the League of Nations. The most important difference from the League was that the United States, (the most powerful nation in the world at that time, was a founding member of the UN. Senator Austin pointed out the League’s other flaws in an article published in 1944: “its lack of authoritative membership, its diplomatic method of settling disputes, its lack of effective power, and its lack of capacity to direct peace forces to prevent military aggression.”\(^3\) He also pointed out that military coercion should be exercised by individual members, not the League as an organization.\(^3\)

Before US entry into World War II in August 1941, US President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada, and agreed on common goals for the post-war world, the Atlantic Charter. Among those goals was the need for an international body dedicated to peace and security. Later they brought Soviet leader Joseph Stalin into the discussion and decided that China must be part of the core of great states at the center of the organization. France was invited to join them later. Fifty nations signed the UN Charter at its founding in June 1945.

The United Nations was created, ostensibly, as an organization dedicated to security, peace, and justice. It was to be a place where disputes between nations could be settled peacefully with the aid and support of the organization and its member states. Committees of the UN were formed to address questions of health, children, human rights, education, scientific matters, economic and social needs, political and legal matters.

\(^3\) Warren Robinson Austin, “United We Stand” in “Two U.S. Senators Weigh Our Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Policy Reports* XX (14) (October 1, 1944), 169.

\(^3\) Ibid.
The United Nations has two deliberative bodies, the General Assembly (GA) and the Security Council (SC). Every UN member has a seat in the GA, which meets as a whole in plenary sessions. It is also the home of several important committees, including Political, Economic-Social, Human Rights, and others. It has very limited enforcement powers and mainly acts as the world’s conscience. The Security Council is composed of the five permanent members, China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, plus six other members on a rotating basis. In 1965, the Security Council was expanded to fifteen members, the five permanent and ten other members. During Austin’s tenure, the Security Council had as yet vaguely defined powers to enforce their decisions. No resolution could pass the Security Council without the positive assent of the permanent members present during the roll call of the vote. The council became politicized and contentious very quickly.

President Franklin Roosevelt’s last secretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., led the US delegation to the San Francisco Conference, April to June 1945, where the draft of the United Nations Charter was finalized, accepted, and signed by the original fifty members. Shortly thereafter, on June 27, 1945, Stettinius was replaced at State by James F. Byrnes. Stettinius later became the first US delegate to the UN in December 1945. Long-time UN diplomat and college professor Seymour Maxwell Finger has pointed out that Truman appointed Stettinius ambassador to the UN not for any special abilities he possessed, but to get him out of the job as secretary of state. Truman believed that Stettinius’s succession to the presidency, in case of Truman’s passing, was

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33 un.org
problematic and undesirable because Stettinius had never been elected to public office.\textsuperscript{34} Stettinius’s tenure at the UN was brief; he resigned on June 3, 1946. His resignation from the UN was prompted by President Truman’s reluctance to see Stettinius use the UN as a diplomatic battlefield with the Soviets. Little did Truman realize that many more political conflicts with the Soviets were to come.

In the spirit of bipartisanship in foreign affairs prevalent at the time, Truman chose, on June 5, 1946, Warren Robinson Austin (R-VT), an old colleague from the Senate, as permanent representative of the United States of America to the United Nations and ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary.

Austin was prohibited by Article I section 6 of the US Constitution from taking his seat as full ambassador until he resigned from the Senate. Hershel V. Johnson, a career foreign service officer and diplomat, acted as the interim representative until Austin assumed full command in January 1947. Austin served as special representative of the president to the UN in the interim period between his appointment and his departure from the Senate.\textsuperscript{35}

Austin was idealistic and possibly a bit naïve as to the motives of the Soviet Union and of many members of his own government as well. He was a true believer in the United Nations and quite innocent of the complicated and often diabolical political machinations that whirled around him. Austin had limited experience in foreign affairs and diplomacy, but he possessed a keen legal mind and parliamentary skills that proved

\textsuperscript{34} Seymour Maxwell Finger, \textit{American Ambassadors at the UN} (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1988), 41. The Presidential Succession Act of 1947 placed the speaker of the House and the president pro tempore of the Senate before the secretary of state in the order of succession.
valuable at the UN. He did not come from any social or economic elite, so he easily fit into Truman’s folksy way and sense of the Jacksonian common man in government. Austin was an affable man who cherished his many friendships. His tenure at the UN, however, was filled with conflict, both with his Soviet opposites and an administration, especially its State Department bosses, that perceived the Soviets as pure evil and increasingly moved to act unilaterally outside the UN. The toxic environment that Austin entered took its toll on him. He suffered from numerous illnesses and was eventually worn down by virulently anti-communist ideologues in the administration who drove him to question the manner in which US policy was determined.

Three weeks after his appointment to the UN, Senator Austin spoke to the Foreign Policy Association meeting at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York. He outlined his goals and those of the US, the “peace goals,” for the United Nations. He said, “peace goals are those objectives which the nations might practically achieve together before some world leader announces them as war goals.” He further listed the four most important goals of the United Nations: the world must rebuild in peaceful struggle with the energy it had in violent struggle; it should concentrate efforts on specific objectives with a specific timetable; it should do doing important things together to build world morale, and a popular will and determination must be behind the objectives. Austin felt that it was important for all the people of the world to have faith in the UN and support its goals.

37 Ibid.

16
Austin was fortunate to have highly competent and engaged subordinates during his tenure. One of those was former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who served in a number of capacities and was a significant force behind the drafting of the Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Mrs. Roosevelt also acted as the liberal conscience of the delegation, often reflecting the views of her late husband President Franklin Roosevelt. Austin and Mrs. Roosevelt grew to be friends during his tenure and carried on an amiable correspondence for many years.

Austin’s two chief deputies, Philip Jessup and Ernest Gross, helped direct an ever-increasing staff, served as delegates to various committees, and filled in for Austin when duties required him to be elsewhere or during his absences due to illness. Incidental to his duties at the UN, Jessup served as the conduit for negotiations to end the Berlin Blockade. He approached Soviet representative Jacob A. Malik in the Delegate’s Lounge at the UN on February 15, 1949, to clarify a statement Soviet leader Joseph Stalin had given to American correspondents in Moscow. This encounter triggered bilateral discussions that led to the end of the blockade.38

The early days of the United Nations were filled with uncertainty, especially as to procedures and protocols. Both the Americans and the Soviets were jockeying for position as the world’s two true superpowers. Questions of procedure and substance divided them. They circled each other cautiously, looking for openings. Before his appointment to the UN, Austin was fearful of the United States withdrawing from the international scene. The *Christian Science Monitor* of March 7, 1946, quoted Austin: “I feel a tremendous undertow pulling the United States back to isolationism and extreme

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nationalism. It seems more difficult now than it was during the war to overcome this undertow. Yet, it must be surmounted."

During his first year at the UN, Austin was optimistic that the organization could achieve what it had set out to do. On January 4, 1947, for example, on a WNBC radio broadcast, he stated that the Americans and Soviets “came to a better understanding with each other” in the UN General Assembly, and that he had “great faith in the future.”

Columbia and Stanford Soviet scholar Alexander Dallin has noted that the Soviet Union approached the UN with the idea that it should be strictly a security organization, maintaining the peace without consideration of other matters. They were in accord with the other big members that the prevention of military aggression was paramount.

The Soviet Union found itself almost always in the minority on most issues before the Security Council. The Soviets believed that the UN system was designed to be dominated by the United States or at least the Western allies. When the Americans began to block membership to Eastern European nations, the Soviets responded in kind with the veto of those applicants they perceived to be US supporters. Both sides continued to engage in unilateral actions and bilateral agreements outside the UN, to the point where the UN seemed like more of a sideshow to the superpower disagreements. For example, former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech in Fulton, Missouri, on March 5, 1946 proposed a bilateral agreement between the United States

and Britain to oppose feared Soviet expansion rather than addressing the perceived problem at the UN. Problems like Soviet designs on northern Iran and the Black Sea straits were resolved not at the UN, but only when the United States and Britain pushed back directly. First British and then American fears that Soviet allies were aiding communist insurgents in Greece, along with anxiety over Soviet designs on Turkey, led President Harry Truman, on March 12, 1947, to offer financial aid to both governments to resist communism. This “Truman Doctrine,” ghost written by adamant cold warrior undersecretary of State Dean Acheson, ignored massive Soviet troop reductions from 12 million in 1945 to roughly 3 or 4 million by 1947 and instead ratcheted up Cold War fears. Secretary of State George Marshall and Soviet experts Charles Bohlen and George Kennan all objected to Acheson’s anti-Soviet vitriol. Acheson, who preferred unilateral actions and was never fond of the UN, wrote in his autobiography, “I always believed that the Charter was impracticable. Moreover, its presentation to the American people as almost holy writ and with the evangelical enthusiasm of a major advertising campaign seemed to me to raise popular hopes which could only lead to bitter disappointment.”

In 1956, sociologist C. Wright Mills posited in his seminal work on the higher echelons of American society, *The Power Elite*, that the ruling socioeconomic elite in the United States shared many traits in common. They tended to come from wealth. They

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44 LaFeber, *America, Russia*, 61.
attended elite prep schools, Ivy League colleges, notably Harvard, Yale and Princeton, and Harvard and Yale law schools. They worked either on Wall Street, for large Wall Street law firms, or were CEOs for large banks or corporations. They might also feel drawn later in life to public service, where their main goal was to preserve the status quo.46 When Mills first published The Power Elite, the foreign policy movers and shakers of the Truman Administration of ten years prior were likely among the unnamed subjects of his thesis. They were defenders of American orthodoxy, unfettered capitalism and outspoken anti-communists. Both Dean Acheson and John Foster Dulles, who was President Truman’s Special Envoy to the UN and one of the most important Wall Street lawyers of his generation, fit the profile particularly well.

Dean Acheson, who lorded over Austin as undersecretary and later as secretary of State for the Austin’s entire tenure at the UN, was one who advocated rule by the elite. Historian Walter LaFeber quoted Acheson as saying, Americans “learned how wrong the prophets of the Enlightenment had been about what moved peoples. These prophets overestimated the influence of wisdom, virtue, and understanding of experience, and underestimated prejudice, passion, and dogma…. Power politics has no place in our Celestial City; but a substantial place in the twentieth century.47

Acheson, who succeeded George Marshall as secretary of State in 1949, told Senator Arthur H. Vandenburg (R-MI), a converted isolationist who helped in the creation of the United Nations, “I think it is a mistake to believe that you can, at any time,

sit down with the Russians and solve questions.” The Truman Doctrine, combined with Soviet analyst George Kennan’s famous and misunderstood “Long Telegram” of February 22, 1946, and his further elaboration published in Foreign Affairs (July, 1947 under the pseudonym of “Mister X”), came to define the American Cold War strategy of “containment,” but not how Kennan had conceived it. In Acheson’s hands, it came to mean a more bellicose United States willing to give battle to the Eurasian hordes of Russia. Kennan believed that “containment” should be construed in a political and diplomatic sense, rather than militarily. Kennan had been apprehensive for some time, however, that the United States did not actually have a foreign policy. He wrote in his dairy on June 1944, “Our government is technically incapable of conceiving and promulgating a long-term and consistent policy towards areas remote from our own territory. Our actions in the field of foreign affairs are the convulsive reactions of politicians to an internal political life dominated by vocal minorities.”

Historian William Appleman Williams and others, however, have pointed out that containment had always been the policy of the United States, dating back to US intervention in the Russian Civil War and subsequent refusal to recognize the Bolshevik government until the Roosevelt administration. The Truman Doctrine and the European Recovery Program, or the Marshall Plan, drafted on June 5, 1947, cemented Soviet fears.

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48 quoted in LaFeber. America, Russia, 63.
that US global financial hegemony was a threat to the Soviet Union. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), founded on April 4, 1949, only confirmed Soviet fears. The Soviets also feared America’s rapid rebuilding of Germany and Japan in the second half of the 1940s. Both countries engaged Russia in wars in the twentieth century and were being rebuilt by their new nemesis. America’s real fear of the Soviets was not based on Soviet military might but instead that they offered an alternative to, and possible impediment to, laissez-faire global free-market economics. Many emerging nations worldwide, and established Western nations as well, saw benefits to state control of certain basic industries, a welfare system, and the protection of nascent industries.

Austin arrived UN at the same time as containment was being fleshed out in the minds of the Truman administration. Among the more ideologically anti-communist members of the administration, the idea of opposing the Soviets at every turn was firmly established. On the other hand, Austin was willing to give the Soviets a fair hearing. In a letter to the president in December 1946, Austin said that although Foreign Minister Molotov had been initially hostile to the United States in an early session of the General Assembly, Molotov had changed his attitude, and cordial relations had developed. Austin said that they agreed on some matters and agreed to disagree on others. The US hostility toward the Soviets had as yet to infect Austin. He went on in the letter to express great confidence in the UN. 52

Warren Austin and his tenure at the United Nations has attracted little attention from scholars. George Mazuzan’s *Warren Austin at the UN, 1946-1953* is the only

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52 WRA archives, Carton IV, folder 13. Letter to President Truman, December 18, 1946.
substantive secondary source. 53 Seymour Maxwell Finger’s _American Ambassadors at the UN_ devoted one short chapter to Edward R. Stettinius, the first US Ambassador, and Austin. 54 Finger mentioned Austin’s honesty, his calm in the face of the increasing gale winds of the Security Council, and his popularity and respect among his staff, but not much else. Finger discussed this fascinating period in UN history, but not Austin’s place in it.

There are also the brief congressional and State Department website biographies that add little to our understanding Austin. He is not even mentioned in standard works on the Cold War, including _The Cambridge History of the Cold War, The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War, The Cold War: A New History_ by John Lewis Gaddis and _The Cold War: A World History_ by Odd Arne Westad. Histories of the UN treat Austin little better. He is mentioned twice in passing in _A History of the United Nations_ by Evan Luard and not at all in _The Parliament of Man_ by Paul Kennedy or _The United Nations_ by Leland M. Goodrich.55

The best primary source material on Austin’s tenure at the UN are his own papers, which are archived in the Special Collections Library of his alma mater, the University of Vermont; the State Department’s publications _Foreign Relations of the United States_

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(FRUS); and the *New York Times*, which gave extensive, almost daily, coverage to the UN in the early years.  

Three different, but interrelated, historiographies must be noted for this thesis. The Cold War, the UN, and the Korean War histories will be considered below, each having its own evolution and problems. A single thread of anti-communism runs through the initial decade of all three historiographies. Nick Fischer’s *Spider Web: The Birth of American Anti-Communism* provides a detailed background history on the evolution of anti-communism in the United States.  

Much of the earliest writing on the early Cold War and Korea came from participants who worked at the State Department, the United Nations, or the defense establishment. All tended to view the US/Soviet confrontation in Manichean terms of good versus evil. Any divergence from this increasingly strident American position was branded as pro-communist in a country that was becoming rabidly anti-communist through a web of anti-labor, anti-liberal, anti-communist, and anti-Soviet leaders and institutions. This hysteria reached its apex with the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and the mostly unfounded accusations of Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-WI). Academics were among the accused victims of these witch hunts and were fearful of challenging the orthodox history promoted by the government insiders and the demagogues.

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American Cold War historiography begins with the orthodox view that Joseph Stalin and the Soviet ruling clique were fixated on achieving world domination by any means necessary, and that the West, mainly the United States and Britain, was resisting this onslaught in order to protect freedom and their way of life. By the time the United States was mired in the Viet Nam War, New Left historians took the United States to task for its role in creating and maintaining the antagonisms between the Western states and the Soviet bloc. These historians, called the revisionists, held that the United States cynically achieved world economic hegemony via the Cold War and needed to take responsibility for its role in starting and maintaining the Cold War. By the 1990s, a new school of thought, the post-revisionists, emerged, who in effect combined parts of the first two tendencies with the added feature of a globalizing context. Their interests were primarily concerned with geopolitics and power balances rather than the assignment of blame. This last school of thought featured the North/South dichotomy of wealth and power, the role of anti-colonialist tendencies and the Cold War, and subaltern studies. Additionally, the scholarship of the past twenty-five years has been aided by the opening of many heretofore locked archives, not the least of which was that of the Soviet Union.

The so-called orthodox position has its own internally generated documents such as George F. Kennan’s “Long Telegram” and his further explanation of the proposed policy of “containment” in the establishment journal Foreign Affairs as Mr. “X.” Also in this category are the memoir Present at the Creation by Dean Acheson and the presumptuously and ironically titled War and Peace by John Foster Dulles. Dulles’s short book found a place on Warren Austin’s bookshelf. Austin’s grandson Edward Lucas Austin, Jr. described Austin’s copy of the book as heavily underlined with copious
marginalia, referencing what the older Austin told him were factual and interpretive mistakes.\(^{58}\) The early 1950 US security document, NSC-68, also falls into the category of internal documents.\(^ {59}\)

Two academic orthodox historians, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and Herbert Feis, had both emigrated from the State Department to the ivory tower. Schlesinger had served with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the precursor of the CIA, and later as assistant secretary of state under President John F. Kennedy. Feis had worked at the State Department in the Hoover and Roosevelt administrations.\(^ {60}\) A third scholar of the orthodox school was Thomas A. Bailey of Stanford University.\(^ {61}\) The three scholars followed the Acheson/Dulles formula that the Cold War was the result of Stalin’s paranoia and Soviet intrigue and lust for world domination.

Schlesinger summed up the orthodox position in a 1967 article in *Foreign Affairs*, in which he said that there was “a presumably mortal antagonism … between two rigidly hostile blocs.”\(^ {62}\) He went on to explain that the two blocs were driven by conflicting worldviews, the “universalist” view that “all nations shared a common interest in all the

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\(^{58}\) Edward Lucas Austin, Jr., personal interview by telephone, January 25, 2019.
affairs of the world,” and a “spheres-of-influence” view in which great powers predominate in specific geographic areas.63

William Appleman Williams is credited with launching the revisionist school with his *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* in 1959.64 He challenged the orthodoxy of American diplomatic history back as far as the War of 1812, positing that the United States always had an imperialist impulse. Once “manifest destiny” was complete by the late 1800s, the impulse toward imperialism found reward in war with Spain in 1898, which gave the United States a new set of colonies. As colonialism got a bad name by the time of World War II, Williams maintains that America sought a global economic hegemony that had all the best aspects of imperialism--resources and markets--without the messy part: political administration of angry colonials. This butted heads with a Soviet system more concerned with its security than playing along with United States dominance.

Walter LaFeber and Lloyd C. Gardner joined Williams in his opposition to the orthodox interpretation. LaFeber, in his 1967 *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1966*, argues that the United States must take responsibility for its part in starting and continuing the Cold War, especially noting a lack of fair-mindedness in dealing with the Soviets on the part of American policymakers. In 1970, Gardner wrote in *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy* that the US policymakers, Kennan, Acheson, Marshall, F.D.R. and others, established rationales and explanations that

63 Ibid., 26.
evolved into a series of myths about the Soviets, their goals, and the origins of the Cold War.  

A post-revisionist school of thought evolved in the 1990s when John Lewis Gaddis returned to a more orthodox position of blaming the Cold War on Stalin in his 1997 book *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*. He argued that Stalin was a Marxist/Leninist ideological zealot and was driven by ideas that manifested in world communist revolution. Vojtech Mastny had recently posited these same notions of the ideological Stalin in his *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity* (1996). Mastny also maintained that the Bolsheviks were constantly fearful of a hostile outside world, but were driven as much by the need to remain in power as they were paying homage to ideological purity. Mastny, as opposed to Gaddis, places greater emphasis on the Soviets, and later Mao at the time of the Korean War, reacting to moves by the United States, rather than carrying out an organized policy of their own.  

Historian Kathryn Weathersby, one of the first Western scholars to gain access to Soviet archives after 1991, argued that many of Stalin’s moves were actually defensive in nature. She maintains that his moves in Iran were in reaction to US and British oil concerns’ activities along the Soviet border, and that he perceived US activities in Japan and Korea as a threat to Soviet security.

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University of Chicago historian Bruce Cumings has argued that Gaddis has trivialized the revisionists and exalted the orthodoxy. In a scathing article in 1993 in *Diplomatic History*, Cumings maintained that Gaddis treated the orthodox view like religious dogma, and that “communists” like William Appleman Williams and the “Wisconsin school” were heretics.\(^68\) Not as accusatory or strident as Gaddis, Melvyn Leffler in his *A Preponderance of Power: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* lays out a more balanced post-revisionist thesis. Leffler said the preponderance of power that the Truman administration sought was through economic hegemony, growing industry, and a deep defense starting on the opposite shores of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In his *Origins of the Cold War*, Leffler maintains that ideological animosity was as significant as geopolitical factors, but ultimately posits that neither side wanted war nor believed that it was inevitable.\(^69\)

Odd Arne Westad took the history of the Cold War in a different direction entirely. He began to look at the effects of the Cold War on different players, often the non-aligned states who were drawn into the fray as unwilling participants. He argued in *The Cold War: A World History* that the Cold War was the logical outcome of worldwide transitions begun in the late nineteenth century and World War I. Westad maintains that third world decolonization was intimately connected to the ideological struggles of East and West and often acted as the real battlefields of the Cold War.

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\(^68\) Bruce Cumings, ““Revising Postrevisionism,”” or, The Poverty of Theory in Diplomatic History,” *Diplomatic History* 17 (4) (Fall 1993), 539-569.

The historiography of the United Nations is a rather dry affair, beginning with
British historian Evan Luard’s *A History of the United Nations. Volume 1: The Years of
Western Domination, 1945-1955.* Luard focuses on the peace and security functions of
the UN, generally omitting economic, humanitarian, and cultural matters. He faults the
Western bloc for not pressing its majority in the UN to elevate the body to the higher
stature envisioned by its founders. Arnold Beichman’s 1968 book *The “Other” State
Department: The United States Mission to the United Nations* speculates that the US
mission had functioned with a certain degree of autonomy vis-a-vis the State
Department. This might have had some validity in Warren Austin’s first year but less
and less as time went on. Austin’s close relationship with President Truman quickly took
a backseat to Dean Acheson’s Svengali-like influence over the president. Inis L. Claude,
Jr. first wrote of the United Nations before the founding San Francisco Conference in
1945. He published *Swords into Plowshares: The Problems and Progress of
International Organization* in 1956. Much of his text is devoted to the UN, where he
devotes considerable space to the constitutional, organizational, and technical issues of
the founding and early years of the organization. He also discusses the utopian ideals of
peace and security in a body dominated by powerful, often self-serving, players.

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Paul Kennedy’s *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations*\(^{73}\) speaks to the problems inherent in a system where state sovereignty must bow to global cooperation.

The historiography of the Korean War, “the forgotten war,” like that of the Cold War itself, was initially the work of insiders, like Leland M. Goodrich, who worked for the UN Secretariat.\(^{74}\) British journalist and military historian Max Hastings wrote a more balanced book entitled *The Korean War*, which was a reaction to many of these early histories that focused on the great power confrontation that happened to be taking place on the Korean peninsula and were happy to put all blame on Soviet machinations.\(^{75}\)

More nuanced histories have appeared in recent years including *The Korean War: An International History* by Japanese historian Wada Haruki and *The Korean War: A History* by Bruce Cumings.\(^{76}\) Wada’s text relies on multiple archives, including those of the Soviet Union, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. He argues that the Soviets had given the go-ahead to the North Korea to invade but with no specific date in mind. Kim Il-Sung was chomping at the bit, and was on a mission to unify Korea, as was South Korean President Syngman Rhee. Wada’s focus is more regional than in earlier histories, placing greater emphasis on the agency of both Koreas and the war’s impact on them, Manchuria, Japan, and Taiwan. Cumings, a longtime University of Chicago professor and

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Korea scholar, refutes many of the misunderstandings, myths, lies and hyperbole surrounding the Korean War, the State Department’s role in it, Syngman Rhee and South Korean atrocities, and Kim Il-Sung as a Soviet dupe. He argues that Rhee was as responsible as Kim for starting the war and that the Soviets were not really eager for this fight.

The present thesis considers where Warren Austin fits in the history of the Cold War. He was neither as stridently anti-communist as the administration he served nor was he overly accommodating to his Soviet opposites. He was an idealist, an optimist, and a moralist who expressed genuine empathy for the suffering of the Soviet people in World War II and genuinely hoped that the United States and the Soviet Union could come to some level of mutual understanding. Neither the US administration nor the Soviet bosses, however, really sought to understand the other and as a result stumbled into the Cold War.

After this introduction there is a chapter on the history of anti-communism in the United States and the flourishing of anti-Soviet sentiment in the Truman administration. This writer believes that the US administration’s vehement anti-communist and anti-Soviet ideology contributed to the beginning of the Cold War. Then three chapters follow on Austin’s thoughts and actions concerning three different issues of importance at the UN during his tenure. These issues fall into three categories representative of the different questions typically on the UN agenda: procedural, substantive, and crisis. The procedural question was voting rights in the Security Council, specifically the Soviet use of the veto. The actions of the Atomic Energy Commission, a subsidiary of the Security
Council, offers a view of a substantive problem. Finally, the Korean War offers an opportunity to analyze Austin and the UN in a crisis situation. These categories are not mutually exclusive; the question of the veto is present in both the atomic energy and Korean War chapters and atomic bomb issue arises in the Korean War chapter. The three chapters all share the same antagonists, directly or indirectly: the Soviet Union and the State Department hawks. Austin was caught in the middle attempting to diffuse the conflict, and attempting to steer the UN to its fullest potential.
Austin was unprepared for the level of animosity directed at the Soviet Union by the Truman administration. President Franklin Roosevelt was empathetic to the suffering of the Soviets in World War II and wished to extend lend-lease and loans to the Soviet Union for reconstruction. That came to a screeching halt with the new administration.

Anti-Soviet feelings in the United States were rooted in American anti-communism, which found its seed in the anti-union sentiments of the nineteenth century manufacturing, extractive, and transportation industries. Trade unionism, as we know it today, began in the early 1800s with skilled craftsmen’s associations and in women’s associations in textile and shoemaking factories in Lowell, Massachusetts and northern New England. Justice Lemuel Shaw ruled in *Commonwealth v. Hunt* (1842) that unions
were not conspiracies in restraint of trade, hence legal when they employed legal means to their ends. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890, intended to combat the great concentrations of corporate wealth in the gilded age, however, was used by local and state courts against labor unions as conspiracies against interstate commerce.¹

There were a few little anti-communist stirrings before the American Civil War, but reaction to the Paris Commune of 1871 and increasing union activity in the United States frightened the American robber barons such as Cornelius Vanderbilt, John D. Rockefeller, Henry Clay Frick, Jay Gould, Andrew Carnegie, J.P. Morgan and others. The growth of industrial unions in the post-Civil War era threatened to cut into capitalist profits in railroad, mining, steel and other growing industries. The actions of the Molly Maguires in the Pennsylvania coal mines in the mid-1870s were blamed on foreign-born, Irish, barbarian communists and anarchists. Increasingly, the state, in the form of police and army units, along with the mainstream media, sided with the capitalists to suppress union activities and demonized the unions as foreign, anti-American communist cabals.² Matters came to a boil in Chicago, in May 1886, with a series of labor rallies and demonstrations that climaxed with the Haymarket affair on May 4. A bomb killed eight police and at least two civilians and set off a crackdown on anarchists and socialists that destroyed the country’s largest labor organization, the Knights of Labor.³ The labor movement and communism had become synonymous in many people’s minds. The

economic, social, and political elite cried “communist” whenever their prerogatives were challenged for the next fifty years. All branches of the government-- the President, Congress and the courts--sided with the industrialists and financiers. Many Progressive Era reformers were also branded as communists.

Anti-Communist fervor grew during the First World War as the government cracked down on dissent and labor unrest. The prime target of government ire was the leftist/anarchist International Workers of the World (IWW), a particularly effective organization much loathed by big business. Crackdowns on IWW leadership during the war virtually destroyed the organization. Eugene V. Debs, labor organizer and perennial Socialist Party candidate for president was imprisoned on charges of violating the Sedition Act. He received nearly a million votes for president while still in jail.⁴

J. Edgar Hoover, the long-time head of the FBI, started to build a reputation as an anti-communist investigator during the Palmer Raids of the Red Scare following World War I. He had the Bureau amass lists of hundreds of thousands of individuals and groups who were either “communists or “fellow travelers.” He rode the anti-communist wave throughout most of his career.⁵

A surge of industrial strikes after First World War prompted another round of anticommunist activity on the federal level known as the Red Scare, which resulted in the deportation of hundreds of leftists and generally aroused patriotic and anti-immigrant feelings. Suffragist and pacifist organizations fell afoul of the red-baiters, whose militarist wing fought post-war cuts to defense budgets. American anticommunist forces

continued their increasingly paranoiac and isolationist propaganda, and now had a substantive bogeyman in the new Bolshevik Russia. Joining industrial and commercial concerns, patriotic organizations such as the American Legion and the Daughters of the American Revolution (who later denounced the UN over its stand on racial equality), among others, gave anticommunism a grassroots presence in virtually every town in America. Nativist, anticommunist sentiments at this time manifested in a rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan in 1915. Anti-Semitism, union-bashing, the eugenics movement, and nativist sentiments throughout the 1920s and 1930s created a perfect environment for anti-communism. Organized labor, communism and Bolshevik Russia, later the Soviet Union, all became a single entity in the minds of the business and financial elite and ultimately in the minds of many ordinary Americans.

Three intensely pro-business Republicans occupied the White House from 1921 to 1933, Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover. Harding’s attorney general, Harry Daugherty, stepped up prosecutions of unions as syndicates operating in restraint of trade and opined that unions were in fact in the pay of Moscow.

The stock market crash of 1929 led to the Great Depression which caused many Americans to question the orthodox US economic system of laissez-faire capitalism. The election of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932 and his New Deal economic programs that featured increased government regulation of the economy, deficit spending, a social safety net, the government as the employer of last resort, and a vastly expanded federal

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6 Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize*, 216.
8 Nick Fischer, *Spider Web*, 150.
bureaucracy was anathema to the socio-economic elite. They viewed the New Deal as the roadway to socialism. Roosevelt’s program did stop the downward slide of the economy, but it was the war in Europe that prompted steady growth and increased employment. US entry into the war in December 1941 led to a period of full employment and hyperactive economic growth. But this central control of the productive economy by the federal government was also perceived by the elite as a further descent into a socialist planned economy.

The Special Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities (the Dies Committee) chaired by Texas Democrat Martin Dies was a congressional committee, begun in 1938, charged with investigating subversive activities in the US, both right-wing and left-wing. They did take a peek at the KKK, the German-American Bund, and other Nazi support groups, but they dedicated most of their efforts to communists. Their investigators raided Communist Party (CPUSA) local offices and harassed veterans of the International Brigades of the Spanish Civil War.⁹

The United States entered World War II at the same moment that the Soviets were beginning to drive the German blitzkrieg back from the gates of Moscow. Six months after Operation Barbarossa began in June 1941 the Soviets had suffered millions of casualties. Some members of the administration were at least sympathetic to the Soviets’ plight. Secretary of War Henry Stimson felt that further delays in the Second Front represented a breach of trust with the Soviets. The British preferred fighting the Axis in North Africa, possibly the Balkans, maybe Italy. Stimson argued, “None of these

⁹ O’Reilly, Hoover and the Un-Americans.
methods of pinprick warfare can be counted on by us to fool Stalin into the belief that we have kept our pledge.” Failure to launch the Second Front in a timely manner, cessation of Lend-Lease Aid in April 1945, and reneging on earlier promises of loans and grants at war’s end left a bitter taste in Stalin’s mouth. The Soviet Union had defeated the Nazis, inflicting 90 percent of all Wehrmacht casualties, and were feeling abandoned by their former allies.10 President John F. Kennedy said at American University on June 11, 1963, “No nation in the history of battle ever suffered more than the Soviet Union in the second world war.”11 It took over eighteen years for an American president to recognize that the Soviets were devastated by the war but still managed to defeat the Nazis. Instead, the US power elite chose to wage a “cold war” on the Soviets, ignoring their sacrifice.

Continued American economic recovery following World War II depended on a global free market economy. The Republican Party platform of 1944 stated that the United States wanted “worldwide economic stability,” which could only occur under US economic hegemony.12 The only roadblocks to this dominance came from lingering European colonialism and Soviet communism. President Roosevelt had half-heartedly opposed British military schemes that were aimed at protecting the empire rather than defeating the Axis, which the United Kingdom seemed to be leaving to the Soviets. Some Roosevelt administration figures such as Roosevelt troubleshooter Harry Hopkins, former ambassador to the USSR Joseph Davies, former vice president and secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace, and Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson argued for continued

12 WRA archives, Carton II file 2 “Republican Party Platform 1944.”
amity with the Soviets under the new US president, Harry Truman. Their voices were
drowned out by the anti-communists and they left the administration in short order.

Other more aggressive personalities in the administration, including John Foster
Dulles and Dean Acheson, led a faction more inclined toward challenging Soviet
hegemony in eastern Europe, and they pressed the ideological differences between the
Soviets and “the American way of life.” The Soviets, for their part, felt that the Grand
Alliance could reach comity by establishing mutually recognized spheres of influence:
the United States in the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific, and Britain and the Soviet
Union in Europe and the Middle East.\(^\text{13}\) The two sides were far apart. Cold War critic
Senator Glen H. Taylor (D-ID) argued that the United States needed to recognize the
realities of spheres of influence. Taylor maintained that unilateral actions like the Truman
Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were inherently provocative and by-passed the UN,
where these questions should be discussed openly.\(^\text{14}\) He argued later that the formation of
NATO was equally provocative as it essentially placed US military bases uncomfortably
close to Soviet borders.\(^\text{15}\)

The United States, by virtue of its contributions to the International Monetary
Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (a component of
the World Bank complex) and its booming industrial sector, had an inordinate amount of
power in international fiscal matters. Britain and France both sought private loans from

\(^\text{13}\) Vladimir Pechatnov, “The Soviet Union and the world, 1944-1953,” in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne
Westad (Eds.), The Cambridge History of the Cold War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010),
91-93.
to American Foreign Policy in the Truman Years (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971) 155.
\(^\text{15}\) Ibid., 159.
the United States at the end of the war to stabilize their economies. The price exacted by
the Americans for the loans was the removal of tariffs and other trade barriers both at
home and in their colonies.\textsuperscript{16}

US ambassador to the Soviet Union W. Averill Harriman and A. I. Mikoyan,
Soviet commissar for foreign trade, began meeting in October 1943 to negotiate loans for
reconstruction. Credits to purchase US manufactured goods would benefit both sides as
the end of the war would otherwise trigger a downturn in the US economy brought on by
the return of GIs to the labor pool and the need to retool factories for domestic
consumption.\textsuperscript{17} On January 3, 1945, Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov made a
formal request to the United States for a $6 billion credit to purchase American goods for
reconstruction. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. proposed an even bigger
credit of $10 billion. Opposition to the loan arrangement came from Harriman, Assistant
Secretary of State William Clayton, and Undersecretary of State Joseph C. Grew, who all
maintained that any loan to the Soviets must be tied to their willingness to pursue
political and diplomatic policies favored by the United States.\textsuperscript{18} Instead, the United States
ended lend-lease deliveries to the Soviet Union immediately after the fall of Berlin,
except for shipments destined for the Far East to supply the Soviets’ entry into the war
with Japan. The Lend-Lease Act of 1943 called for the termination of all lend-lease to the
Allies on VE-Day, but the Soviets understood that there would be a continuation of

\textsuperscript{17} Thomas G. Paterson, “The Abortive American Loan to Russia and the Origins of the Cold War, 1943-
\textsuperscript{18} Paterson, “The Abortive American Loan.”
shipments to aid in reconstruction.\textsuperscript{19} Efforts to get the American loan came to naught. Soviet suspicions of US hegemonic desires were confirmed and relations between the two countries began to spiral down quickly.

American capitalists became especially fearful when the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) became an affiliate of the World Federation of Trade Unions, an organization that they believed was directed from Moscow.\textsuperscript{20} This, combined with a Labour victory in Britain, causing an ouster of Winston Churchill from the government, galvanized anti-Soviet/communist forces in the United States.

The end of the war, the need to retool industry to domestic needs, and the return of millions of GIs caused a spike in unemployment and an economic downturn. Historian Larry Ceplair noted that, “between August 1945 and August 1946, more than 5 million strikers engaged in 4360 work stoppages nationwide. It was the largest strike wave in US history, and involved the biggest industries: coal, oil, electrical, steel and railroads.”\textsuperscript{21} Parallel with Stalin’s need to reassert internal controls in the Soviet Union, the US power elite needed to crush unruly labor unions. The old formula of equating labor unions with communism and the Soviets was resurrected to oppose both the unions on one hand and Soviet refusal to play along with US global free-market economics.

Demonizing the Bolsheviks from the first days of the October Revolution came quite naturally to a country fighting to open markets around the world to laissez-faire

capitalism. A relaxation of the US anti-Soviet vitriol during the alliance in World War II was a necessity. It proved problematic as worldwide appreciation of Soviet bravery and sacrifice in the defeat of Hitler’s Nazi regime had to be reversed as the war ended and American anti-communists re-emerged. Hyperbolic reports of Soviet atrocities as they marched on Berlin acted to temper international amity toward the Soviets. American rehabilitation of Nazi and SS members to rewrite their side of the war in the east and to act as intelligence agents for the United States sped the process of demonizing the Soviets.

Many American political and military figures became obsessed, at least publicly, with the idea that Stalin and his Soviet “barbarian hordes” were intent on war and world domination. In reality the Soviets were militarily spent after the siege of Berlin and not in the position to really bother anyone. Field Marshall Semon Budennyi encouraged Stalin to keep marching into Western Europe. Stalin demurred, asking who was going to feed the people of Western Europe. He also discouraged Yugoslavia from grabbing parts of Italy and Austria. Stalin also resisted the temptation to occupy Finland, an ally of the Nazis.  

The war had devastated the agricultural and industrial heartland of European Russia. As many as thirty million Soviets, soldiers and civilians, had died in the war. The battle to defend Mother Russia had loosened things up internally and, combined with the return of soldiers and slaves that had seen the significantly higher standard of living elsewhere in Europe, the Soviet leadership needed to reassert itself so that the masses

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clamoring for more could be controlled. Although looking to consolidate territorial gains while maintaining what goodwill the Soviet Union had earned because of their sacrifice in defeating Hitler, Stalin and the Politburo needed primarily to reassert totalitarian control of the homeland first.

Stalin, above all other matters, wanted security. That term, however, has a double meaning in post-war Soviet thinking. Initially, the regime must be secure from internal threats from both hungry citizens and emboldened military brass. Secondly, the Soviet state must be secure from hostile neighbors. Peace would allow for disarmament and the freeing of men and capital for reconstruction. Although a decimated Germany was no immediate threat, Stalin feared a united and rebuilt Germany fifteen years down the road. Nine days after Churchill’s Fulton speech, Pravda published a front page interview with Stalin in which he quipped, “Mr. Churchill and his friends bear a striking resemblance to Hitler and his friends.”23 Churchill’s friends had already made good friends with Hitler’s friends.

Besides security, the Soviet Union needed to rebuild its economy, devastated in the war. The United States had reneged on financial aid and instead embarked on a program of demonizing the Soviets and their alleged threat to Europe and its Asian neighbors. Without the loans from the United States, the Soviets could rationalize their pillaging the industrial machinery of eastern Europe as unilateral reparations.

The flames of anti-Soviet hysteria in the post-World War II era were stoked by the “Lost Cause” propaganda generated initially by the publication of the memoirs of certain important German generals that promoted ideas about the purity and efficiency of the Wehrmacht and the Waffen SS. Generals Manstein, Guderian, and others were prompted by US Army intelligence at war’s end to outline German operational strategy and tactics on the Eastern Front. These antiseptic operational “histories” and the popular histories of the Eastern Front, written by Americans and others who drew heavily on these German sources, gained increasing popularity in the decades following the war. Manstein orchestrated the initial memoirs of the generals and made certain they were all playing the same notes. These works failed to mention any atrocities committed by the Wehrmacht or Waffen SS, arguing that the military was proud of its traditional Prussian apolitical and totally professional approach to war-making. This propaganda became doctrine to the general public and World War II enthusiasts alike.

The story tended to go like this: Wehrmacht and Waffen SS troops, vastly outnumbered, fought bravely and efficiently against the barbarian Asiatic hordes. The Nazis highly sophisticated armaments became an obsession with World War II aficionados in the United States and elsewhere. Little credit is afforded to the bravery of Soviet soldiers nor to the competence of their leadership. The Holocaust and other atrocities are absent from these “histories,” and, in the final analysis the Soviets were demonized as godless barbarians.

US anti-communists were more than happy to change the whole narrative of the eastern front, as well as to turn Nazi spies into American spies. Exaggerating the threat posed by the victorious Soviet Army to the rest of Europe was of primary importance to
the anti-Soviet/communist conservatives in the US military and government. One of the first propagandistic balloons floated by the Americans after the war was that the Soviets had three hundred divisions poised to continue the war into western Europe. The noted Kremlinologist George Kennan debunked this notion when he noted, “I was conscious of the weakness of the Russian position, of the slenderness of the means with which they operated, of the ease with which they could be held and pushed back.” In reality, Soviet military strength was confined to ground forces that had experienced stupendous losses especially during the final offensive to Berlin. They had no navy, no significant air force, no strategic air power, nor the atomic bomb. Their industrial base was shattered in the opening months of Barbarossa, and they were mourning the deaths of nearly 30 million soldiers and citizens.

The United States, on the other hand, had suffered a little over 400,000 fatalities, virtually no physical damage to the forty-eight states, and instead experienced phenomenal economic growth, especially in manufacturing. The United States emerged from the war with the largest navy, air force, and economy on earth. Possession of the atomic bomb gave the United States a strategic advantage for years. Control of much of the world’s supply of high-grade uranium ore guaranteed that advantage into the foreseeable future.

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The Soviets saw their position in eastern Europe and their influence in Europe generally threatened not by American military might, but by US financial largesse, which they could never hope to match.26 Stalin, also, saw advantages in demonizing his former allies. If he could create an overwhelming atmosphere of fear of attack in his people, from a hostile Western alliance, they would be less likely to grumble about their low living standards and instead marshal their efforts for rebuilding the country.27

Senator Austin noted in May 1945 that there was already hostility toward the Soviets manifesting at the San Francisco Conference. He posited that forces outside of the State Department “whose political office depends substantially upon the partisanship and votes of the Poles” were chastising the Soviets; he continued, “any organization setup for security and peace will fail, if it is not founded upon continuing peaceful feelings among the great powers.”28

Reviewing the historiography of three decades of Cold War writing, Historian Alexander Dallin took the discipline of Soviet scholars and Kremlinologists to task for their methods, biases, and conclusions. He argued that so many otherwise gifted scholars made glaring eras as to preconceptions, analysis, and prognostications that were flawed and ultimately misleading.29 Dallin also notes that the political mood of the moment in America often guided the “dominant interpretations by specialists on the USSR.”30 He

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30 Ibid., 565.
feared that analysis often took a more orthodox hard line for fear that a more liberal approach to Soviet questions could lead to reproach from university and/or civil authorities.

Columbia University professor Richard Hofstadter posited in his famous 1964 essay “The Paranoid Style in American Politics” that a varying portion of the American populace since the first days of the republic has been susceptible to the fear that some force is attempting to undermine America and its moral values. This paranoia has manifested in a politics of fear and suppression of groups, real or imagined, such as the Illuminati, the Masons, the Jesuits as agents of Roman Catholic Pope, and leftists of different sectarian tendencies. Hofstadter brought this lineage of hate into his own day as embodied in Senator Joseph McCarthy and John Birch Society founder Robert Welch. Implicit in Hofstadter’s argument is that too many Americans are receptive to this form of paranoia.31

Harvard Law School professor and research associate of the Russian Research Center of Harvard University Harold J. Berman reflected on visits to the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s with lawyers, congressmen, and others. He said that nearly all commented on how the living conditions and state of the people was so much better than they had been led to believe. Berman pointed out that US media, political propaganda, and American scholarship had all painted a picture of Russia that was inaccurate and tainted. He also said that some reporting and scholarship was good and objective, but hardly anyone was paying attention. Anti-communism mythology still lingered in the years

following the McCarthy era. Berman was no apologist for the Soviet totalitarian system, but he was someone who insisted that not all was wrong with Russia. He writes of the American puritanical vision of the devil, and a hellfire and brimstone vision of hell. He continues by saying,

It is linked also to our national immaturity which leads us to see moral issues in terms of black and white, ‘good guys’ versus ‘bad guys.’” It is linked, in addition, to an unconscious desire to cover up our own lack of high common purpose by creating an external symbol of evil, a Moby Dick, through which we find a release from our frustrations.32

Austin’s worldview was more in line with Berman’s thinking that there was common ground to be found with the Soviets. It was not necessarily an us--versus--them, winner--take--all situation. Even if doing battle with the Soviets was inevitable, it was better that it happens at the UN than on the plains of central Europe. Austin was confronted by an intractable Russian foe over issues of unanimity in the Security Council and in the work of the Atomic Energy Commission. Equally, he represented an administration that refused to consider any Soviet criticism of American goals, or take their proposals seriously. Austin eventually grew frustrated with Soviets but never gave up faith in the United Nations.

In one of several informal conversations between Austin and Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Representative to the UN, as reported in his *Memoirs*, Gromyko quoted a question by Austin, “How is it possible to reconcile the interests of the socialist states with those of the Western democratic states?” Gromyko responded, “Germany, the USA and Britain, despite their similar social structures, were on different sides in the war. Then the United States and Britain became allies of the USSR, despite the differences in their social systems. The experience of war shows social differences are no barrier to co-
operation and coexistence.” Gromyko also said that unlike other US statesmen, he felt that Austin was someone with whom he could have a serious discussion.¹

Delegates from the US, Soviet, British, and Chinese governments agreed at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in 1944 that there needed to be unanimity among the permanent members in the Security Council. This was confirmed at Yalta by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin. SC voting procedure proved to be the most contentious question at the San Francisco Conference, where the final form of the UN Charter was drafted and signed. Smaller and medium powers objected on the grounds that giving the Great Powers both permanent seats on the Security Council and the right to block substantive questions was not compatible with the doctrine of equality of states as found in Article 2 of the Charter.²

The State Department’s view on the veto is found in a Department Position Paper from October 1946. The paper stated, “The unanimity rule was meant to be confined in the United Nations to the most vital decisions affecting war and peace.”³ The paper also recognized that others, the Soviets are mentioned by name, may take a very different position on the veto.

The Soviets saw the veto as an integral part of their political arsenal. Delegate Andrei Vyshinsky said, “The veto is a means of self-defense.”⁴ In 1951, Vyshinsky elaborated in the Political Committee of the General Assembly, “The veto is a political

tool. There are no such simpletons here as would let it drop. Perhaps we use it more (than others), but that is because we are in the minority and the veto balances power.”

From the inception of the UN until Austin’s retirement in January 1953, the USSR cast fifty-five of the fifty-seven vetoes in the Security Council. Twenty-eight of these vetoes were to block the admission to the United Nations of countries that they deemed sympathetic to US aims, or antithetical to their own, such as Nazi ally Italy, demi-fascist Portugal, or Nazi-sympathizers Ireland and Finland. By the late 1940s, they vetoed the admission of any state outside their circle of friends. These votes were usually a quid pro quo response to American-led rejections of admission for countries, within the Soviet sphere or sympathetic to it, such as Bulgaria and Outer Mongolia. Five of the admission vetoes by the Soviets were lodged against Italy, one of the Axis powers in World War II, despite the fact that they had one of the largest communist parties in Western Europe. At the same time, the Soviets had no difficulty supporting the admission of Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, Axis allies in the war, who were within the Soviet sphere of influence. On August 27, 1946 the US representative to the Security Council “made a strong declaration for universality of membership.” The United States, however, continued to stymie the admission of Eastern bloc states and later opposed Soviet efforts toward universality of membership.

Four Soviet vetoes in 1946 concerned international recognition of the fascist government of Generalissimo Francisco Franco in Spain; the French also registered a

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veto on this matter. Seven more vetoes concerned matters in the Balkans (Greece and Albania) where both the Soviets and Britain, with support from the United States, were trying to influence events in the region. Other vetoes concerned foreign troops in Syria, Indonesia (2), Czechoslovakia, an Atomic Energy Commission report, the Berlin blockade, Regulation and Reduction of Arms (3), North Korean aggression (2), and the Chinese in Korea.

A long-time attorney and lawmaker, Austin often spoke using a juridical vernacular betraying a mind that was always focused on the ethics, morality, and legality of the matters at hand. In a memo following his meeting with President Truman on his appointment to the UN, he spoke of a news reporter’s question: “I was asked about my attitude toward Russia, and told them that they should not ask such a question because even a refusal to answer it would be given probative effect, and, if answered, I felt that I would be violating the ethics of my present position.”

Austin’s idealism shone bright at a State Department meeting on September 11, 1946 in preparation for the General Assembly. The minutes of the meeting show Austin trying to temper the anger over vetoes and insisting that the delegation must articulate the positive achievements in the Security Council. The minutes read, in part:

Senator Austin stressed that in public discussion of the veto question the emphasis has been wrong; That the affirmative problems of prevention of war and the peaceful settlement of disputes should be stressed rather than the negative functions of the veto; that the veto was one aspect of the principles of voting which were in turn only phases of the broader subject of the prevention of war and peaceful settlements of disputes.

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8 WRA archives, Carton 30, folder 14. Memo to staff, June 7, 1946.
Austin understood the limitations of the General Assembly but hoped for growth in its stature as time went on, commenting in 1946 that, “The General Assembly is not a legislative body that can decide by a vote what the peoples of the world organized in independent nations shall do. It recommends. Then only the force of public opinion can give form and reality to its recommendations. Nothing happens unless the people make it happen through their own governments.”

Frustration in the General Assembly over Soviet vetoes drove the General Assembly to assert itself and claim new authority for itself, adopting the “Uniting for Peace” resolution #377A on November 3, 1950, which stated that the General Assembly could issue recommendations in order to restore international peace and security when there was a lack of unanimity in the Security Council.

Austin stated on October 25, 1946 that the Four Power Statement of the Moscow Conference of October 1943 was morally but not legally binding on the Members of the United Nations that subscribed to it. The fourth point of the declaration reads, “4. That they recognize the necessity of establishing at the earliest practicable date a general international organization, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states, and open to membership by all such states, large and small, for the maintenance of international peace and security.”

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10 WRA archives, Carton BV file 347 Oct. 25, 1946 speech entitled “Force of Public Opinion” to the America Association for the United Nations at Waldorf in NYC.
11 Ibid.
12 The Avalon Project Departments of Law, History and Diplomacy - Yale University, “The Moscow Conference; October 1943 Joint Four-Nation Statement,” accessed 8/14/2107 at: avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/moscow.asp
Austin wrote to UN Atomic Energy Commission chairman Bernard Baruch on June 20, 1946 stating his view, at the time, concerning Soviet vetoes. He said that the Soviets realized that they were hopelessly outvoted in the General Assembly, where the United States always had the rubberstamp of twenty Latin American nations to support their position. He noted that the Soviets were constantly outvoted in the Security Council as well, where six of the eleven seats were elected by the General Assembly. He said that the veto was all that the Soviets really had.\(^\text{13}\)

There had already been much give and take in the department as regards the definition of “disputes” and “situations” as found in Chapter VI of the Charter The Peaceful Settlements of Disputes; and what were “procedural” and “substantive” questions before the Security Council. One of the objectives listed in the position paper states that unanimity is “essential for the effective operation of the Security Council.” The second objective read, “The unanimity rule was meant to be confined in the United Nations to the most vital decisions affecting war and peace.” The third point is most interesting; it read, “the United States must constantly hear [sic] in mind the viewpoint of other nations and particularly of the Soviet Union towards the unanimity principle and avoid action which tends to drive them into grudging, half-hearted partnership or even out of the Organization.” The final objective recognized that all members must act in good faith in upholding the Charter.\(^\text{14}\)

The first veto by the Soviets came on February 16, 1946, when the Soviets objected to French and British imperial designs in Syria and Lebanon. Also, among the

\(^{13}\) WRA archives, Carton IV, folder 6. Letter to AEC Chairman Bernard Baruch, June 20, 1946.
earliest vetoes cast by the Soviets concerned whether the Franco dictatorship in Spain was a threat to world peace. The issue was not brought forward initially by the Soviets, but rather by the Mexican delegation at the San Francisco Conference in June 1945. Mexico was giving asylum at that time to the exiled Spanish Republican Government and condemned Franco for his loyalty to Hitler during World War II. A motion presented by Mexico at the San Francisco Conference condemning the Franco regime was passed unanimously. James C. Dunn, a career State Department employee and diplomat, said that the US delegation was in agreement with the resolution.\footnote{John A. Houston, “The United Nations and Spain,” \textit{The Journal of Politics} 14, no. 4 (1952), pp.683 & 684.} Taking action on the resolution was, however, a different matter. One year later in June 1946, ten members of the Security Council voted on a preliminary investigation of the question.

The Soviets, along with the Mexicans and the French, who were disturbed over the executions by Franco of some Spanish members of the French Resistance in February 1946, were instead supporting a Polish resolution that called for an immediate diplomatic break with Spain and a condemnation of the Franco regime.\footnote{W.H. Lawrence, “Veto Issue to Fore,” \textit{The New York Times}, May 27, 1946, and W.H. Lawrence, “Council Looks to Paris Talks to Shift Soviet Vote on Spain,” \textit{The New York Times}, April 28, 1946.} When it came time to vote on the resolutions on June 18, Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet delegate, referred to a news agency dispatch from Madrid stating that “official circles” in Madrid were “elated” over US and UK efforts to oppose the Polish resolution. Gromyko said that the Soviet Union was on the correct side by not being praised by the Franco regime.\footnote{Thomas J. Hamilton, “Soviet Veto Bars Compromise in UN on Spanish Issue,” \textit{The New York Times}, June 19, 1946.}
Senator Austin had just been appointed as US Ambassador to the UN and did not participate in this question, but he could not help but hear the buzz about the Soviets. The Spanish question continued to vex the UN for years, and the United States would have been happy to see an end to Franco and his regime, but they took an essentially non-interventionist attitude. Spain was admitted to membership in the UN in December 1955. Generalissimo Franco remained in power until his death in 1975 and Spain transitioned to constitutional monarchy in 1979.

The series of four vetoes by the Soviets on the Spanish issue began anxious SC discussions over what became known as the double-veto. As per Article 27 Sections 2 and 3 of the UN Charter (see below), unanimity in the Security Council was only required when a vote was take on a “substantive” question. Typically, procedural votes would include accepting the annual report of the General Assembly, holding meetings in places other than the United Nations, establishment of subsidiary organs of the council; and similar issues. The Soviets argued that everything in the Security Council was substantive, so they vetoed any motion that the other members wished to treat as “procedural.” They then vetoed the resolution itself, the double-veto. The United States and Great Britain became particularly exercised over the double-veto and for years attempted to change Security Council rules or have consideration of certain matters transferred to the General Assembly in order to break what they perceived as a deadlocked Security Council.

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Dr. Herbert Vere Evatt, the Australian minister of External Affairs, presented the history of the veto to the Security Council as it had been discussed at the Yalta, Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco conferences. The Australians had submitted proposals to change SC rules so that only issues of punitive enforcement, not pacific settlements, could be vetoed. The Soviets, however, maintained that the Charter wording was clear and supported their position.\(^{19}\)

On October 25, 1946, after nine Soviet vetoes, the General Assembly began discussing different resolutions proposed to address the unanimity or veto issue. There is, however, no mention of the word “veto,” anywhere in the UN Charter. The Charter does explain Security Council voting in Article 27:

1. Each member of the Security Council shall have one vote.
2. Decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of seven members.
3. Decisions by the Security Council on all other matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of seven members including the concurring votes of the permanent members; provided that, in decisions under Chapter VI and under paragraph 3 of Article 52, a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.\(^ {20}\)

This means that each permanent member of the Security Council in attendance for the vote must vote in the affirmative or a resolution does not pass. The General Assembly meeting of October 25 was the first of many attempts to change the process, all to no avail. The Cuban delegation proposed abolition of the veto, while the Australians offered


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a milder resolution that merely called for placing discussion of the veto on the General Assembly agenda. The French, British, and Chinese delegates all opposed changing Article 27. The United States had already said that it stood by Article 27. During the October 25 discussion, Austin added that the court of public opinion could weigh heavily on the misuse of the veto: “There is no springboard of publicity equal to the publicity from the General Assembly.”21 The issue of the veto and different approaches to controlling it burdened the GA and the SC for years to come.

On October 29, Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov insisted that the real problem with the veto revolved around Soviet resistance to what they perceived as the worldwide strengthening US financial and military hegemony. He stated,

The disputes and struggle that are going on around the so-called “veto” testify to the intensification of antagonisms between the two principle policies, one of which consists in the defense of the principles of international cooperation among big and small states, recognized by all of us, and the other one of which is prompted by the desire of certain influential groups to have a free hand with a view to waging an unrestrained struggle to gain world domination…. Our peoples did not shed their invaluable blood in streams to pave the way for new claimants to world domination.22

A month and a half later, Molotov reiterated the Soviet position by saying, “In so far as the Soviet Government was concerned it had only used the veto in essential cases and could not agree that anyone had abused the veto.”23

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At this same time, there were widespread calls by delegates in the General Assembly for the council to consult before votes to ensure that the exercise of the veto would not block progress in the Security Council, and a resolution to such effect was passed in December 1946. It recommended that the Security Council adopt practices and protocols to ensure its smooth functioning. Austin resisted any Charter changes, stating that the unanimity requirement was sound, but he argued for increased energy to be applied to rulemaking activity in the Security Council to smooth its operation.24

In an address to the Eighth Biennial General Assembly of the Council of State Governments, on January 16, 1947, Austin spoke mainly about the UN Atomic Energy Commission, but also included statements about the unanimity rule in that body. He stated, “The end-product of the unanimity rule, of course, is agreement not forced on any member but one in which agreement is complete by assent.”25 However, he qualified this statement shortly after. Speaking to a meeting of the New York State Bar Association on January 25, 1947, Austin said that the United States opposed any changes to the voting rights of the permanent members, but that two “little known” articles (1 and 51) of the Charter also protected the Security Council from nullification by a recalcitrant member. He argued that the General Assembly shared responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security.26 This hinted at procedural moves to come that gave the General Assembly more say in membership admissions.

Austin received a draft of a speech to be given by Secretary of State George Marshall in September 1947 at the opening of the General Assembly term. The speech stated that the United States supported unanimity in the Security Council, but that it was impeding progress in the Atomic Energy Commission. Austin noted in several places in the text that the secretary’s words were “defeatist” or otherwise not diplomatic. Austin was showing a level of patience with the Soviets that was not necessarily echoed at the State Department. He might not have liked the Soviets, but he understood that their perspective was very different from that of the United States, and they were using the tools that were available to them to achieve their own ends as did the United States.

Austin stated in an ABC radio broadcast on August 10, 1947, that the US Government supported the veto privilege by the Big Five Powers. He also pointed out that there had been “misuse of the veto,” without naming the Soviets specifically. Austin maintained that the United States saw no need for Charter changes, but he also said that there must be a tightening of ethical standards in international diplomacy. Two weeks later, Herschel Johnson, Austin’s deputy, introduced proposals to the Security Council that more precisely defined what matters were procedural and what were substantive. These were not changes to the Charter, but rather to Security Council rules. Gromyko stated that these proposals were unacceptable: “Let us not remain in the clouds; let us come back to earth.”

27 WRA archives, Carton BVI folder 368D. Draft of speech by Secretary of State George Marshall to be delivered September 16, 1947.
The General Assembly grew frustrated with Soviet vetoes in the Security Council and wished to assert its own authority on issues of peace and security. The United States introduced a draft resolution, written primarily by John Foster Dulles, to create a “little assembly” to address the question of the veto in the Security Council and other matters when the General Assembly was not in full session. The Netherlands had suggested such a committee in 1945, but it went nowhere. Now, in 1947, the United States beckoned and the UN machinery ran at full steam. A State Department Position Paper of August 26, 1947 said that there was a need for “the adoption of measures to enable the General Assembly more effectively to discharge its responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and security.”

The paper went on to list three policy areas to be addressed in such a committee: “(1) a commission on indirect aggression; (2) a mutual defense pact; (3) future policy of atomic energy.” Dulles was quoted in a delegation meeting saying that the Interim Committee represented an attempt “to circumvent the Security Council and the veto.” Others in the US delegation remarked that this plan looked like a naked power-grab by the United States. Austin argued that their draft should be shared with other delegations to gage their reactions and that there was no need to rush the process to introduce the resolution.

The alternative of amending the Charter, as proposed by some other delegations, was problematic as all manner of other amendments would likely have been raised thus...

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31 Ibid.
33 Ibid., p.181.
bogging the UN down in a constitutional convention. Austin felt that it was less risky to attempt to obtain agreement on what constituted procedural and non-procedural categories than with amending the Charter because vetoes were not permitted on procedural matters.\(^{34}\)

A resolution of the General Assembly dated November 13, 1947 established a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly known as the Interim Committee, with one delegate from each country, which met between the end of one regular session of the General Assembly and the beginning of the next. The committee conducted research on questions before the General Assembly, dealt with emergency situations and reported to the General Assembly “on any dispute or situation that may arise.”\(^{35}\) The Soviets came to believe that the Interim Committee was a creation of the Western bloc to circumvent the Security Council, Big Five unanimity, and their veto. Andrei Vyshinsky, Soviet foreign minister and UN representative, stated that the “Little Assembly” was an “ill-conceived attempt to replace and by-pass the Security Council.”\(^{36}\) The Soviets, along with the other Eastern European states, announced that they were boycotting the committee and held that the committee’s decisions and actions were unlawful and invalid.\(^{37}\)

Dulles argued in a \textit{New York Times Sunday Magazine} article that the “little assembly” served a useful purpose, noting that “The fact that there is a continuously

\(^{34}\) “Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the United States Delegation, New York, September 13, 1947, 10 a.m.,” \textit{FRUS, 1947, General; The United Nations, Volume 1}, September 13, 1947.


available veto-free body which can be used to study any dispute or any troubled situation may itself moderate disputes and influence the interested parties to settle directly.\textsuperscript{38} He went on to write that the Interim Committee could act as a forum for world opinion year round, holding the Soviets accountable for their actions at the UN and in the world at large.\textsuperscript{39} In reality, the new committee offered a new stage to broadcast Western propaganda without fear of Soviet rebuttal.

On December 19, 1947, the Security Council voted 9-2 to place a meeting on the agenda to discuss the “Little Assembly.” The Soviets and the Poles voted against. Gromyko said that he would try to block any attempt at actually having the meeting. Austin said that the United States thought that discussion of the matter was premature at that point.\textsuperscript{40} The Soviets could veto any resolution that came from the meeting anyway. This sort of parliamentary maneuvering on both sides became standard operating procedure as each side jockeyed for position in the battle of public opinion. In January 1948, Austin reported to the secretary of State the substance of a discussion he had with Mr. Gromyko concerning voting rights. Gromyko said that nothing had changed in the Soviet position on the veto, consideration of procedural or substantive issues, or the little assembly.\textsuperscript{41}

The Soviets used the “double veto” for the third time on May 24, 1948.\textsuperscript{42} This double veto was used to block a hearing on charges that Soviet military threats aided the

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\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{42} The double veto of the Spanish question in 1946 and the Greek question in 1947 were the previous instances.
Communist coup in Czechoslovakia. Austin and his British counterpart, Sir Alexander Cadogan, maintained that setting up the hearing was a procedural matter not subject to veto.43

On May 28, 1948, the International Court of Justice, the judicial arm of the United Nations Organization and successor to the Permanent Court of International Justice, established by the Covenant of the League of Nations, issued an advisory ruling sought by a number of nations who had taken exception to the Soviets vetoes of twelve membership applications. These nations argued that the prospective members had met all of the criteria enumerated in Article 4 of the UN Charter and should be admitted. Article 4 also states that a membership petition must be passed by the Security Council, then forwarded to the General Assembly for final passage. The Court ruled to uphold the Soviet vetoes, saying that no language in Article 4 precluded a permanent member from voting against a petition (thus a veto under SC rules) for political reasons. The ruling reads:

Article 4 does not forbid the taking into account of any factor which it is possible reasonably and in good faith to connect with the conditions laid down in that Article. The taking into account of such factors is implied in the very wide and very elastic nature of the prescribed conditions; no relevant political factor—that is to say, none connected with conditions of admission—is excluded44

The Soviets’ stated reason for the vetoes was that they had no diplomatic relations with these particular countries. The unstated reality was that the vetoes were a quid pro quo for the US-led denial of admission of Romania, Hungary and Outer Mongolia to the

UN. During Austin’s tenure at the UN, the Soviets also vetoed the admission of Jordan and Ceylon twice each, the Republic of Korea, Nepal, Libya, Japan, Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia.

On April 13, 1949, Gromyko and Austin traded barbs over NATO and the veto. Gromyko maintained that NATO was not a legitimate regional security organization under the UN Charter, but a further buildup of hostile military bases and forces around the Soviet Union’s periphery. He also opined that the leadership of the United States and the United Kingdom were out of sync with the ordinary people of their countries. He said, “It has long been a well-known fact that people in palaces think differently from those in huts.” He went on to state that the battle of the veto was essentially a political matter between those who wish to expose the aggressive warmongers (the eastern bloc) and the imperialist warmongers themselves. Austin replied that the veto had “seriously undermined the confidence of member states in the ability of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security.”

Reconsideration of membership applications arose again in the Security Council on June 21, 1949. The Soviet representative to the Security Council, Semyon K. Tsarapkin, claimed that the United States practiced discrimination in its voting for membership and opposed a policy of universality. Austin rebutted by saying that the United States had never vetoed any application but had simply voted with the majority to turn down applications.

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The Soviets renewed their call for a compromise resolution on September 15, 1949, concerning the membership deadlock. They agreed not to veto the admission of the eight states which they had vetoed in the past if the Council admitted the five Eastern bloc nations the Soviets had been championing, essentially an “all or nothing” position. The resolution was voted down, with the United States abstaining, stating that such a group admission was illegal under the Charter, which required individual votes.47

With the exception of vetoes touching matters involving North Korea and the Communist Chinese, the majority of vetoes by the Soviets in the early 1950s still concerned admissions. In late 1951, Trygve Lie, the secretary general of the UN, and certain member states were pushing a General Assembly resolution, in favor of the “principle of universality,” the idea that the UN could only succeed when all nations are admitted regardless of their politics.48

In an analysis of Soviet behavior in the United Nations written in 1952, Harvard University professors Rupert Emerson and Inis L. Claude, Jr. examined the role of the veto in Soviet statecraft. They quoted Andrei Vyshinsky as saying that the principle of unanimity is “the paramount principle which constitutes the cornerstone of the very foundation” of the Security Council. Further, they argue that Soviet vetoes were not whimsical but a “must” in light of their being overwhelming outnumbered in the Security Council. They also noted that the Western powers had set up organizations such as NATO and the Council of Europe that required unanimity in their deliberations.49

On December 14, 1955, after Austin had left the UN, the logjam of admissions to the international body was finally broken. A deal was brokered where sixteen new states were admitted *en masse*: Albania, Jordan, Ireland, Portugal, Hungary, Italy, Austria, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland, Ceylon, Nepal, Libya, Cambodia, Laos and Spain. The original resolution called for eighteen, but Chinese opposition to the admission of Outer Mongolia resulted in a retaliatory veto by the USSR of Japan. Japan was admitted a year later in 1956 and Mongolia in 1961. The two Vietnamese states, as well as the two Korean states, were denied admission at this time (1955) “pending the solution of the problem of unification.”

Vietnam was admitted in 1977 and North and South Korea in 1991.

The United States did not announce a veto in the Security Council until 1970, but has used it extensively since. The Russian Federation, the successor to the Soviet permanent seat has utilized the veto twenty-two times since 1993. Through March 2019 the veto count by the permanent members in the Security Council since 1946 was:

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Nothing changed as years of squabbling about the veto came to naught. Austin patiently pushed for changes in Security Council protocols but consistently maintained, as did the other permanent members, that there was no need to amend the UN Charter to remedy the problem. The Great Powers feared that a constitutional convention to amend the Charter at this time, would end up in a free-for-all where the young institution would become mired in bickering over other matters as well. Austin maintained diplomatic decorum throughout the veto struggle, holding his administration superiors at arms length while expressing empathy for the Soviets’ difficult position as a permanent member usually in the minority on most questions before the Security Council. Simultaneous with the veto question, Austin faced off with the Soviets over the powers of the Atomic Energy Commission in controlling nuclear energy and weapons. The two questions were intertwined with the threat of the veto hanging ominously over the debates of the Atomic Energy Commission throughout its brief lifespan.

51 Graph created in Microsoft Excel by the author from data acquired from the United Nations at http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/scaet_veto_table_en.htm
Problems with the Soviets in the Atomic Energy Commission had already surfaced by the time Austin assumed official leadership of the US delegation in January 1947. The Security Council was debating an American proposal to centralize all aspects

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of atomic research and development in an international agency. The Soviets, citing
national sovereignty, objected to provisions in the plan regarding inspection of facilities.
Austin sparred with the Soviets until the whole plan and the Atomic Energy Commission
were shelved in 1949.

The General Assembly adopted a resolution on January 24, 1946 establishing the
Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) as a sub-committee of the Security Council. There
were six permanent members of the AEC, the five permanent members of the Security
Council plus Canada. The Commission was charged to research all phases of the
“problem” of atomic energy and make specific proposals in four areas:

a) the exchange of basic scientific information for peaceful between use all
nations;

b) the control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to ensure its use only for
peaceful purposes;

c) the elimination of national armaments adaptable for mass destruction, atomic or
other;

d) effective safeguards by inspection or other means to protect against the hazards
of violation or evasion.²

The Commission’s first provisional chairman was the American representative
Bernard M. Baruch, a financier and frequent presidential and governmental advisor. At
the Commission’s first meeting, on June 14, 1946, Baruch introduced the American

Organization 1 (1) 99.
proposal for an International Atomic Development Authority, the Acheson-Lilienthal Plan, to oversee all aspects of atomic energy. The Authority, as the American plan outlined, would have,

1) Managerial control or ownership of all atomic energy activities potentially dangerous to world security;
2) Power to control, inspect, and license all other atomic activities;
3) The duty of fostering the beneficial uses of atomic energy, and
4) Research and development responsibility of an affirmative character intended to put the Authority in the forefront of atomic knowledge and thus enable it to comprehend, and therefore to detect misuse of atomic energy.

The US proposal further called for all nations to stop manufacturing atomic weapons, the disposal of existing weapons, and transferring all information for the production of atomic energy to the AEC. Baruch was adamantly opposed to any veto in the AEC.

The Soviet representative, Andrei Gromyko, was primarily interested in the destruction of existing atomic weapons and a ban on further manufacture. He also said that he was in favor of all nations sharing in the technology of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. He insisted that unanimity rules be in force in the Commission on all matters of substance. Soviet Foreign Secretary Molotov argued in his speech of October 29, 1946 to the General Assembly, that atomic weapons be banned first and then discussion of the

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peaceful uses of atomic energy could begin. That same day, Soviet delegate Andrei Vyshinsky put the Russian position in context:

It was after the first World War that the nations reached agreement to prohibit the use for military purposes of poisonous gases, bacteriological means of warfare and other inhuman implements of war. It is all the more necessary to prohibit the use for military purposes of atomic bombs as well as any other means of mass annihilation of people.\(^5\)

The First Report of the Atomic Energy Commission to the Security Council was released on December 30, 1946. Much of the report was written by the Americans and laid out the parameters and rules for an “international control agency” to oversee all worldwide atomic activities from the mining of thorium and uranium to final uses. The report contained at least two clauses in its recommendations that proved anathema to the Soviets:

3. (a) …The treaty shall provide that the rule of unanimity of the Permanent Members, which in certain circumstances exists in the Security Council, shall have no relation to the work of the international control agency. No government shall possess any right of veto over the fulfilment by the international control agency of the obligations imposed upon it by the treaty nor shall any government have the power, through the exercise of any right of veto or otherwise, to obstruct the course of control or inspection…

(b) Affording the duly accredited representatives of the international control agency unimpeded rights of ingress, egress, and access for the performance of their inspections and other duties into, from, and within the territory of every participating nation, unhindered by national or local authorities.\(^6\)

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The Soviets would never have accepted a treaty creating an agency subsidiary to the Security Council where they could not use their veto. Nor would they accept any outside agency to breach their sovereignty, especially since they were frantically building their own atomic bomb, which was first tested on August 29, 1949. The Soviet Union took the position that the first order of business was a ban on all atomic weapons and the elimination of all existing atomic weapons. The Soviets also argued that the subject of banning atomic weapons should be included in a general disarmament treaty.

The General Assembly had passed a disarmament resolution on December 14, 1946, two weeks prior to the AEC report. It included clauses on atomic weapons, but contained no mention of the veto. On December 17, at an AEC meeting in preparation for the release of their report, Representative Gromyko said that he was not prepared to comment on the substance of the report but wished to study it in connection with the GA resolution. He said that a cursory study had shown to him that the two documents were not in sync, and that more study by himself and the commission was needed.7 At this same meeting, the Canadian representative, General McNaughton, offered the observation that, “the international control of atomic energy, to be effective, must involve an unprecedented departure from traditional concepts of national sovereignty.”8 This was certainly problematic for the Soviets.

Austin became the permanent US representative to the Security Council in January 1947 at about the same moment as General George Marshall replaced James F. Byrnes as Secretary of State and Bernard Baruch resigned as the US representative to the

8 Ibid., 10.
AEC. This left US atomic energy policy in a state of limbo until Austin could get up to speed in the AEC and Secretary Marshall could make his vision clear to the State Department. On January 16, Dean Acheson was already expressing reservations about Austin. He told David Lilienthal, “Senator Austin terrifies me. ‘I can handle the Russians.’ God! Famous last words.”

By early February, the first report of the AEC was facing difficulties as China was the only supporter among the permanent members of the American proposals for the establishment of the control agency based on the first commission report. Austin presented the US position in the Security Council succinctly: “My Government believes that the international control of atomic energy, including effective safeguards by way of inspection and other means, and effective provision for the collective enforcement of sanctions against violations, is fundamental to the establishment of international peace and security and to the regulation and reduction of other weapons.”

Austin stated, in a speech to the Security Council on February 11, that he and Gromyko had informal discussions about the proposals that had been amicable. Austin was, however, disturbed over prolonged discussions about definitions, jurisdiction, and procedures that had conflicted with the GA resolution and earlier positions taken by parties in the Security Council and the AEC as to the control agency. He argued for

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greater clarity, “Clear! Definite! Precise! Makes certain! Leaves no room for doubt!”\textsuperscript{12} he said. The old country lawyer was asking for a simpler, more direct form of diplomacy so that they might arrive at some consensus on such a vital question.

As Soviet representative on the Security Council, Gromyko gave a lengthy reaction to the proposals for the international control agency in a speech on March 5, 1947. He objected to the omission of an unanimity clause, but primarily focused on what he thought were the lack of parameters for the control agency and its alleged monopolistic control of everything atomic. Soviet internal and external security concerns were running at full throttle.

Initially Gromyko maintained that the proposals were written by Americans to strengthen the American monopoly on the bomb and atomic technology. He pointed out that the United States continued to resist the Soviets’ ongoing call for a ban on atomic weapons, noting that this must be the highest priority of the United Nations. He argued that all other matters were scientific and technical in nature, and it would take a long time to work out the details; the bomb was of immediate significance. He maintained that the whole situation “is dictated by nature of the atomic weapon itself as a weapon of aggression. It is dictated by the fact that at the present time atomic energy is still being used only for military purposes.”\textsuperscript{13}

Gromyko went on to argue that the control agency had been given “excessively broad powers” in its control and inspection responsibilities, especially as it was likely to be dominated by the United States. He argued that, as written, “the proposed control


agency had unlimited rights of inspection that threatened the economic life of a nation and was a direct challenge to its sovereignty.”\textsuperscript{14}

Thirdly, Gromyko expressed dismay at the proposal that the control agency would manage the vertical integration of all aspects of atomic energy from research, to mining through end purposes. He maintained that this was, in essence, an international monopoly or trust with unlimited power to say who does what and who can derive the benefits of atomic power.

Austin took exception to Gromyko’s comments calling them “defamation and innuendo” at an SC meeting a few days later on March 10. He said that Gromyko’s comments did: “not provide for any international system of control of nuclear energy at all. They provide for a system which at best would give no security, and at worst would be a constant incentive to distrust and war.” He went on to deny that the control agency would be monopolized by the United States. Austin was upset by the nationalistic rivalries that were upsetting the United Nations, and he stated that the Americans were willing to share their atomic know-how with everyone through the control agency.\textsuperscript{15}

At a meeting of the Executive Committee on Disarmament in late March 1947, David Lilienthal, the first chairman of the American Atomic Energy Commission, quoted an optimistic Austin as saying:

\begin{quote}
I think it is a mistake to take an attitude of defeatism about whether the Russians will agree to our proposals; it is a mistake to guide our course with the thought only of putting them in the wrong because of their refusal to go along with the rest of world on our proposals. We should approach this matter with optimism and hope, or no good can possibly
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. 400.
come of it. It is a mistake to take the position, ‘Here it is; take it or leave it.’”

Austin was accommodating and showed great patience with the Soviets during his first months as US representative; he hoped that they would eventually bargain in good faith and substantive progress could be made.

The State Department held a conference on June 4, 1947 to discuss the Atomic Energy Commission. Chester S. Williams, public liaison officer of the US Mission to the United Nations, wrote a letter to Austin where he listed five “outstanding problems” before the UN. The first read, “Conclusion of the agreement on atomic energy and general reductions of armaments,” next to which, in the margin, Austin wrote, “too difficult, too important.” One of the main sticking points remained the Soviet refusal to accept the abolition of the veto in punishment of violators uncovered in AEC inspections. Austin and David Lilienthal, head of the US Atomic Energy Commission, maintained that the UN AEC plan called for an international authority or “operation” to control and conduct all research and production of nuclear materials, taking these functions out of the hands of individual nations. The Soviets could not agree with this thinking. Also, once again, the Soviets were insisting that atomic weaponry be included in the discussion of general disarmament, not in the AEC. The State Department was holding firm that these were discreet and separate matters not to be joined and that the AEC and the Commission for Conventional Armaments needed to remain separate.

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17 WRA archives, Carton BVI, folder 365. State Department Conference, letter from Chester Williams to Austin, June 4, 1947.
Austin’s patience with the Soviets begin to wear thin, when he said on September 20, while speaking to the American Association for the United Nations, “We still believe that peace is the purpose of all countries, both governments and people. The methods practiced by them differ. We believe that those followed by the Soviet Union are all ill-conceived and have more tendency to generate hate and war than love and peace.”

A position paper of April 9, 1948, approved by the Executive Committee on Regulation of Armaments informed Austin that the policy of the United States was to recognize that the AEC was in a stalemate position because of Soviet actions, and was no longer the place to pursue control of atomic energy and weapons. By July the State Department was pushing a plan to have the three reports of the AEC submitted to the GA for their approval and move forward in the GA on this issue. The resulting resolution was passed in the GA on November 4, 1948. The resolution’s fourth term called on the AEC to resume its sessions, resume work, and proceed with further study.

Anxiety over Soviet obfuscation, delay, and submission of resolutions that were totally unacceptable caused public despair in Austin on the floor of the GA on October 18, 1948. He stated that the Soviets wanted to scrap thirty months of work in the AEC and that they must start from scratch on new AEC rules. He said that the Soviets wanted to “collide prohibition and control, and have them enacted simultaneously.”

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21 “Position Paper Approved by the Executive Committee on Regulation of Armaments,” FRUS, 1948, General, The United Nations, Volume1, Part1, April 9, 1948, 323-335.
continued, saying that the United States would like a world where there were no atomic
secrets, where information was shared, and the atom was used for peace.\textsuperscript{24}

Austin summed up the US position at a plenary session of the GA on November
2, 1948. He said,

\begin{quote}
It (US) will vote for the resolution in this Plenary session. In doing so, it
is carrying out the commitment which it made to turn over its atomic
weapons, its plants, and all its knowledge in the field, to an international
agency in order that atomic weapons might be forever prohibited, and
that the peaceful use of atomic energy might be successfully developed.
To this committee is attached only one condition, namely: that a system
of safeguards should be set up, such that, when the United States
disposes of its atomic weapons it would not be possible for any other
nation to make or use atomic energy for destructive purposes.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

\textit{The Yearbook of the United Nations} summarized the incapacity of the AEC to
agree on the fundamentals stating, “Disappointment was generally expressed at the
fruitlessness of the Atomic Energy Commission’s efforts and at the division of opinion
which had been revealed in the Commission.”\textsuperscript{26}

Although Austin was frustrated and dismayed at the lack of any real progress in
the control of nuclear energy, he demonstrated real empathy with the Soviet people. In an
article he penned for the \textit{American Bar Association Journal} he stated, “The fear of the
Russian people feeds on vivid experience. They have suffered two destructive invasions
in thirty years. They are naturally security-conscious. They are likely to be apprehensive
of any proposal which they think might weaken their existing defenses.”\textsuperscript{27} Austin

\textsuperscript{24} WRA archives, Carton BVI, folder 423. Statement by Austin to the GA, October 18, 1948, pp. 4-5.
\textsuperscript{25} WRA archives, Carton BVI, folder 426. Statement by Austin to the GA, November 2, 1948.
\textsuperscript{26} United Nations, \textit{Yearbook of the United Nations} (Lake Success, N.Y: Dept. of Public Information, United
\textsuperscript{27} Warren R. Austin, The Development of International Law,” \textit{American Bar Association Journal} 34 (2)
(February 1948) 162.
continued, however, in the same article, to critique the Soviet regime’s methods of insuring that security.

A report from the American Embassy in Moscow in April 1949 seems to have confirmed the Austin’s best sentiment. The report read, in part,

At the end of World War II, the Soviet Union stood at a crossroads. The USSR had gained not only awed respect as a major power but also legitimacy and acceptability and a great reservoir of good will among practically all the peoples of the world. She might well have lived in peaceful possession of her wartime conquests and gains, to a great extent the gift of her grateful and trusting allies. Had she chosen to play the international game cooperatively, these would today be essentially little less than what she now possesses and they could have been securely held in a calm and peaceful world. 28

Instead the Soviet government chose the opposite course.

The UN AEC became inactive after July 1949, and the General Assembly officially disbanded the commission in 1952. 29 On December 8, 1953, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower addressed the UN General Assembly in a speech that has come to be known as the “atoms for peace” speech. Eisenhower called for international cooperation in the development of nuclear energy and oversight of nuclear weapons. The Statute of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) was approved by the Conference of the Statute of International Atomic Energy Agency on October 23, 1956 at the United Nations headquarters. The IAEA came into being on July 29, 1957, and is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. It is considered to be in the “UN family” as a “related organization” and reports to both the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Among the original fifty-seven members were the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Soviet Union, and the Soviet’s eastern European allies.\(^{30}\)

Austin showed frustration with the Soviets on the atomic issue and, in combination with the lack of resolution on vetoes, began to harden his thinking about the Soviets. Both the reform of the unanimity rule and the work of the AEC had essentially come to nothing. Austin blamed the Soviets entirely for these failures while refusing to recognize that the US position on the veto was essentially the same as the Soviets, and that the American stance on the AEC was utopian and failed to address Soviet concerns over national sovereignty. Also, Soviet requests that atomic disarmament be a part of a general disarmament agreement and the destruction of existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons never received a fair hearing. Austin was increasingly the mouthpiece for the administration on these issues and seemed to be increasingly comfortable in that role. He would finally get drafted into the Acheson/Dulles hardline approach to the Soviets with the invasion of South Korea in June 1950.

\(^{30}\) International Atomic Energy Agency, “History” and “Members,” accessed online on February 27, 2019 at iaea.org
KOREA

Austin, in the Security Council chamber on September 18, 1950, holds a Soviet-made submachine gun, dated 1950, to illustrate that the Russians had been supplying the North Koreans with armaments since their departure from Korea in 1948.

Austin was at his home in Burlington, Vermont on June 25, 1950 when the North Korean army crossed the 38th parallel in force to invade the Republic of Korea. He rushed to New York, but missed the UN session that day and the first resolution condemning the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) for violating the peace. He spent much of the next two years blaming the Soviets for orchestrating the attack and supplying the DPRK with war materiel. He also spent the second year of the war trying to negotiate the mutual release of prisoners of war.

The Korean War, after the initial flurry of resolutions at the United Nations, became a US affair, directed from the State Department by Dean Acheson and from the
field by General Douglas MacArthur. They both paid minimal lip service to the United Nations, leaving Austin to encourage the notion that this was, in fact, primarily a UN action. The question of communist China’s admission to the United Nations and their right to the permanent seat on the Security Council was pressed by the Soviets who tied it to the Korean question. Austin spent a great deal of time arguing that the China question and the situation in Korea were two different and distinct matters that had to be dealt with separately.

The United Nations, and the world at large, was already concerned about world peace in June 1950, because the Soviets had detonated their first atomic weapon and the communists had emerged victorious in the Chinese civil war, both events occurring the year before. At the time, the Soviets did not have an effective delivery system for their atomic weapon, and the Chinese communists were recovering from a two decade-long war. Both were, however, willing to contribute to the North Korean war effort as best they could.

As early as July 1945, Senator Austin had called for the US representative to the Security Council to have special authority in the face of threats to world security. The New York Herald Tribune reported on July 27, “Senator Warren R. Austin, Republican of Vermont, proposed today that the American delegate to the United Nations Security Council have authority, under direction of the President, to send United States forces into action to preserve the peace.”¹ The UN representative was never given this much latitude, however, and fell increasingly subservient to several officers in the State Department, as well as the president.

The National Security Council report “NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security” was presented to President Truman on April 7, 1950. The document began with all manner of boilerplate and hyperbole as to America’s divine role to preserve freedom and the Soviet aim to enslave the world. In part, NSC 68 reads, “The Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world.” The immediate goal of the Soviets, according to NSC 68, was the domination of the Eurasian landmass. The fall of China to the communists in 1949 was the first step. Later in the document, the policy of “containment” was promoted as the paramount strategy to stop the Soviets.

Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis noted that in NSC 68 military preparedness was not enough; propaganda and perception were part of the battle too:

World order, and with it American security, had come to depend as much on the perception of the balance of power as on what the balance actually was. And the perceptions involved were not just those of statesmen customarily charged with conducting international affairs, they reflected as well mass opinion, foreign as well as domestic, informed as well as uninformed, rational as well as irrational.

Senator Austin, who had been speaking publicly since 1943 about the need for an international body to protect peace and security, and then for the UN itself, redoubled his efforts with arrival of the Korean War to convince everyone he could reach that North

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Korean aggression was a threat to the balance of power in the whole world. His efforts within the UN met opposition from some normally allied Asian states, most notably India, who began to assert their own agendas.

Both the Soviets and the United States had removed their troops from the two Koreas, by prior agreement, in 1948. The Soviets left behind important armaments such as tanks and artillery, while the United States had refused to leave anything but small arms so as to discourage the Republic of Korea (ROK) President Syngman Rhee from taking any offensive actions against the North. Rhee was the Harvard (MA) and Princeton (PhD) educated strongman in South Korea who converted to Christianity; he was married to an Austrian and had spent nearly four decades, on and off, in America before returning to Korea in 1945. The thoroughly westernized Rhee was dictatorial and corrupt but also an adamant anti-communist, which was enough for the US administration. The United States continued in this mode throughout the Cold War, supporting problematic dictators who professed anti-communism and were the enemy of our enemies, hence friends. Support in the south for the Rhee government was quite shaky. Many members of Rhee’s administration had collaborated with the Japanese occupation, while the government of North Korea was staffed by soldiers who had fought the Japanese in Manchuria.

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6 Ibid.
The army of North Korean strongman Kim Il-Sung contained many veterans of the Chinese Civil War. Some were ideological zealots who had volunteered to fight with the communists, while others were of mixed Korean and Manchurian ancestry and wished to carry the fight back to the Korean peninsula. Kim, however, had only land forces, no substantial air force and no navy at all. This proved to be an enormous deficit once the United Nations entered the fray. They were opposed, initially, by an ROK army that was poorly trained and equipped and not highly motivated.

A CIA memorandum dated June 19, 1950, six days prior to the North Korean invasion, stated that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea was “a firmly controlled Soviet Satellite that exercises no independent initiative and depends entirely on the support of the USSR for existence.” The memo went on to accurately assess the military of North Korea and how Russian or Chinese troops would not be required in a war with the South except as a last resort. There was, however, no alarm sounded that aggression was imminent.

The military forces of the DPRK crossed the 38th parallel separating the two halves of Korea early in the morning on June 25, 1950. The surprise attack was in fact a full-scale invasion by the larger and better equipped communist army of the North. Considerable subversive activities had been carried out in the Republic of Korea by the communists for years, and minor border incursions had become a common occurrence. It took most of the first day to determine that this was an all-out invasion. The UN

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7 Ibid, 5-7.
Commission on Korea was present on the scene and acted as the official observer passing information to the UN Secretariat in New York. The UN responded very quickly to the alarm, and the Security Council gathered at 3:00 PM on the day of the attack.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson played a central role in the American response to the North Korean aggression. Acheson had argued, since 1947, for establishing economic ties between Japan and South Korea, not unlike the colonial position that Japan had held for the previous four decades. When the North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel on June 25, Acheson took charge of administration actions, bypassing congressional oversight and the reluctance of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to prepare a US military intervention in Korea with the blessing of the United Nations. He also pressed the United Nations for forces to pursue retreating North Korean forces over the 38th parallel to destroy their army and political regime.10

The State Department did not hesitate in blaming the Soviet Union for the invasion. The two Koreas blamed each other for starting the war, but the UN readily accepted the US view that this was an invasion from the North. An Intelligence Estimate from the Office of Intelligence Research at State dated June 25, the day of the invasion, stated that the North Korean Government was subservient to the Soviets and would not act without a Soviet go-ahead.11

The UN Security Council met on June 25 and passed a resolution calling for the communists to cease their attack and return to their side of the border. Austin was in Vermont that day and was not present for the passage of the resolution. His deputy,

10 Ibid. 208-209, 190-191.
Ernest Gross, stewarded the US-written resolution through the Security Council with only minor amendments pertaining to specific language as submitted by the other delegates. This resolution was made possible by the absence of the Soviet delegate, Jacob A. Malik, who had been boycotting the Security Council since January 1950, when the Council refused to recognize the mainland Communist Chinese as the legitimate government of China and holder of the permanent seat on the Council. The resolution stated that the North Koreans were guilty of breaking the peace, that there should be an immediate ceasefire, and that the North Korean troops should be withdrawn.

On June 27, with the North Korean army continuing their attack unabated, the Security Council met again and passed a resolution recommending that UN members use armed force to repel the invasion and restore international peace and security. Austin said after the meeting that the immediate effect of the resolution “should be to stop bloodshed and aggression in Korea... the larger effect should be to discourage aggression everywhere.” No mention of the Soviets was heard in the resolutions of June 25 and 27, or in supporting debate in the Security Council, but many suspected that North Korea’s Kim was a puppet of Moscow. President Truman announced, on June 27, that he had ordered the Seventh Fleet to patrol the channel between Taiwan and mainland China, as well as accelerating military assistance to France and others in Indo-China.

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Two weeks later, on July 9, Austin began to hint publicly that the United States was suspicious that the North Koreans might not be acting on their own when he said on a radio broadcast, “I am not talking about peace in Korea in particular but I am talking about international peace, because this is the first step without doubt in the form of aggression that would advance around the world if it were not stopped in its tracks.”

As early as mid-July, the destruction of the North Korean Army and state was being discussed at the State Department. John Foster Dulles wrote in a memorandum to Director of Policy Planning Paul Nitze that the 38th Parallel was a meaningless political border and that, given the opportunity, the UN should cross the line in order to “obliterate” the North Korean Army and unite Korea as a free and democratic nation.

On July 25, Austin addressed the Security Council and accused un-named parties of supplying the North Koreans with weapons and munitions. The implication here is that this attack by the North Koreans was part of the grand design of the Soviets. Placing blame on the Soviets became the public modus operandi of Austin, Truman, and the State Department from that point on.

A meta-analysis of declassified Soviet memoirs and documents, North Korean memoirs, the work of other historians, and some communications between Mao and Stalin by historian Kathryn Weathersby in 1993 has clarified the Soviet’s role in the initial attack. Weathersby confirms that the Soviets had given, in April 1950, the go-ahead to Kim Il-Sung to invade at some future time, but not until after he attempted re-

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17 “Memorandum by John Foster Dulles, Consultant to the Secretary of State, to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Nitze),” FRUS, 1950, Korea Volume VII, July 14, 1950, 386-387.
unification through diplomatic channels or other peaceful means. Kim had convinced Stalin that the United States would not get involved. Weathersby’s research showed that Kim found much more encouragement from Mao. The Soviets were upset once American troops arrived in Korea and did all they could for the first nine or ten months of the war to remain in the background militarily so as not to provoke the Americans. Finally, the evidence showed that the attack was not part of a master Soviet scheme, but the dream of a trigger-happy Kim encouraged by Mao.19

Japanese historian Wada Haruki has worked in Chinese, Russian, and South Korean archives and has arrived at a similar conclusion. He argues that Kim Il-Sung begged the Soviets for permission to invade and the munitions they needed to succeed. Wada states that the army of the DPRK launched their assault with only the vaguest of blessings from Stalin and without advanced notice of the exact date.20

Soviet spokesman Andrei Gromyko argued that the invasion was part of a civil war and did not really fall within the purview of the United Nations and that, by sending troops into Korea, the United States was, in fact, the invader and aggressor and should leave. Austin took exception to all Gromyko’s charges, citing the UN Charter, but the Soviets continued with their line of reasoning throughout the war.21 On July 8, the Soviet journal The Literary Gazette levelled attacks on Secretary General Trygve Lie and

20 Wada, *An International History*.
Austin. Austin was described as “a talking fool” and a “dangerous fool.”\textsuperscript{22} Austin was saving his vitriol for another day.

On July 7, 1950, the Security Council passed Resolution 84 (S/1588), which noted the support many Governments and peoples had responded to the call for assistance for the beleaguered South Koreans, and also requested that the United States take command of the armed forces making their way to the peninsula.\textsuperscript{23} This leadership came to be called Unified Command. ROK President Syngman Rhee appointed World War II hero US General Douglas MacArthur as the military leader of all UN troops. The United States provided 90 per cent of all the non-Korean troops to the command, while Australia, the United Kingdom, Thailand, Canada, and Turkey sent substantial numbers; ten other UN members sent smaller numbers, while others sent humanitarian and medical aid.

After the initial flurry of resolutions following the June 25 invasion, Austin took a backseat to more unilateral actions initiated by Acheson at State and MacArthur in the field. Austin lobbied allies to increase their contributions to the war effort; acted as a propaganda conduit to rationalize the UN invasion of the North in October 1950, and later, when armistice talks began, he worked on the contentious issue of the exchange of prisoners, especially those that did not wish to return to their home countries.

The Soviets returned to the Security Council in August 1950 to assume their presidency (chairmanship) in the monthly rotation. Soviet representative Malik wanted to

tie any peace settlement in Korea with the admission of communist China to the Security Council as the legitimate holder of the fifth permanent seat. Austin immediately fought back, saying that Chinese representation could not be considered at that time since the Security Council was giving its full attention to the Korean situation. Malik introduced a resolution on August 4 calling for a ceasefire in Korea and the withdrawal of foreign troops. The Soviet representative also proposed that representatives from North Korea and Communist China participate in the discussions. Malik then held that the South Korean representative, Dr. Chang Myun, was not welcome at the discussions. Austin took great exception to the slight to Dr. Chang, because the UN had recognized the Republic of Korea (South Korea) as the legal government of all Korea. On August 8, the fireworks in the Security Council continued when Chairman Malik threatened to expel observers from the chamber when they applauded a speech by Austin. Malik pounded his gavel but never did order the public out.

Malik spent his whole August presidency of the Security Council thwarting any substantive work in the Security Council, sidetracking the body’s agenda into procedural questions and engaging in long-winded, propagandistic harangues against ROK aggression and US imperialism. The Soviets also renewed calls for the mainland Chinese to take possession of the permanent seat in the Security Council.

On August 10, Austin began to name the Soviets as the force behind the North Koreans and described the North Korean attack as “Communist imperialism,” carried out

by “subservient puppet governments-zombie governments that breathe and speak and act, but have no soul.”

Many delegates began to speak of throwing Malik and/or the Soviets out of the UN, but Austin said in a statement for television broadcast on August 20, “Our objective is peace. We do not find peace by throwing out the person with whom we must make peace. We must be firm in our principles.” He nonetheless continued with the “zombie” theme on August 23 attacking Malik’s tenure as chair: “This is a philosophy worthy of some witch doctor who has created so many soulless zombies in his own graveyard that he ends up believing the earth is peopled by such creatures.” He went on in his speech to refer to the North Koreans as the “zombie” regime. By the end of Malik’s month as chair, Austin had tired of the Soviet representative, calling him a “circus barker” on a CBS radio broadcast.

August 1950 was a difficult month for Austin and the United Nations, and not just because Malik and the Soviets were acting up. General MacArthur began causing trouble for the Truman administration and the United Nations by suggesting that 35,000 Nationalist Chinese troops be brought to Korea and that the United States should “occupy” Taiwan “as a bastion vital to United States Security.” Austin spent the next week explaining to the SC how this was not the policy of the United States and that


30 The folklore of the “undead” or the “zombie” can be traced back to the enslavement of Africans on plantations in Haiti and their fear of being a slave forever throughout eternity. References to zombies in US culture were infrequent until the film *White Zombie* (1932) starring Bela Lugosi. In the late 1940s, the comic book series *Tales from the Crypt* resurrected the zombie. It was not until George Romero’s cult classic *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) that the zombie, minus its voodoo origins, became truly embedded in American culture.


President Truman had admonished MacArthur for his statement. George Kennan wrote a memorandum to the secretary of State, on August 21, arguing that MacArthur had far too much latitude in determining US policy in the whole western Pacific and North Asian regions. He maintained that MacArthur’s status as a representative of the United Nations and the United States simultaneously allowed him to be evasive as to orders and direction from both. Kennan also offered that having a military commander as the vehicle of political policy was not a good idea.  

Even while UN troops were still confined to the Pusan beachhead in August, the State Department was discussing whether to cross the 38th peninsula and pursue the North Korean Army to its international borders. In a memorandum of August 28, the State Department recommended that as long as there were no Soviet or communist Chinese troops along the 38th parallel, the UN command could pursue the North Korean Army but not get too close to the international borders with Manchuria and the USSR.  

A third “neutral” voice in the search for peace in Korea was emerging at the UN in the person of the Indian representative to the Security Council, Bengal Narsing Rau. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Rau did not trust the West, especially the British and the United States, fearing attempts to resurrect imperialism in Asia. Rau called for consideration of the communist Chinese for the permanent Security Council seat. He also rallied other Asian members of the United Nations to present a united front in calling for more Asian input on Asian matters. On September 18, the Indian delegation announced

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33 “Memorandum by the Counselor (Kennan) to the Secretary of State,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, August 21, 1950, 623-628.  
that when the General Assembly opened later that day, they would introduce a resolution to admit the communist Chinese to the General Assembly and hoped that other UN agencies would follow suit.\(^{35}\) Rau was also skeptical of any plans for UN troops to push north of the 38\(^{th}\) parallel if that occasion arose.

UN forces rallied and broke out of their redoubt at Pusan and pushed back up the peninsula following the dramatic surprise landing at Inchon harbor, near the South Korean capital of Seoul, on September 15, severing the North Korean invaders’ supply routes. With military progress up the peninsula and the end of hostilities in sight, Austin, unaware of the looming Chinese onslaught, spoke to the General Assembly on September 30 of rebuilding Korea as one united, democratic nation. He said, “The great opportunity given by victory inspires dedication rather than rejoicing; responsibility rather than revenge, consecration rather than recrimination. In that spirit we should consider the political action required of us that will contribute to lasting peace.”\(^ {36}\)

Looking ahead to a united Korea determining its own future in free and democratic elections, John Foster Dulles took pause and opined that the vote could result in a strong communist minority in the Assembly causing all kinds of trouble.\(^ {37}\) Others felt that there was little support for President Rhee and that the communists could possibly end up forming a minority government in league with Rhee’s other opponents. At a meeting of the US delegation the same day, September 22, Dulles argued for limited goals in the north, while Austin became more aggressive militarily. Dulles maintained

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\(^{37}\) “Memorandum by Mr. John Foster Dulles, Consultant to the Secretary of State, to the Secretary of State,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, September 22, 1950, 751-752.
that in would be inadvisable to try to enter the most northern and eastern provinces of
North Korea, as that would likely bring the Soviets and Chinese into the war. Austin, on
the other hand, said that the UN should complete the job, but not necessarily station
occupation troops in the northern provinces.\textsuperscript{38}

As UN forces approached the 38th parallel, the pre-June 25 border, the question of
whether those forces should pursue the communists into the North, destroy their army
and reunite the country was pressing. Austin argued in the First Committee of the
General Assembly on September 30, 1950 that, “the aggressor’s forces should not be
permitted to have refuge behind an imaginary line because that recreated the threat to the
Peace of Korea and of the whole world.”\textsuperscript{39} Crossing the 38th parallel would trigger red
flags in both the Soviet Union and China over the possibility of UN forces driving to both
of their international borders. Austin continued in his speech, “The future of Korea is, in
a special and unique sense, the responsibility of the United Nations.”\textsuperscript{40}

The UN forces crossed the 38th parallel into North Korea on October 9. The
Indian delegation had been lobbying for the UN forces to remain where they were and
seek negotiations. They had been in contact with Beijing, where the government
indicated that troops from China would come to the aid of the North Koreans if the 38th
parallel was crossed.\textsuperscript{41} The CIA opined on October 12 that there were no “convincing
indications” of planned communist Chinese intervention in the war.\textsuperscript{42} On November 1,

\textsuperscript{38} “Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of the United States Delegation to the United Nations General
\textsuperscript{39} WRA archives, Carton BVII, folder 506. Statement by Austin in GA Committee 1, September 30, 1950.
\textsuperscript{40} WRA archives, Carton BVII, folder 506. Statement by Austin in GA Committee 1, September 30, 1950.
\textsuperscript{42} “Memorandum by the Central Intelligence Agency,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, October 12,
1950, 636-638.
1950, however, the director of the CIA, Walter Bedell Smith, stated that there were between 15,000 and 20,000 Chinese troops in action in Korea, and their numbers were increasing daily.\(^{43}\) The US military and political elites were in a quandary with no real contingency plans to confront a massed attack by the Chinese.

Three days later, on November 9, General Omar N. Bradley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was asking that “every effort” be made to settle the problem of Chinese intervention by political means, preferably through the United Nations.\(^{44}\) MacArthur wrote to the Joint Chiefs on November 9, saying that his air forces could handle the Chinese threat.\(^{45}\) Two and a half weeks later, he wrote back stating that the Chinese forces then numbered 200,000 and that, “This command has done everything humanly possible within its capabilities but is now faced with conditions beyond its control and strength.”\(^{46}\) The military situation was collapsing at a breakneck pace.

As Austin and other US diplomats escalated their cries of Chinese and Soviet military aggression in the North, the Soviets increased their claims of US imperialism in China. On November 27, Soviet Foreign Minister Vyshinsky charged the United States, in the SC, with:

1) invasion of the island of Taiwan
2) blockade of the shores of Taiwan
3) economic oppression in Taiwan

\(^{43}\) "Memorandum by the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (Smith) to the President," FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, November 1, 1950, 1025-1026.

\(^{44}\) "Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Marshall),” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, November 9, 1950, 1117-1121.

\(^{45}\) “The Commander in Chief, Far East (MacArthur) to the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, November 9, 1950, 1107-1110.

\(^{46}\) “The Commander in Chief, Far East (MacArthur) to the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, November 28, 1950, 1237-1238.
4) intervention in the internal affairs of China

5) systematic violations of Chinese airspace

The United States had maintained all along that the Seventh Fleet was present merely to keep the peace, as much keeping the Nationalist from invading the mainland as vice-versa. The United States also said that only a small handful of US advisors were on Taiwan, and that the United States had taken responsibility for two alleged incursions into Manchurian airspace.

As the military picture, which eight weeks earlier had looked so positive, was deteriorating in the face of the influx of hundreds of thousands of Red Chinese troops, the political picture for the United States at the United Nations took a hit as well. In late November, the United States proposed a Security Council resolution that would brand the Chinese as “aggressors,” a distinction that would, under UN rules, enable sanctions that including a boycott of trade with the Chinese, severing diplomatic relations, and other “collective measures.” Both the British and French delegates, along with some from Latin America, took exception to the US resolution. These countries were also voicing displeasure with General MacArthur’s leadership. MacArthur had proposed bombing enemy supply lines in Manchuria and was balking at constraints against attacking the Yalu River hydroelectric plants, which supplied Manchuria with much of its electricity.

On December 2, Secretary of State Dean Acheson met with Austin in Washington to press him to outflank the opposition in the Security Council and take the “aggressor” fight to the General Assembly. Two days later, however, Austin calmed the allies’ fears

when he announced that the United States would not pursue the “aggressor” claim in the GA.⁵⁰

On December 7, Austin spoke in the General Assembly, claiming that the Chinese troops fighting in Korea represented “Russian colonial policy,” implying that the Chinese were the Soviets’ lackeys. Austin was echoing the standard administration line that the Soviets were behind every move in Korea. He called on the United Nations to renew its resistance to communist aggression and said, “We have much to win by staunchness of heart and unity. We have everything to lose by indecision and vacillation.”⁵¹

Representative Rau of India became a backchannel between the United States and the UN Secretariat and the Chinese. He suggested first that the US Seventh Fleet would leave the Taiwan Strait if the Chinese would leave Korea. Rau also suggested that by putting the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait in the first place, the United States had, in fact, given Chinese communists a guarantee of safety from the Nationalist Chinese and allowed the communists to move considerable forces to Manchuria in anticipation of their own incursion into Korea.⁵² Rau then suggested, in a conversation with Austin’s deputy Ernest Gross, on December 4, a cease fire with a demilitarized zone somewhere south of the Manchurian frontier.⁵³ Secretary General Lie got involved as well with off-the-record discussions with the Chinese at the United Nations, but the Chinese position was

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⁵² “The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, December 4, 1950 8:44 p.m., 1379-1381.
⁵³ “The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, December 4, 1950 1:59 p.m., 1354-1358.
primarily about themselves, not the North Koreans. The Chinese demanded United Nations withdrawal from Korea, withdrawal of the Seventh Fleet form Taiwan, and the seating of the Chinese Communist regime in the UN. The Chinese were also leery of any cease-fire agreement that did not include all three of their demands. At this point, there was no real need for the Red Chinese to negotiate, as they were winning on the battlefield. Austin, at this time was attempting to calm the French and British, who were growing agitated over the prospects of World War III. The UN had relied on the military for a resolution of the Korean question and had neglected the political dimensions that were now in flux as a result of changes in the military situation.

General MacArthur, in a report to the Department of the Army on December 30, argued for an expansion of the war to include a blockade of China, an attack on China with naval bombardment and aerial bombing, and the importation of troops from Taiwan to man the barricades or even to invade the mainland. On the other hand, Austin began to advocate for a position being pushed by the Asian states to seat the Chinese at the UN. Prime Minister Nehru of India, backed by the British in a rare moment of agreement, saw that “a great act of faith was required in order to break out of a vicious cycle.” Austin felt that such an act of faith “might pay untold dividends.”

The North Koreans and Chinese recaptured Seoul on January 4, 1951 and continued their attack, driving UN troops south. On March 14, as part of a successful

54 “The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State,” FRUS, 1950, Korea, Volume VII, December 4, 1950 7:51 p.m., 1378-1379.
56 “The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State,” FRUS, 1951, Korea and China, 1951, January 6, 1951, 31-33.
counterattack, UN forces retook Seoul for the second time. Intense fighting continued through April, and truce talks began in early July 1951.

Addressing the General Assembly’s Political Committee on January 18, 1951, Austin continued to press the administration’s line of thinking that the Soviets were behind everything in Korea. He said, “That aggression (by the Chinese) is part of the world-wide pattern of centrally directed Soviet imperialism. It is an aggression which clearly serves no legitimate Chinese national interest.” He also maintained that it was no time for UN members to waver in the face of the Chinese Communist hordes. He said, “Security is indivisible. Once we start slicing it up into pieces it no longer exists. We cannot let one nation fall unheeded before aggression and expect to protect another nation at some future date.”

President Truman had argued this position since defending Greece and Turkey from Eastern Bloc overtures in 1947-48 via the Truman Doctrine. Later, at a press conference on April 7, 1954, President Eisenhower coined the phrase “domino theory,” in reference to US support of the French in Indochina, saying that if one country fell to communism surrounding countries would fall like dominoes.

On January 20, 1951, Austin introduced a US resolution in the Political Committee of the General Assembly that branded the Chinese as aggressors in Korea and against the forces of the UN. Austin had difficulty in finding co-sponsors for the resolution, as other powers did not want to provoke the Chinese or Russians. A different “aggression” resolution passed in the General Assembly on February 1.

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Once the Chinese offensive was effectively blunted, the American policy in Korea was simply to kill as many Chinese as possible with the least number of casualties to UN forces. American planners at both the State and Defense departments saw bleeding the Chinese dry was the only way to get them to the negotiating table.\textsuperscript{60} At a commencement address at Georgetown University on June 11, 1951, Austin said that the UN would fight until the Communist aggressor sought peace. He said, “Effective resistance to aggression can lead to a peaceful settlement, when the aggressor sees that he can not achieve his objective. If he does not see this yet, we can go on until he has had enough.”\textsuperscript{61}

On April 11, 1951, President Truman relieved General MacArthur of his command in Korea and replaced him with General Matthew Ridgway. Truman wished to end the fighting in Korea and return to roughly prewar boundaries between the two Koreas. MacArthur wanted to press back beyond the 38\textsuperscript{th} parallel again, defeat the communist forces in North Korea, and just generally halt comunism in its tracks even if that meant world war. Speaking off the record, or at least unofficially, to a group of students from Princeton University at his office in New York, Austin said that he supported the president’s decision despite growing Republican opposition to the firing. He said, “It is not our purpose to extend the military operations to any other place or area. We do not want to take any steps leading to all-out war with China.”\textsuperscript{62}

In an Associated Press article of May 1, 1951, Austin took exception to a statement issued by General MacArthur, who said to Congress, “victory over the enemy

\textsuperscript{60} “Memorandum on the Substance of Discussions at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting,” FRUS, 1951, Korea and China, Volume VII, Part 1, April 18, 1951, 353-362.
is the objective in warfare.” Austin responded, “The aim is not conflict without limit, but peace without appeasement. That is the victory we seek.” On May 2, 1951, Austin referred to several recently uncovered North Korean military documents that demonstrated planning for the June 25, 1950 invasion, refuting long-time Soviet claims that the Republic of Korea had initiated hostilities by invading North Korea.

Fighting continued for two years and with talks breaking down again in April 1953, the new secretary of State and adamant anticommunist John Foster Dulles showed his frustration with war. He said, “I don’t think we can get much out of a Korean settlement until we have shown--before Asia–our clear superiority by giving the Chinese one hell of a licking.” An armistice was signed on July 27, 1953, preserving the status quo ante bellum.

Once again, the UN was ineffective in its handling of the Korean conflict. The United States had sought and received moral support from the UN, and military support from some of its members. The United States, however, acted unilaterally while keeping the UN at arms-length, utilizing it primarily as a propaganda platform. Austin played his part by acting as the spokesman for the administration. There was little else Austin could do as Acheson and MacArthur were directing policy and the UN was ineffective in bringing about the peace.

63 WRA archives, Carton VI, folder 34. Associated Press article, May 1, 1951
64 WRA archives, Carton BVIII, folder 545. Austin press conference at Lake Success, NY, May 2, 1951.
CONCLUSION

The formal portrait of Senator Austin that hangs in the Vermont Statehouse in Montpelier.

Austin spoke at a large number of outside events during his tenure at the UN. He promoted the institution, and America’s role in it, at every opportunity. He spoke to, and received honors from, the American International Chamber of Commerce, the National Council of the YMCA, the Theodore Roosevelt Society, the International Benjamin Franklin Society, Yale Political Union, the Alfred E. Smith Foundation Dinner, the National Father’s Day Committee (when he was selected “Father of the Year’ in 1947). In one randomly chosen ten day period, he had invitations from the Delaware Education
Association, numerous Elks clubs, the National Air Fair, Washington Town Hall, the Missouri State Teachers Association, and the Medical Society of Washington.¹

He delivered speeches and commencement addresses and received honorary degrees at Bates College, MIT, the University of Vermont, Princeton, Middlebury College, and Harvard, among others. His message usually championed internationalism, the UN, and the moral high ground occupied by the United States. His commencement address at Tulane University on May 10, 1951 featured the statement, “The waging of peace requires greater effort than the waging of war.”² His Tulane address was followed by a speech at nearby Xavier University of Louisiana, an historically black college. Austin had requested the president of Tulane to arrange for the speech at Xavier so that he could speak to “the Negro community of New Orleans” after speaking at racially segregated Tulane.³

In an excerpt from his farewell address, published in Commonweal at the time of his retirement from the UN, Austin said, “When asked if he ever got tired of all that talk? I replied, ‘I do, but it is better that aging diplomats be bored than that young men should die.’”⁴ Among the numerous commendations awarded to Austin after his retirement was the establishment of the Warren R. Austin Forest in Israel in 1955.⁵ The Israelis lauded Austin for supporting them at the UN in establishing the state of Israel.

¹ WRA archives, Carton VI, folder 5. Correspondence August 11-21, 1950.
² WRA archives, Carton VI, folder 32. Commencement speech at Tulane University, May 10, 1951
⁴ WRA archives, Carton BVIII, folder 592b. From Commonweal, January 9, 1953.
The Soviet Union and the United States approached the opening of the United Nations in 1945 from two very different perspectives. Soviet international goals at the end of World War II focused on both internal and external security, two necessities that they believed were inextricably connected. They also sought a global political-economic balance based on spheres of influence. They hoped that the UN would prove to be at least a partial deterrent to the resurrection of a united and hostile Germany and a return to a balance of power in Europe at least partially achieved through the promotion of decolonization. At the same time, however, the Soviets perceived the UN as an extension of US moves toward global political and financial hegemony. As Columbia Law Professor José E. Alvarez has pointed out, “even multilateral organizations, including the UN, the international financial organizations and NGOs, can act ‘unilaterally’ in the sense that what is done in the name of the collective may serve, primarily or exclusively, the interests of a hegemonic state or a group of states and not the real interest of the community.” The Soviets participated with the thought of limiting, as best they could from a minority position, American maneuvers and goals.

US goals for the post-war world included an end to old fashioned colonialism replacing it with a free market system dominated by Americans. US intentions for the UN were obfuscated by often sanctimonious declarations about self-determination, democracy, and multilateralism. The General Assembly was a deliberative body whose toothless resolutions could be used for propaganda purposes, as averred by Senator Austin in December 1946: “The General Assembly wields power primarily as the voice

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of the conscience of the world.” The Security Council, theoretically, could be used to thwart Soviet bad intentions.

Warren Austin was seventy-four years old when he vacated his seat at the United Nations in January 1953. He had done battle with the Soviets and dutifully carried out the wishes of his president and his overlords at the State Department. He preferred a lighter touch than his superiors’ more aggressive approach. He shepherded the creation of a United Nations headquarters building on the east side of Manhattan through its earliest stages. He helped in the formation of the state of Israel. He also saw key issues like the reform of the veto and nuclear arms control come to naught. His dreams of an international organization that would insure peace and security were only partially fulfilled. The institution’s weaknesses were revealed during his tenure, and he saw his own government frequently prefer unilateral action to the deliberations of the UN. The United Nations would slip from America’s grasp, in the ensuing decades, as decolonization and the expansion of the UN membership diluted the support for US policies.

Austin admirably filled his role as the face of the US Mission to the United Nations, but had virtually no effect on policy during his tenure. His goals of building an effective international organization to promote peace and security ran head on into the Soviets, who sought security through spheres of influence, and his own administration that sought global economic hegemony mainly through unilateral actions.

Austin worked tirelessly to promote the United Nations to the general public in an era where there was great interest in the international organization. He also tried to temper

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the rabid anti-communism of the Truman administration, but no one was listening. He
was not naïve, but was innocent when confronted with the machinations of both the
Soviets and his own administration. In many ways, he represented the hopes and
aspirations of ordinary people who sought relief from the twentieth century’s devastating
wars and tragedies. The United Nations was ineffective, in this regard, but through no
fault of Warren Robinson Austin. He had hoped and prayed for leaders to rise above petty
ambition and strident ideology, but that was probably too much to ask.

Austin and his wife, Mildred, returned to their home in Burlington, Vermont
where he spent his remaining days. Senator Austin passed away on Christmas Day 1962.
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