

## A CHURCHILLIAN EVENING

First of all I would like to thank out dear João Espada, his colleagues and his team for this marvellous event. “We are easily satisfied with the best”.

We can never be tired when listening to Churchill’s stories, quotes and facts. Why is this man so important nowadays and why his lessons are somehow still relevant? In a society that is getting less and less freer we have been hearing few voices of consciousness, balanced opinions and overall understanding. It’s like we were in our “wilderness years”, watching the rise of totalitarianism and trying to warn people about the dangers nobody wants to see.

“An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile – hoping it will eat him last”. We are living the Twenties again, not 2020’s, but the 1920’s. The new totalitarianism around us is the political correctness now named woke, or in the business world, ESG. The dream of united societies is dead as we now are labeled in race, color, religion, eating habits, sexual orientation, reading habits and the list could go on and on.

And the mobs are back. Instead of burning books in public places, (though Asterix was burned in Canada) people are being cancelled in real live through social digital nets. If you say something or publish ideas that wokeness priests consider offensive you will be immediately called racist, sexist, homophobic, islamophobic, womanizer but seldomly antisemitic. This is somehow allowed. Cancellation means you will not be able to sustain your live but selling books, giving speeches or monetizing in social media platforms. You will be sent to hell, with no stop through purgatory. We are being ruled by fanatics and “A fanatic is one who can’t change his mind and won’t change the subject”.

There is a new Arianism going on and “don’t you dare to speak out”. Kids in school are being taught to think one way only and are offended by ideas that go against the mainstream. “The empires of the future are the empires of the mind”, and this is the war we are now fighting.

And the press, ah, the press; there is a new reality being build and few voices give the news instead of doing the news. Comments substitute the facts and become the facts. In the book “The Splendid and the Evil”, Eric Larssen mentioned that when WSC gave his “the finest hour” speech, only a few newspapers from almost twenty, reproduced the speech. Maybe Churchill was producing fake news for some of them. “There is no such thing as public opinion. There is only published opinion”.

As times move forward we are facing the death of the truth, the constructing of a divided society, the rule of one only thought, the distortion of reality and cruel mobs around the block. They are not using black or brown shirts yet, but could become fashionable in the next years.

I didn’t mentioned Covid in this wider panorama, and here goes my respect to millions of people that died and the pain of their families. But we had the Spanish flu in the 1920’s, much worst in the number of deaths but less destructive in freedom and liberties. Somehow Covid is part of this new rule as we softly abandoned freedom in name of safeness. WSC said about Chamberlain that “Britain and France had to choose between war and dishonour. They choose dishonour. They shall have war”. We choose to be safe instead of free, we will lose freedom and won’t be safe. “The truth is incontrovertible. Panic may resent it, ignorance may deride it, malice may distort it, but there it is”.

One last point is economics. We are living the same conditions as in the late 1920's. The market is flooded with cash, liquidity is higher than ever, revenues are down, real estate is booming (again), sales are stuck and power points are overrated. Startups are the new Xanadu as was the "Colas", the car companies and railroads back then. One day the wheel will stop do spin and the music will stop to play. Few chairs will be available. When? Well, that's a trillion dollar question.

As freedom fighters that we are, all of us must not lose perspective on the real facts and pursuit, as we have always done, to show that all that matters in freedom.

We do have a lot of work ahead and we are behind it. "Do we have enemies? Good. That means we've stood up for something, sometime in our lives". "But this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning". So, "if you are going through hell, keep going". "Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm". And our "Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference".

This is a fine dinner at a fine moment. We are going back to live, getting together again. Though the hard work ahead, we do stand for what is right and what is reasonable. "The price of greatness is responsibility", and shall be the example we must stand for.

Regarding my country Brazil, "When I am abroad, I always make it a rule never to criticize the government of my country. I make up for lost time when I am at home", I will revert to it in our conversation tomorrow.

But I am happy to say that thanks specially to João Espada, Craig Horn, Justin Reash and Allen Packwood we opened an International Churchill Society chapter in Brazil. We are in our first steps and it will be operating in a couple of months and, Mr Ambassador, with the help of the British consulate in São Paulo. I could not go to London this year due to travel restrictions in the UK so the official announce is being done here, at the Political Forum in Estoril. Also I am happy to say we will be able to have a beautiful park, by the lake Guaíba in Porto Alegre, that will be renamed as Praça Winston Churchill. I hope to see you there for the inauguration.

Thank you and good evening to all.