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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT  
By Congressman Everett M. Dirksen  
16th (Ill) District

LOVE LIFE OF THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

Nobody seems to love the Atlantic Charter any more. That is very interesting. Once it seemed all the rage. It was on every tongue. It echoed in all parts of the world. A butcher in Turkey, a girl selling coconuts from a roadside stand in Ceylon, a hotel clerk in Damascus, a chauffeur in Cairo, spoke with feeling of the Charter and what it meant. It was the spark plug of the war. Its Four Freedoms was the light by which GI's went forth to do and die. It was echoed from platform and pulpit. Today it seems an unloved document. It seems to have been sidetracked by the very country that gave it life and meaning.

A BIT OF CHARTER HISTORY

You will recall that the Charter was drafted aboard a vessel in the Atlantic by Churchill and Roosevelt and given to the world on August 14, 1941. That is more than four years ago. It became an official document. It was printed as House Document No. 358 of the 77th Congress. It was published in a State Department bulletin. On January 1, 1942, a few months after the Charter was announced, it was endorsed by the representatives of many nations in Washington. They drafted what is now known as the United Nations Declaration and therein fully endorsed the principles of the Atlantic Charter. Their endorsement was clear and unequivocal. They were for it and said so in writing. Forty-five nations have now joined the United Nations Declaration. Moreover the principles of the Charter were reaffirmed in the Moscow Declaration on November 1, 1943. But it is well to go back and reexamine the Charter. History moves so swiftly and such things have a way of being forgotten.

FIRST THREE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER

The first three principles of the Charter are important. They state that the United States and Great Britain seek no aggrandizement. That means expansion of their territories. It states that they favor no changes in territory unless such changes are freely approved by the people concerned thereby. Third, it states that the right of any people to freely choose their own government is respected and that where sovereign rights and self-government have been taken away they wish to see it restored. Now all that is quite clear and it was supported by 45 nations, including the United States, Great Britain, China and Russia. This is good gospel. It caught on with the people. They could and they did support that program because it was clear, fair and equitable.

A BIT OF CURRENT HISTORY

It is common knowledge how Europe is being scrambled today and that little countries are not free to choose their own governments. It is quite clear how pressure is being applied. But VE Day has come and gone. Nations are now thinking of postwar problems. That means money and materials to make a fresh start. Eyes are, therefore, turned to the United States. It is expected that this country can supply both credit and goods. To help in carrying out this program Congress last week passed a bill to redefine the powers and increase the capital stock of what is known as the Export-Import Bank. This bank was first created in 1934 to assist in making credit available to countries and firms both here and abroad in the hope of stimulating foreign trade and making more jobs available.

### AN AMENDMENT

While this bill was under consideration the author of the Front offered a simple amendment. It stated very clearly that no credit was to be extended to any country that failed to adhere faithfully to the first three principles of the Atlantic Charter and left it to the President to certify when a country met that requirement. The amendment said in effect that no country could get credit if it hamstrung freedom. One would think there could be no objection to such an amendment after 45 nations had stated in writing that they supported the Charter. This was the thing for which hundreds of thousands of American GI's have already fought and died. It seems so logical, therefore, not to permit American dollars to undo the work of GI's who had died for a cause. That amendment at once begot opposition from members of the Banking Committee of the House.

### SOME AMAZING ARGUMENT

Chairman Spence of the Committee said the amendment was vague, indefinite and uncertain. One might ask whether the Charter for which we were fighting was vague, indefinite and uncertain and whether hundreds of thousands of Americans died for something vague, indefinite and uncertain. Other members of the Committee felt it unwise to place a moral restriction upon an international loan. One must ask whether there is no morality about international relationships. But the \$64 question still remains. Is it proposed to let American dollars now undo the work of American GI's who by hundreds of thousands died for what they thought were the principles set forth in the Atlantic Charter? Since 45 nations, including all of the major nations, subscribed to this principle, what can be wrong with asking them to abide by it now that the war is moving to a conclusion? To say the least, it is a strange business.