



BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES

News Division

RT. HON. HAROLD WILSON

Prime Minister

Today Britain mourns the loss of Sir Winston Churchill, who in our years of greatest danger became the personification of the will of the British nation and the ultimate symbol of freedom throughout the world. There are few of us today, men or women, whose lives have not been affected by his life. There are countless millions whose present freedom stems directly from his and Britain's finest hour; and many others, who do not share our freedom, nevertheless respect the strength and the will that he always showed in its defense.

This is not the time to give the biography of a man who always lived in the spotlight. His achievements, his individuality, his personal philosophy are well enough known. He was a statesman who strode the world stage with vigor in war and in peace and with magnanimity and foresight in victory. As a wartime leader he inspired Britain and those nations who now make up our Commonwealth to stand and defy militarism and aggression. In peace he held at one time or another nearly all the great offices of state, and

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always fought for basic human rights. He retired from the House of Commons at the end of the last Parliament, and it is at once sad yet characteristically appropriate that he should die in the very week that the British Parliament marks its 700th anniversary. He loved the House of Commons. He would probably wish to be remembered most of all as a House of Commons man.

As a politician he revelled in the tough fighting of Parliamentary debate. He was a writer, soldier, orator, philosopher, historian, painter; but he was much more than all of these. He was a master of the English language and he used it simply and effectively. He was a man of vision, yet he had that simplicity of true greatness which enabled him to cut through to the heart of any problem. In the throes of war he looked forward to the consequences and the national needs of the peace that would follow that war.

He saw the lasting strength of the British Commonwealth and he watched over an important stage of its transition from Empire. Blessed with an American mother and an English father, he instinctively saw how vital it was that the links between Britain and America should be strengthened and sustained, and above all he had one unshakeable faith -- freedom under the law. At the most vital period in our history he believed in the British people, in their resourcefulness, their industry, their invention, their tolerance, their ability always to respond to the call of the hour, and he believed in their sense of humor. He more than anyone else

knew how to appeal to all these qualities and to channel the reserves of energy they represented to final victory and to peace. He became in his own lifetime a legend and in death that legend will endure and will continue to inspire every one of us.

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