

Tuesday 20 August 2019

**“Britain has a habit of making promises to people that it never intends to keep, or could not conceivably keep,” says Peter Hitchens.**

“I’m not a surrenderist. I’m not a Hitler apologist. I’m not, in fact, even an appeaser. I’m just somebody who thinks that a country which hides its own past from itself, will never ever manage its own present. Let alone make its way healthily into the future.” Controversial Conservative journalist Peter Hitchens appeared at the Edinburgh International Book Festival today in an event chaired by Scottish Journalist Ruth Wishart. Hitchens discussed his new book, *The Phony Victory: The World War II Illusion*, which looks at how the British viewpoint of the illustrious win of the second world war has been created from a revisionist standpoint and what he considers to be modern day appeasement.

“We’ve got in the habit, in this country, of having politicians who say to the public ‘we have this terrible enemy and we must fight him’. He doesn’t mean ‘we’, he means ‘they’, the armed forces. They must go out and fight.”

When the topic ran to what Hitchen calls “the bizarre view” held by many, including he mentions “The Prince of Wales”, that Britain went into the Second World War to save European Jews, when, Hitchen claims, is the opposite saying that there’s “no evidence that we did.

“The truth is, that by defeating Hitler, the Allies did indeed end the massacre of European Jews, but not until after quite a lot of them had been massacred. So there was this coincidence of aim, but it wasn’t the purpose of the war and we should stop pretending to ourselves that somehow we went to war to save Anne Frank, because we didn’t.

“At the time, by leaving the gates of Palestine open we could have saved huge amounts of European Jews. We slammed those gates shut.”

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Hitchens makes the point of frequently mentioning that he is opposed to war. While he concedes that an invaded country has its reasons to defend its nation, he says that war brings nothing good for the ordinary people. “From the point of view of the people, war is always a disaster. War means broken families. War means orphans. War means widows. War means destroyed homes. War means rationing, shortage, frustrated ambition, years eaten by the locust and at the end of it, high taxes.”

When asked about Neville Chamberlain’s policy of appeasement of Hitler in the 1930’s before Britain waded into the War, Hitchen states that he doesn’t consider that to be the only instance of appeasement and that there is even one example close to home.

“There are many instances of appeasement in the modern world. The principle one I made myself very unpopular by pointing out, is the collapse of the British Government supposedly as a United Nations Security Council member, a nuclear power in the fact of being blackmailed by the Irish Republican Army in 1998 in what is so blasphemously referred to as The Good Friday Agreement. That’s plainly appeasement of the first order.

“The other really popular form of appeasement in the modern world is the constant pressure of western countries on Israel to give real land away for paper peace. This is standard, boilerplate what everybody believes.”