The **Speech to the Troops at Tilbury** was delivered in August 1588 by Queen Elizabeth I of England to the land forces earlier assembled at Tilbury in Essex in preparation of repelling the expected invasion by the Spanish Armada. Prior to the speech the Armada had been driven from the Strait of Dover in the Battle of Gravelines eleven days earlier, and had by now rounded Scotland on its way home, but troops were still held at ready in case the Spanish army of Alexander Farnese, the Duke of Parma, might yet attempt to invade from Dunkirk; two days later they were discharged. On the day of the speech, the Queen left her bodyguard before the fort at Tilbury and went among her subjects with an escort of six men.

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**Queen Elizabeth I’s Speech to the Troops at Tilbury, 1588**

My loving people,

We have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear, I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarde of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already, for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and We do assure you in the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the mean time, my lieutenant general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.