CHURCHILL, Sir Winston Leonard Spencer (November 30, 1874 – January 24, 1965)

Winston Churchill was British Prime Minister twice during his eventful political career. Churchill initially served the British Empire as a soldier in the Caribbean, India, and Africa during the imperial wars of the 1890s. His political service began in Parliament in May 1904 when he joined the Liberal Party and became undersecretary at the Colonial Office (1905). Prime Minister Herbert Asquith promoted Churchill to the Home Office and, in 1911, appointed him First Lord of the Admiralty. After briefly resigning from politics, Churchill returned in 1917 as an ardent anti-communist, joining the Conservatives in 1924, the year he became Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was again appointed First Lord of the Admiralty upon the outbreak of World War II and became Prime Minister for the first time in May 1940. As Prime Minister during the war, Churchill relied on vigorous nationalist rhetoric to rouse his compatriots against Germany. Although defeated in the general election of 1945, he continued to speak and publish, delivering his famous “iron curtain” speech at Fulton College in Missouri on March 5, 1946. A lifelong anti-communist, he used this particular speech to emphasize the ideological gulf between the democratic, liberty-embracing West and the Soviet Union. Churchill again served as Prime Minister from 1951 until 1955.

Bibliography: Eugene L. Rasor, *Winston S. Churchill, 1874-1965: A Comprehensive Historiography and Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000).

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