

Background: Goebbels gave his famous [speech on Total War](#) on 18 February 1943. Now it is four months later, 5 June 1943. Speaking in the same hall, Goebbels reports that the crisis been overcome, and Germany is on the road to recovery. He repeatedly assures the crowd that victory is certain, though he is never clear as to how that victory might come. This speech can be compared with a [speech two weeks later](#) in commemoration of those killed by Allied bombing. Goebbels there used some of the same arguments that he uses here. One of his primary arguments for victory is submarine warfare. It is interesting that on 24 May 1943, Admiral Dönitz noted in his diary that Germany had lost the Battle of the Atlantic.

Internal German morale reports found that the speech was effective: “The general conclusion is that people have new courage and are more optimistic.” However, some people felt that German chances for victory were significantly less than in the past, and that fine talk was nice, but they wanted to see action.

Goebbels has this to say about the speech in his diary entry of 6 June 1943:

“The meeting in the Sportpalast was at 4 p.m. The mood cannot be compared to that of 18 February [[the Total War Speech](#)]. That is the result of differences in the situation and the entirely different nature of the meeting. The main audience on 18 February consisted of party members, but this time they were primarily Berlin armaments workers. Still, the atmosphere was extraordinarily good. Speer spoke first about armaments. He was persuasive. The statistics he gave were better than people expected, and earned enormous applause. Speer speaks calmly and reasonably, but very effectively. His speech will doubtless have great impact on the German and world publics.... My speech follows. It works mostly through its realism. I deal with all the questions that concern the German people today, with excellent effect. Of course one cannot compare the mood of the meeting with that of 18 February, as I already said. But that may be more an advantage than a disadvantage. If we worked for storms of applause, it would certainly have had a negative impact on those in the West suffering from Allied bombing. They want realism above all, and cannot understand that Berlin is applauding while those in the West endure the bombing. I am very satisfied with the results of this meeting. Our people fundamentally are decent. At the moment they do not want calls to outward enthusiasm, but rather thorough discussion of questions relating to the political and military situation. That is what happened in this meeting. It followed the traditional format of our earlier meetings in the Sportpalast. I hope this speech will result in a major change in morale.”

The text of Speer’s speech is available [here](#).

The source: “Überwundene Winterkrise. Rede im Berliner Sportpalast,” *Der steile Aufstieg* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP., 1944), pp. 287-306.

The Winter Crisis is Over

by Joseph Goebbels

The winter crisis is over. We may at times during the gray preceding months have looked at the situation with a grim expression, but we never resigned ourselves to the blows of fate. The opposite. With unprecedented exertions, the leadership and the people fought against them. Quietly and without a

lot of excitement, great things have been accomplished. The enemy's war of nerves is having no effect on us. In November 1918 the German people fell prey to the tricks of its enemy. We learned from the hard results of our moral failure. (Loud agreement accompanies the minister's words.) Our opponent then promised us peace, freedom, happiness, and prosperity. They told us that they, too, had raised the red flags over their ships and trenches. As the German people followed the urgings of Jewish criminals and lowered their flags, the then British Prime Minister Lloyd George said cynically: "Now we have them. We can do what we want to them!"

Such a tragedy happened once in German history. It will never happen again. It will not happen this time because we know what is going on, and we hold all the elements for a truly decisive victory in our hands. They cannot defeat us with lies and promises. That was only possible through force. But we are using force against force. (Jubilant agreement.) The leadership, the people and the front are of one opinion. We have no workers who want to strike, and above all no Jewish rabble-rousers who might mislead them into it! (Long-lasting, thundering applause.) We are a people at arms, determined to defend our honor and our territory to the last breath. There is no group in Germany that would be ready to work with the enemy. Should an individual have such criminal intentions, he will be rendered harmless as soon as he is noticed. (Jubilant agreement and applause.) We have obligations to the dead as well as to the living, to the soldiers at the front and also you workers in the homeland. He who threatens the security of the German nation will risk his own life. The laws of war are harsh. Millions of German soldiers today have to be ready to die on the battlefield for their people. We would not deserve to lead this nation if we tolerated to any degree whatsoever any threat to the homeland.

Our people are fulfilling their war duties as one would expect. Naturally the war is harder in its fourth year than it was in its first. No one in Germany, by the way, wanted or welcomed the war. That is not at issue. What the Philistine calls mood is not a decisive military factor. The wounds inflicted on all the combatant peoples in this drama of nations are sometimes very painful. The bloom of our youth is in battle. They must bring the hardest sacrifice of blood, just as do those who live in the areas suffering from bombing attacks. Through his brutal and cynical methods, the enemy is giving us a foretaste of what he has prepared for us should we prove weak.

Even in England the foolish talk of an "exciting war" has stopped, and one prefers not to be reminded of it. Given the anguish this world-wide struggle has brought to all the nations, even those not involved, who dares to speak of a superficial patriotism! Mood belongs at a family gathering or a springtime excursion. The war demands of every nation a manly attitude. Soldiers show this attitude. They are in the fourth year of difficult conditions, or in almost their third year in the barbaric East, fulfilling their hard duty, risking their lives a thousand times when the situation demands. They have given up vacations, a normal life, comfort and the quiet of home to defend the life and freedom of the nation. Workers and farmers too display attitude. They do not think of escaping the hard duties of the war. Millions of women and mothers display it. They protect and care for their families and free their men for the front by standing by the machine or behind the plow. They do not complain, even give birth to children in the midst of it all to guarantee the life of their nation. That all demands more than mood, which is changeable. It is one thing today, something different tomorrow.

What can I say to praise the hard-tested population in the areas affected by the air war! They resist the effects of criminal enemy bombing terror with unprecedented heroism. Overnight families lose all that they have, sometimes the father, sometimes the mother, sometimes their growing children. They stand before the smoking ruins of their house or apartment for which they have worked and saved their entire lives. How can they be consoled by the thought that their heavy sacrifice is necessary if their people and nation is to live, that however bitter their fate may be, it must be endured. Only an attitude that withstands all the bitterness of their sorrow gives them the strength to go on. Perhaps the Jewish press in London and Washington brings a mood to the war that is lacking in the German people. That is

because they never suffer themselves. The mood of their racial comrades in Germany is probably different than theirs. That is because the war that they helped to bring about is having its impact on them as well. One can disagree about the mood of the combatant peoples in this fourth year of war. There is no doubt that the National Socialist attitude has remained firm. We Germans are doing our duty, fighting and working with unprecedented fanaticism, and securing thereby the foundations for our coming victory. It will not be given to us. We can only earn it through great national sacrifice by all of us.

Every attempt by the enemy to seduce the German people fails to overcome this National Socialist attitude. It gives us the strength to bear all the problems any war brings with patient and dogged pride, be they defeats, twists of fate, increased demands, heavy sacrifices, and so on. We do not only speak of peace, we fight for it. We are doing everything in our power to keep fighting until the enemy sinks to the earth. (The masses show their agreement and unshakable confidence in victory by lively applause.) That is the foundation and goal of our whole war policy. We will not permit conditions to develop that would keep us from being ready for the final decisive fifteen minutes. We view things from a broad perspective, doing what it takes to continue the war. That may lead to measures that are here or there unpopular, but they are necessary for a successful end to the war. That applies above all to the food situation.

The unusually harsh winter of 1941/42 led to enormous losses of grain, to a total loss of winter oil fruits, and major reductions in the potato and vegetable crops. As a result, about 1.7 million tons of grain intended for animal feed had to be used for bread. The meat ration had to be increased in fall 1942 to make up for major reductions in other foodstuffs. That had a major impact on animal stock. The 1943 harvest was a good one. Potatoes and vegetables are also in better supply. It was necessary to do something about the animal population to avoid serious problems later. A reduction in the meat ration by 100 grams per person a week was unavoidable. We were able to make small adjustments in the fat and bread rations. It is, of course, not possible to replace 100 grams of meat per person a week with egg whites. But we had no choice. Our food policy takes the long view. It uses what we have carefully. It makes sure that the existing rations can be supplied, and that we never find ourselves in the situation where food shortages make a continuation of the war impossible.

Everyone understands and approves, even if the result is a temporary reduction. One may not forget that millions of foreign workers are involved in our domestic production, and they must eat if they are to work, and that many hundreds of thousands, we are proud to say, have followed the flag. That all impacts the food situation, but it also increases our military strength.

We at least know why we in the homeland have to make these sacrifices. They seem to me more than bearable, especially given the sacrifices those in the areas subject to bombing attacks have been enduring nearly every night. Our enemy is attacking all they have with brutal cynicism, hoping to destroy their morale. They admit that openly. The German cultural monuments that they are destroying will be their eternal shame. But they want more than that. They are waging war against the attitude of our people, destroying civilian life, killing old people, women, and children, and do not even bother to cloak their infamous bloody terror. (The minister's remarks draw repeated shouts of pfui and disgust.) The Church of England declared a few days ago that bombs do not distinguish between men, women, and children. Even this seems mild when compared to the demonic hatred and triumph in the London Jewish papers. We Germans are not the sort of people who beg for mercy from an enemy who is out to destroy us. We know that there is only one effective answer to British-American bombing terror: counter-terror. (The masses have listened intensely to the minister's words. Now they break into spontaneous, long-lasting and repeated stormy applause.)

The entire German nation is filled with but one thought: to repay like with like. (Again there is a storm of enthusiasm.) We do not boast or threaten. We only take notice. Each English voice today that finds

the bombing war against German women, old people, and children to be a humane or even Christian method to defeat the German people will one day give us welcome grounds for our answer to these crimes. (Repeated applause affirms the minister's comments.) The British people have no reason to triumph. They will have to pay the bill for the actions of their leaders, who are carrying out the orders of their Jewish masters and rabble-rousers.

Until then, we must seek to endure the sometimes difficult consequences of British-American air terror. We must allow these crimes to wash over us with dogged toughness. It is a part of war, and on the success with which our nation bears it depends to a great degree the coming victory.

I have recently been in the threatened areas in the west and northwest to see things for myself. The average citizen in the Reich has no idea what people there must endure, under what primitive conditions they must reestablish their shattered lives, what high morale and attitude they still display. He who still thinks he has the right to complain about this or that inconvenience of the war should turn his gaze to Essen, Dortmund, Bochum, Wuppertal, or the other cities in the region and blush with shame that he even dares compare his troubles and complaints with the suffering of the population there. (The stormy applause of the masses expresses their sympathy and pride at the courageous attitude of the population in the air raid districts.) If anyone has the right to complain, it is those in the west and northwest. They do not do so. They fight with astonishing strength of spirit and fanatic determination against fire and devastation. On nights of bombing, men, women, and children stand guard, protecting insofar as it is possible their homes and belongings, displaying miracles of bravery against which in the end British-American terror will shatter. (Shouts of Bravo!, and long-lasting applause.) Each scientist and researcher who work against enemy war technology, each worker and engineer building our new bombers, each young pilot who studies from morning to late at night to one day attack the enemy criminals, may each of them keep this part of our people before their eyes and work untiringly to speed the hour of revenge. (Jubilant agreement interrupts the minister. There are passionate expressions of glowing hatred against the murderous terror sown by the British-Americans.)

I speak as a son of my West German homeland to all Germans, but above all to my own people. I know what you have had to bear in recent weeks. I also know that whatever sorrow may befall you personally or to our homeland, you will maintain the proper attitude. We who live on the border have always had a hard time of it. Just as we did not bow after the First World War to the enemy occupation nor to the separatism they encouraged, so also our cities and villages will never bow to the British bombing terror. The enemy can bomb our houses to rubble. The hearts of the people will burn with a hatred that cannot be extinguished. The hour of revenge will come. (Strong applause.) After the war, it will be the duty of the entire nation to reward their heroism by rebuilding their houses and cities more beautifully than before. Life will flourish once more, and far into the future children and children's children will speak of the courageous endurance of their fathers and mothers, who through their heroism will have won unfading wreaths for the coats of arms of their proud cities.

The English are using the air war against us. We are using submarines against them. The results of the air war are more visible, but the submarine campaign is more important to the war in the long run, since its wounds are deeper. Through May of this year, 26.5 million BRT of enemy shipping have been sunk by the German navy and Luftwaffe. The significance of that figure is clear when one remembers that German submarine warfare nearly brought England to the ground in 1917 and 1918 while sinking only about 12 million BRT.

Of course, the English admitted that only after the war; during the war they, along with the Americans, boasted just as today about their new construction and cast doubt on our statistics. Whatever new ships the enemy may launch, they cannot replace what we have sunk. Also, the supplies and work force that go into constructing ships cannot be used for other war production. And his work force, the foundation of war production, does not compare with ours. They only thing the enemy may do better at than we is

boast. Even trees in America do not grow up to heaven. We have every reason to disregard the enemy's fantasy statistics. We do not entirely ignore them, but either do we overestimate their importance.

The nature of combat on sea is changeable. Periods of great success are followed by periods of defeat, depending on the state of our attacking forces on the one hand and the enemy's defensive abilities on the other. The battle is being fought not only on the oceans, in the air or on the battlefields, but also in scientific institutes and laboratories. Every new method of attack is in time followed by a new method of defense, and each new defensive technique provokes a new method of attack. That is especially true in a life and death struggle, the submarine war, for example. The periods of greatest success by our submarines have been followed by periods of less success. But the enemy always boasts too soon when he thinks he has finally won. He has often enough declared the submarine danger over, only to be persuaded in short order of the contrary. He really has every reason to be cautious in his predictions. For example, we sank 629,000 tons in October 1940, but only 203,000 in January 1941. Three months later in April 1941, the figure was 1,000,211 BRT of enemy shipping. Then, too, the British Admiralty first boasted as the statistics fell, but three months later the English public was again in a panic.

The struggle at sea is hard and dangerous. It is fought with growing pitilessness by both sides. Our submarine crews know how important their work is to the war. In the end, the balance of fate will tip in our direction. Over the long run, the enemy must expect devastating losses. His supply routes will be cut again, destroying his chance of success. A war of such scale is not measured in centimeters.

This much we know: the German people can be confident. Its vast efforts for total war have not been in vain. They will be used one day. (Stormy shouts of Bravo!) Our enemies can wonder when and how. They may believe that the initiative has shifted permanently to them, and that Germany's leadership is waiting with fear and trembling for their actions. The future, however, will decide who should be anxious. We are waiting, but in a different way than the enemy believes.

They speak of the invasion of Europe as if that were the most obvious thing in the world. The Jews want the invasion most of all, presumably since none of them will be involved. They will be playing the battle songs. The American and British soldiers will have to pay the bloody tab. Our army is waiting for them. (Jubilant agreement and shouts of Bravo!) Dunkirk and Dieppe are warnings against a British-American invasion. Roane Waring, the commander of the American Legion, recently returned from a trip to North Africa. He said: "The American forces have suffered terrible losses. The losses are far more than what Eisenhower has admitted, and worse is ahead. Tunis is only a foretaste of what is waiting for us in Europe."

The British military observer Cyril Falls adds the following warning: "I want to warn against underestimating. There will be bloody battles once the Allied forces run against Axis fortifications. Europe will not be conquered quickly. We must not make the mistake of underestimating the fortifications in France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Italy, and in the Southeast. We must realize that attacking them will cost us much in blood and tears."

The Jews are pressing for those tears to play out the bloody drama to its end. Churchill and Roosevelt are only their tools.

Perhaps one or two super-objectivists will think my characterization of the enemy leaders too crass, but I am saying what I mean. What else can one say about those who on the one hand speak of freedom from want and fear, but on the other shoot 12,000 Polish officers through the neck in the Forest of Katyn. On the one hand they sing "Onward Christian Soldiers," while on the other they burn down churches. On the one hand they claim to be fighting for the sovereignty of the small states, but on the other they want to plunge them into Bolshevik chaos. On the one hand they represent the crassest form of capitalism, on the other the crassest collectivism. So many statements, so many contradictions! How can one reconcile them without concluding that we are dealing with a band of crooks who are striving

for world domination, and who want to subject Europe to Jewish world rule? The only reason they went to war against us is because we were the last bastion in the way of their infernal Jewish-plutocratic-Bolshevist goals. They rule vast and rich empires, but have proven themselves unable to organize them and use their peoples effectively. They reach for war to rule poor nations and take from them the little they do possess. This is a criminal conspiracy. Either we will defeat it, or decent and creative humanity will be destroyed.

It does the enemy coalition no good to attempt to conceal these matters. The Soviets may abolish the Comintern, but they remain wolves in sheep's clothing. The plutocrats may permit their hired newspapers to discuss plans for social reform, but the expert sees behind all the talk the pitiless face of Jewish world capitalism that is seeking to seduce and drug the nations of Europe. One will have to doubt the justice of the universe and the meaning of history if we do not withstand the enemy. It is all too clear why their criminal leaders are trying to conceal their blood guilt, now that the nations are beginning to awaken. Using the tested Jewish method, they shout: "The victim is guilty, not the murderer!" They fill the world with hypocritical lamentations and toss out their old views and convictions, the intellectual documents of a declining world, whenever they become a nuisance. They present themselves to an astonished world as great reformers out to improve the world, they who always opposed any reasonable new order in the world, indeed launched a war to hinder it!

We are flattered that we have forced the Soviets to at least outwardly dissolve the Comintern, that instrument for world destruction. But the Jews in London and Washington are gloating too soon if they think that will stop National Socialism's educational work. A lying peace of paper cannot undo a practice that has raped, tortured, starved and murdered countless millions of human victims. Bolshevism's tactical move is only another reason for us to reveal to the world its planned crimes. It may take years, as it did during our struggle for power, until their plot fails.

People are increasingly recognizing the work of the Jews around the world. It does them no good to use parliaments and courts to protect their parasitic existence. It will not be long before the whole world cries out against those guilty of causing this terrible drama between nations. We want to be sure that the questions are answered. (Long-lasting applause.) In the Fifteenth Protocol of the Elders of Zion it is written: "When the king of the Jews receives the crown upon his holy head that Europe will offer him, he will become the patriarch of the entire world." The Jews have often been near that triumph, just as they believe they are today. But always before they fell from the heights to the depths, This time, too, Lucifer will fall. (The minister's statement is received with renewed stormy approval.) Our Europe will offer them not a crown, but the mailed fist (Applause.) The Jew will not be the patriarch of the world, but rather the leper, the scum, the victim of his own criminal desires, who will break against our strength and our knowledge. (Renewed stormy applause.)

In the face of this danger to the world, sentimentality is out of place. It may be that some do not understand the importance of the Jewish Question, but that will not stop us. Ridding all Europe of Jewry is not a matter of morality, but rather a question of the international security. The Jew will always act consistently with his nature and racial instincts. He cannot do otherwise. Just like a potato beetle destroys potatoes, the Jew destroys nations and peoples. There is only one solution: to deal radically with the danger. (Agreement and shouts from the crowd.) Wherever one looks among our enemies, one sees Jew after Jew. Jews are behind Roosevelt in his brain trust, Jews are behind Churchill as his prompters. Jews are the rabble-rousers behind the entire English-American-Soviet press. Jews hidden in the Kremlin are the real bearers of Bolshevism. The International Jew is the cement that holds the enemy coalition together. With his world-spanning connections, he builds the bridges between Moscow, London, and Washington. The war is his doing, he directs it from the shadows, and he will be its only beneficiary.

We are facing the most dangerous enemy in the world. He is not unbeatable. Just as we defeated him

within Germany, we will break his power, which now threatens us from abroad. (Lively applause.) He is resorting to bloodthirsty fantasies of revenge. That is good, for he is only showing his true face. A few days ago one of its most prominent representatives announced a new White House peace plan. It includes: "The complete occupation of Germany and its rule by an Anglo-Bolshevist-American military government. A takeover of the entire German administration, a complete dissolution of German industry, and sending all German troops for an undetermined period as workers in the occupied territories, especially Siberia. Germany may never again become a strong power. After the most spartan food supply is left for the German people, the remaining agricultural products will be sent to the enemy powers. Germany may not remain a unified nation. Education toward a German national consciousness will be banned. The products of German industry should benefit the German people only to the extent necessary for them to feed themselves."

Is there anyone in Germany who pays any heed to this program? It reflects precisely what the Jews in the Kremlin have planned for us. We know that. No one has any illusions.

Even the small club of super-objectivists must now be clear that the hour has come. Today's Germany otherwise has no use for them. Our dead have left obligations for us, and we the living are under obligation to do their will. Anyone who doubts victory has no right to be part of our community. (Stormy applause from the crowd testifies that thousands agree that Dr. Goebbels has expressed what we all think.) Whoever pays attention to what the enemy says is a traitor to our cause. (Growing applause.) Who harms our war efforts by passing on enemy rumors sins against our people, for which hundreds of thousands of soldiers have died heroic deaths. We must take immediate action against these talkative chaps. (Lively agreement and shouts of "Right!") There may only be a few of them, but the enemy thinks he can use them. We want to live in a clean war atmosphere. Our people demand that mentally ill world apostles, even if they act unintentionally and are a laughable minority, go to jail.

Lloyd George, the British prime minister during the First World War, wrote in his memoirs: "If Germany had had a leader of the stature of Bismarck or Moltke instead of Bethmann-Hollweg and Falkenhayn, the outcome of the great battle between the military autocracies and the democracies would in all likelihood have been different. Germany's mistakes rescued us from the results of our own mistakes."

We now have the strong national leadership that we lacked then. (These words lead the crowd to express enthusiastically its admiration and confidence in the Führer.) It knows what to do to ensure that the current British prime minister will not be able to say the same thing about the German people at the end of this war.

Rumors and loose talk fade before the war's hard realities. It will be decided by strong weapons and strong hearts. The German people possess these in full measure. They need only be used. True and loyal allies, the Axis nations, stand at our side. They, too, are fighting for their lives. Nearly all of Europe is working to support our war effort. The fruits of our common fighting and industry will one day come. After victory, our part of the world will be a powerful continental community comprised of free peoples who have devoted themselves to a great common cause. That is the only way Europe can continue to live. Otherwise, it will fall apart and become easy prey for anarchy and Bolshevism. No real European can want that.

I am nearly finished. Today more than ever before, the German people in this war have been given a great historical opportunity. Each of us more than ever has the duty to use this opportunity for his life and the lives of his children. The nation will prove worthy of the great hour, and earn its proudest victory. But it will not be given to us; it can be earned only by steady determination in battle and work. No one knows better than we how hard it is and how many bitter sacrifices it demands. But our future will be still harder and more bitter if we do not meet the challenge. Every war brings its trials. Only

then can a nation display its toughness and its historical stature. No power on earth can spare us the trial; it is sent by Fate itself and must be withstood, for there is no other way. After a great trial, the weather clears up, as the great Prussian king once said, and the skies are once more bright. We have experienced that ourselves too often during the war to forget it now. What remains is manly courage that accepts the blows of fate, and in the end withstands them.

Unlike the enemy coalition, the German people have the good fortune to have a clear worldview. We do not need to disregard our program to meet the demands of the war. To the contrary, it is affirmed by those demands. Once we have mastered this war, a new era of German growth, German socialism and German national strength will come.

The great teachings of the party gained over our fourteen year struggle for power are today the guiding star of the whole nation in this world struggle. Their continuing power gives the nation strength for the tests of the war. If Germany stays united and marches to the rhythm of its revolutionary socialist outlook, it will be unbeatable. Our indestructable will to life, and the driving force of the Führer's personality guarantee this. (Stormy, jubilant agreement; thundering applause for several minutes testifies to the admiration of the Führer.)

We still cannot measure what it means to have a man at the head of the nation who incorporates the will to live and the confidence in victory of the whole people. We lost the World War above all because we lacked such a great leading personality. We will win this war because this time he is there. (Renewed enthusiastic agreement.) Our chances of winning today are far greater than they were then, yet the British prime minister believes we would have won that war had we had strong national leadership. Today we have it. What more do we need to believe in victory! Every mishap of war only strengthens our faith. In the midst of the war's ups and downs, we turn our gaze to the Führer to restore our strength. We cannot be defeated, unless we defeat ourselves. But the German people are far from such suicidal behavior today. The enemy may attack our nerve with tricks, deviousness and evil. No one will do him the favor of weakening. He will have to resort to weapons, and our soldiers will give the proper response on the battlefield.

Germany and its allies are facing the most infernal plot against the freedom of humanity that history has ever known. We need not fear its threats. We face it with our heads held high. It will fall under the blows of the German sword, as often as it may be necessary. The enemy will receive no mercy. Let us eliminate all weakness of heart, all pity, all good-natured gullibility. The German nation is forced to defend its very life. It will fight wherever there is opportunity. Victory is waiting at the end.

Our enemy does not believe it. We will prove it to them. (When the minister had concluded, a unending and thundering storm of applause began. The masses sprang up and applauded the minister stormily.)