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Works Cited

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Man of the Year

(See Cover)

Those who write history with words sometimes forget that history is made with words. The course of the 20th Century has been shaped by three stupendous movements. Each movement has been led by a man of words, who used words as instruments of policy, of persuasion and of power, who epitomized the character of his movement in words of historic simplicity.

> In the autumn of 1917, in Smolny Institute in Petrograd, Nikolai Lenin quietly said: We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist State.

> In the autumn of 1924, in Landsberg Fortress in Bavaria, Adolf Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*: I, however, resolved now to become a politician.

> On May 13, 1940, in his first statement as Prime Minister to the British House of Commons, Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill declared: I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.

Those eleven burning words summed up the nature of Britain's war, turned Britain's back on the weaknesses of the past, set her face toward the unknown future.

Because of them the rest of that speech has been forgotten. It should not be forgotten, for it is not only a great example of Winston Churchill's eloquence, but the epitome of the movement which he leads.

After a brief report on the formation of his Government, Winston Churchill said: "You ask, what is

our policy? I say it is to wage war by land, sea and air—war with all our might and with all the strength God has given us—and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy.

"You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs. Victory in spite of all terrors.

Victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival.

"Let that be realized. No survival for the British Empire, no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge, the impulse of the ages, that mankind shall move forward toward his goal."

December 31, 1940, was not only the end of a year; it was the end of a decade —the most terrifying of the 20th Century.

The decade which ended in 1920 had seen a war that was to prove inconclusive. It had seen a revolution that was to lie quiescent after establishing itself in the largest country of the world. The decade which ended in 1930 was one of confusion and wasted energy—the wasted energy of gambling and gin-drinking in the U. S., of civil war in the Far East, of misdirected revolutionary effort from the U. S. S. R., of the attempt in Europe to hold resurgent peoples in check. The decade which ended this week saw the failure of that attempt and the unleashing of ruthless war. It saw the Far East's battle of warlords turn into a war for the supremacy of one people. It saw the U. S. turn to a feverish effort to protect itself and its neighbors. It saw, in the Battle of Britain, the life-&-death struggle of the greatest empire the world has ever known.

The Candidates of 1940. No artist, no athlete, no scientist, only a man whose place was on the stage of world politics, could be Man of 1940—last and stormiest year of a stormy decade.

The obvious U. S. candidate for that title was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who got himself elected for an unprecedented third term. But Franklin Roosevelt's other accomplishments of 1940 were not breathtaking.

On the score of leadership Wendell Willkie, who, although a businessman, convinced 22,500,000 voters that he spoke for a vital cause, performed more strikingly.

But in the end Willkie did not succeed in leading his crusade to victory.

The great accomplishments of 1940 belonged, if anywhere, across the waters as they did in 1938 when Man of the Year Hitler conquered without fighting in Austria and at Munich, as they did in 1939 when Man of the Year Stalin got half of Poland by a shrewd deal and a free hand to work his will on Finland. But 1940 did not fall like a plum into the lap of the Dictators. One of them, Benito Mussolini, thinking conquest was easy, proved the year's greatest flop. Another, Joseph Stalin, lost several teeth before he chewed off an edge of tough little Finland. A third, Adolf Hitler, was more successful.

Hitler during the year conquered five nations by arms—among them France, his most powerful opponent on the Continent—and subjugated part of the Balkans by threats. His conquests were on a par with those of Napoleon Bonaparte. But in one vital respect he failed. He did not master Britain, as scheduled, before the summer was out. He did not bring the war to a victorious conclusion. At year's end he had a tiring people at home, and a war abroad, a war which, unless he could end it swiftly, might ultimately prove Germany's undoing. All his victories had not saved him from jeopardy nor won him real success. Before the end of fateful 1941 Hitler may be Man of the Century—if Britain falls. If Britain still stands at the end of 1941, Adolf Hitler may be on his way to join the distinguished company of Benito Mussolini, Generals Gamelin and Almazán, and John Llewellyn Lewis, those men of high hopes who failed to come through in the crisis year of 1940.

Among other Europeans who had made their mark in 1940, one was short, squat General John Metaxas, Premier of the Greeks, who had made a monkey of Benito Mussolini. Another was Britain's Union Leader Ernest Bevin, who became a tower of strength in Britain's Government, who rallied Labor to Britain's cause, who became a symbol of the breakdown of class distinctions by which Britain achieved a new unity to fight her battle.

Yet the curious fact was that in most men's minds everywhere—even in Germany, to judge by Nazi denunciations—Winston Churchill outranked all others as Man of 1940. He came to power as Prime Minister just as the Blitzkrieg descended upon Britain's outposts. In his first few weeks in office they toppled about him like ninepins. Norway had already been lost. Then fell The Netherlands, Belgium, France.

Against this roll call of defeats, all the victories which Churchill gave his countrymen, aside from isolated successes at sea, were such that any Cockney could count them on his thumbs: 1) the gallant evacuation at Dunkirk, really a disaster in which, although upwards of 335,000 men were saved, the equipment of virtually the entire British Expeditionary Force was lost; 2) the Battle of the Marmarica which smashed the Italian Army in Egypt.

But Churchill was not without accomplishment. He gave his countrymen exactly what he promised them—blood, toil, tears, sweat—and one thing more: untold courage. It was the last that counted, not only in Britain but in democracies throughout the world.

One evening just before year's end millions of U. S. citizens sat silent before their radios and heard their President identify the future of their country with the future of Great Britain. But more than six months before, when France was tottering, it was Winston Churchill who raised his brandy-harsh voice and made that identification real, saying: "We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be; we shall fight on beaches, landing grounds, in fields, in streets and on the hills. We shall never surrender and even if, which I do not for the moment believe, this island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, will carry on the struggle until in God's good time the New World, with all its power and might, sets forth to the liberation and rescue of the Old."

Anglo-American. As a symbol of Anglo-American unity Winston Churchill is a paradox because his Americanism is more British than American—more British, even, than average-British. This seven-

month child of a British peer and an American heiress went back to Elizabethan times to find his spiritual forebears; he grew to maturity with a stomach for strong food and drink, with a lust for adventure, with a tongue and pen that shaped the English language into the virile patterns of a Donne, a Marlowe or a Shakespeare. His father he worshiped, but never got close to; his mother he respectfully admired.

He had money, a name and a flair for publicity; he had Lord Randolph Churchill's "force, caprice and charm"; and he had an incomparable gift for words. During his years of eclipse between the two World Wars he was an articulate and consistent critic of British Empire policy, the most feared politician in Britain by the narrow-minded men who made that policy. He was the one man in the British Empire most obviously equipped to lead the Empire in war, and it was small credit to Britain that he was not chosen to lead it until the Empire rocked on its heels.

The year 1940 found the man, as well as the man the year. It found him speaking, not only as a Briton, but as an American, taking his words from Oscar Hammerstein and Edna Ferber: "These two great organizations of the English-speaking democracies, the British Empire and the United States, will have to be somewhat mixed up together in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage. For my own part, looking out upon the future, I do not view the process with any misgivings. No one can stop it. Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on in full flood, inexorable, irresistible, to broader lands and better days."

War of Words. Adolf Hitler and Winston Churchill are the two men alive in the world today who best understand the power of words as weapons of warfare. Their techniques are different. Hitler uses words as poison gas; Churchill uses them as a broadsword. Yet he, too, can be cunning. Last May he wrote a letter to Benito Mussolini couched in the sort of language Captain John Smith might have used to a savage chieftain:

"I ... feel a desire to speak words of good will to you, as chief of the Italian nation, across what seems to be a swiftly widening gulf. . . . We can, no doubt, inflict grievous injuries upon one another and maul each other cruelly and darken the Mediterranean with our strife. If you so decree, it must be so. But I declare that I have never been the enemy of Italian greatness, nor ever at heart the foe of the Italian lawgiver. . . . Down the ages, above all other calls, comes the cry that the joint heirs of Latin and Christian civilization must not be ranged against one another in mortal strife. Hearken to it, I beseech you in all honor and respect, before the dread signal is given. It will never be given by us." This plea failed, but last week Winston Churchill made it again, this time over the head of Il Duce in a broadcast directly to the Italian people. This time he used his broadsword. He said: "One man and one man alone has ranged the Italian people in deadly struggle against the British Empire and has deprived Italy of the sympathy and intimacy of the United States of America. . . . One man has arrayed the trustees and inheritors of ancient Rome upon the side of the ferocious pagan barbarians. . . . There lies the tragedy of Italian history and there stands the criminal who has wrought the deed of folly and of shame." How many Italians hearkened to these words no one knows,* but it was necessary for King Vittorio Emanuele to make a plea for unity to his people and for Crown Princess Marie Jose publicly to join the Fascist Party.

The Men. Man-of-the-Year Churchill does not stand alone. Neither does Runner-up Hitler. Beside and behind Hitler stand the German armed forces, the superbly destructive machine fashioned by Goring, Brauchitsch, Raeder and hundreds of others. Beside and behind Churchill stands a very small man multiplied a millionfold. He is just an Englishman. He was born in the country, or in one of the big cities of the Midlands, or in a grey house in a London suburb. The hands that reared him were hard. His food was tepid or cold: butter and bread, jam and strong black tea, mutton and what was left over of the Sunday joint. His boyhood was tough. At school he was caned. He grew to know history in a simple way; he grew to love his King as he loved the mist in the park on a summer's morning, the hedges and the downs and the beaches.

But he never spoke of these things.

When the war came he did not like it.

For a moment he knew fear, then he lit his pipe and poured himself a whiskey.

When the blackout came he grouched.

Churchill took over: the right man for the job. Then came Dunkirk: a bloody shame.

Then the stuff fell: St. Paul's, the club, women and children, London afire. He got mad, but he did not show it. There was too much to do: business to carry on, children to be sent to the country, people to be dug out of shelters, sleep to be got somehow. A bloody nuisance.

On his behavior hung the shape of the future. His civilized toughness, his balanced courage and his simple pride altered the course of history in 1940. Without him there could have been no Churchill.

"Their Finest Hour." Great history makes great literature. Seven years after the Spanish Armada an Englishman wrote: This royal throne of kings, this scept'red isle, This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars, This other Eden, demi-paradise, This fortress built by Nature for herself Against infection and the hand of war, This happy breed of men, this little world, This precious stone set in the silver sea, Which serves it in the office of a wall, Or as a moat defensive to a house, Against the envy of less happier lands; This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England. . . .

In times of action literature is the words of men of action. Afterward come the poets. To the small men of Britain in 1940 Winston Churchill spoke words that may live as long as Shakespeare's: Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duty and so bear ourselves that if the British Commonwealth and Empire last for a thousand years, men will still say "This was their finest hour!"

* National Broadcasting Co. picked up British Broadcasting Corp.'s broadcast of the speech in Italian, rebroadcast it over short wave to Italy.

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