ORDNANCE

## Improved Subs Ahead

THE submarine will become the primary instrument of naval attack in wars of the future, it was predicted by Lloyd H. Norman in Ordnance (Nov.-Dec.), official journal of the American Ordnance Association.

The submarine will remain after the big flattops, the battleships, the cruisers, and most other surface warships have been retired, this wartime naval officer declares. It is the cheapest and most effective naval weapon for its cost, he added, but present day submarines are still in their infancy.

Submarines of today, however, are vastly improved over the recent wartime type. The Navy is now building two new underwater vessels far superior to any now in use. They will cost about \$21,000,000 each and will include much that is new in submarine construction, including advances made by the Germans during the war. They will be equipped with improved diesel engines, but may later be adapted for a new type like the Walter engine—or atomic power if it becomes feasible.

The so-called Walter engine is a German

development which uses hydrogen peroxide. It is said to be extremely efficient, particularly for emergency speeds of 25 knots, but studies made at the Naval laboratories at Annapolis show that it is extremely uneconomical because it requires peroxide of 90% purity.

The efficient German Kreislauf engine is also being adapted for American use. It is a diesel which uses its own exhaust gases supplemented by injections of pure oxygen from oxygen tanks. This engine permits deep underwater operation without use of the schnorkel breathing device. The schnorkel is a tube which can be projected some 50 to 60 feet above a submerged boat into the atmosphere. By this means a submarine may remain under water for many days.

Twenty-four of America's wartime submarines are under conversion with schnorkel installations and other improvements. They are being streamlined by the removal of deck guns and are being given greater battery capacity.

Science News Letter, November 26, 1949



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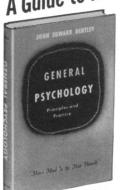
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