

Churchill and England

In the 1930s, England had become permeated with pacifism. Millions of soldiers had been lost to the gas warfare and dank trenches of World War I. In reaction, those on both the left and right of the political spectrum showed great support for appeasement and concessions to Hitler.

The Oxford Union Debating Society overwhelmingly approved a resolution that would "in no circumstances fight for king and country." A pledge, known as the Oxford Oath, was taken by students and teachers across the nation using the same language. The Cambridge Union voted 213 to 138 for "uncompromising" pacifism. The nation was increasingly dispirited and isolated.

Meanwhile, Hitler's Nazi tyranny advanced. Whispers of surrender to Hitler began to circulate throughout England.

It was upon this stage that Winston Churchill arose. As one historian has said, he imposed his "imagination and his will upon his countrymen," idealizing them "with such intensity that in the end they approached his ideal and began to see themselves as he saw them."

In doing so, "he transformed cowards into brave men, and so fulfilled the purpose of shining armour." Churchill led a nation that had pledged to never fight again to once again fight and die for king and country.

It is an important lesson, not only for England, but for America as well. We must always remember: To whom much is given, much is required. A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.

--Beecher Hunter