

GREAT SPEECHES

英美著名演说选注



外语教学与研究出版社

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背景介绍 1940年6月，巴黎失陷，贝当政府屈膝投降。英国处在孤立无援的境地。德国法西斯开始对英国发动攻势。人们开始问道：“英国是否也会投降？”

6月18日，邱吉尔在议会发表讲话，用石破天惊之口才，作了动人心弦的答复：“魏刚将军所说的‘法兰西之战’已告结束，我预计‘不列颠之战’即将开始。基督教文明的生死，我们英国人自身的生存，以及我们的制度和我们的帝国是否能维持久远全系于此战。……让我们勇敢地承担起我们的责任，我们要这样勇敢地承担，以便英帝国及其联邦一千年之后若仍存在，人们还会说：‘这是他们最光辉的时刻’。”

这里选的是讲话的结尾部分。

注 释

1. General Weygand: Louis Maxime Weygand (1867—1965) 法国将军，法国失陷时任法军总司令（1940年6月），后任投降德国的法国维希政府的战争部长（1940年6月—7月）。

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Patrick Henry Prepares Virginia for War Against the Mother Country

(March 23, 1755)

Mr. President:

No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen if, entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs,¹ I shall speak forth my sentiments freely and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate.² It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at

truth, and fulfil the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions³ at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren⁴ till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and, having ears, hear not,⁵ the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House. Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to

your feet. Suffer not⁶ yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort.⁷ I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to⁸ force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry⁹ have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done every-

thing that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne,¹⁰ and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne! In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation.¹¹ There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free — if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending — if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained — we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts¹² is all that is left us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying

supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath¹³ placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave.¹⁴ Besides, sir, we have no election.¹⁵ If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest.¹⁶ There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable — and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace — but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren¹⁷ are already in the field! Why stand we here idle?¹⁸ What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains

and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what
course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty
or give me death!

背景介绍 裴特瑞克·亨利 (1736—1799), 美国弗吉尼亚州人, 年轻时务农, 开过小店, 生活贫困。后来学习法律, 1700年成为一位颇负盛名的律师。据说三年之内, 他就打赢了1200起官司。亨利是美国独立战争期间重要政治家之一, 曾出席第一次大陆会议, 担任过弗吉尼亚州部队司令 (1775—76), 和弗吉尼亚州州长 (1776—9) 等职务, 亨利以他的政治演说而闻名世界。1765年反对《印花税法》时他说“凯撒遇上了布鲁特斯。查理一世遇上克伦威尔。乔治三世或许应该从中吸取教训。如果说这是叛国罪的话, 那就叛到底吧。”

这里选的是亨利1775年3月在大陆会议上的发言。十八世纪中叶, 北美殖民地人民同英国殖民主义者之间的矛盾日趋激化。殖民地人民的反英斗争不断高涨。战争处于一触即发之势。但当时殖民地的一些资产阶级领袖人物, 出于本阶级的利益, 极力主张与英国和解。1774年第一次大陆会议上, 他们主张采取“合法”行动, 反对与宗主国决裂。会议拟定了给英国国王的请愿书, 哀求英国作出让步。在妥协势力占绝对优势的情况下, 亨利愤然而起。1775年3月23日, 他在弗吉尼亚州议会上发表了著名的演说, 严厉驳斥了妥协主张。全篇充满了反问句和排比句, 调子激昂而诚恳, 决坚而不强加于人。他说, “假若我们想得到自由, 并拯救我们为之长期斗争的珍贵权利的话…我们必须战斗! 我再重复一遍, 必须战斗! …退让只能被征服, 被奴役。…战争是不可避免的, 让它来吧! …我不知道别人将如何行事, 但对于我来说, 不自由, 毋宁死!”

演说完毕, 全场愕然, 鸦雀无声。接着几个代表站了起来喊道“拿起武器!”顿时全场响起“拿起武器”的呼

声。从此，“不自由，毋宁死”的口号鼓舞着千千万万的人民投入了争取自由独立的战争。

注 释

1. entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs; 虽然我的观点与他们截然不同。entertaining 引起的状语短语修饰 I shall speak forth; as I do 插入短语内构成让步的句式。

2. For my own part, I consider ... the freedom of the debate; 我认为,这是个关系到享受自由还是蒙受奴役的大问题。鉴于它事关重大,我们的辩论应该允许各抒己见。第二分句是倒装句。

3. Should I keep back my opinions = If I were to keep back my opinions.

4. the Siren; 希腊神话中半人半鸟的女海妖,能唱美妙的歌曲,诱惑过往的海员,使航船触礁沉没。

5. see not, hear not; 早期现代英语中,助动词 do 不太常用,因此否定式常用 verb + not。下文的 trust it not, suffer not 等都是这种用法。

6. Suffer not... with a kiss; 不要让人家吻你们而把你们出卖了。这里借用基督教《圣经》中耶稣的门徒犹大吻了耶稣而出卖了他的典故。

7. These are the implements of war... kings resort; 它们是战争和征服的工具,是国君们采用的最后的争执手段。

8. If its purpose be not ... = If its purpose it not to ...

9. the British Ministry; 英国内阁。

10. the throne; 国王的宝座,此处指英国国王。

11. In vain after these things, ... reconciliation; 事到如

今,我们再也不能沉迷在和平与和解的盲目希望之中了。这里indulge是及物动词。本句是倒装句,因为句首有短语 in vain。

12. God of Hosts; 万军之主,指耶和华,是希伯来人信奉的犹太教中最高神。基督教《旧约》中耶和华是上帝的同义词。

13. hath = has. hath 是中古英语 have 的第三人称单数。

14. The battle is not to the strong alone; ... the brave; 战争胜负不仅仅取决于强弱;胜利属于那些机警的人,主动的人,勇敢的人。

15. we have no election; 我们没有选择的余地了。

16. If we were base enough to desire it, ... from the contest; it 指下面的 to retire from the contest. 可译为:即使我们那样没有骨气,想退出这场斗争,也为时已晚。

17. brethren = brothers

18. Why stand we here idle = Why do we stand here idle. 没有用助动词 do,见本篇注解5。

Daniel Webster Celebrates the American Heritage (August 2, 1826)

Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote.¹ It is true, indeed, that in the beginning we aimed not at independence. But there's a divinity which shapes our ends. The injustice of England has driven us to arms; and, blinded to her own interest for our good,² she has obstinately persisted, till independence is now within ~~our~~ grasp. We have but to reach forth to it, and ~~it~~ is ours. Why, then, should we defer the Declaration? Is any man so weak as now to hope for a reconciliation with England, which shall leave either safety to the country and its liberties, or safety to his own life and his own honor?³ Are not you, sir, who sit in that chair — is ~~not he~~, our venerable colleague near you — are you not both already the proscribed and predestined objects of punishment and of