

Following the British defeat at Dunkirk in June 1940, Winston Churchill's famous "Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat" broadcast - vowing that "we shall fight in the fields and in the streets... we shall never surrender" - effectively rallied the British population and kept up their morale.

defeat: downfall
broadcast: radio transmission
vow: declare
surrender: capitulate
to rally: unite

Business as usual after a German raid



„Blood, Toil, Tears, and Sweat“

May 13, 1940

toil: hard work
ordeal: nightmare
grievous: painful
struggle: fight
suffering: pain
policy: strategy
to wage war: carry on war
might: power
lamentable: sad
aim: goal
in spite of: regardless of
fail: collapse
care for: help
abyss: depth
sinister: dark
protracted: extended
perverted: degenerate
brace: stay
duty: obligation
to bear: tolerate

I say to the House as I said to ministers who have joined this government, I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat. We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many months of struggle and suffering.

You ask, what is our policy? I say it is to wage war by land, sea, and air. War with all our might and with all the strength God has given us, and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy.

You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs - Victory in spite of all terrors - Victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival.

From Churchills speech on June 18, 1940:

Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age, made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will say, "This was their finest hour."



Winston Churchill, Britain's Prime Minister during the war. In 1953 he received the Nobel Prize in Literature.