

Churchill's Triumph (historical novel at end of WWII)

by Michael Dobbs (2005)

The book starts twenty years after the war on the private yacht of Aristotle Onassis. He was a good friend of Churchill & was remembering him when others forgot. He met a man who remembers him for years ago. Reader be aware...some parts are too graphic.

Russia was about to march on Berlin & bring the European side of WWII to an end. 63 yr old Roosevelt (FDR), 70 yr old Winston Churchill (WC) & 66 yr old Marshal Stalin (MS) met the week of 4Feb45 in Yalta, Russia to determine what to do with the mess after the war. They each came with their own agendas & expectations. But it seems Stalin came the most prepared. They and their entourage ate lavishly while the common people starved to death.

President Wilson setup the League of Nations after WWI, but it fell apart when Hitler ignored it. FDR was near death after 4 terms as president in the worst of times (he actually died two months later). FDR only wanted to walk away with two things: create the United Nations (in hope of world peace) & get Russia to help US stop Japan. They both came at a cost; mainly 3 votes in the UN & countless incentives to help with Japan.

Churchill loved whiskey & arguing. His speeches were part of his arguments. He fought hard to save Poland (it lies between Russia & Germany, but also as a buffer to England), but it was futile when FDR didn't have the fight to stand with him against MS.

Even before they began MS had won just by demanding them to come to him. He was a master manipulator & a bully. The first day of the negotiations he asked England to destroy Dresden, Germany to keep Hitler from retreating. 75,000 civilians died that day. **MS took advantage of FDR's exhaustion & ignored WC to make him powerless.**

Words to MS meant nothing; to FDR meant only what he could make voters believe they meant, but to WC they were a means to motivate his people to greatness. 6 million Poles died (more than Germans, Japanese & Italians). They suffered when the Germans came through, when they retreated, when the Russians came through & when the Russians took over.

Throughout the book a Polish plumber (ex pianist) was promised freedom by WC, but was left behind. The three leaders left in such a haste after signing the final papers, WC's servant was left behind to finish packing & meet him on the ship. That is how Nowak escaped Russia. He walked 1000 miles back to Poland to see if his family was alive (they were not). He then went to another soldier's family village to let them know their son had died. He was thrown in prison for 10 years until MS was dead. And at the end of the book he finds WC & tells his story.

After WWII Russia took over Poland, East Germany, Czech, Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria & Romania until it's breakup at the end of the cold war (1989).

Quotes: "Win the war, yet lose the peace – the timeless legacy of fools." (Michael Dodds)