

trained on the strait and on the streets of Dover. It has been extended to the sea, where, since August 17, the waters around the British isles, as in the unrestricted submarine warfare of 1917, have been declared by the Germans a zone of military operations.

The assault on Britain has not stopped at military objectives. It has been extended to open cities. It has indeed been deliberately aimed at the civil population, in the hope that incessant and merciless bombing will break down morale, and lead to the evacuation, in panic, of cities and towns, and to the disorganization of British industry.

Nevertheless the apprehension felt in those August days, when the savage onslaught was unloosed, and Britain stood, virtually alone in Europe, to face the German hordes, and the unknown destructiveness of unlimited air war, has been dissipated for the time being at least. It has been dissipated by the magnificent skill and courage of British airmen, and by the determination of the whole population to let no attack, however ferocious or long sustained, deter them from their purpose. Not only is their purpose that of defending Britain; it has been from the outset and will continue to be that of freeing their fallen allies, and, ultimately, of removing the menace of Nazi domination from Europe and the world.

The battle for the mastery of the air over Britain still goes on. Long, grim months of siege, with constant threat of death from the skies, still lie ahead. Nevertheless the numerical superiority which the Nazis enjoyed throughout the summer and early autumn, and which, indeed, they still enjoy, is gradually but surely being whittled down. Greater losses by the enemy of pilots and planes, combined with a smaller relative production are beginning to tell their tale.

The British army has been reorganized, reequipped, and strengthened by fresh divisions and reinforcements from the dominions overseas. The Royal Navy has been strengthened by flotillas of destroyers from this side of the Atlantic. The whole country bristles with defences. After months of waiting, the German army of invasion remains impotent to cross the narrow seas that separate it from Britain's shores. In spite of all her suffering and losses Britain is stronger, and stronger by far, than when we separated in midsummer.

Members of the government of the United Kingdom have referred repeatedly in the most appreciative terms to Canada's contribution to the strengthening of the British defences. On September 17, Lord Caldecote, speaking in the House of Lords, referred to what he termed:

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

... the invaluable cooperation and assistance which we are receiving from the dominions in the common trouble.

He said:

It is well known that the defences of this country include very substantial land forces from Canada, Australia and New Zealand. These forces are at present available to repel invasion, should invasion come. There are also with us units of the Royal Canadian Navy and a naval contingent from New Zealand. In the air it is common knowledge that a Canadian fighter squadron has helped us immediately to increase the enemy's losses, and we have had invaluable assistance from a unit of the Royal Australian Air Force. More recently we have welcomed an air contingent from southern Rhodesia. In our own Royal Air Force, there are many pilots from all the dominions and indeed from all parts of the empire. Newfoundland also has made a most substantial and indeed a remarkable contribution to the forces defending the British isles by sea and by land.

As recently as October 30, the present Secretary of State for the Dominions, Lord Cranborne, told an audience that thousands of Canadian troops were waiting in Britain with eager impatience for a chance to deal faithfully with Hitler's forces of invasion. He referred also to the Canadian destroyers which were in close cooperation with the Royal Navy. The following day the British Under-Secretary for War, Lord Croft, who fought beside our Canadian troops in the last war, visited the units of the Canadian active service force at present in the United Kingdom, and told them that the British army council was extremely proud of having fine Canadian formations cooperating with the great army being built up in Britain. Lord Croft also praised our Canadian airmen and added these significant words:

When the river of supplies of pilots from the great imperial camps in Canada turns to flood, air ascendancy will be won.

Everyone senses the improvement in Britain's position. The enemy's hope of a quick victory has been shattered on the rock of British resistance. He is now turning his attention in considerable measure to other regions, and to the maintenance of his supply of foodstuffs, of oil, and of other materials necessitated by a war of attrition. His great aim now is to break the stranglehold of the British blockade. At the same time, he is seeking to blockade the United Kingdom. Already destruction at sea by the U-boat has become a peril to Britain greater even than that of bombardment from the air.

Coincident with Germany's concentration on the battle of Britain and the consolidation of her gains in the west, events of far-reaching importance have been happening in eastern Europe. The Baltic states of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania have been taken over by the