

HITLER'S SILENCE MARKS REICH RITE

Doenitz, Speaking for Chief on
Heroes Day, Says War Is for
Germany's Life or Death

By The Associated Press.

LONDON, March 12—Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz substituted for Adolf Hitler at the microphone today and gave Germans a grim Heroes Day assurance that a "pitiless struggle is being waged for the existence or annihilation of our nation."

Each year since the start of the war Reichsfuehrer Hitler had been borne amid cheering to the rostrum of Berlin's ancient Zeughaus, military museum on Unter den Linden, for a harangue on Germany's memorial day.

In 1940, before the invasion of France, he had predicted the "most glorious victory of our history."

In 1941, before his invasion of Russia, he had predicted final victory. "Today German armed forces in a world-wide area stand ready, colossally strengthened in personnel and equipment, joyfully determined to complete that which was begun in the historic, epochal year of 1940," he said.

In 1942 he had admitted that a colossal struggle was ahead, but he had promised a crushing victory in the approaching summer.

Last year his regular appearance at the Zeughaus had dispelled a rumor of his death. He had declared the crisis on the eastern front had been overcome, but he admitted that Allied bombings had

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made German soil a war zone.

Today Hitler's armies still were engaged in a great retreat in Russia, and so far as is known neither Hitler nor Reichsmarshal Hermann Goering nor Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels made a public appearance.

Only one German broadcast referred to the Zeughaus. It said Admiral Doenitz, "in behalf of the Fuehrer," had laid a wreath trimmed with lilies and white carnations in the Berlin War Heroes' Memorial on Unter den Linden.

This perhaps was to disguise earlier omissions of mention of the old Museum. Royal Air Force bombs have fallen thickly along Unter den Linden since Herr Hitler last spoke there, and neutral reports from Stockholm have mentioned bomb hits on the landmark.

Amusements Banned

Berlin reports of the observance indicated its gloomy nature. Heretofore flags and bunting were flying. This year there were no pennants, and Heinrich Himmler, Gestapo chieftain, prohibited all amusements.

The German naval commander spoke soon after the announcement that his youngest son, Lieut. Peter Doenitz, had "died a hero's death in the battle of the Atlantic."

"Everybody knows we are in the midst of a merciless struggle of great harshness and seriousness," Admiral Doenitz said. "Events of this war and the brutal aims of our enemies, which they have publicly proclaimed, demonstrate to us what is at stake."

Concerning bomb-lashed Germany, he declared:

"We shall be victorious * * * thanks to the hardiness and determination of the home front. * * * Above all, we appreciate the heroism of those parts of the fatherland which have become themselves a part of the front as a result of terror attacks."

Herr Hitler, he said, "will steer the Reich safely through this struggle for survival."

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