

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: Niederlage
broadcast: Radiosendung
vow: beschwören
surrender: sich ergeben
to rally: sich sammeln (um)



Business as usual after a German raid (Luftangriff)

„Blood, Toil, Tears, and Sweat“

May 13, 1940

toil: Mühsal
ordeal: Tortur
grievous: schlimm
struggle: Kampf
suffering: Leiden
policy: Politik
to wage war: Krieg führen
might: Macht
lamentable: beklagenswert
aim: Ziel
in spite of: trotz
fail: versagen
care for: sich sorgen um
abyss: Abgrund
sinister: dunkel
protracted: langwierig
perverted: missgeleitet
brace: streben
duty: Pflicht
to bear: ermutigen

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 Unites 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.