

Background: Goebbels began a weekly newspaper called *Das Reich* in 1940. He generally wrote the lead article each week, in which he took special pride. This essay is dated 23 November 1941. It explains why he thinks England is doomed to lose the war. For a good discussion of Goebbels' wartime essays, see Bramsted's book [*Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda*](#).

The source: "Der tönende Koloß," *Das eherne Herz* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP., 1943), pp. 92-98.

The Clay Giant

by Joseph Goebbels

The British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, as is well known, is a close friend of alcohol. His relations to the truth are a bit more strained. He has been on a war footing ever since his entry into political life. He is one of the world's best known liars. Not only do those in neutral and enemy nations smile when he says something, even knowledgeable circles in England cannot repress a grin. Everyone knows how he adds or subtracts, for example. At the moment he divides figures that are unfavorable for England by three, and multiplies the favorable ones by the same figure.

The multiplier or divisor varies according to the war situation. When Mr. Churchill was recently forced to give an account of the Battle of the Atlantic to the House of Commons, he announced that 750,000 BRT had been sunk in the preceding four months. The real figure was 2 million. Granted, he can claim to be less than a liar than Stalin. The latter recently said that 378,000 Soviet soldiers were missing, while we happen to have 3,600,000 Bolshevik prisoners. He uses a divisor of ten.

It is clear that the enemy does not hesitate to tell the most outrageous lies, even when we possess irrefutable and persuasive numerical evidence. They clearly are not trying to impress us with their figures any longer. The sole goal is a more or less short-term impact on world opinion. They no longer have the courage to tell the whole truth, since they begin to realize that it could be a shock to domestic public opinion that could not be controlled. They conceal the facts without particularly worrying about us. That's how things are at the moment in the Moscow-London-Washington coalition.

Questions are increasingly being asked in England as to how, given the current situation, England has any chance at all of winning. Mr. Churchill did indeed claim with practiced emotion during his last speech that if Japan and the United States began warfare, a British declaration of war would follow within the hour. Everyone knows that that is a bluff. How can an England that daily sends desperate pleas to the U.S. provide any support? Great Britain's current situation is so hopeless that only a miracle can save it. Mr. Churchill's prophecies have not been fulfilled. The Soviet Union has not done what was expected of it. The Battle of the Atlantic continues with consequences that in the long run can only be fatal for England. The threat of a blockade of the Axis powers has failed. Roosevelt is running into war with seven league boots, but he may not make it, and even if he does, how would America's entry change England's precarious situation?

The English government clearly must maintain face even in its present desperate situation. One cannot determine the dramatic change in England's changes by comparing yesterday to today, but if one looks back to the end of June it becomes clear that England's chances are nil. We will not even mention the alleged plan to invade the continent as a way of taking pressure from the Soviets, even if London was speaking about it four months ago as if it were practically a given. It has been removed from consideration on the other side of the Channel, and by the same Prime Minister who not too long ago

was encouraging his paid journalists to promote it.

When the Führer spoke with biting irony of this empty prattle in his recent Munich speech, the English press hurriedly sought to avoid the matter, explaining that the Führer's speech really did not say anything new and therefore did not deserve a detailed response. In the previous 24 hours, however, the British air force lost 60 valuable aircraft and 250 crewmen in flights over the Reich or our occupied territories. During the same period we had seven civilian deaths and no significant damage. The human casualties thus stand in a relationship of 1:36. The material losses are hardly comparable. Mr. Churchill blamed the enormous losses by the Royal Air Force on the weather, which his news service claimed was the worst in 98 years. It seems the British have been keeping exact records of weather conditions in Germany for the last 98 years — one must be orderly, after all. He also raised the number of participating aircraft over a period of 72 hours from 150 to 2,000, to lower the loss percentages. But the American press reported the next day that the Royal Air Force lost nearly half of the aircraft involved in the mission.

Do what man will, England has nothing left but a bitter aftertaste. They have miscalculated in every regard. There is no revolution in Germany or the occupied regions. The blockade has been rendered useless by Germany's counter-blockade. The current situation rules out a return to the continent. The so-called "Non-Stop Offensive" has not come anywhere close to living up to its promise. We no longer fear assistance from the U.S.A. Despite all the prayers of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bolshevik offensive has failed. London's numerous psychological attempts to break Axis unity were condemned to failure from the beginning. British attempts to break German morale have failed. Once more: How is it possible for England to win at all, or even better put, how is it possible for it to avoid losing?

We are not among those who fantasize about a collapse of the British Empire in the next day or two. All good things take time, and that which has been built up over centuries will not collapse in a few months. We see things realistically, and know that it takes more blows before the clay colossus begins to crumble. But that is not really important. What is important is that fact that England no longer has a chance to win, and is in fact already on the road to defeat.

No one can say exactly when that will happen. We are not waging the war with a stopwatch. Mr. Churchill makes childish claims every day over his propaganda service that if we have not won the war by a certain point, we will lose it. It is true that the British and American armaments industries are producing at full capacity, but does Mr. Churchill believe that our factories and those of our allies are idle? We hardly believe that time is working in England's favor. We know exactly what England can and cannot do. We also know what we cannot do, and above all what we can do. We also have firm figures that give us a reliable grasp of our armaments capacities and those of the enemy. Mr. Churchill may be able to fool his satellites with his figures, but we will never be in any doubt as to which multiplier or divisor we need to apply to his numbers.

Incidentally, both the recent and distant past provide ample evidence that one must distinguish between England's claims and the facts. What they announce or threaten usually proves empty. Their boasting as a result has no effect on us. They hardly cause us the fright Mr. Churchill seems to expect, but rather give only the occasion to smile. London cannot fool us. We know what a desperate situation the British Empire is in just as well as Mr. Churchill — perhaps even better than he.

The only remaining question is why he stubbornly and insistently holds to a position that is so harmful for England. In recent weeks there have been rumors of German peace-feelers. The wish is the father of the thought. He has to give his people something to strengthen their resolve. When he bombastically announces that he will never accept a German peace offer — an offer that we have not made and will never make — it is only grasping at straws as a way of dealing with his inferiority complex. We do not consider him a person with a political conscience. He has no scruples at all and his hide is as thick as

that of a hippopotamus. He is wholly indifferent to the vast misery into which he has plunged the nations he has seduced. He is also incapable of historical thinking, as his speeches regularly prove. He who joins forces with Bolshevism to lay waste to Europe is a man without character who is hostile to Europe.

He really is not interested in such things. He evaluates everything only as to how it affects his valued self. He prepared this war and incited it. In the fullest sense of the word, it is his war. If England loses the war his position will also collapse, and perhaps more fully than he is able to realize today. That may be why he has made repeated attempts recently to place the responsibility for the war elsewhere. In his more lucid moments he probably sees his approaching fate but does not want to admit it. He fights desperately, hoping for a miracle.

He will wait in vain. History also has its laws. They can sometimes be slowed down, but never stopped. Fate follows its prescribed course. It will not stop at England's door. We do not know when the hour will come. Rather than asking when, we should work and fight for it so that it will find us a nation in readiness.