

## VICTORY IN THE ATLANTIC

People have come to look for news in Mr. Churchill's speeches. He is a great reporter in a supreme observation post while the biggest story of all time is unfolding. Once, musing over the destiny that placed him at the head of the British Government in England's "finest hour," he told a visitor that he would be remembered in history more for what he said in that hour than for what he did in it. He might have added that his war speeches will live as the very stuff of history, the source the future chroniclers will have to turn to when they try to tell the stupendous and terrible tale of the days we are living through.

Yesterday, in the medieval setting of the gutted Guildhall, in its ruin still a sign of the power of ritual and tradition in a country where change is always evolution, the news the Prime Minister pointed up with an unerring sense of proportion was the mounting success of the war against the submarine. He promised heavy fighting "in the Mediterranean and elsewhere before the leaves of autumn fall," reiterated even more forcefully than in his address in Washington the pledge to use every means to inflict total defeat on Japan, repeated that there will be no peace with the enemy save the peace of unconditional surrender. But the main emphasis was on the "massacre of the U-boats" because this is a new victory and an all-important one. The Atlantic is the nearest, most dangerous and from the beginning of the war until now has been the most critical of all the fighting fronts for the United States and the British Islands. It was on this front, moreover, that the Germans placed their highest hopes of victory this year. Admiral Doenitz was told off to build undersea craft at an unparalleled rate and to use them ruthlessly, regardless of cost, in the sea lanes which the enemy rightly judged as the weakest point in the Allied armor.

The submarine, in short, is Hitler's ultimate weapon. The tank was overpowered by artillery. The bomber was defeated by more bombers, above all by an incomparable capacity on our side to multiply bombers. There remained the power of the wolf packs of the deep to cut our ocean-borne supply lines and sink our ships and cargoes faster than we could replace them. This was so formidable a danger that the news that we have sunk forty German submarines in May and June, that ship losses in June were the lowest since the outbreak of the war, and construction from seven to ten times as great as losses, represents a victory for the Allies and a defeat for the enemy as significant as any of the great reversals that mark the course of the war. It means that we are overpowering the Axis as conclusively under the sea as in the air. It means that the lines of Allied communication are at last becoming safe. This, as Mr. Churchill was quick to underscore, is an augury for peace as well as for war, for he is not exaggerating when he says that the immediate future of the world depends on the "close association and intimate alignment of policy" of the two great Atlantic Powers.

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