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Winston Churchill's leading achievements and failures during World War II

Bakalářská práce

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis deals with Winston Churchill's leading achievements and failures during World War II. The thesis is divided into four parts. The first part focuses on Churchill's life from his birth to the beginning of the Second World War (WWII). This is followed by a brief overview of WWII, especially from the perspective of the United Kingdom. The third part presents Churchill's achievements and failures. This part covers in detail some events from 1939-1945, in which Churchill played a major role. The last part of the work is devoted to Churchill's post-war life until his death.

Introduction

Winston Churchill was one of the most important personalities of the 20th century. He became famous in Britain as a strong politician, but the whole world knows him more as a man who fought evil during World War II. If Hitler was considered evil during this time, Churchill could be called the exact opposite. However, all that glitters is not gold and Churchill also had his weaknesses. This bachelor thesis discusses Winston Churchill's leading achievements and failures during World War II.

The work is divided into six chapters. The first three chapters are devoted to Churchill's childhood, his first steps in politics, his involvement in the First World War, and his life in the interwar period. The fourth chapter mentions important events of the Second World War, which serve to quickly recapitulate the history, better orientation and understanding of the whole problem. The fifth chapter is based on the information obtained in the previous chapter. This chapter is the most important of all, as it outlines Churchill's main achievements and failures. The last chapter mentions Churchill's activities in the post-war period until his last days in life. The conclusion is a summary of all the facts, a depiction of Churchill's achievements and failures, and also an appraisal of how Churchill is viewed by people in this century.

1. Churchill's youth

Winston Churchill was born into a wealthy family during the Victorian era. It was this fact that secured him an important position in society, which clearly contributed to his future popularity. The first chapter deals with Churchill's youth and the people who influenced him at this time.

1.1. A child from an influential family

Winston Churchill, full name Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, was born on 30 November 1874 in Blenheim Palace. His father, Lord Randolph Churchill, was English aristocrat and son of the seventh Duke of Marlborough. He was especially known for his slightly radical convictions in politics. The mother of Winston Churchill, Jennie Churchill, was a wealthy American heiress who could be grateful for her wealth to her father, Leonard Jerome, a New York financier. “Winston Churchill was born into a small group of extremely influential and wealthy people who at that time still dominated political and social life” (Ponting, 1997, p. 5, own translation).

When Winston was two years old, he moved with his family to Ireland due to his father's disagreements with the Prince of Wales. They spent four years here and then the family moved back to London. Winston's childhood was not ideal. His parents did not get on well with each other, they were unfaithful and what is more they rarely seen little Winston. It is therefore not surprising that during period Winston's only friend was his nanny, Mrs Elizabeth Everest, who largely held the post of his mother (Ponting, 1997).

It can be said that there were three important women in Winston's life. The first was the aforementioned nanny, Mrs Everest. Winston loved his mother, but she did not return his affection, so he befriended a nanny. That was the case until 1895, when Mrs Everest died. Winston's father also died this year. It is intriguing that Winston's mother began to return Winston's love only after the death of his nanny and his father. She sent him money for his studies and she helped him at the beginning of his political career, when thanks to her influence she arranged suitable jobs for Winston and meetings with influential people, which helped him in the future (Thomson, 2006).

The third and probably the most important woman was his wife. Their relationship was almost a fairy tale. They fell in love at first sight and, according to available sources, were faithful to each other for a lifetime. Winston Churchill and Clementine Hozier were married in 1908. The married couple had five children together – Diana, Randolph, Sarah, Marigold and Mary – four of whom lived to adulthood. Clementine had a great influence on Winston. She comforted him in moments of despair and supported him in a time of glory. Even for this couple, the rule was that behind every success of a great man is a strong woman (Thomson, 2006).

1.2. The troubled pupil

When Winston commenced his studies, his excellent memory and talent for the humanities appeared for the very first time. Although he was able to achieve excellent results, his behaviour was a big problem. Namely negligence, carelessness and forgetfulness. On the grounds of these bad attributes he was one of the worst students and this did not become better even after the switch to secondary school. Teachers sent angry letters to his parents to which, however, no answer ever came back. The relationship between young Winston and his parents was the same. They were not interested in him at all. They often did not even answer his letters or appeals. The only thing that comforted him was fairly good pocket money and his father's consent for Winston to join the academy for cavalry, the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst. After passing the entrance exams, Winston began to lead his own social life and for the first time he became involved in politics. He decided to resign from trying to communicate with his parents who were still not interested in him and who rather preferred his brother Jack as well as their own social life (Ponting, 1997).

In 1895, Winston's father died of syphilis and he left huge debts. The remaining money from the debts was enough for Winston and his brother for a while but it was clear that, unlike their father, the boys would have to work. After this event, Winston entered upon for the career of a cavalry officer. Although he liked military service, he was already clear about his career – politics attracted him more (Ponting, 1997). He also had certain (negative) qualities that contributed to his future fame.

Military service also included a sojourn in India, on which he left in 1896 and lasted for almost three years. Because Winston was often bored here, he educated himself during his free time. The books he read greatly influenced him and formed his first political beliefs. Among other things, the view of the superiority of white people and the view of the greatness of the British Empire he held whole life. In 1899, he left India and ended his career as a cavalry officer. His plan was to stand as a candidate for parliament as soon as possible. This wish came true in 1900, when he became a Member of Parliament after a very evenly matched election (Ponting, 1997).

1.3. For the first time in politics

He made his first speech, presenting the Conservative Party, in 1901. At first, he was enthusiastic about his work, but after a while he stopped enjoying his role in parliament because “his leaders had left him tormented in the back benches for three years” (Haffner, 1996, p. 35, own translation). At this time Churchill believed in two things – he dies young just like his father, and that he is predestined and the chosen one. He was an atheist believing in destiny and his uniqueness. For these reasons, he considered his inaction in parliament intolerable. This led Churchill to a radical move. In 1904, he went over to the side of the Liberal Party (Haffner, 1996). This surprising move, which was considered presumptuous, clearly paid off.

Two years later, the Liberals came to power, and since Churchill was the most conspicuous person, he became the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, shortly after the President of the Board of Trade and finally the Secretary of State for the Home Department. However, some Members of Parliament considered his raging as a threat. For this reason, in 1911, he was appointed by the then Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith as the First Lord of the Admiralty. It was Asquith who wanted to displace Churchill, and he succeeded. Churchill began to devote himself fully to the Royal Navy, which he planned to modernize (Haffner, 1996). What drove him forward was the conviction that his homeland was in danger of an inevitable war. And he was right.

2. World War I

The previous chapter describes Churchill's youth, adolescence, and his first steps toward a political career. During World War I, Churchill held important offices. This chapter describes the events that affected Churchill and thanks to which he gained experience that was useful to him during World War II.

2.1. The unsuccessful campaign

To my mind, Churchill's enthusiasm for work, his verve and especially his foresight were quite impressive. Therefore, in the first year of the war, Churchill seemed to be the best doer to lead Great Britain to victory. He had the necessary experience, commanded a fleet and was a natural-born warrior. However, he did not have enough support in the government. His colleagues did not trust him, they did not find him reliable, and what is more, he looked down on all the others. The truth is, he was very far-sighted. He predicted several events as well as the planned advance of German troops. He even suggested the use of tanks.¹ This was initially considered a senseless idea. Churchill was so sure of his truth that he did not understand that others did not see it either. This was fatal for him during the Naval Operations in the Dardanelles Campaign (Haffner, 1996).

Churchill's idea was to attack Turkey, which was on the side of Germany. The plan was to attack the capital Constantinople, which was conveniently located for an attack by Churchill's fleet. If this operation had succeeded, the whole of Turkey would have been defeated and for Great Britain, it would have been a connecting bridge with Russia. This plan was also brilliant in that if Turkey would be captured, the Balkans would join the Allies, which would mean the defeat of Austria. Germany would then find itself alone and would have to fight on three fronts at the same time. The problem was that in order to succeed, the navy would have to work closely with the military. However, this was not possible because Earl Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War, wanted to fight exclusively on the Western Front. Churchill therefore decided to set out on his own, despite the reluctance of his own admirals. The Turkish stronghold resisted and it was impossible for the British navy to break through. The admirals decided to wait for the

¹ In the book, author Sebastian Haffner uses the term landship which was the former name for tanks.

ground forces. However, before the ground forces arrived, the Turks managed to fully arm themselves. It was clear that Britain had no chance. Although Churchill wanted to continue, the admirals refused to deploy their best ships and therefore they called off the action (Haffner, 1996). It is clear that Churchill was really trying to reverse the situation but it seems to me that he did not consider the opinions of others, but only at his convictions and his own interests.

Subsequent events such as the resignation of Admiral Fisher in 1915 and the change of government brought with them Churchill's downfall. He was succeeded by Arthur Balfour and Churchill was given the almost insignificant office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. At this time, Churchill began painting. It was a consolation for him when he was cornered by society. During this "rest" period, he devised a new plan. He wanted to return in full force as an officer to his friend John French, who lived in France at that time. However, French's influence was not very strong, quite the opposite, and therefore Churchill became a mere front-line officer in Flanders. It did not last long and after a few months he returned to the House of Commons in London. It can be said that he only watched idle for the last two years of the war. As he declared – "I knew everything. I could do nothing" (Haffner, 1996, p. 61, own translation).

3. The interwar period

After the end of the First World War, Churchill became involved with British politics again. There were a lot of new problems that needed to be solved. The third chapter describes the events in the interwar period as well as Churchill's preparations for the Second World War.

3.1. The fight against Bolshevism

After the victory of the Allies and the end of the war, it was time for elections in Britain. Churchill wanted to be back in the game and therefore he had to take necessary steps. Because the Conservatives did not have a great fondness for him and the Liberal Party, which has lost confidence in him, fell apart, he had to make a friend with the former Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Churchill achieved his goal and in 1919 became the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary of State for Air. However, according to the election results, he was dependent on the Conservatives (Rose, 1994).

At this time, in addition to restarting the economy, the fight against Bolshevism began. This problem was not only in Britain, but also in the rest of Europe. Although Germany was on the losing side and had to pay reparations, Churchill had sympathy with them. The German question had to be resolved as soon as possible. Churchill was behind the need to support Germany, not to ruin it financially (Rose, 1994). The fall of Germany would mean the fall of democracy in Central Europe, which could extend to Western Europe. It was also necessary to keep Poland. The best solution was to make peace with Germany and support the recovery of its economy. Then to form a friendly alliance with France, which would mean an effort to moderate France's aggressive policy towards Germany. After the union of Great Britain, France and Germany, it would be possible to return peaceful ideas and true democracy to the rest of Europe and Russia. In Norman Rose's book, he called it an alliance of the Anti-Bolshevik bloc. Although the fight against Bolshevism became Churchill's interest (he himself considered it almost a mission), this plan did not work.

The Cabinet decided to recall British troops from Russia. Some steps by the government even indicated rapprochement with Russia. Churchill, with his radical stance,

got to the side of far-right politics. Some Unionists and Tories began to sympathize with him, which was a problem for Lloyd George. He tried to solve the whole situation by keeping Churchill busy elsewhere. He also succeeded, and in 1920 Churchill became the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Rose, 1994). His thoughts on the destruction of Bolshevism shifted to the background.

As the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Churchill strove to reduce the cost of all matters abroad. He tried to make sure that the profit is always greater than the cost. He also searched for various connections between nations and opportunities to improve relations between them that would preserve peace, and at the same time make these relations advantageous to Great Britain. One such idea was the return of Jews to Palestine. "He had called Zionism an 'inspiring movement' " (Gilbert, 2000, p. 429). Churchill was able to defend and support the thought of Zionism, but it was clear that it was impracticable.

Although Churchill was the Secretary of State for the Colonies, he rarely visited colonial states. He seemed to be losing interest in this position and was preparing to move to the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He hoped Lloyd George would help him to become the Chancellor, but George was gradually losing his influence. Therefore, Churchill slowly but surely tried to transfer his influence to the Tories (Rose, 1994). But the situation has changed for the worse.

3.2. One misfortune replaces another

In 1922, Churchill lost his office, and so did Lloyd George. Other difficult moments followed, such as the death of Churchill's mother and his daughter Marigold, as well as convalescence after appendix surgery. During this period, Churchill stayed with his wife Clementine in Cannes. When he regained his strength, he decided to get back to the House of Commons. He succeeded in 1924, this time with the support of the Conservatives. Churchill returned to the Tory and subsequently became the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Rose, 1994).

Churchill was the Chancellor of the Exchequer until 1929. After losing this office, Churchill began writing books and journal articles. He also traveled to Canada and the

United States, where he lectured in major cities, promoted his books and visited famous tourist places. “His initial optimism regarding his American investments was to be brutally short-lived. In late October, the assets that he had counted on were virtually wiped out in the great stock market crash” (Rose, 1994, p. 231/232). The whole of society in Britain began to deal with the financial crisis, which was added up by problems abroad. Politics changed and Churchill felt isolated with his differing beliefs on Indo-British relations. In 1931, he resigned from the Conservative shadow cabinet.

3.3. Problems at home and abroad

During the 1930s, Churchill strove to avert Indian politics. He did not like the idea of India without British dominance. He predicted that if that happened, Britain would lose its sovereignty and the British Empire would fall apart. However, this was not the only problem Churchill was solving. In 1933, Hitler came to power in Germany (Rose, 1994). Churchill considered him a threat. He again warned about the war atmosphere in Germany as well as its armament.

Churchill was a supporter of diplomacy, but the blood of a warrior flowed in his veins. He wanted to react to Germany's armaments in the same way – armament, especially the air force. This time the government agreed with him. At the end of 1933, the Defence Requirements sub-Committee (DCR) was formed, focusing mainly on Germany. Britain drew up an armaments plan. As it turned out, the plan was too exaggerated and unmanageable financially. Therefore, the members of the DRC decided to increase especially the air force, then the naval fleet and finally the ground forces (Rose, 1994).

Churchill also argued that the ground forces were not so important. If necessary, they can mobilize all forces in a short time by so-called improvisation. He also believed in the invincibility of the French ground army. He himself came to verify this fact to France in 1939. Then he stated that “the French front cannot be surprised. It cannot be broken at any point except by an effort which would be enormously costly in life and would take so much time that the general situation would be transformed while it was in progress” (Rose, 1994, p. 274). At the beginning of the war, Churchill was convinced that, together with France, they could defeat Germany if their economic level is higher

than in Germany. This was his first wrong estimation, which he made before the Second World War started. The Battle of France and the German Blitzkrieg were events that were, as Churchill himself later admitted, the most surprising.

In 1935, Churchill became a member of the Air Defence Research Committee (ADRC). He stayed here for three years and considered the office almost useless. One of the reasons was the constant disputes between the members. Churchill also began to think about the ministerial chair. His chances began to increase when the then Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin began to lose popularity and his health deteriorated (Rose, 1994). In the eyes of other deputies, but also of ordinary people, Churchill was seen as a warrior who could face the crisis. From my point of view, Churchill's experience and his overview of all the problems gave the impression to others that he could be an ideal candidate for the prime minister. Although around 1935 the situation looked promising for Churchill, a year later came the abdication crisis (Gilbert, 2000).

Churchill was affected by this event. King Edward VIII was his friend and Churchill defended him. This put him in parliament, but made the British public indignant. The only salvation for his position was the future war with Germany. Events such as Germany's breach of the Munich Agreement, German pressure on Poland, or the Pact of Steel of Germany and Italy added to Churchill's reputation as a prophecy. "Vindicated by this aggressive, brutal record, Churchill appeared before the British public, no longer as a panic-monger, but as a neglected and abused prophet who had finally come into his own" (Rose, 1994, p. 303). On September 1, 1939, the German army invaded Poland. On the same day, a small War Cabinet, including Churchill, met in Downing Street. Everyone, even Churchill, who saw war as his opportunity, was devastated. Two days later, a state of emergency was declared (Gilbert, 2000).

4. World War II

The previous chapter described Churchill's efforts to prevent Bolshevism and prepare for another war. When World War II came, it was not such a big surprise to Churchill. This chapter describes the most important events of the Second World War, especially those that were closely related to Great Britain or Winston Churchill.

4.1. The beginning of the war in 1939

Although this world war is numbered 2, it could be said that it was the First World War. The reason is that this was the first world war the whole world was really involved. On the contrary, it would be better to call the First World War its second name – the Great War. World War I was largely a conflict between European countries, while World War II involved almost all continents. “What we call World War II began as two separate wars, which had quite different origins and were fought in different continents. The war in Asia arose from the slow disintegration of the ancient empire of China ... The war in Europe was essentially a resumption of the Great War” (Campbell, 1990, p. 8). In Asia, Japan was a major player in the former empire of Chinese. In less than a hundred years, the feudal land has become one of the leading powers. Japan's confidence continued to rise and its troops occupied one country after another. However, other states whose colonies were conquered by Japan did not like this. Japan was only a hair's breadth away from war.

A similar situation with aggression and expansion was in Germany. The economic problems facing Germany played in favour of the National Socialist German Workers' Party. In 1932, the Party won the most votes in the election and a year later, their leader, Adolf Hitler, was appointed the Chancellor. Over the next six years, he succeeded in rescinding the Treaty of Versailles, arming Germany, annexing Austria and much of Czechoslovakia to Germany. The Western powers were making a policy of appeasement and so there was nothing to prevent Germany from invading Poland on September 1, 1939. The following days, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany (Campbell, 1990).

4.2. Year 1940

One of the first war conflicts was the Norwegian campaign. The task of Great Britain was to prevent Germany from occupying Norway, thanks to which the Germans would gain advantageous ports, from which they would then attack Britain in the future. Churchill took command of the fleet and, in part, the ground forces. The British fleet, which fought along with the small Norwegian fleet, was advancing very skilfully. Germany suffered heavy losses, as did the ports they occupied. The next task was to send a British ground force to help Norwegian troops. This event was a big failure. The plan was to attack Trondheim, occupy it and gain an important military base. However, German troops reached Trondheim earlier and the British army did not stand a chance. The campaign was useless, and Churchill was also responsible for this failure. Norway was left to the Germans (Thomson, 2006).

4.2.1. Prime Minister Churchill

It must be said that Churchill's failure in Norway was partly due to the fact that his power was limited to the naval fleet. The then Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was also blamed for the failed Norwegian campaign. As it was said, he was not built for a war. When the German army invaded Belgium and the Netherlands on May 10, Chamberlain resigned. He proposed Churchill as his successor to the king. It is possible that it was because Churchill defended Chamberlain after the failed campaign in Norway and he tried to take all the blame. However, while other Members of Parliament knew that the Norwegian campaign was only partially Churchill's fault, it was clear to them that Churchill was trying to use it to his advantage. In the end, it really was, and although Churchill did not hope at first, he became the Prime Minister that day, May 10, 1940 (Thomson, 2006). This fulfilled his long-awaited wish and perhaps it was an even greater success for him than if he had taken office under normal circumstances. Churchill, a born warrior, stood at the head of the nation during the most extensive war in history. What more could he ask for?

When Churchill entered the House as the Prime Minister, he was greeted with little enthusiasm. Under normal circumstances, other deputies considered him an insufferable and unmanageable person, who always needed to assert his truth. But his

militant nature was exactly what Britain needed. On 13 May, he made his most famous speech, in which he stated: “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat. ... You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word: Victory – victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror; victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival. ... Come, then, let us go forward together with our united strength” (Churchill, 1985, p. 24). This speech caused a stir in the lower house. Some deputies agreed with him, others were stunned. But more importantly, the nation was thrilled. People were ready to fight against evil and Churchill could celebrate success, because in his first speech to the nation, on May 19, he gave people the courage and motivation they needed (Gilbert, 2000).

Churchill eventually gained support in parliament. He assembled a war cabinet and divided other functions. There were many ministers who lost their offices and returned to the ranks of ordinary deputies. Under normal circumstances, Churchill would face resistance. However, the war proved that the deputies accepted their new seats without major objections. (Pitt, 1981).

4.2.2. The Battle of France

After the invasion of German troops into Belgium and the Netherlands, another target for the Germans was France. After the surrender of the Netherlands, France withdrew its troops home to the north. It did not help either, and the Germans crossed the supposedly impassable Ardennes and the Maginot Line to France. On May 15, 1940, Churchill flew to Paris to see if France was losing the war. After the visit, he decided to provide ten squadrons to the French army. “He must bear in mind the distinct possibility that French pugnacity did not match his own and that French generalship, already revealed as inadequate, might lack both the expertise and resolution to carry the plan through to success” (Pitt, 1981, p. 12).

French and British troops thus went against the Germans. As the fighting took place in the north of France, the Belgian army also joined. These three combined units tried to counterattack, but the German army began to surround them. It was necessary to withdraw to the far north. British and French troops suffered another blow when Belgium signed an armistice agreement with Germany on 28 May, 1940, and Belgian troops

stopped fighting. Shortly after this event, the evacuation of both units broke out. Churchill insisted that French troops would be transported in the same proportion as British troops. Most of the French soldiers who came to Britain did not want to stay there and returned to France after the evacuation. Churchill's efforts to save them were thus useless, as most of the soldiers who had returned to France had reached German prisoner-of-war camps. The evacuation in Dunkirk brought rescue only to British units (Pitt, 1981).

After this operation, it was necessary to decide what to do with the remaining British troops that stayed in France. Churchill wanted them to remain and keep fighting. However, Field Marshal Alan Francis Brooke was of the opinion that the remaining British troops also needed to be evacuated and returned to Britain. Churchill disagreed with him at first, but in the end he was glad he submitted. After all, it turned out that Churchill's decision was a good one, for which he was obliged to Brooke. By June 20, most British troops were home, and two days later France signed an armistice with Germany (Pitt, 1981). The Battle of France failed, and as Churchill predicted, the Battle of Britain was approaching.

4.2.3. The Battle of Britain

France fell and Germany began preparing for an attack on Great Britain. Hitler planned to prepare properly and waited for the attack. But that was a fatal mistake. Churchill undertook preparations for the attack. "In the meantime the government was trying to prepare the British people who persisted in regarding the war as a sort of cricket match. Gas masks had been distributed, but every day hundreds were left in the tube or on buses and trains. ... The cinemas were showing *Gone with the Wind* and the pubs were full. It really was about time people woke up" (Jillian, 1968, p. 54). The British nation eventually recovered and began with preparations. People began digging trenches and anti-aircraft shelters. The soldiers built stands for the cannons and their commanders devised demanding training for them. Churchill employed everyone who could help (Pitt, 1981). Where there was a lack of motivation, Churchill hurried with a brilliant encouraging speech. Exactly how he could do it. His contributions to Britain's preparations for an attack were enormous. Churchill also made contact with the then U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, with whom he had long been friends. The Americans

provided the British with the necessary weapons, ammunition and fifty destroyers (Gilbert, 2000).

The air attacks on Britain began on August 8, 1940. Hitler's Luftwaffe first attacked the south and the southeast of Britain respectively. During the air attacks, which lasted ten days, about 700 German aircraft were destroyed. As the operation failed, the Germans tried to attack the inland, but again in vain. Another plan was the bombing of London, which began on September 7. Until mid-September, this rather unsuccessful bombing took place. Gradually, there was a shift from daily attacks to night attacks. The Germans had already attacked almost the entire country, especially large and industrial cities. Churchill often walked through the places in London that were most affected, giving courage to people who lost their homes or loved ones. The determination that Churchill passed on to his nation led Britain to victory (Thomson, 2006).

The winning day could be considered September 17, 1940, when “the Führer has therefore decided to postpone Operation Sea Lion until further notice” (Jillian, 1968, p. 231). No other major campaigns took place, but the Blitzkrieg lasted until the following year. The bombings waned and stopped as Hitler attacked the Soviet Union.

4.3. Year 1941

When Germany attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Churchill did not hesitate to help. Although communism was despised in Britain, Churchill saw in helping the Soviet Union strengthen friendships and possible future cooperation. Churchill also had a strong interest in cooperating with the Americans. As U.S. President Roosevelt shared his interest, they met together and signed the Atlantic Charter (from this alliance, NATO was formed in the future). The British nation accepted the alliance of these two English-speaking countries positively. Churchill's popularity has grown in Britain and in the United States. With an anti-fascist attitude in the United States, Roosevelt was willing to negotiate mutual assistance with the Soviets. Churchill was completely satisfied with this result. The First Moscow Conference took place on August 29, attended by representatives of the three states (Thomson, 2006). This alliance seemed to benefit not only Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union, but also all the states that opposed Germany.

Although Hitler reported at home that the German army was successfully advancing against the Soviet Union, this was not entirely true. The situation worsened for the German army even more when winter came to the Soviet Union. Hitler was also unsuccessful in the submarine warfare against Britain. Preparations for war began in the United States, and Hitler had to do something about it. He needed to break the Big Three alliance. Therefore, he turned to his other ally – Japan. Japan embarked on feigned friendly negotiations with the United States. While unsuspecting Americans negotiated, on December 7, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. After this event, the Axis powers declared war on the United States (Thomson, 2006).

4.4. Year 1942

As Churchill rightly assumed, 1942 was a year of extensive preparations for the defeat of Germany. The Allies tried to repel the enemy's attacks. They suffered heavy losses, but Churchill was able to give everyone hope in his speeches. In the following months, Great Britain and the United States lost a number of colonies. After an agreement on the invasion of North Africa was reached between Great Britain and the United States, Germany occupied all of France. Hitler realized that the Allies' strength was beginning to increase and he had to relocate his troops. A similar situation occurred in Stalingrad, where Russian troops successfully repulsed the German ones. Churchill traveled to states that joined the Allies and arranged further actions. He was travelling, but he still had an overview of all the successes and failures of the Allies. At the end of 1942, the Allies completed preparations and got ready for an attack. As Churchill said, 1943 would be the year when the Allies take the initiative (Thomson, 2006).

4.5. Year 1943

The Allies began to be successful. In January, the German army was defeated in Stalingrad and the Soviets began to push the Germans back west. The invasion of North Africa was also successful. Churchill met Roosevelt in Casablanca (a recaptured city in North Africa) and “an Anglo-American agreement – made as a result of a clear warning by the Combined Chiefs of Staff of the many problems of supply and preparation – not

to launch the cross-Channel liberation of German-occupied Europe until the early summer of 1944” (Gilbert, 2014, p. 493) was reached there. The other two states of the Axis powers were also unsuccessful. Japan tried to occupy Australia and the surrounding island states. In Italy, Mussolini was deposed on 25 July due to the deteriorating situation in the country. He was arrested and only thanks to a group of German soldiers was liberated and taken to Munich (Thomson, 2006). Germany was slowly but surely losing strength, as were its allies.

4.6. Year 1944

Already in 1942, the Allies began bombing Germany. In 1943, the bombing intensified and, in addition to Germany, German military bases, airports and industrial centres, which were in the territories occupied by Germany, were also bombed. The Allies continued in this way until mid-1944. The bombings were intended to weaken the enemy and also pave the way for the Allies and their crucial D-Day – Operation Overlord. D-Day was scheduled for June 5. The plan was to land troops in Normandy, which was to become the main Allied base in France. However, according to the weather forecast, the weather was supposed to be unfavourable, even in the following days. The Germans were thus sure that no invasion would take place. Thanks to eavesdropping, the Allies learned that the Germans did not expect an invasion, so in the end Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force Dwight D. Eisenhower took responsibility for the whole operation, and it began on the originally planned day, June 5. It is also possible that Eisenhower's decision was influenced by the event of June 4, when American troops entered Rome and caused its downfall (Gilbert, 2014).

Early in the morning, on June 6, Allied troops arrived in Normandy and conquered the area. “The invasion fleet was vast. Eight different navies supplied a total of 6939 vessels. Warships accounted for 1213 of these, 4126 were transports, including landing craft, there were 864 merchant craft and 736 ancillary vessels. The majority of vessels of all types were British since much of the U.S. Navy was engaged in the Pacific” (Sharp, 2014, p.42). The success of this operation was the result of long-range preparation and carefully elaborated plans. The Allies thus gained an important point where they built ports, to which soldiers and the necessary equipment subsequently arrived. In the

following months, they managed to regain almost all of France and Belgium. The army, composed of American, British and French troops, advanced south and east of France. From the east, the Soviets went west to them. By the end of 1944, Germany had lost almost all occupied states (Sharp, 2014). As the Allies approached, it became clear to Hitler that they would reach Germany shortly after. D-Day and the ensuing invasion were a huge success.

4.7. Final Year 1945

At the beginning of 1945, the Allied victory was almost within reach. Now the question has arisen as to what would happen to Europe (especially with Poland) after the defeat of Germany. For this reason, the Big Three met on February 4 at the Yalta Conference. Churchill, who had supported democracy all his life, wanted post-war Europe to be full of democratic states. Roosevelt shared this view. Still, Stalin's plans were different, and he could not confide them to Churchill or Roosevelt. "After considerable pressure from the two Western leaders, Stalin gave a series of assurances that free elections would be held, and that all Polish political parties could participate. These assurances were to prove valueless" (Gilbert, 2014, p.782). At the Yalta Conference, it was agreed that the Red Army would continue further west and in the future the Soviet Union would join the fight against Japan.

In April, the Red Army approached Germany. Stalin came up with another question as to who should be the first to appear in Berlin. Churchill and Roosevelt agreed, though reluctantly, to be the Soviets. It became clear to Churchill that Stalin would not keep his promise of democratic states and democratic elections. This turned out to be true after he occupied Hungary and part of Czechoslovakia. Stalin's next step was to form a friendship with the then Prime Minister of Yugoslavia Josip Broz Tito (Gilbert, 2014).

President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, and he was succeeded by Harry S. Truman. When the news reached the world, Hitler was as pleased as the Japanese. They saw the event as a sign that they would win the war. But the truth was that both Germany and Japan were on the brink of strength. Most German war factories were occupied by the Allies. The Red Army was approaching Berlin. Out of desperation, Japan began committing kamikaze – suicide attacks (Gilbert, 2014).

On April 28, Mussolini was shot dead and a day later, the capitulation of all German troops on Italian territory was signed in Rome. The Axis powers thus lost their first ally. It was clear to Hitler that the war was over and he lost. As he stated in the last days of his life, he still believed that the Jews were behind all the problems and one day they will be destroyed for good. He shot himself on April 30, and the Red Army captured Berlin the same day. The war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945 (Gilbert, 2014).

5. An overview of Churchill's achievements and failures

The previous chapter, World War II, briefly describes the period in the years 1939-1945. This chapter contains the most important events that have affected the UK in whole or in part. Each subchapter also mentions how Churchill behaved as the “leader” of Great Britain during these events in difficult times. The following chapter will describe and also summarize Churchill's achievements and failures during the Second World War.

5.1. The achievements

5.1.1. War Leadership

“When Winston Churchill became Prime Minister on 10 May 1940, he had been a Member of Parliament for almost forty years. For more than twenty-five of those years he had held high ministerial office, with responsibilities that covered many spheres of national policy and international affairs. Central to the strength of his war leadership was this experience” (Gilbert, 2003, p.7). Churchill gained a lot of experience during his life. He knew how to solve political problems in his own country as well as abroad. He also experienced the First World War, from which he was inspired to solve problems and he tried to learn from mistakes. Churchill confirmed the saying that failure teaches success. He has made many mistakes, faults and unfortunate decisions during his career. He was often criticized. When someone did not like him, it was because of his nature. He was considered an egoist, and he confirmed this when he said: “Of course I'm an egoist. Where do you get if you aren't?” In his case, this quote was apt.

Maybe his nature was not the most suitable for everyday life, but it was quite suitable for politics. His persuasive skills were immense. He was considered an excellent speaker who could defend his truth. He based his convictions on experience, strategic thinking and gained information. Although not all of his suggestions were reasonable and were often rejected by others, they were always based on some fact and were logically formulated. Because of this, a lot of people came to him for advice. He often solved problems that no one knew how to deal with. He analysed each problem in detail, until he finally came up with a solution. Most of all, he liked war conflicts. Therefore, it was not surprising that he became the prime minister during World War II. Although the war

was an unfortunate event, Churchill took office in joy and determination. The position of the prime minister was his first achievement. As the head of parliament, he led Great Britain to victory (Gilbert, 2003).

5.1.2. National Broadcast

Three days after Churchill became the Prime Minister, he presented his war speech in parliament, in which he perfectly summed up the 5 years that were to follow. The war speech was also broadcast publicly on May 19, 1940. Although Churchill promised them only “blood, toil, tears, and sweat” the citizens of Great Britain were determined to fight evil, even though they were horrified by the war (Gilbert, 2000). In my opinion, Churchill's greatest gift was his oratory.

In no state are there people who have exactly the same opinions. Everyone has different ideas about how government should work. But it is in our nature that in the event of a threat, we can, despite differing opinions, come together and cooperate. Hitler and his terrifying Nazi army represented a huge danger. Now it was still important to find a man who was an excellent speaker and could unite the nation. That is exactly what Churchill was. This is evident not only by the aforementioned speech of 19 May, but also by others that followed. Churchill's rhetorical skills during the War of Britain were most useful. However, Churchill's first broadcast as the prime minister in 1940 brought him achievement, which gained popularity among the people (Johnson, 2014).

5.1.3. The Battle of Britain

When France fell to Hitler on June 22, 1940, Churchill began preparing Britain for a defensive attack. It was clear to him that Hitler was planning to attack Great Britain before attacking the Soviet Union. Hitler named the invasion of Britain as Operation Seelöwe, which was to begin with the occupation of the south coast of England (Pitt, 1981). Churchill already began war preparations in May 1940. He called on the British people to prepare for battle. “In this mood of adrenalin-fuelled exhilaration the British indeed accomplished extraordinary things. There is only one period that I can discover in the last 120 years when British manufacturing output overtook Germany's – and that was

the summer of 1940. Britain produced more planes than Germany; and by the autumn they had seen off the Luftwaffe” (Johnson, 2014, p. 202). However, Churchill knew that despite all the efforts of the British, it would not be possible to defeat Germany, unless he involves the Americans in the Battle of Britain (and in fact to the whole of World War II). Therefore, he decided to negotiate with them and demonstrate his perfect persuasive skills (Gilbert, 2000).

During the Battle of Britain, Churchill got the impression that Britain was losing power and their only hope was help from the United States. In his meetings with Roosevelt, he always tried to give the impression of brotherhood between Great Britain and the United States. He engaged his feelings and showed the Americans how similar they were. In the end, Churchill arranged with the Americans a fairly advantageous trade in the form of war material and warships. His achievement was not the defeat of Germany, but the realization of the defence of Britain. Churchill also had a big credit for the U.S.'s entry into World War II (Johnson, 2014).

5.1.4. Operation Overlord

When Churchill managed to drag the United States into the war, he also wanted to involve the other superpower – the Soviet Union. Thanks to Churchill's determination, he succeeded. He, along with U.S. President Roosevelt and the Soviet Union ruler Stalin, met for the first time on November 28, 1943, at the Tehran Conference. This is how the legendary “The Big Three” was created. All other Allied conferences were aimed at defeating Hitler (Gilbert, 2000). From the first conference in Tehran, all their activities were directed at a major operation, later known as Operation Overlord.

Churchill was undoubtedly the leading speaker at the meetings. He discussed all the actions with Stalin and Roosevelt. Careful discussion of the strategies was the reason why the Normandy landing was a success for the Allies and a defeat for Hitler. Hitler did not consult much with anyone and did not know the concessions. “While Churchill engaged in debate, Hitler simply stifled it. In the end therefore, although totalitarian states are good at starting wars, democracies are better at winning them” (Roberts, 2010, p. 180).

Operation Overlord on June 6, 1944 was the first great success of the Allies, leading to the liberation of Europe from Hitler. Churchill also came out of this situation as a hero. When in 1942 some British people demanded the creation of a second front line in France, it was Churchill who rejected the idea. It was thanks to his experience from the First World War. However, the plans for Operation Overlord were top secret, so Churchill was forgiven for not creating a second front line in France until D-Day, when the public learned with amazement about the successful campaign. Dissatisfied people became a crowd of his admirers (Thomson, 2006).

5.2. The failures

5.2.1. The Norwegian Campaign

Before the Battle of France, Hitler launched the Norwegian campaign on 8 April, 1940. “Churchill made the first and probably decisive mistake right from the start. He was convinced that the German fleet was trying to sail to the Atlantic, and ordered the troops to disembark from the ships that were to sail to Norway ... He also sent warships stationed near Narvik, which provided protection when laying minefields, to start searching for the German fleet” (Ponting, 1997, p. 385, own translation). Thanks to Churchill's “help”, the Germans reached as far as Narvik.

Churchill ordered sending several ships to Norway in an effort to liberate German-occupied Norwegian cities and ports. However, he gave different orders every day and the soldiers were confused. The commanders did not like Churchill's indecisive behaviour, so he was forced to hand over the function to Neville Chamberlain. Even then, Churchill became entangled in the lead and changed his mind several times during the day about where British ships should attack. On 10 June, 1940, British troops were withdrawn, and the only thing they gained from Norway was Narvik. Although Churchill was only partially responsible for the failed action, the Norwegian campaign was a big failure and Churchill's reputation deteriorated considerably (Ponting, 1997).

5.2.2. The Battle of France

Before Churchill became the Prime Minister in 1940, he served as the First Lord of the Admiralty. It follows that he had a great overview of the British Naval Fleet, and partly also had an overview of the Air Force and the Ground Army. Even before the start of the war, he proposed to start armament, just as Germany had begun. He decided that it would be best to invest as much money in the Air Force as possible. This decision was very reasonable, but the following assumption made by Churchill was completely wrong. He believed that if Great Britain were in trouble, friends from France would come to their aid. In his opinion, the French army was invincible (Rose, 1994). As it turned out, it was his first mistake.

In May 1940, the German army attacked France. Although Churchill expected the Battle of France to take place, he never thought the event would be so quick and successful for Hitler. There were many British troops in France and it was necessary to evacuate the troops back to Britain. At first, Churchill did not want to evacuate British troops and continue to fight because France had not yet capitulated. It was not until Field Marshal Alan Francis Brooke made him do it. The Dunkirk evacuation finally took place between 26 May and 4 June 1940. The loss of life was enormous, and had it not been for Brooke, Churchill would probably have left British troops at the mercy of the Nazis in France for some time to come (Pitt, 1981). The Dunkirk evacuation eventually succeeded, but could have been much faster. What is more, Churchill's failure was the loss of France.

5.2.3. Soviet expansionism and the fall of democracies

On June 22, 1941, when German army attacked the Soviet Union, Churchill saw the Soviets as friends. He thought that a connection with Stalin would be as beneficial as a connection with Roosevelt. The Allies were to bring peace to Europe and restore democracy. All three allies swore an oath. As it turned out, Stalin did not keep his word. The expansion of the Soviet Union was already evident at a time when Stalin had inconspicuously occupied Poland. After the war, the situation was even worse. Churchill and Great Britain became a weak and insignificant country in Stalin's eyes. The new President Harry Truman and his United States became the enemy of Stalin. Churchill began to fear that Britain would not have enough strength to stop Stalin, so he turned to

the United States. “Writing to Truman, Churchill changed his metaphor to warn of 'an iron curtain' being drawn down along the Soviet front line” (Fenby, 2006, p. 437).

Just after the end of World War II, the United States did not see the Soviet Union as an enemy. At Churchill's urging, they sent an advisor on foreign policy Harry Hopkins to Stalin to discuss the situation in Poland and other matters agreed at the Yalta Conference in 1945. The outcome of the negotiations was the interim Warsaw government (Fenby, 2006).

Churchill thought he would ease Stalin's expanding government if he maintained a friendly relationship with him. However, Stalin only used it to his advantage, assuring Churchill that the Soviet army was slowly withdrawing from Europe. Germany was then divided into East and West. Churchill lost the election and the Allies fell apart. Truman last met Stalin in August 1945. The world split into two sides, Eastern Europe was absorbed by the Soviet Union and Churchill's optimistic vision of a free and democratic Europe was destroyed. Stopping Soviet expansion was a failure for Churchill. In my view, Churchill's biggest problem was that his belief in Stalin's promises blinded Churchill's rational thinking, and then he was surprised when Stalin did not keep his word. Despite the unfortunate result, Churchill was still optimistic because he said that: “The machinery of propaganda may pack their minds with falsehood and deny them truth for many generations of time, but the soul of man thus held in trance, or frozen in a long night, can be awakened by a spark coming from God knows where, and in a moment the whole structure of lies and oppression is on trial for its life” (Gilbert, 2006, p. 76). And as we know today, Churchill's prophecy turned out to be true

6. The post-war period and the rest of Churchill's life

During World War II, Churchill had many duties as the Prime Minister of Great Britain. After the war ended, many changes came to his life. The last chapter deals with the post-war period until Churchill's death.

6.1. The first elections after the war

After the war, it was time to call a new general election, as it had been for decade since the last few years. “In a free democracy, it usually happens that the political party that was in power when the war began is defeated by its opponent once the war is over” (Thomson, 2006, p. 316, own translation). The same situation occurred in the post-war elections in Britain. The Conservatives suffered a huge defeat, while the Labourites, who proclaimed the “Let Us Face the Future” manifesto, celebrated success. Churchill resigned and was therefore unable to attend further Allied conferences.

The resolutions approved at the end of the Potsdam Conference were unrewarding to Britain. At the time, the Americans believed that Britain was “the bad one”, while the Soviet Union had no imperialist goals. And while in Europe they were dealing with peaceful conditions, the United States was bombing Japan. Japan was warned to give up immediately. The whole world was horrified when an atomic bomb hit Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki three days later. The consequences were terrifying. Japan surrendered and August 15 was considered the worldwide end of the war (Thomson, 2006).

After these events, Churchill's interest shifted to foreign policy. The British colonies were in a lamentable condition and an increased interest in their autonomy began to emerge. Churchill saw another problem in the communist Soviet Union (similar to Bolshevism after the First World War) and the Iron Curtain. He presented these concerns during his visit to the United States in Fulton. He did not fear another war, but a threat to democracy. He proposed the unification of Anglo-American areas against the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, many people sympathized with the Soviet Union and no one took Churchill's speech, as well as his concerns, seriously. After returning to Europe, Churchill presented a proposition for the Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance. This

proposition, which was presented twenty years ago by Aristide Briand, was more successful than a lecture in Fulton (Thomson, 2006).

In 1947, the agreement on India's independence began to be resolved. Although Churchill did not agree with the independence, there was nothing he could do about it. In the same year, India became independent and two new states were created – India and Pakistan. The following year, Burma's independence was recognized. Another problem was the economic crisis that struck in 1947. Britain received a loan from the United States, but even that was not enough. Other Western European countries were in the same situation. That is why the U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall decided to give a helping hand to these states. He offered a solution in the form of the so-called Marshall Plan, which was to help with additional funding. The United States were not concerned with the economic collapse of Western Europe. However, it terrified them that these states could be an easy target for the Soviet Union in times of crisis. The congress at which Marshall's plan was signed was started by Churchill with his speech. The Marshall Plan was approved on April 3, 1948. A year later, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed in which Churchill played a crucial role (Thomson, 2006).

6.2. Back in the chair

Five years have passed since the first post-war elections, and the then government has weakened. This resulted in the dissolution of parliament and new elections were called in 1951. Churchill sensed an opportunity and this time he was lucky. The Conservatives won by a narrow margin, and the then Prime Minister Clement Attlee resigned. Churchill was asked by the king to form a government. It should be said that he achieved his dream. “He was the prime minister by a popular vote. During the war, he became the prime minister under different circumstances. At that time, he was brought to this position by a national catastrophe” (Thomson, 2006, p. 347, own translation). When he became the prime minister, the situation inside and outside Britain was not easy. It was necessary to get money to repay loans to the U.S. and riots reigned abroad. However, Churchill was not intimidated and began to deal with these issues in parliament and in person in the United States.

Shortly after Churchill's return to Great Britain, King George VI died, which meant that Churchill took the lead. Related to this was the mental strain, which resulted in a small stroke. His loved ones persuaded him to slow down, but he did not stop. He went to the United States again, trying to persuade the new President Dwight D. Eisenhower to meet with Joseph Stalin and to strengthen relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. However, he did not succeed and therefore returned home. Two months after this visit, Stalin died. After returning home, preparations were made for the coronation of the future Queen Elizabeth II, which took place on June 2, 1953. On this occasion, the new queen awarded Churchill the Order of the Garter. From that moment on, he was called Sir Winston Churchill (Lewis, 2005).

There were many events that Churchill attended or organized. This mental strain manifested itself again in a second stroke. His health got worse and he began to be pressured to resign. The then Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Anthony Eden strove to replace him. Churchill did not plan to give up until the enmity between the USA and the USSR was resolved. However, the situation did not change when at the summit Eisenhower refused to negotiate with the Soviet Union and two weeks later, the Premier of the Soviet Union Nikolai Bulganin expressed a lack of interest in establishing friendly relations with the Americans. After these two events, Churchill and his wife invited the Queen and her husband to a farewell dinner in Downing Street. The next day, April 5, 1955, Churchill resigned (Lewis, 2005).

6.3. The resignation and the last years of life

After leaving office, Churchill enjoyed a well-deserved rest. He watched political events from a distance. Wherever he went, he was enthusiastically welcomed. He gained citizenship in Belfast, Londonderry and even the United States. He received the Charlemagne Prize and his own statue, which is on display in London. He met with prominent political figures and celebrities. He spent his free time actively, still travelling and writing his books. Writing was his passion and the fact that he was a good writer is evidenced by the fact that already in 1953 he won the Nobel Prize for Literature. He could not slow down even in retirement. This resulted in another stroke and weakened

immunity. The news that his daughter Diana had committed suicide did not help his recovery either (Lewis, 2005).

On July 27, 1964, Churchill last appeared in the House of Commons. His colleagues noticed that he was running out of energy. He suffered the severest stroke six months later and died on January 24, 1965, at the respectable age of 90. Thus, his presage that he would die young did not come true. But what came true was his belief that he is predestined and the chosen one. Churchill had a state funeral, which was attended even by Queen Elizabeth II. “Despite all his mistakes, despite his arrogance and his eccentricities, and despite the hatreds he roused among Conservatives and Labour alike, Churchill's reputation has survived virtually unscathed” (Lewis, 2005, p. 253). This is evidenced by the fact that in 2002, according to a BBC poll, he was elected the greatest Briton of all time. Personally speaking, Churchill might be considered one of the most distinctive, world-famous personalities of the 20th century.

Conclusion

Churchill's life was very diverse. He was born into a prominent family, and although his father did not show much interest in him, he still had a great influence on little Winston, as Winston soon entered politics like his father. During his lifetime, Churchill held almost every major position that parliament could offer. He held the highest one twice. He first appeared as the prime minister was during World War II. This was the period that is central to this bachelor thesis, as the main goal was to discover *Winston Churchill's leading achievements and failures during World War II*.

Churchill's achievements include his War Leadership as a prime minister, National Broadcast, the Battle of Britain and Operation Overlord. Of all these successes he achieved, becoming the prime minister was the most important. The question is how much influence Churchill would have had during the war if he could not control Britain from the ministerial seat. Fortunately for him, and probably for the whole nation, he was elected as the leader in this difficult time. People admired his experience, verve, ability to solve problems and his speaking skills. It was his rhetoric that caught attention and motivated the nation. It is a fact that some considered him an excessive talker, but it is hard to deny that in difficult moments he came to the rescue with the encouraging and meaningful speech. His National Broadcast, in which he promised only “blood, toil, tears, and sweat”, amazed everyone who heard it and these four memorable words went down in history. His other speeches are not so well known, but they were no less important to the British during the Battle of Britain. It is certain that Britain won this battle because the country was well prepared. Churchill played a major role in these preparations, especially when he obtained the necessary military material from the United States. The fact that the United States joined the war was partly due to Churchill. He also managed to persuade the Soviets to work with the Americans. After the creation of the Big Three, Churchill's all efforts were directed at defeating Hitler. Operation Overlord was Churchill's last great success during World War II. It was a top-secret campaign that made Churchill a hero and brought the Allies their first significant victory.

Churchill's failures include the Norwegian campaign, the Battle of France, Soviet expansionism and the fall of democracies. Before Churchill became the Prime Minister, he played a role during the Norwegian campaign. During this event, one of his

weaknesses became apparent. It turned out that Churchill often changed his opinions and cooperation with him was sometimes difficult. After the unsuccessful Norwegian campaign, Churchill turned out to be an indecisive meddler. His other problem was the belief that he was infallible. Churchill was convinced that although Hitler had gained almost all of Norway, he would never defeat France. As it turned out, France was a fairly easy target for Hitler and Churchill himself later admitted that the Battle of France was an unexpected failure. The last failure was the inability to prevent Soviet expansionism and the fall of democracies. Even in this case, Churchill underestimated his opponent. He placed too much trust in Stalin, who in the end did not keep his promises and destroyed the friendship not only with Churchill.

Taking everything into consideration, it cannot be said that Churchill has always been successful. Like everyone else, he made many mistakes. But it is clear that Churchill's main attempt to defeat Hitler and his domination in Europe was successful. As a result, Churchill went down in history as a hero and in the context of World War II, his personality will always be perceived positively.

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Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá Winstonem Churchillem a jeho úspěchy a neúspěchy během druhé světové války. Podstatná část je věnována jeho životu, kde je zobrazeno, jak se z ambiciózního chlapce stal známý politik, zarytý demokrat a hrdina národa. Část práce popisuje stručný průběh druhé světové války. Pátá kapitola, která je ze všech nejdůležitější, ukazuje Churchillovi úspěchy a neúspěchy. Je zde vidět, že i on byl pouze člověk a z toho důvodu se ani jemu nevyhnuly potíže. Dá se však obecně říci, že i přes všechny neúspěchy si ho lidé pamatují zejména v tom dobrém, a to nejenom obyvatelé Velké Británie, ale i zbytku světa.

Anotace

Jméno a příjmení:	Kateřina Václavková
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Název práce:	Úspěchy a neúspěchy Winstona Churchilla během druhé světové války
Název v angličtině:	Winston Churchill's leading achievements and failures during World War II
Anotace práce:	Cílem této bakalářské práce je nalezení všech úspěchů a neúspěchů Winstona Churchilla během druhé světové války. Práce se věnuje Winstonu Churchillovi jako významné historické osobnosti. V práci je také zmíněn průběh druhé světové války, a to zejména z pohledu Velké Británie.
Klíčová slova:	Winston Churchill, druhá světová válka, Velká Británie, úspěchy, neúspěchy, vůdcovství
Anotace v angličtině:	The aim of this bachelor thesis is to find all the leading achievements and failures of Winston Churchill during World War II. The work is devoted to Winston Churchill as an important historical figure. The progress of the Second World War is also mentioned here, especially from the point of the view of Great Britain.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Winston Churchill, World War II, Great Britain, achievements, failures, leadership
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