

# **Hitler's Angel Has 3 Millions In N. Y. Bank**

By M. J. Racusin

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New York, July 30.—Hidden in the tides of economic warfare now surging over the world, the New York Herald Tribune has discovered that Fritz Thyssen, the German industrialist who was Adolf Hitler's original patron a decade ago, has three million dollars in American cash salted away in the bank vaults of downtown New York.

In the American colony of Thyssen enterprises, perhaps the most interesting is the Union Banking Corporation, 39 Broadway, nominal guardian of the three million dollars cache, all in United States currency—a sort of nest egg for Thyssen or perhaps some of his high-placed Nazi friends when the present troublous days are over.

## **Real Ownership Is Mystery**

Among other Thyssen interests in New York are half a dozen corporations engaged in the shipping, export and import trades, centering chiefly about the coal and steel industries and operating under the wing of the Union Banking Corporation. These organizations did a thriving business in rolling up dollars for Thyssen in years past, but have been brought virtually to a standstill during the last year by the war.

One of the most fascinating aspects of this story is the mystery surrounding the real ownership of the Thyssen fortune. At the moment, of course, no one can get at this Thyssen nest egg, because it is part of the \$4,500,000,000 foreign assets frozen by the United States Government since Adolf Hitler's

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armies began overrunning Europe.

Government circles assert that the assets of the Union Banking Corporation and its subsidiaries were frozen because capital and control came from a Netherlands institution called the Bank Voor Handel en Scheepvaart (Bank for Trade and Shipping) in Rotterdam, one of the Thyssen string of banking houses on the continent. It was subject to the freezing order, however, as a Dutch corporation, and not as a German-owned property.

As the custodian of all Dutch property outside the Netherlands, the Netherlands government in exile represents that it, too, would seem to have some rights in the matter. Nevertheless all of Thyssen's properties were confiscated by the Nazi regime back in 1939, and thus it might appear that the assets here are legally a part of the German government's assets in the United States.

The Thyssen bank in Rotterdam which nominally owned the New York corporation was bombed out of existence by the invading Nazis



FRITZ THYSSEN

in May, 1940. No one in New York professes to know what has happened to the officers of the Rotterdam institution. Not a word of instruction or advice has come from abroad.

## Rift Believed Not Genuine

Perhaps it wasn't Thyssen's money at all. Some persons suggest maybe he sent it here for safekeeping for some of the Nazi bigwigs—perhaps for Hermann Wilhelm Goering, for Paul Joseph Goebbels, for Heinrich Himmler, or even Hitler himself.

No matter how the story comes out, the United States Government has the situation in hand. Every penny of known Thyssen assets is frozen, under the strictest control.

There are many Americans in responsible positions who do not think that the rift between Thyssen and the Nazis was genuine at all, preferring to believe that Thyssen was in reality a sort of economic advance agent of the Hitler forces, a financial surveyor and softener-up posing as a refugee.

Reliable private information is that Thyssen has been wandering about Switzerland, France and other European countries before and after the Nazi armies arrived without much hindrance from the Hitler government. Thyssen is now in Germany—not under confinement, free to move about but closely watched—perhaps a willing prisoner, perhaps a hostage for his wealth throughout the world.

Thyssen's adventure in the American business world dates back to August, 1924, when without flourish or ruffles the Union Banking Corporation was incorporated with a capital stock of \$400,000, the money coming from the Bank Voor Handel en Scheepvaart, it was licensed under the New York State banking laws as an investment corporation.