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made it possible for us Americans to save skins. More than that. She helped us to save our souls.

Much as some Americans would like to forget it, the record shows that, in the first two years of this war, we were a mentally confused and spiritually sick people. Our right-wing isolationists thought we could do business with Hitler, our left-wing isolationists thought it was an "imperialist war" until Russia was attacked, and most Americans hardly knew what to think. Even after the invasion of Holland and Belgium and the slaughter of Rotterdam, even after the fall of France, even after the Battle of Britain, even while nearly the whole European continent writhed under the torture of German tyranny, even while the British Empire stood utterly alone, even while both the candidates for the presidency in the election of 1940, despite their obvious sympathies, deemed it politically necessary to assure the people, in the most fervent terms, that the United States would not enter the war "except in the case of attack."

Incidentally, certain Americans should remember that record because it might persuade them in these days to temper their ungracious boasts of "idealism" in contrast to the alleged "realism" of our Allies, most of whom have suffered and sacrificed much more than we in mankind's mightiest struggle for freedom.

And yet, throughout that dismal period of doubt and delay, the American people did slowly but surely come to realize their danger and their need of Britain for their very salvation. We knew, deep down, that if Britain were conquered, the spiritual center, yes, the very soul of Western civilization, would be gone forever. British courage gave us good cheer and strengthened our hearts. Dunkirk, Britain's greatest defeat, helped us on the hard road to moral recovery. So did the Battle of Britain, her greatest victory. The Blitz helped. The fires of London rekindled the American conscience.

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Britain stood up. The power and the glory of the British spirit astounded some and inspired all of us. The British spirit is, of course, an old, old story filled with the words and deeds that move the hearts of men. Oliver Cromwell, three hundred years ago, revealed that spirit in the account of his thoughts about the Battle of Naseby, the decisive contest of England's Civil War. He said, "When I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we a company of poor ignorant men . . . I could not, riding alone about my business, but smile out to God in praise, in assurance of victory, because God would, by things that are not, bring to naught things that are. Of which I had great assurance, and God did it."

When, after the invasion of Poland in September, 1939, the British people decided not to wait until they were attacked but assumed the grim burden and the supreme honor of being the first to declare war on the Germans, some people in America and countless millions of men and women elsewhere thought to themselves, "Thank God for England."

When, after Dunkirk, the obscene power of Germany darkened the world and our whole Christian civilization hung in the balance, men and women throughout the earth, who wanted to remain or prayed to become free, cried out, "Thank God for England."

When, today, all the peoples of the Western nations are passionately seeking the way to reconcile the best of their traditions with the benefits of democracy and to achieve personal security while holding on to their hard won freedoms, men and women are hopefully saying, "Thank God for England."

And whenever in the long, long years ahead the freedom of mankind is in mortal danger, the same old prayer will again rise to the lips of liberty-loving men and women in every land—"Thank God—thank God for England."

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