

**THROUGH TERROR TO TRIUMPH:
SPEECHES AND PRONOUNCEMENTS
OF THE RIGHT HON. DAVID LLOYD
GEORGE, M. P., SINCE THE
BEGINNING OF THE WAR**

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Through terror to triumph: speeches and pronouncements of the Right Hon. David Lloyd George, M. P., since the beginning of the war by David Lloyd George & F. L Stevenson

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DAVID LLOYD GEORGE & F. L STEVENSON

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THROUGH TERROR
TO TRIUMPH

*Speeches and Pronouncements of the
Right Hon. David Lloyd George, M.P.,
Since the Beginning of the War*

ARRANGED BY

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PREFACE

I HAVE no responsibility for publishing or even for suggesting the publication of these speeches. Some of them were delivered without the least preparation; others were delivered after such slight and sporadic preparation as is alone possible for the head of a great Department of State to spare for speechmaking in the urgency of a colossal war. Such speeches may escape severe criticism from the newspaper reader whose glance sweeps over them in the limited time he can devote to reading his daily paper; but I should not have dared of my own accord to challenge a more leisurely perusal of these utterances.

After twelve months of war my conviction is stronger than ever that this country could not have kept out of it without imperilling its security and impairing its honour. We could not have looked on cynically with folded arms whilst the country we had given our word to protect was being ravaged and trodden by one of our own co-trustees. If British women and children were being brutally destroyed on the high seas by German

submarines, this nation would have insisted on calling the infanticide Empire to a stern reckoning. Everything that has happened since the declaration of war has demonstrated clearly that a military system so regardless of good faith, of honourable obligations, and of the elementary impulses of humanity, constituted a menace to civilisation of the most sinister character ; and despite the terrible cost of suppressing it, the well-being of humanity demands that such a system should be challenged and destroyed. The fact that events have also shown that the might of this military clique has exceeded the gloomiest prognostications provides an additional argument for its destruction. The greater the might, the darker the menace.

Nor have the untoward incidents of the war weakened my faith in ultimate victory—always provided that the allied nations put forth the whole of their strength ere it is too late. Anything less must lead to defeat. The allied countries have an overwhelming preponderance in the raw material that goes to the making and equipment of armies, whether in men, money, or accessible metals and machinery. But this material has to be mobilised and utilised. It would be idle to pretend that the first twelve months of the war has seen this task accomplished satisfactorily. Had the Allies realised in time the full strength of their redoubtable and resourceful foes—nay, what is more, had they realised their own strength and resources, and taken prompt action to organise them, to-day we should have witnessed the triumphant spectacle of their guns pouring out a stream of shot and shell which would have deluged the German

trenches with fire and scorched the German legions back across their own frontiers.

What is the actual position? It is thoroughly well known to the Germans, and anyone in any land, belligerent or neutral, who reads intelligently the military news, must by now have a comprehension of it. With the resources of Great Britain, France, Russia—yea, of the whole industrial world—at the disposal of the Allies, it is obvious that the Central Powers have still an overwhelming superiority in all the material and equipment of war. The result of this deplorable fact is exactly what might have been foreseen. The iron heel of Germany has sunk deeper than ever into French and Belgian soil. Poland is entirely German; Lithuania is rapidly following. Russian fortresses, deemed impregnable, are falling like sand castles before the resistless tide of Teutonic invasion. When will that tide recede? When will it be stemmed? As soon as the Allies are supplied with abundance of war material.

That is why I am recalling these unpleasant facts, because I wish to stir my countrymen to put forth their strength to amend the situation. To dwell on such events is the most disagreeable task that can fall to the lot of a public man. For all that, the public man who either shirks these facts himself, or does not do his best to force others to face them until they are redressed, is guilty of high treason to the State which he has sworn to serve.

There has been a great awakening in all the Allied countries, and prodigious efforts are being put forth to equip the armies in the field. I know what we are

doing: our exertions are undoubtedly immense. But can we do more either in men or material? Nothing but our best and utmost can pull us through. Are we now straining every nerve to make up for lost time? Are we getting all the men we shall want to put into the fighting line next year to enable us even to hold our own? Does every man who can help, whether by fighting or by providing material, understand clearly that ruin awaits remissness? How many people in this country fully apprehend the full significance of the Russian retreat? For over twelve months Russia has in spite of deficiencies in equipment absorbed the energies of half the German and four-fifths of the Austrian forces. Is it realised that Russia has for the time being made her contribution—and what a heroic contribution it is!—to the struggle for European freedom, and that we cannot for many months to come expect the same active help from the Russian armies that we have hitherto received? Who is to take the Russian place in the fight whilst those armies are re-equipping? Who is to bear the weight which has hitherto fallen on Russian shoulders? France cannot be expected to sustain much heavier burdens than those which she now bears with a quiet courage that has astonished and moved the world. Italy is putting her strength into the fight. What could she do more? There is only Britain left. Is Britain prepared to fill up the great gap that will be created when Russia has retired to re-arm? Is she fully prepared to cope with all the possibilities of the next few months—in the West, without forgetting the East? Upon the answer which Government, employers, workmen, financiers, young men

who can bear arms, women who can work in factories—in fact, the whole people of this great land, give to this question, will depend the liberties of Europe for many a generation.

A shrewd and sagacious observer told me the other day that in his judgment the course pursued by this country during the next three months would decide the fate of this war. If we are not allowed to equip our factories and workshops with adequate labour to supply our armies, because we must not transgress regulations applicable to normal conditions; if practices are maintained which restrict the output of essential war material; if the nation hesitates, when the need is clear, to take the necessary steps to call forth its manhood to defend honour and existence; if vital decisions are postponed until too late; if we neglect to make ready for all probable eventualities; if, in fact, we give ground for the accusation that we are slouching into disaster as if we were walking along the ordinary paths of peace without an enemy in sight; then I can see no hope: but if we sacrifice all we own and all we like for our native land; if our preparations are characterised by grip, resolution, and a prompt readiness in every sphere; then victory is assured.

D. LLOYD GEORGE.

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