

Air Ministry News Service

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CAPT. BALFOUR CALLS FOR TOTAL EFFORT

Speaking at the Margate Constitutional Club this morning the Under Secretary of State for Air (Capt. H. H. Balfour) said:-

The Atlantic declaration of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, and the circumstances of its preparation, have a world effect of material and spiritual significance.

Materially, remember that these pledges were exchanged on the waters of the Battle of the Atlantic - those very seas which Herr Goebbels has been boasting for months past would have come under German control. It is for him to explain to his dupes how Mr. Churchill could travel each way in safety. How our convoys continually sail these seas, guarded triumphantly by ship and aeroplane.

In spirit, these pledges - made by the democratic leaders, both answerable to the free legislatures of their respective countries - lay down a human and common understanding of intention as to what shall be the shape of things to come, when the inevitable victory is within our grasp.

To get the victory which will enable us to put into operation these common principles is our purpose. It is likely yet to be long, hard, calling for effort and sacrifice beyond that which hitherto any one of us had considered adequate as our contribution.

Herr Hitler forced a total war. We call for a total effort. We must go for a total victory.

In spite of the collapse of our former ally, France, bringing with it strategic and material gains of tremendous value to the enemy, we have avoided defeat during the first two years of war, and, indeed, I believe that our island fortress, stoutly armed and bravely defended, could continue indefinitely to avoid defeat. But this would be only a fraction of the task, for we need this total victory, and I do not believe we can get it without that generous help from the United States which the declaration of the Atlantic makes more certain.

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Even as the Atlantic declaration was being signed in the west, far away in the east the Russian forces have been stubbornly defending their land.

I am no lover of Communist doctrines or methods - though equally, I expect that if you asked the Soviet Commissars they, on their part, would hardly agree with the Tory party. But today, in this war, any one who kills Germans is my friend and ally. The splendid defence of Russia has diverted enemy men and material from the western front. It gives us a pause - but not one to rest in or complacently to watch others fighting the common enemy. The lull weeks must be used frantically in re **doubling** our efforts so as to be sure we are that much better armed and prepared for the final tussle in the west, whenever it should come.

It is in this way that everyone engaged in any direction of our war effort can themselves make a real contribution of help to the Russian soldiers and to the defeat of the German attack.

In the air the initiative is with the Royal Air Force. Day and night we are carrying on an offensive with fighter and bomber.

What a contrast to twelve months ago, when the Battle of Britain was being fought out. Today, Fighter Command trails its coat in front of the Luftwaffe, challenging them to come up and fight. Today, we are successfully doing over enemy-occupied territory what the Germans tried to do over Britain last summer and failed - and, in failing, lost the Battle of Britain.

Our bomber force has the initiative. Today, it is the Royal Air Force that has recommenced day bombing on a great scale - our heavy and light bombers penetrating deep into the heart of Germany in broad daylight.

Are not these two actions proof positive that the spirit of the Royal Air Force has achieved superiority over the morale of the Luftwaffe? It remains now for our supplies of aircraft to overtake in quantity those of the enemy, and when this comes about then, indeed, shall we be able to claim mastery in the air.

In the bomber lies our punch on the solar plexus of Germany. It is the new "beautiful bomb" that makes factories crumble and spirits waver, and we will go on ceaselessly hitting at these nerve centres of Germany's life. I believe our cry to industry here and to the United States must be loud and clear: "Roll out the bombers. Load up the bombs."

Finally, let our bomber force be ever so great, we can be sure we shall never lack in quality or numbers the personnel to man our air fleet, so long as we have the sort of young men whom I have seen training in this country and in the Dominions.