

CHURCHILL WITH CIVIL DEFENCE FORCES

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Lot V Churchill  
 G.V. lunch  
 F.V. Churchill  
 S.V. lunch  
 Cota Blue and Amy May  
 And Good Series,

LENGTH WITH TITLE.. 467 Ft.

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CHURCHILL SPEAKS:

SV.

"It seems odd to me that it should have taken the stresses of a great world war to bring me for the first time to the County Hall (Laughter) and I am very glad indeed to find by the time the call came the whole had not already ceased to exist. You have taken in this building some of the blows and scars which have fallen upon London but like the rest of London you carry on ( applause).

"The impressive and inspiring spectacle we have witnessed in Hyde Park this morning displays the vigour and efficiency of the Civil Defence forces of London . (They have grown up in the spirit) ....

LV. ....of emergency. They have been shaped and tempered by the fire of the enemy and this morning we saw them all in their many grades and classes - the wardens, the rescue and first aid party, the casualty services, the decontamination squad, the fire services, the report and control centre staffs, the highways and public utility services, the messengers, the police. All these we have seen in the lovely English summer morning marching past, men and women in all the pomp (and pomp, not of war-)

SV.

.....Though it is war though it is war but of their civic duties. (applause). There they march and as one saw them passing by, no one could but feel how great a people, how great a nation we have the honour to belong to (applause), how complex, sensitive, resilient is the society we have evolved over centuries and how capable of withstanding the most unexpected strain (Those whom we saw this morning worthy)

CU..... representatives of nearly a quarter a million organized functionaries and servants in the defence of London who in one way or another stand to their posts or who take an active part in the maintenance of the life of London and Greater London in an attack, which when it began and while it was at its pitch was unexampled in history.

"And what we saw to-day in Hyde Park was only symbolic of what can be produced though in a smaller scale throughout the length and breadth of the country. (A competent and embattled island. In September last)

LV .....having being defeated in his invasion plans of the RAF (applause) Hitler declared his intentions to raze the cities to the ground, and in the early days of that month he set the whole fury of the Hun upon London. None of us quite knew what would be the result of a concentrated and prolonged bombardment of this vast centre of population. ( Here in the Thames Valley over 8 million people are maintained.

SV. .... at a very fine level of modern civilization. They are dependent from day to day upon light, heat, power, water, sewerage, and communications upon the most complicated scale.

The administration of London in all its branches was confronted with problems hitherto unknown and unmeasured in all the history of the past. Public order, public health, the maintenance of ~~the~~ all the ~~public~~ essential services, the handling of millions of people who came in and out of London every day, the shelter not indeed from the enemy's bombs, for that was beyond us, but from their blast and splinters to shelter a million of men and women, and the removal of the dead and wounded from the shattered buildings (the care of the wounded when the hospitals were being ruthlessly bombed)

SCU. The provision for the homeless sometimes amounting to many thousands in a single day and accumulating to many more after three or four days of successive attacks all these things, with the welfare and the education amid these scenes of our great numbers of children here. All these presented tasks which, viewed in cold blood beforehand, might well have ~~seemed~~ seemed overwhelming. Indeed before the war (when the imagination painted pictures-)

LV ...of what might happen in the great air raids on four cities, plans were made to rid the Government, to move all the great controlling services which are centred in London, and disburse them about the countryside, and also it was considered a very great danger that had to be met that a sudden wave of panic might send millions of people crowding out into the countryside or along the roads.

GV On my way north to visit the troops, it was cold and raining, darkness had almost fallen on the blacked out street, I saw everywhere long queues of people, among them hundreds of young girls in their silk stockings and high heeled shoes, who had worked hard all day and were waiting for bus after bus which came by already overcrowded, in the hopes of reaching their homes for the night. When at that moment the dæful wail of the siren betokened the approach of German bombers, I confess to you that my heart bled for London and Londoners. (LIBRARY.)

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SV (All this sort of thing went on for more than four months with hardly any intermission) . I used to hold meetings of my Ministerial colleagues who are present and members of the authorities concerned every week in Downing Street in order to check up to see how we stood. Sometimes the gas had failed over large areas - the only means of cooking for great numbers of people; sometimes the electricity. There were grievous complaints about the shelters and about conditions in them. Water was cut off, railways were cut or broken, large districts were destroyed by fire, 20,000 people were killed and many more thousands were wounded.

But there was one thing about which there was never any doubt. The courage, the unconquerable grit and stamina of the Londoners showed itself from the very outset (cheers)

CU Without that all would have failed. Upon that rock they all stood unconquerable. All the public services were carried on, and all the intricate arrangements, far reaching details involving the daily lives of so many millions, were carried out, improvised, elaborated, and perfected in the very teeth of the cruel and devastating storm. I am very glad to come here to-day to pay my tribute and to record in the name of the Government our gratitude to all the civil authorities of London who, first under Sir John Anderson, and through the darkest moments under the courageous and resourceful leadership of Mr. Herbert Morrison (cheers), So long master of the London County Council (laughter) and now acting in an even higher sphere, to all who carried out their duties faithfully, skillfully and devotedly so that at last we made our way through the tempest and came for the time being, at any rate into a calm spell.

LV (During her long ordeal London was upheld by the-) sympathy and admiration of the other great cities of our Island and let us not forget here loyal Belfast in Northern Ireland (cheers) and when after the enemy wearied after the attack on the Capital and turned to other parts of the country, it is no extravagance of speech to say that many of us in our hearts felt anxiety lest the weight of the attack concentrated on those smaller organisms would prove more effective than when directed on London .

SV (However the staunchness) and vigour of London was fully matched by the splendid behaviour of our ports and cities (cheers) when they in turn received the full violence of the enemy's assault. London is so vast and so strong that she is like a prehistoric monster into whose armoured hide showers of arrows can be shot in vain. But a frightful measure of cruelty has been inflicted upon the great city and seaports of the country and I say here that while we are entitled to speak particularly of London we honour them for their constancy in a comradeship of suffering, of endurance, of triumph

2

LV The comradeship in this unprecedented novel pressure, a hideous pressure applied to modern communities has united us all and it has proved to the world the quality of our island life. I have no doubt whatever, as I said to the Civil Defence Forces ~~at the meeting in~~ in Hyde Park this morning, that the behaviour of the British people in this trial gained them conquests in the mind and spirit and sympathy of the United States of America which swept into ignominious corner all the vilest of Goebbels's propaganda ]

1

CU (We have) to ask us this question will the bombing attacks of last Autumn and winter come back again. We have proceeded on the assumption that they will. Some months ago I requested the Home Secretary and the Minister of Home Security and his principal colleagues, the Minister of Health and others to make every preparation for the autumn and winter war as if we should have to go through the same ordeal as last year or only rather worse. I am sure that everything is being done in accordance with those directions. The shelters are being strengthened ~~improved~~ improved

(lightened and warmed all arrangements) and fire watching

SV.....for fire control/are being improved perpetually. Many new arrangements are being contrived as a result of the hard experience ~~through which we have passed~~ through which we have passed and the many mistakes which no doubt we have made - for success is the result of making many mistakes and learning from experience. Many new arrangements have been made and if the lull is to end if the storm is to renew itself London will be ready, London will not flinch London can take it again (cheers)

We ask no favours of the enemy, We seek from them no compunction, on the contrary if to-night the people of London were asked to cast their vote ~~whether~~ whether a convention should be entered into to stop the bombing of all cities the overwhelming majority would cry 'No' . We will meet out to the Germans the measure and more than the measure that they have metted out to us. (Cheers)

3

LV L.V We will have no truce or parley with you or the grizzley gang \* You do your worst and we will do our best (long and prolonged cheer)

\* who work your wicked will (applause)