

The Big Lie

Description

Frequently attributed to [Joseph Goebbels](#), the oft-cited **big lie** theory appears instead to have been Nazi dictator [Adolf Hitler](#)'s explanation for how people came to believe that Germany lost [World War I](#) in the field — a “big lie” that Hitler attributed to Jewish influence on the press.

Hitler writes in [Mein Kampf](#) (James Murphy translation, page 134):

“All this was inspired by the principle – which is quite true in itself – that in the big lie there is always a certain force of credibility; because the broad masses of a nation are always more easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional nature than consciously or voluntarily; and thus in the primitive simplicity of their minds they more readily fall victims to the big lie than the small lie, since they themselves often tell small lies in little matters but would be ashamed to resort to large-scale falsehoods. It would never come into their heads to fabricate colossal untruths, and they would not believe that others could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously. Even though the facts which prove this to be so may be brought clearly to their minds, they will still doubt and waver and will continue to think that there may be some other explanation. For the grossly impudent lie always leaves traces behind it, even after it has been nailed down, a fact which is known to all expert liars in this world and to all who conspire together in the art of lying. These people know only too well how to use falsehood for the basest purposes.” From time immemorial, however, the Jews have known better than any others how falsehood and calumny can be exploited. Is not their very existence founded on one great lie, namely, that they are a religious community, whereas in reality they are a race? And what a race! One of the greatest thinkers that mankind has produced has branded the Jews for all time with a statement which is profoundly and exactly true. [Schopenhauer](#) called the Jew “The Great Master of Lies.” Those who do not realize the truth of that statement, or do not wish to believe it, will never be able to lend a hand in helping Truth to prevail.”

Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's minister of propaganda, is alleged to have stated that if a lie is repeated enough times it would become widely accepted as truth. However, in a 1941 article titled “[Churchill's Lie Factory](#),” he wrote:

“One should not as a rule reveal one's secrets, since one does not know if and when one may need them again. The essential English leadership secret does not depend on particular intelligence. Rather, it depends on a remarkably stupid thick-headedness. The English follow the principle that when one lies, one should lie big, and stick to it. They keep up their lies, even at the risk of looking ridiculous.”

Portions of this article were adapted from [Wikipedia's](#) article.