

XX 4"

I am neither a great national figure like Cardinal Hinsley, nor a glamorous visitor like General de Gaulle. I cannot hope to equal either in oratory or in importance.

I find myself thrust into eminence beside them because in recent months I have become a rather notorious character. I have been bold enough to say openly and with all possible emphasis that I believe in my country. I believe in the cause she is fighting for. I am confident that she can win. I want her to throw off her sloth and get on with the job of smashing the enemy. I want her to put an end once and for all to this German menace that is not only a peril to mankind, but the existence of which is an eternal disgrace to all mankind.

XX

Now there is nothing unusual in these views. They are not original. I did not invent them. They are the thoughts in the minds of most of the people in this country at the moment. What astounds me is that I should have created such an enormous interest simply by expressing them. That shows the depths to which our country has been reduced by twenty years of palsied Government.

Now how did we get into such a state? Why is it that so soon after the most tremendous victory in our history we should be facing the greatest crisis in our history? The answer is very simple. We put the leadership of this

~~nation into the hands of men who thought that talking was more important than doing things. The ability to talk came to be considered the only qualification that mattered.~~

We put conscientious objectors into high places and flung the men who had won the war into the gutter. We chose as our Prime Minister a master of oratorical incomprehensibility. He talked and talked and talked and no one ever understood what he was saying. He was so completely incomprehensible that we thought from his profundity that he must be marvellous.

~~In the fullness of time he went and in his place we put a perfect wizard of inanition. A man who made indecision and inaction into a virtue and labelled it "Safety First", a political Pinocchio without a Jimminy Cricket.~~

~~XXX When you reflect on the history of recent years it is a miracle that we are even standing up today.~~

~~XXX~~ Now for all my bellicosity let me say that I am by no means a warlike man. I hate war. It should not be necessary for men to fight each other for the right to exist. There is quite enough fighting of a righteous kind to be done. Fighting to abolish unnecessary hardship, want and poverty. Fighting to make progress not to destroy. Fighting to make this bountiful earth of ours more bountiful still, not to lay it in ruins.

~~I do not believe this war was necessary. I believe it could have been avoided. I believe it should have been avoided. But you cannot tame a tiger with a saucer of milk, and that is what we tried to do.~~

~~It is, and always has been, my view that if you find yourself in a war the wisest thing to do is to win it as quickly as you can. It saves you worry. It saves you money. And most important of all it saves you precious lives.~~

*8/11* ~~XXX~~ There is only one way to win a war. If you cannot make a leopard change his spots, you knock them off. You have to hit your enemy as hard as you can where he doesn't expect to be hit, and if possible with something he doesn't expect to be hit with. ~~XXX~~

*8/12* ~~That is the whole secret of war. It is the story of every great victory won on land, on sea or in the air. It is the theory of the Blitzkrieg. It is the theory General Wavell is demonstrating with such spectacular success in Libya. It is the lesson General de Gaulle tried to teach France. It is the lesson Führer Hitler taught France and I hope has taught Britain too.~~

*5/4* ~~XXX~~ Orthodox minds are no use in war. A great man who bore the same name as myself, General Gordon, once said "England was made by adventurers, not by its Government, and I believe it will only hold its place by adventurers".

*8/12* I believe that too. ~~XXX~~

*8/5* ~~Lack of imagination in your leaders, lack of courage, lack of that decisive quality of mind that can see the opportunity to strike ruthlessly and resolutely on the instant, are a graver peril to you in war than a strong enemy.~~

~~Two many people with these disabilities have sat in high places in this country in the past twenty years. The heart of the nation was sound enough. Our limbs were strong as ever. Red, good red blood still flowed through us. It was the head that was weak and wonky. There was too much froth on top.~~

That was why we drifted into war. That was why the British Empire was brought within almost a single day of extinction. For had our Air Force been driven from the sky above the Channel on that historic September afternoon we were lost.

A few hundred young men saved us. A few thousand young men are still saving us in North Africa. Some time in the future many thousands more, now fitting themselves for the task behind our sea coasts, will bring us victory.

~~There was never an escape like this in history. Pray God there will never be so close an escape again.~~

XXX I have said that I am not a warlike man. Neither am I a vindictive man. But I think that men who have been guilty of such crimes as Hitler, Mussolini, Goering and their gangs deserve punishment and must be punished. They must be taught, as all criminals are taught, that crime doesn't pay. It is not mercy they need but justice.

~~And when it is all over, where are we going? When my generation came home from the war 20 odd years ago, no praise~~

was too high for us, no promises too profuse. But the land fit for heroes to live in did not quite come up to our dreams. XXX

~~What was our reward? Two million unemployed in a year. Great want, great poverty. We saw our good comrades who had fought so valiantly with us begging in the gutter. We saw the power of money grow and by misuse inflict great suffering. We saw men who had the right to work fobbed off with doles because work was made impossible for them, sometimes deliberately, by a crazy economic system for which little good can be said. It has been cracking and groaning for years. It had to crash. It has crashed. Hitler has at least done us that service.~~

14 XXX Let us make up our minds now, before we have to face the problem, that what happened to so many of the fine men who fought to save us 25 years ago is not going to happen to the great boys who are saving us today.

~~Rebuilding is going to be a difficult task. It may be that it will be a harder fight than even the war. The same old promises are already being made.~~ I see in the newspapers that one of the things we are fighting for apparently is that there shall be a few more places for elementary boys in public schools. Isn't it pathetic?

~~A political correspondent wrote the other day that the Government had decided that we had earned the right to a better Britain by our heroism. "Earned the right to a better Britain" mark you! Can you believe it? Well may we ask who but~~

~~ourselves has the right to decide whether we are going to have a better Britain or not. Does any group of men really believe that they have the power to give us a better Britain or to take it away just as they please? If they do they are in for shocks.~~

8" 5" XXX [ As a people throughout history we have shown a genius for making social changes without disastrous upheavals. We shall need all that genius in the years that lie immediately ahead. They may be hard and difficult years. [ The whole future happiness of men is in our hands. Pray God that we - and those who are fighting beside us - shall be worthy of our opportunity. ] XXX .

27  
There is only one way to win a war. If you cannot make a leopard change his spots, you knock them off. You have to hit your enemy as hard as you can where he doesn't expect to be hit, and if possible with something he doesn't expect to be hit with.

28  
Orthodox minds are no use in war. A great man who bore the same name as myself, General Gordon, once said "England was made by adventurers, not by its Government, and I believe it will only hold its place by adventurers." I believe that too.

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Let us make up our minds now, before we have to face the problem, that what happened to so many of the fine men who fought to save us 25 years ago is not going to happen to the great boys who are saving us to-day.

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