

**BOLSOVER READING GROUP
READING EXERCISE**

VE Day 75th Commemoration

‘Postscript’ by J.B.Priestley

Broadcast by BBC Radio on Sunday 28th July 1940

What are we civilians prepared to do in return for the skill, devotion, endurance and self sacrifice of the young men in The R.A.F.?

Surely the answer is that the least we can do is to give our minds honestly, sincerely and without self interest, to the task of preparing a world really fit for them and their kind – to arrange for their ‘Happy – Landing’.

Don’t insult them by thinking they don’t know what kind of world they are fighting for.

Here is a bit of a letter that reached me two days ago:-

My son was formerly a salesman; he resigned in order to join the Air Force. On a recent visit home he said: ‘I shall never go back to the old business life - that life of what I call the survival of the slickest; I now know a better way. Our lads in the R.A.F. would, and do,

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willingly give their lives for each other, the whole outlook of the force is one of 'give' not one of 'get'. If tomorrow the war ended and I returned to business, I would need to sneak, cheat and pry in order to get hold of orders which otherwise would have gone to one of my R.A.F. friends if one of them returned to commercial life with a competing firm. Instead of cooperating as we do in war, we would each use all the craft we possessed with which to confound each other." I will never do it.

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Winston Churchill and Europe

Winston Churchill (Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from May 1940 to July 1945) is undoubtedly one of the most significant people in bringing about V.E. Day — Victory in Europe — at the end of 6 long years.

Not long after V.E. Day Churchill was pressing the case for what needed to happen next,
“We must recreate the European family in a regional structure called, it may be, the United States of Europe”

Five years later, he was warning of the,
“disadvantages and even dangers to us of standing aloof” from a more united Europe.

He was sad that Britain had refused to discuss the creation of a European army.

Close ties to our European neighbours were precious, Churchill argued, even if that sometimes meant,
“going against our national sovereignty”.

In July 1945 the newly elected Prime Minister, Clement Attlee (Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from July 1945 to October 1951, and Leader of the Labour Party from 1935 to 1955), was saying,

“Had Europe been united in spirit, the Nazi monster would have been strangled at birth, and that disunity among nations was responsible for the success of Nazi Germany”.