



The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches

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Whether it was **Winston Churchill** rousing the British to war, **Fidel Castro** inspiring the Cuban revolution, or **Bill Clinton** defending himself against **Monica Lewinsky**, great speakers have always had the power to stir hearts, uphold great ideals, and lead nations to new frontiers. This newly revised edition of **The Penguin Book of Twentieth Century Speeches** includes a new introduction and twenty-nine new selections, such as the words spoken by **Earl Spencer** at **Princess Diana's** funeral, **Nelson Mandela's** "Let Freedom Sing" speech, and **Bill Clinton's** 1998 apology to the American people.

The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches Details

Date : Published May 1st 2000 by Penguin Books (first published August 1st 1993)

ISBN : 9780140285000

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Format : Paperback 560 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, History, Politics, Reference



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From Reader Review The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches for online ebook

Conor says

great to dip in and out of

Shishir says

Good collection of well written speeches (unfortunately written books are unable to portray the delivery and cadence) - providing explanation and context in history

Lizzy says

First I have a confession to make, I did not read all the speeches contemplated in The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches. I picked just those that were more significant to me. Maybe I will read others later on, I don't know.

There were, for certain, famous and notorious words by well known personalities that helped shape the world. I was moved by some of them, irritated by others and emotional about a few. Churchill comes out as, perhaps, the supreme speaker. But it could be that I was biased, from just having finished William Manchester and Paul Reid's The Last Lion 3: Winston Spencer Churchill, Defender of the Realm, 1940-1965.

However, this anthology lacked somewhat because it includes portions of each speech and not it all. A pity.

Richard says

Anyone with an interest in politics or the last century's history should check this out. It's in bite-sized pieces, too.

Greg says

This book is certainly worth the read, but really demands a large footnote.

It is ridiculously focused on The UK, particularly royalty. There is a large volume of British domestic policy speeches from parliament in the early 20th century that turned me off just because I can't imagine anyone outside of Great Britain gives a crap (Princess Diana's eulogy is just one example of a speech that just doesn't matter that much. I mean, did you remember until I told you that her brother went apeshit at her funeral? Who cares about Edward VIII's abdication? This editor includes 4 &%^ing speeches about it.).

I was really overwhelmed how eurocentric this book is.

Nehru and Gandhi have 2 apiece if I recall, but that's as far East as it goes. With all the speeches and declarations re: World War II and nuclear energy (Oppenheimer's resignation from Los Alamos, for example), one would expect Hirohito or one of his generals, at the least. While strategic bombing in WWII is discussed in the context of say, Dresden, Tokyo's firebombing is not mentioned, and so on.

The DPRK's Kim family does not appear, nor Mao, nor Ho Chi Minh (I'm not the editor of the London Times or anything, but I feel his declaration of independence far surpasses much of the parliamentary grumbling early in this chronologically-ordered book), nor any of the countless other well-spoken leaders of the East. The editors didn't mind translating Hitler, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Castro, Reinhard Heydrich or even Dolores Ibarruri - that's no excuse.

Everything from the west that you'd expect is here, and a few I wasn't expecting. (Adlai Stevenson was a great public speaker. Who knew?) Sacco and Vanzetti's closing statements surprised me with their inclusion, but certainly belong.

This book is strong in newer speeches, with Clinton, Blair, and Jesse Jackson each featured, along with a bit of Thatcher and Reagan.

The very brief (and heavily edited for profanity) speeches by General Patton are a highlight in this sometimes very dry mess of elderly British people talking like elderly British people.

Worth the read, especially if you're in desperate need of well-written prose (okay, Hitler's prose is legendarily daft, but still) and have a few hours to knock off.

Nick Twinamatsiko says

It was in this book that I came to learn of, and greatly admire, such people as Emeline Pankhurst ('I am here as a soldier who has temporarily left the field of battle in order to explain - it seems strange it should have to be explained - what civil war is like when civil war is waged by women.' I LOVED that!) Eugene McCarthy ('I say to you the political prophets have prophesied falsely in these eight years. And the high priests of government have ruled by that false prophecy. And the people seemed to have loved it so.') and Vaclav Havel ('People, your government has returned to you!')

It's amazing what history can be learnt by simply considering the great speeches of an age. Reading MacArthur's collection, and then considering how the century unfolded, one wonders whether it's words - mere words - that shape history, or it's the events (the history) that give shape to the words.

Kris Wijoyo says

bagian waktu jenderal Mac Arthur menyampaikan pidato perpisahan bikin gw terharu, dia banyak ngejelasin tentang keabadian sebuah pengabdian yang walaupun zaman berubah tetapi nilai pengabdian yang tulus akan tetap kekal abadi..."Duty-Honor-Country"

Will James says

I never tire of picking up this book, and scanning its pages to be constantly amazed and inspired by some of the greatest rhetoric of the last century.

Sara says

If you ignore the fact that it's ridiculously eurocentric and only about 3 speeches are by women, it's a good anthology.

Alyson Bowers says

awesome! Gives you some wonderful and not-so-wonderful speeches made by some of the most influential speeches of people in the 20th century. Speeches from Churchill, Mandela, Luther King, and even the evil dictators like Hitler, Stalin, etc.
