

DEATH OF A NATION

German prisoners, out of the war and sure of rations on the British Army scale, out of all proportion with what they give our men. Numbered with them now is Franz Von Papen, a big fish netted among the growing haul of little ones. Caught with him was his son. Here is an object lesson not lightly to be forgotten. Van Papen is a Junker; throughout the thirty years of his slimy career he has always been near the centre of German intrigues. Given time and opportunity, his son would probably make another diplomat of the same shady school. Foxy Franz, the cheating, double-crosser, leaves the sinking ship. We are looking at the Thyssen steel works in the Ruhr, a gaunt forbidding skeleton that was once one of Germany's busiest war factories. Herr Thyssen used to be a close friend of Herr von Papen and one of the wealthiest men in Germany. He it was who first financed a certain unknown Austrian ex-corporal, by name Adolf Hitler, and set the future Fuhrer on the road to power. This is where that road led. To the utter destruction of the entire heart and centre of German war industry - the Ruhr.

A special target of R.A.F. Bomber Command has been the Sterfrade synthetic oil plant. The Refineries are now a wilderness.

Serving this huge spider's web of war factories was the biggest inland dock system in Germany linking the Rhine and the Ruhr. Every loading centre had its own rail yard working day and night pumping oil supplies into the Reich. Now the tugs and barges are here to stay.

The Ems-Weser canal at the junction of two inland waterways pictures a tale of super-accurate day and night bombing. Canals and viaducts in an area pitted like the moon's surface with the massive craters of ten ton bombs.

King-pin of Ruhr industry was Essen, Germany's Steel city. In this war Krupps of Essen turned out 7,000 heavy guns, an uncountable number of the famed 88 millimetre guns, tanks, ships and "U" boats. It's all in the past tense now.

Sole owner of the steel Empire, Alfred Krupp, told Americans who captured him recently that his works were once worth 160 million marks. Only a scrap merchant would look at them now. Bleached bones of steel girders make a fitting graveyard for this monstrous, war-mongering arms industry. The words of Thomas Jefferson were never truer than now. "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of tyrants - it is its natural manure."