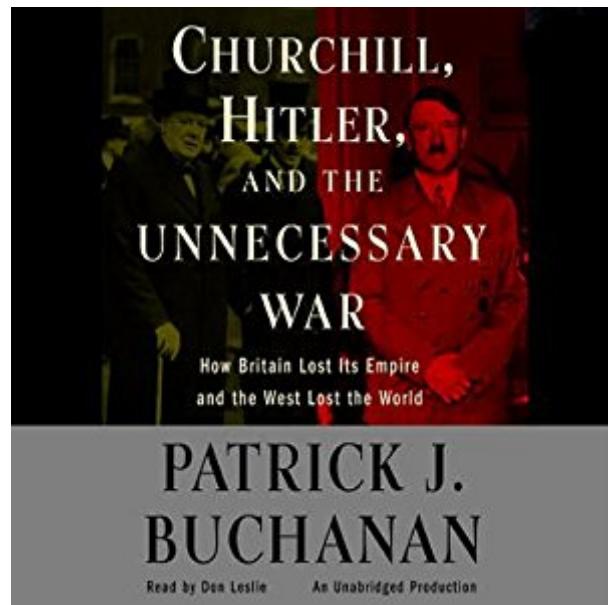


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Churchill, Hitler, And 'The Unnecessary War'



Synopsis

Were World Wars I and II "which can now be seen as a thirty-year paroxysm of slaughter and destruction" inevitable? Were they necessary wars? Were the bloodiest and most devastating conflicts ever suffered by mankind fated by forces beyond men's control? Or were they products of calamitous failures of judgment? In this monumental and provocative history, Patrick Buchanan makes the case that, if not for the blunders of British statesmen "Winston Churchill first among them" the horrors of two world wars and the Holocaust might have been avoided and the British Empire might never have collapsed into ruins. Half a century of murderous oppression of scores of millions under the iron boot of Communist tyranny might never have happened, and Europe's central role in world affairs might have been sustained for many generations. Among the British and Churchillian blunders were: ¢ The secret decision of a tiny cabal in the inner Cabinet in 1906 to take Britain straight to war against Germany, should she invade France ¢ The vengeful Treaty of Versailles that mutilated Germany, leaving her bitter, betrayed, and receptive to the appeal of Adolf Hitler ¢ Britain's capitulation, at Churchill's urging, to American pressure to sever the Anglo-Japanese alliance, insulting and isolating Japan, pushing her onto the path of militarism and conquest ¢ The 1935 sanctions that drove Italy straight into the Axis with Hitler ¢ The greatest blunder in British history: the unsolicited war guarantee to Poland of March 1939 "that guaranteed the Second World War" ¢ Churchill's astonishing blindness to Stalin's true ambitions. Certain to create controversy and spirited argument, Churchill, Hitler, and "The Unnecessary War" is a grand and bold insight into the historic failures of judgment that ended centuries of European rule and guaranteed a future no one who lived in that vanished world could ever have envisioned. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Patrick Buchanan has never been shy about taking positions that defy conventional wisdom. He does so again in this extremely well-written and well-documented book (there are over 1300 endnotes). Buchanan argues that both world wars, which constituted a "Civil War of the West", were not necessary and would not have taken place had unwise diplomatic decisions not been made by the major European powers. 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 of the war. In the interwar years, Britain alienated longtime allies Japan and Italy, who eventually formed an alliance with Nazi Germany. The Second World War came about, Buchanan believes, as a result of Britain's disastrous guarantee to protect Poland (which it was incapable of doing anyway). Hitler did not want war with Britain, as evidenced by the fact that he never attempted to build a strong navy.

From all of the other reviews I have read on this book it is certainly obvious that the author has hit a hot button issue and stirred the pot. This is the first book I have ever read by Pat Buchanan, and it has a very impressive premise. It is filled with over 1200 notes, and has a vast bibliography. Does the author have a point of view? Obviously, but then what author/historian does not wish to interpret history in their own way. While many reviewers give much time to WW II, the real issue is WW I and the resultant Treaty of Versailles. Such a pathetic war, such a pathetic treaty, one that was so bad even the US Senate refused to ratify it, and other diplomats knew all the Treaty did was ensure another war in 20 years. The dismantling of the old Empire/Monarchy system led to many of today's bastardized countries. Countries that contain people with no common language, culture or background. And, if you wish to criticize the premise, just look what recently happened with the

Georgian invasion by Russia, and now we have US giving its own "Polish Guarantee" for missile defense. The book definitely shows that there were other views with regard to Churchill and the two World Wars, and Buchanan comes down on the side of those who feel that the wars were unnecessary. It has been over 60 years since the WW II has ended, we have seen the files, seen the paperwork and correspondence from that era, and people are now properly wondering if that war was fought for the wrong reasons. Buchanan certainly points out all the atrocities that Hitler and his Generals ordered to happen, but to me the basic premise was that Hitler could have been avoided had there been a better and more civilized peace to end WW I.

Buchanan stakes out some pretty controversial positions here. But, agree or not, he raises questions seldom dealt with in public, and ones that go to the heart of the West's presumed moral authority in its two wars with Germany. Crucially, his is not an apologia for Hitler or the Third Reich. Their wretched horrors during WWII are acknowledged without reserve. Rather, it's an effort to put the diplomatic moves preceding WWII into a more balanced and accurate perspective than the American public is accustomed to. The results amount to a much more ambiguous mix than the history books usually allow, and should come as an eye-opener, particularly regarding Churchill's punitive role. Churchill is often treated as a god, and not a minor one at that. A reckoning with the British politician's career is long overdue. I doubt that any non-American head of state has been more lionized in our press than the former prime minister. Of course, the focal point of hagiography is Churchill's undeniable role as a wartime leader. It's a role the author Buchanan doesn't dispute. What the author does dispute is the wider context, particularly Churchill's vaunted reputation as a statesman. It's here within an unfolding sixty-year period that Buchanan lays bare the actual record--and contrary to legend, a dismal one it is. From the British politician's earliest service through 1955, the author records again and again gross errors of judgment that helped propagate WWI, instigate WWII, facilitate Soviet expansion, and finally terminate the British Empire. It's a sobering account, to say the least, darn near the equivalent of saying Jesus erred on the Mount of Olives. Nonetheless, it's an account that can't be ignored.

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