

Sunday, April 18, 1943

Nazis Increase U-Boat Warfare

Informed London sources said Saturday that the number of U-boats operating against Allied shipping is increasing despite the improved defense record of the last six months.

However, these same sources saw hopeful signs on the submarine front, including:

¶ Despite the gravity of ship sinkings for March revealed by Navy Secretary Frank Knox, the four preceding months showed a big drop in losses to U-boats.

¶ U-boat sinkings and destruction wrought by Allied bombers against sub works and bases greatly reduced the per capita take by the submarines.

¶ The Allies steadily increased the size of their merchant fleets despite losses and many anti-submarine boats are being built to combat the underseas craft.

The American raid on Vegesack, Germany, particularly was effective in cutting down Nazi production rates, it was believed, and Allied defense operations probably keep many U-boats laid up for repairs.

Sources said the Allied record against U-boat warfare was bright in the Mediterranean. Despite the severity of Allied losses, proportionately they probably were a fraction of the German and Italian losses in the Mediterranean from raids on supply ships heading for North Africa.

The Allies have sent more than 1,500,000 tons of shipping into North African ports since the campaign opened there in the face of Axis sea and air opposition.

There were definite signs that German surface raiders such as the Tirpitz and Scharnhorst might soon join the submarine attacks on Allied Atlantic shipping.