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**Manufactured Success:**

**How the Great War Impacted Winston Churchill**

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James Madison wrote in *The Federalist* No. 51 “ambition counteracts ambition.”[[1]](#footnote-1) While his quote is specifically centered on a separation of powers within a government, the deeper meaning is reflected in the life of Sir Winston Churchill. A masterful politician in his later years, Churchill struggled in the beginning—constantly tripping over his own ambition to achieve power and prestige. While he did serve Briton’s proudly in both the Parliament and on the battlefield, his primary motive was for himself. His own reflections of his life paint the picture of an egocentric man struggling, succeeding and achieving greatness for himself, first, and then Britain. Perhaps this is a harsh criticism of a great leader, but the facts leave little room for variation in perspective.

Apart from the truth, however, the rise of the, once, great leader was not a smooth and gentile rise, but rather a choppy and almost impossible adventure. Unlike those who rise to glory through fame and fortune, Sir Winston Churchill manufactured his role in history. He was not considered a great man by those around him. His greatness and dramatic role in history came about due to his ambition. Often referred to as an “opportunist”, his eagerness to be involved in whatever fighting occurred, and in whatever political arena he could advance the most through, earned him such a nickname.[[2]](#footnote-2) However, despite his eagerness for war, he never stopped fighting for his principles (right or wrong). His continued efforts militarily and politically aided in ending a second war for domination. If not for lessons learned during the Great War, Churchill would not have been the strong leader the world needed during the Second World War.

**No Regrets**

The Right Honorable Sir Winston Churchill was born into the aristocratic family of the Dukes of Marlborough in 1874. The son of Lord Randolph Churchill and the American heiress Jennie Jerome, Churchill applied to attend the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.[[3]](#footnote-3)He tried three times before passing the entrance exam; he applied for cavalry rather than infantry because the grade requirement was lower and did not require him to learn mathematics, which he disliked. He wouldlater resign his cavalry commission to become a correspondent during the Boer War.

One of Churchill’s flaws was his insatiable spending habits. He believed he deserved more money than he received, and even when his mother provided more, he overspent. According to biographer Roy Jenkins, this is one reason he took an interest in war correspondence. He did not intend to follow a conventional career of promotion through army ranks, but rather to seek out all possible chances of military action, using his mother's and family influence in high society to arrange postings to active campaigns.[[4]](#footnote-4) His writings brought him to the attention of the public, and earned him significant additional income. He acted as a war correspondent for several London newspapers and wrote his own books about the campaigns.

Churchill obtained postings all over the world. One such post took him to the rich and luxurious island of Cuba. While there, he developed a taste for Havana cigars.[[5]](#footnote-5) He would smoke them the rest of his life. His stay in Cuba eventually led him to the States where he stayed with an admirer of his mother’s, Bourke Cochran, a U.S. Representative. Cochran helped Churchill flourish in oratory and political strategy.[[6]](#footnote-6)In his short time in New York, Churchill gained a real love for America and a passion for the republic—something which helped forge a strong partnership during World War II.

Over the next several years, Churchill was promoted and moved to different fronts. Each time, his involvement in the current conflict elevated his stature and fame back home. In most instances, he served as correspondent to whatever engagement took place. However, Churchill was not afraid to fight, and many times found himself in the center of combat, either as prisoner or commander. In India he fought gallantly while also earning 600 pounds for his account of the fight.[[7]](#footnote-7) At this time in his life he begged to be deployed.

The first opportunity at political advancement quickly saw failure when his backer suddenly died. Of course, this did not deter him from his lofty ambitions, and Churchill soon found other ways to advance himself. He continued to serve as a war correspondent, and eventually ended up in the middle of the Boer War. While on assignment, he was captured along with other soldiers.[[8]](#footnote-8) Lucky enough, and skilled enough, to escape, he found his way back to the front lines only to lead more men back to the fight and rescue his comrades. His gallantry during the war almost assured him the Victoria Cross. Unfortunately, he was passed over.[[9]](#footnote-9)

He, soon, stood again for parliament in Oldham and won.  Of course the Conservative party for which he was a part of cheered for his victory. However, the cheers quickly grew faint when they realized his ideals did not necessarily follow suit with the agenda of the Conservative party—an inconvenience for the ambitious and suspicious party. Although a part of the Conservative party, Churchill consistently voted against his party.[[10]](#footnote-10) The other members soon grew annoyed and angry that this war hero and supposed conservative could flip and deceive his voters. For Churchill, however, he did not see it as flipping, but rather as voting his conscience. Much like his father had done before him.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The Conservative back was broken when Churchill began espousing the ideals of free trade. Nationalism served a large role in Europe during the era, and certain British goods needed to be protected. Subsidies and taxes needed to be in place in order to protect those goods. Of course, Churchill saw it differently and voiced his opinions in the Commons as such. His party had abandoned him. Lloyd George insisted to Churchill that he’d “be a liberal before long.”[[12]](#footnote-12) Churchill disagreed, but soon thereafter crossed the room to join the Liberals permanently. He became the Conservatives biggest critic and earned many enemies due to his lengthy and flamboyant speeches about the opposing party.

Yet, despite his obvious flip-flopping nature, Churchill’s fame was on the rise, and he continued to climb the political ladder. A decade later, he became First Lord Admiralty. He immediately began the push for modernization and industry. He understood countries needed to continue to modernize or else be left behind. Considering the era centered on the strong buildup of the military (among other things), he felt in order to do his job, he needed to keep Britain in the forefront of everyone’s mind. This required modernization of every aspect of British military, and industry.

Churchill, seemingly, rose without hindrance from the late 1800s through the first part of the Great War. His fame did not serve as a love affair between him and the people, but rather as an understanding of what needed to happen in order to sustain the status of British superpower. He actively placed himself in critical positions to, not only be promoted, but also make money. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, Churchill had positioned himself to be a strong player for the role of Prime Minister.

**The Wrath of the World**

Anyone looking at Europe in 1909 would have guessed a major conflict would break out between Germany and Great Britain. Their economic goals of the two countries appeared to be in direct conflict. Still in the line with the Liberal party, Winston Churchill worked furiously on social reforms. He hoped, even, there would be cutbacks in defense in order to pay for his “War on Poverty”.[[13]](#footnote-13) Unfortunately, after witnessing the menacing force of the German army while abroad, Churchill reexamined his priorities. He did not give up on his dreams to help those in need, but he did shift his mindset to one in preparation for a larger battle. Even though he prepared mentally for such a struggle, Churchill remarked on a possible conflict by stating, “a European war cannot be anything but a cruel and heartrending struggle.”[[14]](#footnote-14) Of course, Churchill’s premonition proved regretfully accurate. It did not have to though. In the opening decade of the twentieth century, Germany had a chance to form an alliance with Britain, but let the opportunity pass, as the Kaiser did not believe that England would ever reconcile with France. However, Britain did reconcile with its longtime adversaries, France and Russia, and in 1906 the British secretly agreed to back France should Germany attack. Had the Kaiser known that war with France meant war with Britain, he would have been more conciliatory, as he never wanted war with Britain. On the other hand, had Britain not been pledged to help the French when World War I did come, and had they stayed out of the war, Germany would have defeated France as they had in 1870, but there would have been no Nazi Germany and no Soviet Union as a result the war. The what if’s surrounding the future struggle mounted, but no one could do anything to stop them.

The coming conflict worried Churchill. He understood Britain’s need to quickly modernize the defense systems. Churchill headed up the commissions to develop the tank, the airplane as a weapon, larger ships, and the switch from coal to oil to power Britain’s machines.[[15]](#footnote-15)Great Britain was not the only country to move towards industrializing, Germany, too, massively built their military in preparation for a fight. Many new technologies used in World War II came from Germany during World War I. Both sides developed the tank. Many critics believed the development of the tank to be a waste of resources, but Churchill and his German counterparts believed otherwise, and were right.

At almost the start of the war, Winston Churchill articulated the question that would dog him for the next four years,

*are there not other alternatives than sending our armies to chew barbed wire in Flanders...If it is impossible or unduly costly to pierce the German lines on existing fronts, ought we not, as new forces come to hand, engage him on new frontiers?[[16]](#footnote-16)*

Nearly every operation, plan or enterprise he crafted from 1914 to 1918 can be seen as a response to the question.[[17]](#footnote-17)

As the character of “total war" came into clearer view, Churchill adopted two goals: defeat the Germans, and avoid unnecessary carnage.[[18]](#footnote-18)His grand strategy was to weaken Germany by attacking its more vulnerable periphery, opening up new fronts in distant theaters.By late 1914 to early 1915 the Western Front in France and Belgium had effectively become a stalemate.[[19]](#footnote-19)A new front was desperately needed.The Allies were keen to open an effective supply route to Russia. Germany and Austria-Hungary blocked Russia's land trade routes to Europe, while no easy sea route existed. Most of the Northern routes were blocked by ice.The Baltic Sea was blocked by the German Kaiserliche Marine. The Black Sea's only entrance was through the Dardanelles and the Bosporus, which were controlled by the Ottoman Empire. The British attempted to bribe the Ottoman Empire to join the Allied unsuccessfully.[[20]](#footnote-20)

In November 1914, First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill put forward his first plans for a naval attack on the Dardanelles, based at least in part on what turned out to be specious reports regarding Ottoman troop strength. He reasoned that the Royal Navy had a large number of obsolete battleships which could not be used against the German High Seas Fleet in the North Sea, but which might well be made useful in another theatre.[[21]](#footnote-21) Initially, the attack was to be made by the Royal Navy alone. Yet, with the operation almost underway, many leaders began voicing concerns that a naval attack could not accomplish the objective alone. It was decided that 50,000 troops would follow up on the Gallipoli Beach after the initial attack. Lloyd George and Churchill both agreed the number should be 97,000.[[22]](#footnote-22) The War Office, however, would not budge and for weeks did nothing. Through that time, the navy halted all activity and waited for reinforcements. By that time, the element of surprise was gone. The grand strategy could not possibly work according to Churchill.

All three attempts to take the Dardanelles, and open a sea route for Russia, failed. The attack proved a disaster. Several ships were lost and thousands of men along with them. When the ground troops finally landed, it was too late. The Turks had brought in reinforcements and were able to drive the British and French troops into trench warfare, the very thing Churchill hoped to avoid. Those left to defend their little beachhead were eventually picked up by the end of the year, but with heavy casualties. All support for the project had pulled out following the attempt by ground troops to take Gallipoli.[[23]](#footnote-23)Yet, there is little doubt that had his brilliant plan succeeded, it would have shortened the war and saved thousands of lives. However, in 1915, Churchill did not possess the supreme authority to carry out the mission the way he envisioned it to work. All reports and urgings on Churchill’s part were ignored by the naval commanders. The entirety of the plan rested in the fact the navy needed to press hard and keep pressing. Even after reports of low ammunition on the part of the Turks, the British did not press hard. The disaster at Gallipoli sealed Churchill’s fate, or so he believed. “I am finished,” he told a friend after his failure.[[24]](#footnote-24) The Conservatives demanded his demotion, and after a few weeks, Churchill resigned his post unhappy and disappointed.

Hindsight would clearly demonstrate, as it always does, that Churchill should have opposed the operation of the Dardanelles. Since he constantly fought the chain of command over troop numbers, and times of attack, he should have seen the large gaps in his strategy. Team work clearly did not happen. The attitudes of the War Commission, and later the Dardanelles Commission demonstrated the old way of viewing war and tactics—with a frontal assault being key—and whoever had the most men and strength would be the victors. The leadership simply did not want to take the chances Churchill knew to be necessary. He told the Dardanelles Commission: "It is not right to condemn operations of war simply because they involve risk and chance...one can only balance the chance....All war is hazard. Victory is only wrestled by running risks."[[25]](#footnote-25)

World War I was hardly Churchill's first experience with war; rather, it was the climax of a life devoted to the study and practice of war. Churchill's had seen the new and disturbing stage in war's evolution as he witnessed the horrible power of technology in the Boer War: "I had carried away from the South African veldt a very lively and modern sense of what rifle bullets could do.”[[26]](#footnote-26)The Boer War had an important impact on Churchill's concepts as World War I developed.

The waste of the Boer War fifteen years before demonstrated to Churchill the effects of trench warfare and the loss of strategic mobility and mass slaughter soon to be seen on the Western Front.Churchill argued many deaths on the Western Front were futile, since they were not sacrificed in the execution of a sound strategy.[[27]](#footnote-27)This was the larger part of why he advocated for the Dardanelles Campaign. Unfortunately, the massive deficiencies in the plan worked against his strategy. He deplored the utter lack of logic displayed in these early assaults, and the ridiculous failure of generals to respond to a new kind of war which was different from former experiences. All of his strategies reflected the pincer move seen in the American Civil War. Churchill understood that attacking the Front head on was futile. All of his plans included maintaining the Western Front, but also attempting to defeat the Germans from all other angles.[[28]](#footnote-28)

Another of Churchill’s profound realizations came when he found the military arm of the country to be inadequate in controlling the course of the war. From that point forward, he believed a central leader needed to control the strategy of conflicts.[[29]](#footnote-29) This realization would later affect Britain’s process and strategic role in World War II. Fortunately, Britain and the Allies prevailed, but Churchill would not be a part of the government’s celebration. By the time the war ended, Churchill served his country on the front lines. He had failed in his role (or so he believed). What was unknown at that time, however, was Churchill would return.

**Political Might**

After the disaster at Gallipoli, Churchill resigned his post. He placed all the blame of what had happened on himself. Of course, politically, so did the Conservatives, but it was Churchill, himself, who took the loss the hardest. He understood his strategy would have worked had he been the controlling factor. He knew the strength of the strategy and what should have happened, but it didn’t. All that planning and strategy without any real gain. It appeared as though the Allies might lose if they didn’t receive help. Of course, eventually, the United States joined the fight. Yet, Churchill always kept the loss close to him; like a painful memory a child might have after burning their hand for the first time. The pain; the lesson; all close in his mind.

Instead of watching the war happen from his home, Churchill flung himself into the heaves of battle. He volunteered with the infantry, and quickly rose to leadership positions.[[30]](#footnote-30) His men loved him. Churchill, a lover of the fight, found that life to be rewarding—sitting with his comrades in the trenches. However, when Churchill entered the field, the Western Front had grown quiet. Churchill despised the waiting game. His strategy had failed at the Dardanelles, but he worked meticulously on creating new plans of attack. The Officers followed the same suit over and over again. Bombard, soften the enemy, attack at dawn, get mowed down, and start over. Churchill hated this tactic. Subsequently, he invented the idea of the tank, and then urged others much more technically sound to build one.[[31]](#footnote-31) Upon successful completion and execution of the first attack, Churchill took command of the building process. He spent the last part of the war as Minister of Munitions, and just like that, he was back.

Many changes came as a result of the end of World War I. The Russians had pulled out before the war was over to manage (mismanage is more like it) their own affairs. Germany had worked a great victory in sending Lenin back to start a revolution and escape a two front war. When the war ended, Russia was still dealing with their own revolution. As a leader in Lloyd George’s cabinet, Churchill took every opportunity to speak out against the Reds and the peace terms with Germany, but his words were met with criticism.[[32]](#footnote-32) The British, tired and hurting from the largest conflict in European history, ached for peace and strong consequences for the violators of that peace.

At this time, Churchill served in George’s War Department, and was consumed in the task of bringing the military home and getting things back in good order. Britain maintained a military presence in Russia during the Civil War (revolution), but those above him believed the presence needed to cease. At one point in the conflict, it appeared as though the anti-Bolshevik forces would win. Churchill planned to help set up the new democratic government onsite; unfortunately, the success of the anti-Bolsheviks did not last, and the trip was cancelled.[[33]](#footnote-33) And, like a flash of lightening, Russia was no longer a “democratic” state, but instead, an enemy to all the Western Nations. The new government created from the revolution would usher in a new era of fear.

More and more, Churchill became unhappy over being responsible for carrying out the policies that had been developed by other people, policies he could not support. In Ireland, for example, Churchill urged Parliament to begin fair talks with the Irish over the governance of the island. Ireland had long been ruled by Britain, and for a long time desired independence. Winston Churchill eventually took the post as head of the Colonial Office. This meant he would head all negotiations of peace and independence with the Irish. At one point in the negotiations, one Irish leader, Michael Collins, disgruntled with the price placed on his head, mumbled to Churchill his displeasures. Churchill responded by lightening the mood with talk of the extremely low price placed on his head during the Boer War. Collins seemed amused and from that point on the discussions went smoothly.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Churchill’s political struggle was far from over. In 1922, the Conservatives did not believe Lloyd George was the best man to lead them anymore.[[35]](#footnote-35) Just before Churchill set out to start his Campaign in Dundee, he was stricken with appendicitis. His wife and friends attempted to campaign for him, but to his dismay, he found himself “without an office, without a seat, without a party, and without an appendix.”[[36]](#footnote-36) He believed it useless to be publicly upset about an election. However, in private, he felt useless. Clementine, while upset at her husband’s dismay, enjoyed having him home. Churchill’s depression did not last long. He soon took his family on a four month vacation to the South of France.[[37]](#footnote-37) From there, Churchill’s famous work detailing the Great War was penned. The book, *The World Crisis*, was a very revealing text including documents never before seen by the public. The documents included many details about the failed Dardanelles campaign. He, however, was unable to escape the crosshairs of that campaign, and subsequently lost the election in 1924. While the loss affected him, it was not as difficult as the first. By now, Churchill worried more about future conflicts. He dove into research and writing about what the horrors of war would bring to the world. At the same time, he advocated for the combination of the Conservative and Liberal parties in order to defeat the Labour Party and the socialist movement.

While fighting for the alliance, Winston Churchill found himself in a political no man’s land. The die-hard conservatives did not want him and he couldn’t escape the Great War with the liberals. He found it easier, though, to side with the conservatives once the protective tariff platform dropped from the platform. Although Churchill won a seat for the conservatives after two years out of politics, he did not want to accept a post in the cabinet since he was not truly a part of the party. The Prime Minister wanted Churchill in his Cabinet though, and he received the post of Chancellor of Exchequer.[[38]](#footnote-38) Churchill shocked and humbled by the offer, gladly accepted.

Winston Churchill now served as the Chief Economic advisor to Prime Minister—one of the highest posts in the Cabinet. This new position was one his father had held the previous century. It is a similar role to that of Secretary of the Treasury in the United States and includes the responsibility for the national budget. Of course, he was criticized for switching parties again to which he replied, “A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.”[[39]](#footnote-39)

The worst problem Churchill dealt with in this new role as Chancellor was the Strike of 1927. The coal miners refused to allow their wages to be cut, so the miners closed the mines. The Trades Union Congress stepped in and initiated the strike in sympathy for the miners. The strike, only lasting nine days, nearly collapsed the nation. All business and public transportation came to a halt.[[40]](#footnote-40) Politically, British Unions were now hostile to the Tories. The government subsequently passed the Trade Disputes Act of 1927, which outlawed so-called sympathetic strikes. Supporters of the General Strike were discredited. More pragmatic union leaders willing to work within the system gained influence, and the T.U.C. became firmly tied to the Labour Party (the same party Churchill was concerned about).[[41]](#footnote-41) The other political casualty was, indirectly, Churchill. When Baldwin stepped down as Conservative leader in 1937, he was succeeded by Neville Chamberlain. The Cliveden set dominated policy by 1934, though Chamberlain was in no sense a puppet. Churchill was cast adrift. He continued to blunder along, voting against the India Act of 1935 and opposing the abdication of Edward VIII in 1936. In fact, Churchill wrote much of Edward VIII's abdication speech, and he remained close to the duke and duchess of Windsor after 1936.[[42]](#footnote-42) Because of his loyalties and aid to the abdication of Edward VIII, political leaders dumped him. For most of the ‘30s Churchill was “in the wilderness”.[[43]](#footnote-43) Only when war came did he receive an invitation to return to politics.

When Chamberlain fell in 1940, Churchill took over as leader of the Conservative party, remaining a Conservative the rest of his life (even though he would lead the opposition party after the defeat of Conservatives at the end of World War II, and then later return and finish out his days). A colleague of Churchill’s would later remark, “he certainly repeatedly favored coalitions and took initiatives to create centrist political parties.”[[44]](#footnote-44) While he served in both major parties, he truly did favor coalitions. Most believed him to be Conservative, but he essentially went with the wind.

Churchill’s “inconsistency” in politics made him the man the world needed. Without his ambition and intrinsic motivation to find the best solution for the British people’s around the world, the appeasers would have lost the country to the trickery of Socialism and Communism. He remained steadfast while in exile and demonstrated a highly intelligent political mind in everything he did. Of course, he made mistakes just as any other man does, but his deep compassion and reflective nature allowed him to overcome his human nature to achieve greatness. His political genius, highly developed after the Great War, allowed him to perceive situations and probable outcomes before they even occurred.

As early as 1931, Churchill spoke out against appeasement and the forgetful nature of the victors following war. He urged Great Britain to remember the horrible troubles Germany had caused, and what rearmament would mean to the world. He vigorously spoke out against the League of Nations opposing the Japanese in Manchuria. He feared the Japanese would fall to Communist rule considering their neighbors. In regards to Spain, he referred to the Spanish Republican government as a Communist front, and Franco’s army as the “Anti-red movement”.[[45]](#footnote-45) Correct in his analysis of those countries, it is surprising he praised Mussolini for as long (at all, really) as he did. He even admitted “if I had to choose between communism and Nazism, I would choose communism.”[[46]](#footnote-46) Of course, when it came down to it, no one would criticize him for his like of Mussolini since Hitler initiated all future conflicts.

Following his return from exile, Churchill campaigned for the rearming of Britain in order to keep Germany at bay. The government seemed perplexed as to whether economic sanctions were in needed, or what else could be done. Frustrated and feeling ignored, Churchill publicly spoke out against the government. One such speech he gave to the House of Commons regarding Neville Chamberlain’s appeasement of Hitler, he bluntly and prophetically stated, “You were given the choice between war and dishonor. You chose dishonor, and you will have war.”[[47]](#footnote-47)The hair raising speech, at the time, seemed unrealistic and painted Churchill as a pessimist, but his own experiences, trial and errors, and intelligence made him ahead of his time. Those who can see the outcome of something before it ever occurs are generally pushed aside for the desires of the people at the present. Winston Churchill was one such person. It would take the start of the Second World War for the British, and the world, to understand this.

**A Second War, a Second (Third) Chance**

After the outbreak of the Second World War on 3 September 1939, the day Britain declared war on Germany, Churchill was, again, appointed First Lord of the Admiralty and a member of the War Cabinet. When they were informed, the Board of the Admiralty sent a signal to the Fleet: "Winston is back".[[48]](#footnote-48) As if to say, “Here we go again!” During the Phony War, Churchill advocated the pre-emptive occupation of the neutral Norwegian port of Narvik, Sweden early in the war. As had happened in the Great War, Churchill was shot down by leadership and the tactic was delayed until the successful German invasion of Norway. Again, Churchill found himself in a position with little authority, and again, his strategic master plans were not followed accordingly and Britain suffered for it.

The bitter beginnings of the war reflected the apathy of the government to learn from lessons of the Great War. Though he felt useless and ignored, he pushed on in advocating for strategies he knew would work. Churchill would later note, when President Roosevelt asked for suggestions about what the war should be called, he replied that it should be called “the Unnecessary War. There never was a war more easy to stop.”[[49]](#footnote-49)

Hours before the German invasion of France by a lightning advance through neutral territory, it became clear that, following failure in Norway, the country had no confidence in Chamberlain's prosecution of the war and so Chamberlain resigned.[[50]](#footnote-50)The commonly accepted version of events states that Lord Halifax turned down the post of prime minister because he believed he could not govern effectively as a member of the House of Lords instead of the House of Commons. Although the prime minister does not traditionally advise the King on the former's successor, Chamberlain wanted someone who would command the support of all three major parties in the House of Commons. A meeting between Chamberlain, Halifax, Churchill and David Margesson, the government Chief Whip, led to the recommendation of Churchill, and, as a constitutional monarch, George VI asked Churchill to be prime minister. Churchill's first act was to write to Chamberlain to thank him for his support.[[51]](#footnote-51)

As Prime Minister, Winston Churchill initiated many new programs to build British defense systems, and he promoted the welfare of citizens and the continuation of the British Empire through his most famous speeches. His first speech as prime minister was the famous "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat".[[52]](#footnote-52)He followed that closely with two other equally famous ones, given just before the Battle of Britain.One of his most memorable war speeches came on November 10, 1942 at the Lord Mayor's Luncheon at Mansion House in London, in response to the Allied victory at the Second Battle of El Alamein. Churchill stated: “This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”[[53]](#footnote-53)Without having much in the way of sustenance or good news to offer the British people, he took a risk in deliberately choosing to emphasize the dangers instead. Churchill rarely offered good news, but he offered hope to an impoverished people. The government had performed a severe disservice to the people from the ‘30s through the beginning of the ‘40s. Churchill worked to correct the distrust the people had with the government.

In regards to U.S. relations with Britain, Churchill’s relationship with Roosevelt proved advantageous for Great Britain, and the world. The Lend-Lease policy was just the beginning of a beautiful friendship between the U.S. and the Allies. And, when Pearl Harbor sat smoldering in the ashes of Japanese bombs, Churchill rejoiced. The remaining years were slow, but steady in increase for the Allied war effort.

Churchill's role in the Second World War had generated much support for him amongst the British population; unfortunately he was defeated in the 1945 election. Many reasons for this have been given; key among them being that a desire for post-war reform.And, the man who had led Britain in war was not seen as the man to lead the nation in peace.Churchill, however, did not step down as expected, and it would be another decade before he finally did.

**Manufactured Success**

Churchill is often treated as a god, and not a minor one at that. Yet his successes were only the product of many failures and lessons learned. The world will always blame the aggressors in conflict, but what about those who lead the lambs to slaughter without a clear plan at hand? Churchill was no God. He was a man with a vision for a better Britain, and a better life for himself. He would not be the last to say he made many mistakes in his life. Many of the failures he is responsible for were a result of the lack of authority he had in government. Until he served as Prime Minister, he had to constantly contend for his thoughts about the Empire’s course. Just like John Adams, those in government rarely cared to agree with him, to their detriment.

In his memoirs he reflects on the decisions he made and those around him made. He discusses the disastrous agreements made between nations, and laments on the poor position the Allies were left in with the end of the Great War. One of the most interesting aspects of Winston Churchill is his ability to learn from the past, and apply that knowledge toward the future. He is one of the few leaders who made it through both World Wars and is the only one to have a deeper understanding of the inner struggles and turmoil both wars presented to the world.

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2. Geoffrey Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness*, (London: Hamledon Continuum, 2006), p. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Roy Jenkins, *Churchill: A Biography*, (London: Pan Books, 2002), pp. 20-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
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