

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 11667

IMPORTANT STEEL WORKS HIT AT BOCHUM

Fires were still burning in Bochum yesterday, many hours after the attack on Wednesday night, reported a reconnaissance pilot who flew over the city shortly after noon yesterday (Thursday).

Bochum, fourth largest city in the Ruhr, produces a high proportion of the special steel used in the manufacture of hundreds of weapons, from aero engines to big guns. In Bochum the steel was made by three huge plants belonging to the United Steel Combine (Vereinigte Stahlwerke).

Between them they turn out a 1,000,000 tons of steel and a 1,000,000 tons of pig iron a year, and cover an area of about 500 acres -- little less than the main town of Bochum itself. All three of these great plants were hit during the attack. In one plant 15 large workshops were damaged.

The photographs taken yesterday show that this attack was one of the most successful Bomber Command has made on Bochum. Industrial damage was very heavy indeed: there has not yet been time to assess the whole of it, but it is known that a number of factories, some of them of first importance to the German war machine, were damaged.

Among them were the Krupp Treibstoffwerke, makers of benzine and tar oils: the Gelsenkirchen Bergwerk, one of Bochum's largest collieries, and the Eisen und Hüttenwerke, an important steel works, which was severely damaged in the attack on June 12/13. All these were first priority targets, but hardly less important were the machinery works of Maschinen und BahndarF, and another Bochum colliery, the Bergbau n.C. Lothringen. Two other firms that were hit were the Fahrzeugwerke, manufacturers of lorries, and Blacke and Co., makers of pumps and compressors.

Bochum is in the centre of the most prolific part of the Ruhr coal basin, and large quantities of coal are sent out to other parts of Germany. Bochum's railways are therefore of great importance and these were badly damaged during the attack.
