

# **The World's Great Speeches Study Guide**

**The World's Great Speeches by Lewis Copeland**

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# Plot Summary

The book is presented as a series of speeches, ranging from Ancient Greece to the 1990s. These speeches include such famous orators as Pericles and Mark Antony, though the latter is actually the speech written by Shakespeare for his play, "Julius Caesar." These earliest offerings cover several topics but many focus on the deaths of soldiers or important people. As the geographic locations of the orators change to Europe, the topics change only slightly. Martin Luther addresses his judges regarding the charge that he has betrayed the Catholic Church with his teachings. Those teachings become the basis for the Protestant movement and Luther, probably knowing that he is facing a death sentence, stands by his words. John Calvin also speaks of religious ideals before the topic moves back to war with Napoleon.

Following those speakers, orators from a period of the American Revolution are presented. There are speeches calling for patriotism and others reminding of the cost of freedom. Benjamin Franklin points out that he has some problems with the Constitution as presented, but says that everyone can find something in that document with which to disagree.

The speeches that follow address global concerns of the recovery from what would become known as World War I and the impending fear of World War II. The speeches include the fear that war is unavoidable and the necessity for careful evaluation of the situation. The orators' words then turn to the need for a lasting global peace and ways to accomplish that, with several indicating the need to spread democracy in order to achieve and retain that sought-for peace. For balance, there are speeches from Adolf Hitler and Mussolini, touting their objectives and calling their followers to fight for the ideals expressed by these men.

The book then moves to speeches from the 1960s. With the conflict in Vietnam as the backdrop, many of the speakers are again searching for world peace. The ongoing problems facing the world, including the buildup of nuclear arms, prompts new calls for changes. John F. Kennedy, during his inaugural address as President of the United States, calls his election a celebration for freedom rather than a victory for a political party.

The book concludes with famous black orators and speeches from the period 1974-1997. The speakers cover a range of black activists, many presenting their thoughts on how to achieve better race relations. The final section, 1974-1997, includes the inaugural address of Ronald Reagan who says that Americans take the nonviolent change of command for granted and cites wars that erupt over political power in other countries.



# Greece and Rome

## Greece and Rome Summary and Analysis

The book begins with "Funeral Oration," a speech by Pericles, a "brilliant" Athenian statesman," who gives the speech as a funeral oration for the first Athenian casualties of the Peloponnesian War. Pericles points out that there are young men among the dead but he reminds the parents of those men that there is no guarantee of life and that death could have come at any time as a result of any accident. He also speaks of the rightness of the war and the fact that future generations will understand the sacrifices of the dead simply through the study of history. In "On His Condemnation to Death," Socrates responds to a death sentence for being a heretic and having corrupted the youth with his teachings. Socrates questions the possibility of life after death, saying that if there is a place populated with others who have died, those are qualified to be his judges. He concludes by saying that to die is to be free from worldly cares. In "To the Union of Greece to Resist Persia," Isocrates writes that the Persian War may very well be the most famous of Athenian history but that there are other events that also deserve notice, including an invasion by the Thracians.

Demosthenes writes "On the Crown," in 330 B.C. and "The Second Oration Against Phillip" in 344 B.C. The second of these speeches outlines allegations against Phillip of Macedon. Demosthenes writes about Phillip's "violations of the peace" and expresses the idea that men should not be punished, even if that punishment is deserved, if it means bringing a punishment on the entire community. "In Support of the Oppian Law," Cato the Elder writes about the need to "repress" women, citing a "female insurrection."

Julius Caesar, in "On the Treatment of the Conspirators," writes that there are examples throughout history of those who acted only on emotion but that there are many examples in which reason takes the lead. He says that there are many examples of excellent conduct, courage and good decisions in spite of human emotions.

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Socrates seems to exhibit a level of forgiveness. Socrates writes that he does not blame those who sentence him to death for his death. He says his accusers believe they are causing him a great injury and that for this reason his accusers should be blamed. He seems to be saying that he does not dread the fact of death but only that his judges want to cause him hurt.

Julius Caesar, though he is most commonly known as a military leader and his role as a civil official, was an excellent orator. It is interesting that Caesar cites the integrity of his ancestors as a way to make the point that the crimes of the conspirators against whom he speaks should have known better.



The final speech from the Greek and Roman examples is "Oration on the Dead Body of Julius Caesar" by Mark Antony, and is arguably the most famous of these; however, it should be noted that it is fictional, written by William Shakespeare for a play. The example included in this book includes not only Mark Antony's speech but also a section of the play.



# The European Continent

## The European Continent Summary and Analysis

St. Bernard writes in "A Second Crusade" that laws no longer carry any weight with the people who do whatever they please, regardless of what is morally right. St. Bernard goes on to call the righteous to arms in the name of God. In "Before the Diet of Worms," Martin Luther addresses his judges at his trial, saying that he hopes they are willing to listen to his defense. He goes on to say that he welcomes criticism of his doctrine which provides the basis of Protestantism.

In "On Suffering Persecution," John Calvin writes that God has just cause to punish people daily if they are judged solely on their actions, and that the punishment would be severe. He says that to die with Jesus as one's savior is a reward but that people "do all we can to shun the combat." In "Before Invading Silesia, 1740," Frederick the Great tells his troops that the men under his command are his only allies. He points out that they face an incredible opponent and that his men must greatly desire the glory of a victory in order to attain it.

Napoleon Bonaparte, in "At the Beginning of the Italian Campaign," begins his speech with an admission that the soldiers are due a great deal of back pay that the government is not able to pay. He goes on to say there are few other perks, but promises there will be honor and glory later in the campaign. Victor Hugo offers a tribute to "Voltaire," citing the fact that the dramatist has been dead a century, having died at eighty-four. Hugo expresses his admiration for Voltaire, saying that there are few great men but that Voltaire was among worthy peers during his lifetime.

In "To the Red Army," Leon Trotzky calls for support at the onset of spring. Trotzky says that there is an ongoing conflict and that Russia's attackers know that if they are ever going to overthrow Russia, spring is the time. He says that there are allies but that the heart of the defense is in the Russian people.

In "Let France Be Free," Georges Jacques Danton writes that the situation facing France calls for action. Danton seems to be condemning those who are seeking ways to take advantage of the situation. He says that when the house is on fire, a person should not be stealing the furniture but should be focused on putting out the fire.

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Calvin, Luther and others of this section write on religious ideals, most to an incredible depth. These writers were often excommunicated or exiled for their beliefs and were called on to denounce their teachings. Another commonality is that some of them speak of welcoming the persecution.



# Great Britain and Ireland

## Great Britain and Ireland Summary and Analysis

"On the Dissolution of Parliament," author Oliver Cromwell writes that his decision to dissolve Parliament is based on the best interests of the public. He points out that he has respect for some of the members individually but not as a collective body. As his rather lengthy speech comes to an end, Cromwell apologizes for the length and says he realizes some will find the words more unkind than others. In "God's Love to Fallen Man," John Wesley says that a person should seek to be holy on earth in order to achieve rewards in heaven. Wesley says the same is true for doing good, especially as it pertains to being kind to others.

In "Anti-Semitism," Cardinal Manning, a Roman Catholic prelate, makes a plea to the Lord Mayor in 1882 to come to the aid of Jewish Russians. Manning says that the attitudes of the Russians against their Jewish population are unacceptable. Manning says the attitudes are detrimental to the Jews but that they also affect how people see the Russians. Manning says that he hopes there will be more than words forthcoming against the Russian policies. In "Militant Suffragists," Emmeline Pankhurst, one of the leading suffragists of Britain, says that she wants to be certain her audience knows that she is destined to be both militant and convict, though imprisoned only in her need to advance her cause. In "England's Position," Sir Edward Grey writes that it is no longer important why England is being pulled into World War I and that the members of the House of Commons need only pay attention to "British interests, British honor, and British obligations." In "An Appeal to the Nation," David Lloyd George says that everyone who is familiar with the facts of the situation understands that England had no choice but to become involved in the war. George cites the country's honor as the reason for joining in the fighting.

In "The Fourth of July," Arthur James Balfour writes from the vantage of one hundred and forty-one years after the Declaration of Independence. He says that there is no doubt that the advance of Americans in various aspects of life, including economic and spiritual, is unmatched by any other nation. He goes on to say that the separation of America and England is purely political. He also points out that the English look upon the event as a loss and that those who fought for unity should be commended.

In "Protest against Sentence as Traitor," Robert Emmet writes about the impending death sentence about to be levied against him for his role as Irish militant and leader of the United Irishmen. Emmet says he believes himself incapable of changing the minds of the judges but says his conscience is clear in that his actions have all been because of his personal belief in what is right.

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Pankhurst writes about the suffragists using the analogy of civil war. She seems to be likening the cause of women seeking equal rights to that of a nation involved in civil war and cautions the audience that civil war waged by women is serious.

Sir Edward Grey seems to have some very defined ideas of the reasons England is being pulled into World War II fighting, but makes it clear from the opening of the speech that he is not going to spend time on those points. He also says that he cannot possibly provide all the information the members of the House should have. Some may find this sounds like typical political sidestepping of the issues.

Emmet's address to his judges during his sentencing is interrupted by an apparent outburst from the court. The outburst occurs when Emmet tells one of the judges that there would be a reservoir of blood if all the blood of innocent victims' blood were gathered, and suggests that it would be deep enough for the judge to swim in.





# The United States

## The United States Summary and Analysis

In "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," Jonathan Edwards likens the wrath of God to dammed waters, saying that the backwaters rise higher, creating more pressure until the release, which is fierce. He goes on to issue a warning to sinners, urging them to consider the danger of the situation. He concludes by saying that those who know Christ should distance themselves from God's wrath, which is certainly near at hand. In "Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death," Patrick Henry addressed the President with the question of why America is trying to evade war. He says that war has already begun, though there are those who deny that, and ends with his famous impassioned plea, "Give me liberty, or give me death!"

In "On the Faults of the Constitution," Benjamin Franklin says that he does not completely approve of the Constitution but that he has learned over the course of his lifetime that he is sometimes willing to change his mind if given the time to consider a subject more thoroughly. Franklin ends his speech with a plea that every member of the convention sign off on the document for the sake of unity. Alexander Hamilton, in "The Federal Constitution," writes that there is a great deal of concern about the power afforded to those who will serve as United States Senators but that he believes that concern to be unfounded. He says the fears seem to indicate that all elected to this office will immediately become tyrannical and unconcerned for their constituents.

The speaker in "Red Jacket," an unnamed American Indian, cites the fact that the Great Spirit ordained the meeting though the American officials called the meeting. The speaker goes on to say that the whites are claiming that there is "one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit," but cites the differences of opinion among the whites, saying that the Indians have a religion that was handed down from their ancestors and that the goal of the Indians is merely to continue to worship in the way of their people, allowing the whites to do the same. "Tecumseh" is the next speaker and he addresses the trend of whites taking lands that traditionally belong to the Indians.

Woodrow Wilson's address to Congress with his request for a "Declaration of War" begins with the statement that Wilson has not the authority to make this decision alone and that it is correct that Congress be called to do so.

The final speech of this section is by Oliver Wendell Holmes on his ninetieth birthday. Holmes says that horses finishing a race do not come to an abrupt stop at the finish line, but do "a finishing canter." He seems to be comparing that to his life, saying that he has passed the finish line of his life but is now performing that final little canter.

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The United States section includes many historically familiar names on topics such as United States independence, the founding fathers and the ideals of the country's foundation. Many of these stories will be familiar to students well-versed in American history, but the speeches offer a depth that should provide additional insight into the speakers and their subjects.

Hamilton's speech addressing what he sees as a weakness of the Constitution is eerily accurate. He says the real danger is that United States officials will be overly dependent on the state officials and that states' demands will weaken or eliminate the federal government. The reader should remember that the Civil War erupts years later with states' rights at the forefront of the issues.



# Canada; South America, South Africa, India and China

## Canada; South America, South Africa, India and China Summary and Analysis

Sir John A. Macdonald writes "On Canadian Freedom," citing the need for a unified Parliament without regard to "upper" and "lower" Canada. Macdonald cites the success of the America in uniting the individual colonies as a model for his plan, which he says has met with almost universal approval. Sir Wilfrid Laurier writes in "Canada, England and the United States" of the need to improve relations with other countries. He says the United States and Canada have a "brotherly" relationship but says it can be made better. In "The Voice of the Empire," Sir Robert Laird Borden writes of the differences of people in times of war than in times of peace.

In "Address at Angostura," Simon Bolivar reminds legislators of the Second National Congress of Venezuela that the country is literally in their hands and that it is up to them to shape it for the happiness and prosperity of the citizenry. Bolivar says that there are many examples of nations that have gained their freedom but says that democratic nations have had more trouble remaining solvent than have monarchies. He concludes by saying that he, as leader of the revolution, has completed his task and it is now up to the legislators to do theirs.

Mohandas K. Gandhi, urges "Non-Cooperation" toward the government of England. He cites this non-cooperation as a means to an end and says that this is better than violence as called for by "my brother and friend Shaukat Ali." Sun Yat-sen, "Father of the Chinese Republic," writes on "National Morale and World Tranquility." He calls on his fellow Chinese to make plans for the days when China will be great and the current suffering and hardships left behind.

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Laurier writes about the hard feelings that seem to linger because of America's quest for independence. He says that the blame for the American decision should be left on the British government of that day and age, and that the actions should be left in the historical past where they belong. He goes on to cite the fact that if America is ever again embroiled in a war, the best scenario is to have America and England fighting as allies rather than as enemies.

# Domestic Affairs in the United States

## Domestic Affairs in the United States Summary and Analysis

Fiorello H. LaGuardia writes on "American Labor," citing the fact that Labor Day is celebrated as an American holiday because laborers work for love of country, always standing proudly for the Constitution. He goes on to say that it is appropriate that government officials express their appreciation for the laborers because of this constant support. In "Speaking for the Consumer," William Allen White says that the employers—whom he calls capitalists—could easily have averted the current economic distress with some forward thinking and planning following World War I. He says that there was ample warning but that those with the power to make economic decisions to change the world for the better "put cotton in your ears" and accused those speaking out of communism. Herbert Hoover, in "The Bill of Rights," assures the American people that the document was not produced at a moment's notice but is the result of centuries of struggle, sometimes ending in the death of those fighting. He goes on to say that the document will not hamper progress and that it assures the liberty of the country's people. Charles Evans Hughes, in "Our Government," addresses congress with the idea that the American people are greatly concerned that the American government remains intact. He goes on to cite the fact that the governmental bodies work together and are dependent on each other.

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The majority of these speeches are about the greatness of America. These speakers are, perhaps, less well known. For example, William Allen White is a newspaper editor who won a Pulitzer Prize. His speech is addressed to the International Management Congress in 1937. The reader must keep the context in mind to fully understand these speeches.



# World Affairs and the Second World War

## World Affairs and the Second World War Summary and Analysis

In "Blood, Sweat and Tears," Winston Churchill, newly appointed as Prime Minister of England, says that he has called a war cabinet. He says that he believes the country's policy going into World War II will be "to wage war by land, sea and air," and that he believes England must hold nothing back in their efforts to gain victory. In "The War on Russia," Churchill outlines the important points of World War II up to this point, citing the financial contributions of the United States, the fall of France, the thwarted Nazi air invasion and the unexpected German attack of Russia. Churchill says the Russians have called on the English for help. Churchill says that the English goal is to destroy Hitler, and that the English people must be willing to do whatever it takes to achieve that goal. In "Address Before United States Congress," Churchill reminds members of Congress that the enemy forces against England are "enormous" and warns that the Germans will do whatever it takes to reach their objectives. He predicts that the United States and England, joined against the Germans, will achieve what neither could have done alone. Clement R. Attlee, Prime Minister of England 1945-1951, in "The Atlantic Charter," predicts a favorable outcome for the Allied Forces but says that it is important to learn from past mistakes. W.L. Mackenzie King, in "Canada and the War," outlines the fact that Canada became involved in the war, not just for Canada's future but with an eye toward what was best for others as well.

In "Nazis' Aim Is Slavery," Edouard Daladier, Premier of France, warns that Hitler's goal is not to dominate Germany but to impose his ideals on the entire world, beginning with the countries he conquers. In "Ireland Among the Nations," Eamon de Valera points out the Irish contributions to history and culture throughout the ages, saying that his purpose is to make it clear that Ireland can continue to be a contributing member among the world's countries. In "The Position of Ethiopia," Haile Selassie says that the country does not want to become embroiled in the war.

In "Germany's Claims," Adolf Hitler writes about the "international press campaign" that is threatening to destroy the world's good opinion of his country and his cause. He says that England, dependent on Great Britain as a whole, cannot fully comprehend the current economic climate that threatens the world. He adheres to the decision that Germany will not join the League of Nations and says the goal is to make life easier on the German people. In "No More Territorial Demands," Hitler says that he has promised England that he will not expand the German Navy, not because he cannot, but in an effort to promote peace with England. Hitler concludes the speech with the warning that there is a different army awaiting their enemies than the army seen by the world during World War I. In "German Conquests," Hitler reiterates that he sought peace but had been given no choice by the nations emerging as enemies of the Reich.



In "A Call to Arms," Benito Mussolini calls on the "black shirts of revolution" to stand with him, saying that he does not believe there will be an all-out European War and promising to avoid that if at all possible. In "Anniversary of Italy's Entry in the War," he cites Greece's failed attempt to uphold the appearance of neutrality. He says that Italy could have conquered other countries but that he advises against it, saying that it would mean there were hostile foreigners in the expanded country. He goes on to say that America's involvement in the war is of no real importance.

Joseph Stalin, in "Defend Every Inch of Soviet Soil," calls on his "comrades" to fight against the danger he sees in the continued German invasions. He says the Soviet people must understand the danger in order to garner the will to fully resist, and that working on wartime endeavors must be the priority for Russians. In "War Between Justice and Force," Chinese Nationalist Chiang Kai-shek says that China's people should not be overly alarmed by the war but that he is saddened by the fact that the Japanese people are following the lead of a few "hot headed young militarists." His Holiness Pius XII issues an "Appeal for Peace" in 1941, admitting the fact that most fight out of a sense of duty but urging leaders to find the way to world peace.

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An interesting point made by Attlee is that the actions of the allied nations at the end of the war are important and cannot be shoved aside by the sheer glory of victory. He points out the horrible economic conditions following World War I and says there cannot be a repeat of them.

While nationalism is an important theme throughout the book, it is perhaps expressed most eloquently by King, who says that Canadians are true to their mother country but also realize that they, as a country, cannot hope to stand alone. He cites the fact that Canadians are "inspired by high ideals, unselfish motives and a passion for human freedom and social and national justice." These words indicate his love for his homeland and his belief that others share that love.

Eamon de Laveria ends his speech by saying that Ireland's goal is to remain true to "her own holiest traditions" in order to "save" the entire world. That sentiment seems very nearly related to the aims stated by Hitler. In fact, de Laveria may seem at least slightly defensive because of the perception that Ireland is very narrow-minded.



# United States and the Second World War

## United States and the Second World War Summary and Analysis

In "Hemisphere Defense for Democracy," Franklin Delano Roosevelt says that Americans know the cost of war is high but that governments wage war anyway. He says that there is an absolute commitment to maintain the democratic government of the United States and that his greatest hope is for world peace, but insists that all this is worth nothing without a belief in God. In one of his famous "Fireside Chats," Roosevelt tells the American people of "The Arsenal of Democracy," which includes his belief that America is in danger from the escalating world crisis. While he says that staying out of the war is his goal, he warns that Hitler's goal is world domination. He says that America's only hope of having no direct involvement in the war is to support the nations that are at war against Germany and commits to wartime endeavors, such as weapons production. In "Freedom of the Seas," Roosevelt makes public the new policy which allows the destruction of Nazi ships making moves against Americans in American shipping lanes. "For a Declaration of War against Japan" is Roosevelt's address to Congress asking for war against Japan after the unexpected attack on Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt says there had been no hint that war would be declared against the United States and cites a message by Japanese diplomats delivered an hour after the attack which said that there was no need to continue discussions for peace. In "America's Answer to Japan's Challenge," Roosevelt says that the Americans have learned that there is no security in a world where gangsters rule.

Cordell Hull, U.S. Secretary of State, presents "The Pillars of Enduring Peace" during a conference of American republics in 1936. The address includes several points, including the admonition to educate people on the need for world peace while recognizing the fact that each nation has the right to do what it will. Hull says that there has to be policies established that will allow any nation declaring neutrality to remain neutral and to go on about their everyday lives without interference. James Bryant Conant, President of Harvard, in "What Are We Arming to Defend," reminds listeners that the threat is not to be taken lightly and warns that the people of the world, if conquered by Germany, would become nothing more than slaves to the conquerors. Pilot Charles Lindbergh, in "An Independent Policy," says that America should not enter the war unless "we have a reasonable chance of winning," admitting that he will be criticized but standing by that statement as being ultimately practical.

In "What Constitutes an American," Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes says that it has been said that Americans are weak and warns against believing those who offer this "tripe" as fact." He goes on to warn that Americans cannot retain their own peace if the rest of the world falls to Germany. He says that it is the duty of the United States to come to the aid of those threatened by this fate, but then says that Americans owe this same debt to Germany. He says that the oppressors, including Genghis Khan, Attila and



Hitler, "come and go" while "freedom endures." Henry A. Wallace, U.S. Vice-President in 1941, outlines "America's Second Chance." He cites the outcome of World War I and says that the United States had planned to advance democracy both during and after the war. He says that there is a second chance facing the nation now and urges that they take it.

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Roosevelt's series of speeches regarding his desire to remain neutral in what is to become World War II has an undertone of warning to the American people that America, just because of a statement of neutrality, is not safe from attack. It seems that Roosevelt's fears are that Germany or its allies will attack American soil, bringing the war to the American people and eliminating any possibility of remaining neutral. Roosevelt later cites the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor that does just that.

Ickes is very outspoken but is also a captivating speaker. He says that Americans have to be willing to come to the aid of weaker nations faced with an oppressor. He points out that everyone needs allies and that America's allies may very well fall to Germany. An interesting point is that Ickes does not caution against haste but says that it is up to America to jump into the fight and urges that they do so quickly.





# United States Government

## United States Government Summary and Analysis

Bernard Mannes Baruch, adviser to the President, presents a speech in 1946 urging "Control of Atomic Weapons." Baruch said the very idea of the atomic bomb is terrible but says the fact that people fear the powerful potential will not be enough to forbid its use. He says having the scientific knowledge is a fact but that he hopes the ethics of the situation will rule the decision. Harry S. Truman addresses the nation on "The Power of the President," citing the need for strong leadership and says that leadership has to be a global effort rather than just leadership for America.

In "Old Soldiers Never Die," Douglas MacArthur addresses Congress in 1951, outlining the reasons for his actions in Korea and asking Congress to look past partisan issues to the heart of the situation. He ends his speech with the thought that many years had passed since the date of his oath at West Point and that many things had changed during those years. Having been relieved of duty in Korea, MacArthur then tells Congress that he is like the old soldier of a ballad he recalls, and that it is time for him to "fade away."

Dwight David Eisenhower's "Inaugural Address" begins with the idea that there are "forces of good and evil ... massed and armed and opposed as rarely before seen in history." He goes on to cite the current problems facing America and the need to reaffirm faith in the United States. While Eisenhower goes on to say that the United States should do what is possible to make the world safe, he also says that there should never be a time when America is willing to "trade honor for peace." In "Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy," Eisenhower urges the reduction of arms throughout the world. He cites the continuing threat posed by nations that have amassed military equipment during the recent war and says that the message from Americans is that the United States is aware but is not afraid.

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Truman's speech regarding presidential powers is presented in 1954 and is set against a backdrop of controversy over the role of Congress versus the role of the President. The historical context is vital throughout the book. For the reader to fully understand the speeches, the historical context must not be overlooked.

The speeches from Americans in this section are typically patriotic but it should be pointed out that speakers from other countries are similarly patriotic about their own countries. These references by people from other countries may be less obvious if the reader is more familiar with terms of American patriotism, but they are there.



# International Affairs and the United States

## International Affairs and the United States Summary and Analysis

In "An Iron Curtain Has Descended," Winston Churchill begins his address at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, by saying that he is speaking only for himself and is not in any official capacity. He then presents various aspects of the situation between Russia and the rest of the world as he sees it. It is during this speech that Churchill presents the concept of "the iron curtain" and coins the term. He says the biggest challenge facing the world is to find a way to instill a lasting peace with world-wide democracy. He says the way to achieve that is for all English-speaking nations to come together, uniting to create a world-wide sense of security.

In 1947, Oswaldo Aranha, President of the United Nations, presents "A New Order Through the United Nations" and continues Churchill's idea of world-wide security. Aranha says the United Nations is the instrument to produce that security. He cites the fact that there have been heated arguments throughout the current UN session but says that the man who battles with words "hardly ever resorts to force." In 1954, at Brandeis University, Eleanor Roosevelt addresses the idea of "The United Nations as a Bridge." Roosevelt says that the UN is often criticized but that the critics should remember that the UN's goal is to maintain peace. The problem, she says, is that there has never been a peace to be maintained.

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Dag Hammarskjold, from Sweden, addresses the graduating class of Stanford in 1955 with "Values of Nationalism and Internationalism." Hammarskjold warns against allowing the negative connotations of the words "nationalism" and "internationalism" rule their ideals. He seems to be referring to the zealous nationalism posed by the Japanese and Germans during World War II and points out that people believe that means their nation is superior and has no need for anyone else. It is important that the reader remember the intensity of the nationalistic ideals presented by the enemies of the United States, such as Japan, in order to fully understand Hammarskjold's arguments.

An interesting excerpt from a letter written by Albert Einstein is included in the book, titled "Peace in the Atomic Age." The ideas presented by Einstein include the need for every nation to declare an end to violence and the establishment of a world government. Of course, looking back, the reader knows Einstein's advice went unheeded, but it is interesting that he publicly advocated such a move.

# Informal Speeches

## Informal Speeches Summary and Analysis

George Graham Vest, a lawyer in Missouri prior to his career as a U.S. Senator, presents an argument for a man suing a neighbor over the killing of a dog. The argument, titled "A Tribute to the Dog," outlines the reasons dogs are called "man's best friend." Vest points out that even a man's children may turn on him but a dog will endure any hardship without complaint, continuing to be faithful even when a man is poor and cannot provide for the dog. The argument wins the case.

Horace Porter, an American Diplomat, is called on during a dinner in New York to toast "Woman." He points out the complexities of women, saying that, given twenty minutes to make the calculations, a woman can pinpoint a particular point in space but cannot find the pocket of her own dress. He goes on to describe sacrifices and willingness to answer calls to duty, ending by saying that even though the men of the world cannot figure out women, they are certainly unwilling to "give her up."

American author Samuel L. Clemens presents an after-dinner speech in New York in 1876 on "New England Weather." Clemens says that he is certain God is responsible for everything except the weather in New England, and that he believes there to be a young, incapable apprentice who learns through the mistakes he makes in New England and is later promoted to a place that demands good weather. He goes on to say that though the weather is not perfect, the incredible colors of fall are and then cites the beauty of a winter ice storm. In "Babies," Clemens talks about the demands a baby places on the household and that even soldiers give up their role as commander to the baby who insists on the bottle at any time of the night and demands that it be warmed to the correct temperature.

In "Farthest North," American explorer Robert Edwin Perry talks about his Arctic explorations and reminds the members of the Lotos Club of New York that there is more at stake than the prestige of being the first nation to reach the northernmost point on the globe. He cites the scientific information and outlines his own trek to this frontier.

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The informal speeches included in this section cover an incredible range of topics and the speakers themselves, unlike the public and political speakers, insert a great deal of their own personalities into the speeches. This makes this section more interesting in some ways but it should be noted that many of these speeches are long-winded and filled with rhetoric. The settings are equally important and the statements that rouse applause or laughter from the audience at the time of delivery are likely lost on the casual reader.



# United States and World Affairs

## United States and World Affairs Summary and Analysis

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, in his "Inaugural Address," says that his election should be celebrated as a symbol of freedom rather than a political victory. The next is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. King's speech accuses America of having reneged on the promise of freedom and equal rights for Blacks. King's "dreams" include that black children will be able to stand side-by-side with white children of Alabama, that black men and women will be able to sit with the whites in brotherhood, and that the nation's creed, "that all men are created equal," will be true for blacks and whites. Dwight David Eisenhower, in his "Farewell Address" of 1961, says that the nation cannot be idle in times of peace and then rush to prepare in times of threat. He thanks the people for the opportunity to serve and says he looks forward to becoming "a private citizen."

Lyndon Baines Johnson, in 1968, addressed the nation with a speech titled "On Vietnam and on the decision not to seek reelection." He cites the numbers of American troops in Vietnam at the time, the reasons for their presence, and the recommendation that the numbers of troops be increased. Johnson says that he has to devote all his time and energy to the war effort and that a decision to run for President would mean he would have to take time from those tasks to campaign. George Wald, a Harvard biologist, delivers "A Generation in Search of a Future" at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1969. Wald says that he does not believe America can continue to support military endeavors while maintaining the lifestyle expected by the American people. Richard Milhous Nixon offers his "First Inaugural Address," citing the extreme problems facing the world because of the ongoing war in Vietnam.

Pope John XXIII, in "The Opening of the Ecumenical Council" in 1962, expresses what he sees as the goal of the Ecumenical Council: to "guard" and teach Christian doctrine. He does point out that there is no need for a council unless the council members follow the described doctrines.

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Wald presents an interesting idea when he cites man's arrival in the world leading to dominance. He says that the sheer fact that man is dominant over all creatures is "a big responsibility." Wald's entire speech seems to be geared to the idea that people have to make choices regarding what major endeavors they support. He also points out that these are not "grown up problems" but are real everyday decisions facing the youth of the nation, because the youth have the power to make changes. Wald's point is mainly aimed at nuclear weapons but it seems he also advocates other steps that he believes will ensure peace on a global basis. He does say that all the idealistic attitudes in the world are worthless unless there is a next generation around to enjoy them.



# Survey of Speeches by Black Americans and Important Speeches of 1974-1997

## Survey of Speeches by Black Americans and Important Speeches of 1974-1997 Summary and Analysis

In "An Address to the Slaves of the United States of America," escaped slave Henry Highland Garnet addresses the National Negro Convention in Buffalo, New York. At one point in this address, Garnet says that public opinion keeps the blacks down every bit as effectively as law. He also says that being a slave does not negate duty to God. Garnet seems to advise rebellion, saying that "it is sinful in the extreme for you to make voluntary submissions." He says that it is wrong for a man to keep a slave as a possession but adds that the slave should resist. Booker T. Washington's address at the Atlanta Cotton Exposition, titled "Atlanta Exposition Address," is touted as the acceptance of white supremacy by the black race. Washington says that black men have been "generously recognized" by the white organizers of the exposition and says that recognition is an important step toward good relations between blacks and whites. Black rights activist Malcolm X warns the whites who remain unmoved by "The Black Revolution" that the whites may outnumber the blacks in America but that they should keep in mind the number of blacks across the earth.

The Modern Speeches section includes the "Inaugural Address" by incoming President Ronald Reagan. Reagan says that inauguration of a new United States President is so common to the American people as to be almost routine, but says that he believes the people of this country have forgotten that America is one of the few countries without constant struggles for power. He goes on to say that the government has only the power allotted to it by the people and calls for a check of that power, though he warns against too much limitation. New York Governor Mario Cuomo in "A Keynote Address, 1984 Democratic National Convention," cites a recent speech by Reagan in which Reagan asserts that the nation is a "shining city on a hill." Cuomo says that he does not disagree, but says that not all Americans are doing so well. He accuses Reagan of not being able to see past the view from his White House office.

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Washington's address related to the need for a good relationship between blacks and whites is presented as an analogy. He talks about a ship in distress that is directed by another to "let down your bucket." When the captain of the distressed ship finally heeds this advice, he finds drinkable water, flowing into the sea from the nearby Amazon. Washington says that a black man who desperately wants a good relationship with whites should do the same, reaching out right where he stands in search of that

friendship. An interesting point here is that Washington is talking to the whites, telling them that the black race should be granted that friendship.



# Characters

## Winston Churchill

Winston Churchill served in several official capacities during his lifetime but is probably most remembered for his military career and term as Prime minister, and also for his speeches that became a major source of information during World War II because they were broadcast on radio stations around the world. His speeches are eloquent but also simple and clear. It is noted that Churchill had the ability to be the first to use phrases that would become commonly accepted terms. For example, in one of his speeches, Churchill talks about the "iron curtain" when he describes the Soviet Union and that phrase becomes commonly accepted for the situation in Russia during this time period. Besides his military career, Churchill was Great Britain's prime minister, serving two separate tenures, one in the early 1940s and again in the early 1950s. Churchill's speeches are filled with love for his country but he also points out the need for allies, citing the fact that English-speaking countries banded together will be an incredible force. Churchill touts the need for world-wide democracy as the only way to attain a lasting global peace.

## Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Roosevelt is arguably best known as the thirty-second United States President and it is during his term in that office that Roosevelt presents his "fireside chats." These barely-formal speeches were broadcast by radio and were to become a cornerstone of his term in the White House. It is important to remember that the United States and the entire world was facing an economic depression that by its very nature was to become known as "The Great Depression." Roosevelt says that there is an impossible burden on the people who are simply unable to feed themselves and their families. However he is critical of "rulers" who are unable to see past the economic situation in which they are unable to see any personal profit. He says that politicians seem to have come to the point of wanting an office only for what they can get in return. It is probably this attitude, along with his efforts to provide work opportunities through "The New Deal" that gain Roosevelt an unprecedented third term in office. He serves that term but dies shortly after being elected to a fourth.

## Pericles

The author of a famed funeral oration, he is a famous Athenian who speaks of the need to balance the words of a eulogy based on what the audience expects and will believe. It is Pericles who points out that the people who know and love the deceased are biased, as are those who did not, and that his role as orator on this occasion is to "procure, as far as I am able, the good-will" of those listening.



## Martin Luther

A German who is credited with developing the teachings that would become the basis of the Protestant Reformation; he is excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1520. Luther's speech, "Before the Diet of Worms," is presented by then Emperor Charles V who sits in judgment of Luther for his "crime" of founding the Protestant movement.

## Napoleon Bonaparte

Known as a military strategist, it is less known that Bonaparte realized the need to prompt his men to great acts of valor by talking to them. His speeches are filled with urgings to fight, promising rewards of honor and glory. At one point, Bonaparte tells his men that the government owes them back pay and tells them that they will not be receiving that money, but makes them realize that what they are fighting for is more important than the money that they will likely never collect.

## Patrick Henry

A great American orator known for his role in the American Revolution, it is Henry who coins the phrase, "Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death" during a speech to the Virginia Convention of Delegates in 1775. He had little education but was eventually elected governor of Virginia.

## Adolf Hitler

A German credited with a dramatic increase in membership of the Nazi Party, Hitler is best known as the man who precipitated World War II. He realized well that the best way to gain the support of the masses is through the spoken word. Hitler is able to present ideals in a way that gain that support, touting the "malicious press campaign" against him personally and Germany as a whole.

## Harry S. Truman

Truman is best known as the thirty-third United States President but also served in the military in World War I, was a Missouri Senator in 1934, and was chosen as Vice President ten years later, taking over as President upon the death of Roosevelt. Truman begins his inaugural address with a plea for the help of the American people, citing the need for full cooperation in order to fulfill the tasks he faces. Truman cites his belief in God and says that America has specific worldwide responsibilities.





## **Samuel L. Clemens**

Better known as author Mark Twain, Clemens was a humorist who was well known both as orator and writer. The speeches included in this book are examples of his humor and include references to an apprentice weather maker who learns his trade by practicing in New England. Clemens was born in 1835 and died in 1910.

## **John Fitzgerald Kennedy**

Best known as the thirty-fifth United States President, Kennedy's achievements during his term in office include the Nuclear Test Ban treaty and the establishment of the Peace Corps. Kennedy's inaugural address is presented in 1961 in Washington, D.C. It is noted that phrases from his speeches are often quoted.



## **Objects/Places**

### **The Peloponnesian War**

The event which prompts the Funeral Oration given by Pericles.

### **The Persian War**

Cited by Isocrates as the most famous conflict in Greece's history.

### **Pearl Harbor**

Where the Japanese attack, bringing the United States into World War II.

### **Westminster College**

Where Winston Churchill coins the phrase, "the iron curtain."

### **New York**

Where Oswaldo Aranha, President of the United Nations, speaks in 1947.

### **Washington, D.C.**

Where Martin Luther King, Jr. presents his "I Have a Dream" speech.

### **Atlanta Cotton Exposition**

Where Booker T. Washington presents his thoughts on the relationship between blacks and whites.

### **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

Where George Wald expresses his views on the current military situation in America with an emphasis on military weapons.



## **The Lotos Club of New York**

Where several famous people give after-dinner addresses or toasts on an array of topics.

## **Missouri**

Where attorney George Graham Vest tells jurors why they should find in favor of his client who is suing a man over the killing of a dog.



# Themes

## Persuasion

Persuasion is a theme seen throughout the book with the vast majority of speeches being used as a means of persuading the audience to a particular way of thinking. A prime example of this theme is seen in Adolf Hitler's speech, as well as others presented during this time frame. Hitler describes his goals in glowing terms but cites a campaign waged by the media of the day as an effort to discredit both his words and his actions. Hitler is obviously swaying his followers to discount the words of the media in favor of what he tells them personally. The same tactic is seen in Mussolini's speech when he addresses his followers. He tells them he does not see an all-out war in their future and promises to avoid that if at all possible. History proves the falsity of his words and it seems very likely that Mussolini is merely trying to garner support for the upcoming war. There are others of this time period who urge caution when listening to the words of Hitler and others like him. Edouard Daladier, who is Premier of France at the time of his famous speech against the Nazi forces, says that Hitler's sole aim—regardless of what he says—is world domination. Others who urge war around this time point out that America's only real defense against Hitler is to join in the fight to stop him.

## Patriotism

Patriotism is an ongoing theme expressed by many of the speakers. Patrick Henry is an example one of the earliest and most famous American patriotic sentiments with his statement, "Give me liberty or give me death." Henry is among those early American orators who set the stage for a strong American patriotic stance. This patriotism is eloquently expressed by Americans but is also touted by speakers from other countries. For example, Joseph Stalin calls on his countrymen to defend their nation against the invading forces of Germany. Stalin cites the fact that Russians who understand the pending danger against their country will be willing to fight that danger. Eamon de Lavera follows the same line of thought, only with the idea that Ireland must defend her traditions. Much earlier in history, Napoleon Bonaparte addresses his men with the plea for continued fighting despite the fact that the government owes them money. Bonaparte calls on them to obey the dictates of their patriotic duty and the men apparently respond to this plea.

## The Desire for Freedom

The desire for freedom is the topic of several speeches. Freedom in the form of equal rights is most often seen in the black speakers. Two of the writers, Booker T. Washington and Malcolm X, have very different ideas of how to achieve this and probably have different opinions on what equal rights even means. Washington says that it is up to black men to seek out friendship among the whites and predicts that the



whites will be receptive. Malcolm X, an equal rights activist from years later, warns of a revolution that will encompass the globe. It is important for the reader to realize that the difference in time periods accounts for much of the difference of opinion between these two men. This desire for equal rights is arguably most eloquently expressed by black speakers, but there are other examples of this theme seen throughout the book. For example, the threat of invasion by Hitler prompts a series of speeches arguing for action against that threat. Many of these tout the fact that Americans have freedoms unprecedented in the rest of the world and that Americans must choose to fight for those freedoms or risk losing them. Perhaps it is Ronald Reagan, speaking from the relatively modern time of 1981, who says it best when he points out that he steps up to take the oath of office without any bloodshed to enact the change—a fact that is not true in most nations of the world where there is no freedom to choose leaders.

# Style

## Perspective

The book is presented as a series of speeches that range from Ancient Greece to the 1990s; the majority are from the 1900s, with a great many from the 1930s through the 1950s. As a general rule, these speeches are presented in first person from the speaker's perspective. The perspective is limited to that of the speaker as a rule, though the speakers have a general view of the world at large. This means that the speeches include information that would not be personally known to the speaker except that the speakers are often office-holders in governmental capacities. It should be noted, however, that the speeches are still limited by the prejudices of the speakers. For example, Adolf Hitler talks of the press campaign to slur his reputation. Booker T. Washington speaks of the need for blacks and whites to extend the hands of friendship but Malcolm X warns of an impending black revolution. The perspectives of each speaker are, naturally, an integral part of the speeches and this changes the perspective from one speech to another. It should also be noted that the perspectives of the speeches change based on time, place and situation.

## Tone

The tone of the speeches including in this book range from light to serious and promising to threatening. Since the book is a series of speeches from various speakers, it is appropriate that the tone change from one speech to another. Most of the lighter speeches are included in the "Informal Speeches" section where humorist Samuel L. Clemens, better known as author Mark Twain, offers after-dinner speeches that include his take on how New England weather is contrived and the importance of babies. Also included in this section is a speech by an attorney who touts the importance of dogs as man's best friend, winning his case at least partly because of this argument. These speeches are only slightly less formal than the speeches presented in formal settings. Among those more formal speeches are those to governmental bodies and to the people of nations, including several inaugural addresses. The tones of these cover an array of emotions, from pleas for support to admonishments for wrongdoing. The reader will likely identify with at least some of these, though there will undoubtedly be some that strike a chord of insincerity, especially when read years later, with the benefit of hindsight.

## Structure

The book is presented as a series of speeches that range in time from Ancient Greece to the 1990s. The speeches are divided into seven "Parts." These are Great Speeches of Earlier Times, Great Speeches of Recent Times, Great Speeches of the Modern Period, Informal Speeches, Important Speeches of the Sixties, Survey of Speeches by

Black Americans, and Important Speeches of 1974-1997. These parts are further divided into fourteen sections. These are titled Greece and Rome; The European Continent; Great Britain and Ireland; The United States; Canada; South America, South Africa, India and China; Domestic Affairs in the United States; World Affairs and the Second World War; The United States and the Second World War; United States Government; International Affairs and the United Nations; Informal Speeches; United States; and World Affairs. The final two parts of the book, Survey of Speeches by Black Americans and Important Speeches of 1974-1997, are not subdivided. The Informal Speeches section contains only one subtitled section. The remainder of the parts contain multiple divisions, generally titled to reflect the nationalities of the speakers or the subject being addressed. It should be noted that these speeches are presented as non-fiction. There is a notable exception in the speech purported to have been given by Mark Antony in ancient Rome upon the death of Caesar. This speech is actually written by Shakespeare as part of the play, "Julius Caesar." It should also be noted that some speeches are abridged versions of the original speech.



## Quotes

"I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!" The United States, Patrick Henry, p. 234

"And so I end with a line from a Latin poet who uttered the message more than fifteen hundred years ago, 'Death plucks my ear and says: Live—I am coming.'" The United States, Oliver Wendell Holmes, p. 377

"Gentlemen, we ought to decide at this hour what is to be the fundamental policy for which the nation is to stand, and where our hope and our greatness lie." South America, South Africa, India and China; Sun Yat-sen, p. 399

"It is typically American because American labor, whenever it gathers, does so with love for its flag and country and loyalty to its government. Labor in the United States is not and never has been antagonistic to its form of government." Domestic Affairs in the United States, Fiorello H. LaGuardia, p. 410

"I say it is to wage war by land, sea and air. War with all our might and with all the strength God has given us, and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime." World Affairs and the Second World War, Winston Churchill, p. 432

"There is being created a world of masters and slaves made in the image of Germany herself. For, while Germany is crushing beneath her tyranny the men of every race and language she is herself being crushed beneath her own servitude and her domination mania." World Affairs and the Second World War, Edouard Daladier, p. 462

"The men and women and children of the Americas know that warfare in this day and age, warfare means more than the mere clash of armies; they see the destruction of cities and of farms—they foresee that children and grandchildren, if they survive, will stagger for long years, not only under the burden of poverty but also amid the threat of broken society and the destruction of constitutional government." United States and the Second World War, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, p. 515

"If Britain should be defeated, then the totalitarian undertaker will prepare to hang crepe on the door of our own independence." United States and the Second World War, Harold Ickes, p. 568

"Give her twenty minutes and she will find astronomically the longitude of a place by means of lunar culminations. Give that same woman an hour and a half, with the present fashions, and she cannot find the pocket in her dress." Informal Speeches, Horace Porter, p. 680

"Let freedom ring from every hill and mole hill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring." The United States, Martin Luther King, Jr., p. 754





"He was preeminently the white man's President, entirely devoted to the welfare of white men. He was ready and willing at any time during the first years of his administration to deny, postpone, and sacrifice the rights of humanity in the colored people to promote the welfare of the white people of this country." Survey of Speeches by Black Americans, Fredrick Douglas referring to Abraham Lincoln, p. 808

"You are complacent simply because you think you outnumber the racial minority in this country; what you have to bear in mind is wherein you might outnumber us in this country, you don't outnumber us all over the earth." Survey of Speeches by Black Americans, Malcolm X, p. 823

## Topics for Discussion

Compare any speech from early Greece and Rome to any speech from more recent times. What are the differences? What are the similarities?

Consider the world setting as the United States is facing World War II. Why is this setting important in understanding the speeches of that period? Are other settings equally as important? Why or why not?

Analyze three speeches that address patriotism on some level. Are the speakers of one country more passionate on this subject than speakers from another? Does tradition play a role in that passion? Explain your answers.

Adolf Hitler and Mussolini are often cited as madmen for their violent stands. Are the speeches of these men any less effective than the speeches of speakers who are generally considered heroic? Why or why not?

Describe the messages of at least two who spoke in favor of limiting arms at particular times in history. Were their pleas heard? Are these messages being presented today?

Compare the speech of Booker T. Washington to that of Malcolm X. What is the major difference in the philosophies of the two men? How are these differences presented in their speeches?

The "informal speeches" included in this book cover a wide range of topics. Are these speeches worthy of remembering? Support your answer with examples and reasoning.