Starvation Weapon By Wm. Philip Simms

WASHINGTON, March 9.—Deliberate starvation—especially of women and children—is being used by the Nazis as a weapon of war on a par with tanks, guns and planes, according to information received here. The French underground has come into possession of a copy of a report to Berlin by Gen. von Stulpnagel, Nazi commander in the Paris area. It is quoted as saying:

"What does a temporary defeat matter if, through the destruction of people and material wealth in enemy countries we are able to secure a margin of economic and demographic superiority even greater than before?"

Lecturing before the War Academy in Berlin, Marshal von Riedesleit is reported as saying:

"One of our great mistakes in the first World War was to spare the lives of civilians in enemy countries. We Germans must number at least twice the population of our neighbors. Therefore we shall be compelled to destroy at least one third of the population of all adjacent territories. We can best achieve this through systematic malnutrition—in the end far superior to machine guns...starvation works more effectively especially amongst the young."

France, better than most, knows the tragic meaning of the Nazi doctrine. The 1914 class of youngsters who answered the colors numbered 760,000. In 1939 there were only 400,000. The missing 360,000 simply hadn't been born. Their potential fathers lay dead on battlefields from Flanders to Switzerland.

But, as the Nazi marshals observed, the enemy now has a still better method. Malnutrition is not only superior to machine guns but is less expensive and leaves more food for the Germans. Systematically practiced, Germany may win the next war, 30 or 50 years hence, because her neighbors simply haven't enough soldiers—because babies were not born or were starved in infancy.

Along this line there's a new edition of Theres Bonney's book, Europe's Children. It contains less than 1000 words, but every one of them is a heart breaker. The main message is conveyed in pictures—photographs taken by Miss Bonney in France, Finland, Spain and elsewhere. pictures mostly of babies, showing what happens to them in war. There are babies wearing paper clothes in sub-zero weather; babies with arms and legs no bigger than your thumb; babies with stomachs bloated in the last stages of starvation.

Miss Bonney braved death again and again to collect this account of what war is doing to the younger generation in Europe. More than anything I've yet seen, it makes one understand what the Nazis mean when they talk about eliminating their neighbors by malnutrition.

Before President Roosevelt is a resolution by Senators Gillette and Taft recommending relief for occupied Europe's starving. It passed the Senate unanimously. Money for the project is already in the hands of governments in exile. There is also available neutral shipping. And the International Red Cross is prepared to supervise distribution and see that none of the relief falls into the hands of the enemy. Experiments in Greece prove the scheme feasible.

Unless something is done, a generation hence the Allies may stand in desperate need of an army—the army which may never be born.
Horror of Horrors

EUROPE'S CHILDREN. By Thérèse Bonney, War Correspondent and Photographer. 85 plates with brief copy by the author. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $3.

By FRANCES WITHERSPOON

JUST one year ago several thousand persons were stirred by a showing at Carnegie Hall of Thérèse Bonney’s photographic testimony to the havoc wrought by World War II upon its most vulnerable victims—the children of Europe. A still larger audience was reached for Miss Bonney’s “raid upon truth,” as her camera-journeys throughout war-torn Europe have been strikingly called, by the reproduction of a number of her plates in THE NEW YORK TIMES Magazine Section of Sept. 19, 1943.

Reaching book form first as a privately printed, limited subscribers’ edition, these pictures were hailed as “more eloquent than crumbled cathedrals,” and genuine thanks are due the present publishers for now making generally available this revelation from Miss Bonney’s “compassionate camera.”

The lyric quality of many of these photographs vies for comment with the artistry of their arrangement. Miss Bonney has an instinct for climax. She begins her story in 1939 with a few portraits of happy youngsters looking at picture-books, trooping up school-house stairs. Follows a child reading the handbill announcing a declaration of war. Next, a single telegraph pole, imaginatively taken with severed, dangling wires, declares communication cut off from the outside world.

The universality of the agony is inescapable. To quote Miss Bonney, whose text is the perfect comment on the pictures: “This is the tale, not of one, but of too many European countries... I have written this story with my lens. This is the truth for which I vouch.”

Miss Bonney’s “truth” is of poor belongings huddled up, the cow driven to the road, packs strapped to young shoulders, tags pinned to mere babies who are to stumble forward on endless odysseys of pain and hunger till they fall to sleep, small exhausted heaps of rags, in barns, in doorways, upon the bare ground. As moving, the deathly weariness of these little “prisoners of hope,” as the more striking pictures of the concentration camps, is one of which the heavily shadowed faces of a boy and girl press close against the barbed wire as if begging all humanity to take pity.

One feels the restraint in the starvation pictures. There are not many of these—only a few emaciated forms with hideously distended abdomens. But lest the most war-calloused seek to evade the purpose of her book, Miss Bonney has with biting irony captioned the most ghastly picture of them all—“the foundations of the post-war world.”

For, make no mistake, Miss Bonney’s superb photography is a call to action. As clear a call as the Senate resolution urging that, in cooperation with the Governments of Great Britain, Sweden and Switzerland, we work out plans to extend the successful “Greek Experiment” for the relief of other starving peoples. Thérèse Bonney’s is but another reputable voice insisting that the International Red Cross be permitted to feed the children of the Nazi-occupied democracies.

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