

WAR IN THE AIR

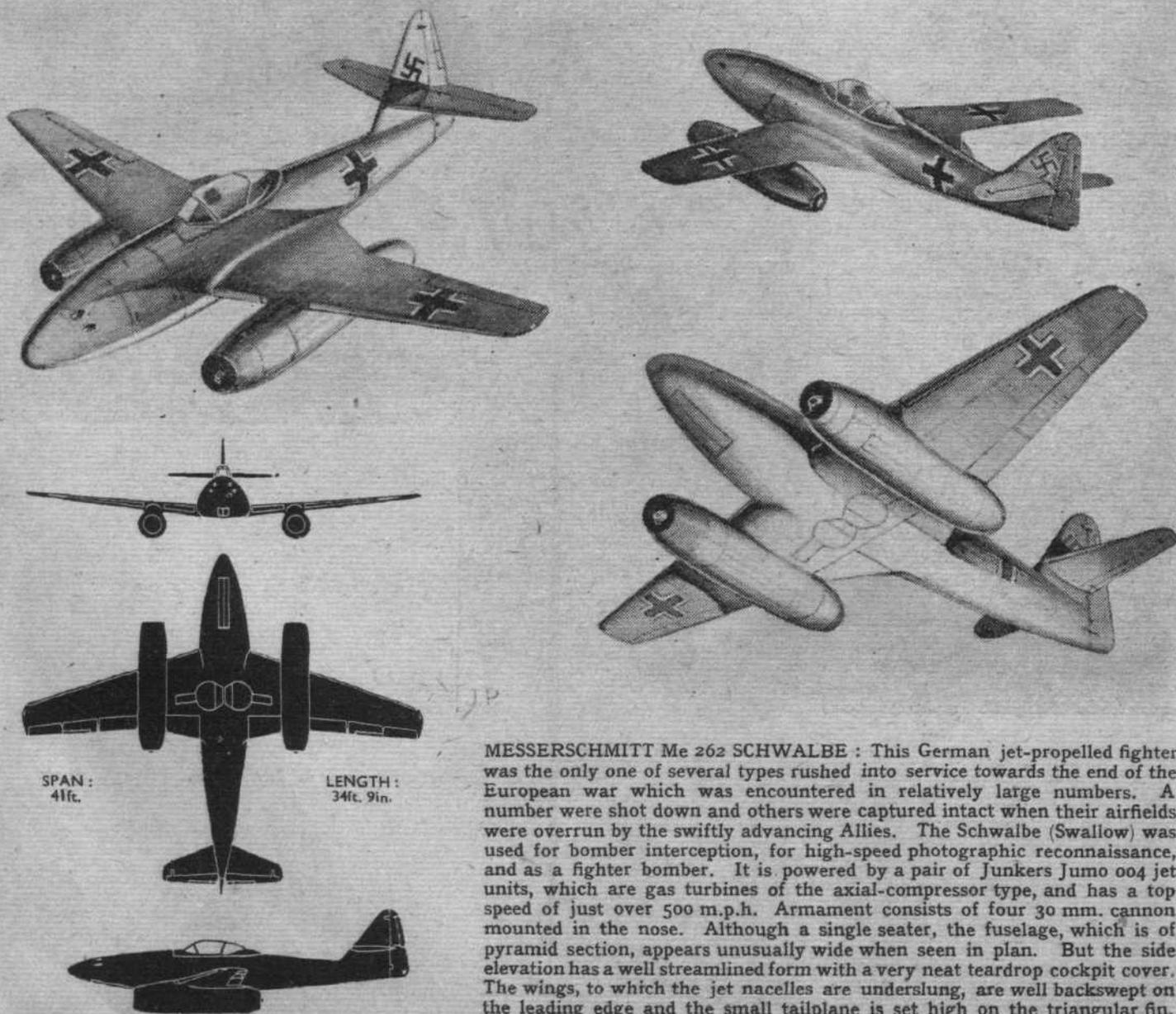
fleet is commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir Philip Vian, a tough fighting sailor who has been in many an action since the now distant days when he commanded the destroyer H.M.S. *Cossack* and liberated the British and Indian seamen who were prisoners in the German ship *Allmark*. In the recent operations he has been attacking the remnants of the Japanese Navy; but he has not had to run his ships up into dangerous fiords and to board the enemy. His carriers lie off shore at a distance which in other wars would seem risky enough, but now appear to be safe, and their aircraft fly across to the enemy naval base at Kure to strike at the enemy warships with every weapon at the disposal of sea-borne air power. They strike, too, at enemy airfields. The Japanese have been doing little enough in the air of late, but some time or other they will surely have to appear in the air once more. Before the attack on Kure, Admiral Halsey signalled, "Under the

punishment of this foray the enemy will probably strike back. Let us go in." It seemed a reasonable calculation, but only Japanese reconnaissance aircraft appeared, and they were speedily shot down or chased off by the fleet fighters.

Mr. Churchill's last act as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and therefore one of "the big Three," was to join with the United States and China in sending a summons to Japan to surrender unconditionally, and thereby to avert the wrath to come. Almost simultaneously Tokyo radio sent an appeal to the United States to be merciful. Japan has not deserved kind treatment, and many people will feel that it would be a good thing for the future of Asia that Japanese armies should be driven out of Malaya and Hong Kong by the arms of Britain and India, and out of China by the combined forces of China and the United States. Prestige always counts for more in Asia than elsewhere, and we should like the people of Malaya and China to see the boastful and cruel Japanese driven

out by the military power of the Allies. But it would certainly have a salutary effect if those peoples saw the once insolent invaders laying down their arms and surrendering. In Japan even more than elsewhere the "saving of face" is an object counted more important than life or death, and unconditional surrender would impress the Japanese perhaps even more than the annihilation of their armies in some Armageddon. A Japanese surrender would also save many Allied lives.

The Japanese are careless of the lives of their own people, but they clearly do not like being bombed. General Arnold, who commands the U.S. Army Air Forces, has said that if the war lasts until next year the Allies will drop more than two million tons of bombs on Japan. This is more than three times the amount we dropped on Germany—and Germany is ten times the size of the Japanese homeland. It is also more thickly populated, and so the devastation will be more complete than in the case of Germany.



MESSERSCHMITT Me 262 SCHWALBE: This German jet-propelled fighter was the only one of several types rushed into service towards the end of the European war which was encountered in relatively large numbers. A number were shot down and others were captured intact when their airfields were overrun by the swiftly advancing Allies. The Schwalbe (Swallow) was used for bomber interception, for high-speed photographic reconnaissance, and as a fighter bomber. It is powered by a pair of Junkers Jumo 004 jet units, which are gas turbines of the axial-compressor type, and has a top speed of just over 500 m.p.h. Armament consists of four 30 mm. cannon mounted in the nose. Although a single seater, the fuselage, which is of pyramid section, appears unusually wide when seen in plan. But the side elevation has a well streamlined form with a very neat teardrop cockpit cover. The wings, to which the jet nacelles are underslung, are well backswept on the leading edge and the small tailplane is set high on the triangular fin.