

# VOICE OF THE LEFT

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## Sixty-Five Years Ago in History: When Britain Stood Alone

Sixty-five years ago in the fall of 1940, Great Britain was in the midst of a life-and-death struggle with Nazi Germany. Following the fall of France in June of 1940, the United Kingdom found herself standing alone against one of the mightiest and most evil military machines the world has ever known.

Throughout that summer and fall, the German Luftwaffe carried out a relentless air attack on many of Britain's key industrial cities as a precursor to invasion. Initially, Britain's fate appeared to be sealed as casualties mounted and reserves of both pilots and aircraft were nearly exhausted. This incredible country with a proud history of over 900 years, who until a generation earlier had ruled over a quarter of the globe, now faced complete annihilation.

Despite overwhelming odds after being stretched to the breaking point, the British people remained steadfast during what has come to be known as the "Battle of Britain." Thanks to the incalculable courage of countless Royal Air Force pilots, the British miraculously took control of their own skies. Eventually, German losses became so high that any attempt to invade Britain was abandoned by late-October. In the words of Winston Churchill, this was Britain's "finest hour" – but the price she had to pay was enormous. Not only were large parts of her major cities destroyed, but the human cost was catastrophic. More than 50,000 civilians alone died as a result of aerial bombardment. Many of my family were among them.

The role played by the sons of Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand in that heroic struggle should never be underestimated. A year later when Hitler invaded Russia, Germany did so with half its air force lying at the bottom of the English Channel. Four years later, the Allied D-Day invasion was launched using Great Britain as a springboard for attack. Needless to say, if the British had not been successful in the Battle of Britain, Allied victory would not have been possible.

Today, the United Kingdom once again stands in the front line in the struggle against Evil. Her highly-trained and well-equipped elite armed forces routinely stand side-by-side our own fighting for the same principles that we as Americans cherish so dearly. And as President Bush so eloquently said in the aftermath of 9/11, "America has no truer friend than Great Britain."

Tragically, as we saw in the recent London subway bombings, there are those who still wish to do this great nation harm. We need not wonder; however, as to what will be the outcome of the current struggle. For we have only to look at history to know who shall prevail.

