

Joseph Hakim

English 9

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Winston Churchill was born on the 30th of November, 1874. He was born into an aristocratic family in Woodstock, Oxfordshire. When he was two years old, Churchill moved to Dublin where his education began. Churchill had a poor academic record in school and attended three different independent schools until he joined the Harrow Rifle Corps in 1888. Although he did not do well in his schoolwork, he grew to love the English language. After Harrow, Churchill attended Royal Military College before entering Parliament. At the forefront of politics for fifty years, Churchill held many political and cabinet positions. Before the First World War, he served as President of the Board of Trade, Home Secretary, and First Lord of the Admiralty as part of Asquith's Liberal government. He then briefly resumed active army service on the Western Front as commander of the 6th Battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers and then returned to government as Minister of Munitions, Secretary of State for War, and Secretary of State for Air.

When Churchill was out of office in the 1930's, he took the lead in warning about Nazi Germany. Churchill was particularly noted for his speeches and radio broadcasts, which helped inspire the British people. He led Britain as Prime Minister until victory over Nazi Germany. After the Conservative Party lost the 1945 election, Churchill became Leader of the Opposition to the Labour Government. He publicly warned of an "Iron Curtain" of Soviet influence in Europe and promoted European unity. After winning the 1951 election, Churchill again became Prime Minister. Churchill suffered a serious stroke in 1953 and retired as Prime Minister in 1955, although he remained a Member of Parliament until 1964. He died at the age of ninety in 1965. Churchill is widely regarded as being among the most influential people in British history.

From as early as 1936, Churchill was always talking in Parliament about the overwhelming rate of German rearmament. His campaign made him unpopular. It wasn't until he became First Lord of the Admiralty in 1939 that Parliament was reminded of Churchill's skills as a great leader. Churchill's predecessor, Neville Chamberlain, had failed to fully estimate the intentions of the Nazi regime. After a series of events which led to the crisis in Norway in April 1940, Chamberlain faced criticism from the government. In May 1940, he made the decision to resign and Churchill became his successor. Churchill was now faced with the issues that Chamberlain failed to address.

Churchill reformed the government, became minister for defense at the head of a Defense Committee and surrounded himself by a military staff. He was experienced in

warfare, from both the civilian's and soldier's point of view. He had seen active service in Cuba and India and he used his position as a journalist to fight for peace in the Boer War. And by the late 1940s Churchill had developed his strategy for success in World War 2; he believed it was a matter of time before the Axis powers were defeated.

Churchill's other great talent was the ability to galvanize an entire nation and he depended on persuasiveness and intelligence to spread national spirit and determination in the face of Germany and Italy's aggressiveness. Even though he promised nothing more than 'blood, toil, tears and sweat', he inspired courage on the Home Front. Throughout the war Churchill worked tirelessly, and built good relations with President Roosevelt at the same time as maintaining an alliance with the Soviet Union. His overriding aim was to obtain support from the US. Over the next five years, the partnership developed as Churchill planned and it became crucial to winning the war.

The only other way Churchill could have responded to this situation, was to take a more aggressive approach. He could have not made ties with the United States or The Soviet Union, but by doing so, he set himself up for success. I think that the way he handled this crisis was the correct way and the most beneficial way for Britain. If he would have taken a more aggressive path, the consequences might have been catastrophic. Churchill handled this issue with the skills he passes as a great leader.