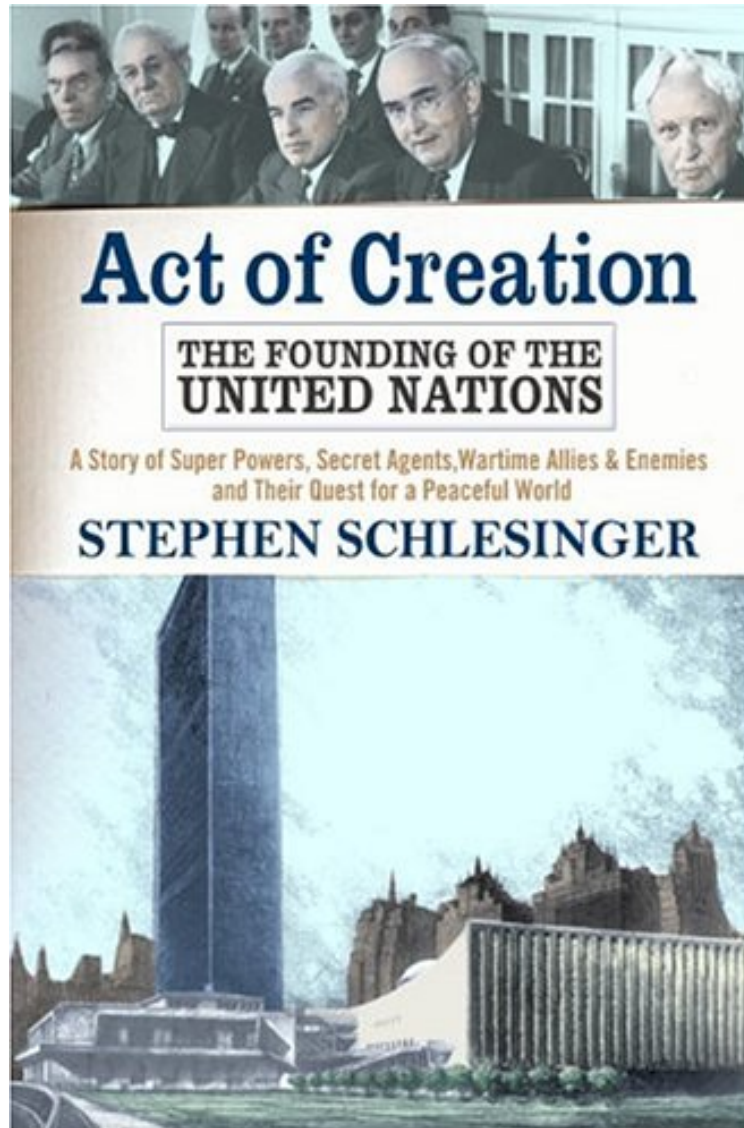


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Act Of Creation: The Founding Of The United Nations

Stephen Schlesinger

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Stephen Schlesinger : Act Of Creation: The Founding Of The United Nations before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Act Of Creation: The Founding Of The United Nations:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Extremely Valuable and Well-Written History of the UN's CreationBy Dmitry PreobrazhenskyMr. Schlesinger has done the world a great service by writing this book. It describes in lucid detail the prelude to the San Francisco conference, the conference itself and the subsequent

ratification process. The book provides interesting biographical information on the major figures that played a lead role in the founding of the UN. Some, like Roosevelt, Truman, Molotov, and Stalin are well-known. Others such as Leo Pasvolosky and Edward Stettinius, Jr. have largely been forgotten and are brilliantly given their proper role in this book. The book's greatest contribution is a description of the main subjects of debate at the founding of the United Nations. Some of the main arguments, such as regional security arrangements and the veto power of the Security Council, continue to be hotly debated today, while others that caused major friction at the time are no longer a factor in UN debates. In reading this book one comes to realize how the contemporary political climate and dynamics of power influence important decisions that have long-lasting consequences and are difficult to undo. The founding of the UN came at a major transition point in world politics and the redrawing of the European order which is reflected in the decisions made and compromises reached in its founding. This is a book that I would highly recommend to anyone interested in the United Nations and how it became the organization that it is today.

UN4Peace0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An enjoyable account of the United Nations By Dana Walker This was a very well written, and enjoyable account on the beginnings of the United Nations. I was compelled to purchase this book after watching the U.N. debates and wanting to know more about the organization. This book doesn't really address the current practicality of the U.N., but is a very clever story of the birth of the organization that I recommend to those who have very limited knowledge about it. Furthermore, I learned a lot about the accompanying players of its creation, such as, Stettinius, Pasvolosky, Molotov, Vandenberg etc., the political landscape of the time, as well as realpolitik. Most of the political books I've read have been around theory, so I was pleasantly surprised when this book was primarily focused on the day-to-day battles in getting the charter passed vs. theoretical underpinnings. Though, I will say that I would like to explore more the connection between the fervent to establish the U.N. amongst the backdrop of a devastating World War; I don't think such an organization could be developed today (this could be in unexpected tribute to the U.N). Lastly, I appreciate the role the USA had in establishing the organization as it shows the influence and excellence of this country.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Most Important Creation By Mike BA A very readable account of the building of the structure of the U.N. at San Francisco in May-June 1945. The strength of this book is in the presentation of the diverse personalities involved. Truman, Edward Stettinius, Leo Pasvolosky, Arthur Vandenberg (a Republican), Nelson Rockefeller, Vyacheslav Molotov of the Soviet Union and more are introduced. Each was strongly motivated in desiring a U.N. And they wanted it done before the Second World War was over; Roosevelt and Truman learned from the mistakes of Woodrow Wilson who waited until after the Great War was over to begin constructing the League of Nations. Also both Roosevelt and Truman brought Republican involvement in this development and the Republicans participated at San Francisco. There was also a tremendous publicity campaign within the U.S. that brought Americans on board for the U.N. Truman wanted to ensure that there was no apathy in his country about the U.N. The building of the framework - basically the wording of the U.N. constitution or charter - was largely a U.S. initiative. Roosevelt made sure that Stalin was to be a participant at Yalta. Nevertheless the Soviets were constantly questioning and objecting to various aspects of the U.N. Charter. The writing of the U.N. Charter was done by the Americans. It was begun at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington D.C. In San Francisco all countries participating met to finalize the Charter. It took over two months of haggling to accomplish this. The success can be credited to the American team headed by Edward Stettinius. Sadly Stettinius's name is not even mentioned in the U.N. building in New York.

In *Act of Creation*, Stephen C. Schlesinger tells a pivotal and little-known story of how Secretary of State Edward Stettinius and the new American President, Harry Truman, picked up the pieces of the faltering campaign initiated by Franklin Roosevelt to create a "United Nations." Using secret agents, financial resources, and their unrivaled position of power, they overcame the intrigues of Stalin, the reservations of wartime allies like Winston Churchill, the discontent of smaller states, and a skeptical press corps to found the United Nations. The author reveals how the UN nearly collapsed several times during the conference over questions of which states should have power, who should be admitted, and how authority should be divided among its branches. By shedding new light on leading participants like John Foster Dulles, John F. Kennedy, Adlai Stevenson, Nelson Rockefeller, and E. B. White, *Act of Creation* provides a fascinating tale of twentieth-century history not to be missed.

From *Publishers Weekly* When President Roosevelt died in April 1945, the plans for a United Nations suddenly fell into peril. Many wondered if the unassuming new president from Independence, Mo., would postpone the long-planned San Francisco conference scheduled to begin in two weeks' time. But Truman's commitment to the global organization was steadfast. For the previous 50 years, he had carried in his pocket a folded piece of paper with the words of his favorite poem, "Lockesley Hall," by Alfred Lord Tennyson: "Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd/In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World./There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe/And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law." Thus, nothing halted the gathering of delegates from all over the world to discuss the thorny issues that would be addressed in the U.N. charter. Most of Schlesinger's book covers the nine-week San Francisco conference, a fascinating web of intrigue, power and

greed. Most interesting is the performance by the American secretary of state, Edward Stettinius, chief overseer and coordinator of the conference. While his ability was doubted and he was criticized by many, Stettinius performed brilliantly, according to Schlesinger, who credits him with the conference's success. Whatever the reader's opinion of the U.N. and its current role, Schlesinger, director of the New School University's World Policy Institute, provides a masterful account of the drama acted out on the pressure-filled stage of San Francisco. He handles the complexities with ease and provides the reader with an engaging and thorough account. 16 pages of bw photos. 40,000 first printing. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A sturdy account of the UN's birth." -- Kirkus s"An immensely valuable contribution to our understanding of one of the pivotal events of the 20th century." -- Robert A. Caro "Never has a book been more relevant to present dangers and future hopes." -- James Chace "Provides unique insights into the colorful characters and fascinating processes behind the founding of the United Nations." -- Shashi Tharoor "This is the right book at the right time, the story of a great American achievement." -- Richard Reeves

About the Author Stephen Schlesinger is Director of the World Policy Institute at the New School University in New York City. In the mid-1990s, he worked at the United Nations, and also served as a speechwriter and foreign policy advisor to New York's Governor Mario Cuomo for twelve years. He is a frequent contributor to magazines and newspapers, including the Washington Post , the Los Angeles Times , The Nation , and the New York Observer . He lives in New York City.