

I.G. FARBEN

The following are some gleanings from my reading of Richard Sasuly's 1947 book IG Farben . I can't remember where I first read that Sasuly's book had been a major source for Gravity's Rainbow (it may have been Weisenburger) but obviously much of IG Farben found its way into GR (sometimes almost verbatim). I haven't had time to really write it all out, so it appears here just as I pulled it from the book, the numbers in parentheses indicating the page numbers on this long-out-of-print book.

While hunting down the book in the San Francisco Bay Area (where I live), one book dealer didn't have the book, but knew Sasuly and gave me his home number (he's also a Bay Area resident). I gave him a call and had a long and fascinating conversation with him. He'd heard of Pynchon, but not of GR. (And he'd long run out of copies of IG Farben.)

"Germany's greatest corporation and the kingpin of the German war effort." (8)

"at the center of the network of international cartels which control a bewildering array of products from oil to rubber to dyes to nitrogen to explosives to aluminum to nickel to synthetic silks."

"had a share, generally the lion's share, in the control of more than three hundred and eighty other German firms"

"IG Farben world organization included more than five hundred firms abroad."

"had its own mines for coal, magnesite, gypsum, and salt. It had its own coke ovens and was a heavy investor in steel firms." (9)

"had its own house banks and patent and research firms, not only all over Germany but scattered through all the main business centers of the world." (9)

IG's most important achievement was in finding substitutes for critical raw materials. (83)

Old privileges for Big Business were flourishing without check in Nazi Germany during WWII. The local paper, the Frankfurter Zeitung, was owned by Jews and was anti-Nazi. IG took it over, ran it as a "cloaked syndicate" headed by a Professor Brunner.

Studied with Gay-Lussac in Paris - no chemistry in Germany.

Returned to Germany in 1824 and taught other Germans to be chemists.

Bulk of his work was in organic chemistry.

Carl Duisberg "great apostle of cartels in the chemical field" (26).

Leader of the IG in 1906. 1904 - The 6 major German chemical companies organized into two major rings/cartels:

(1) **Badische Anilin und Soda Fabrik**, the Bayer Co. of Leverkusen (Duisberg's), AGFA Co. of Berlin;

(2) Hoechst works (on outskirts of Frankfurt-on-the-Main), Leopold Cassella & Company, and Kalle & Co. of Biebrich

At this time, IG came into common usage to describe the German dye cartel. The most advanced specimen of cartel organization

1916 - The two cartels organized into a single IG. Griesheim-Elektron and Farbwerk Muehlheim were added

The science of chemistry came of age during WWI

1925 - The separate firms are merged into a single corporation - IG Farbenindustrie, Inc.

Steel's major producers already in cartels, so cartelization was easy.

Chemicals even easier because in 1916 the complete IG was formed.

Hermann Schmitz was one of his chief aides. **Schmitz succeeded Carl Bosch as president of IG and was still the #1 man at end of WWII.**

By agreement of all members of the IG, in 1925 all of the other concerns were absorbed into the Ludwigshafen firm (headed by Bosch), Badische, Anilin und Soda Fabrik, and the name was changed to the IG Farbenindustrie A.G.

. . . actually one of the key organizers in IG and boss of the IG international spy ring."

(13 & 97) Ran his office (Berlin NW 7) with a strong hand, and none of his chief assistance had a complete picture of the whole operation. (97) Statistical Department prepared maps and kept tabs for the army on industries and agricultural production abroad, especially bottlenecks in capacities and raw materials. Joined Nazi party early.

The top men of IG avoided taking official government jobs themselves.

Per Duisberg: stay clear of open government ties, but to exert pressure in secret conferences. Second-tier leaders were sent to the government.

"Without the support of the IG and the rest of the German monopolies and cartels, Hitler could not have won his political fight. And the German industrialists could see that without Hitler their empires would crumble." (54)

Four members of the Vorstand [managing directors] of IG Farben, including Dr. Bosch, the head of the Vorstand, and Baron George von Schnitzler were asked by the president of the Reichstag to attend a meeting at this house. About 20 people attended, mostly leading industrialists from the Ruhr: Schacht,

Krupp von Bohler, and Albert Vogler, leader of steel trust Vereinigte Stahlwerke. Hitler was also present, and was given the decisive support of German business leaders.

Arms producers worldwide (e.g. Du Pont) benefitted from rearmament.

After Hitler took power, all arms producers made a killing.

In 1920 Krupp began producing weapons.

Krupp was symbol of arms makers. Krupp family fortune was saved in

December 1924 by a loan of \$10 million from Hallgarten and Company and Goldman Sachs and Company of New York. Foreign loans poured into Germany between 1924 and 1930.

IG became one of the big powers of the Ruhr, owning its own coal mines.

Hermann Schmitz was on the Krupp board of directors, as well as on Vereinigte Stahlwerke's board of directors. (83)

The two major munitions-making concerns became IG subsidiaries in 1926.(83)

Synthetics

IG's most important achievement was in finding substitutes for critical raw materials. (83)

Prof. Fritz Haber's process for producing nitrates by snatching nitrogen from the air (fixation of nitrogen - essential for explosives - and fertilizers) was very successful.

Dr. Carl Bosch (who with Duisberg had founded the IG), with IG chemists, discovered how to make synthetic oils using hydrogenation which converted coal into lubricating oils and gasoline for cars, tanks or airplanes.

Enabled IG to form an alliance with Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey. Produced gasoline at its main plant at Leuna.

"The widely spread sales organization of IG was used to plant Nazi agents in strong posts through the world." (90)

"Germany's most effective intelligence agents were solid, respectable businessmen."

A few years after WWI, created alliances with three Swiss concerns--Ciba, Sandoz, and Geigy--who formed a cartel of their own in 1920.

1929 - Continental Dye Cartel (CDC)- Ciba, Sandoz, Geigy, Etablissement Kuhlmann and Societe des Matieres Colorantes de St. Denis (both French), and IG. 80% of world dyestuffs in 1927.

1926 - Major English chemical firms had organized into a single concern - Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd. (ICI) - 2nd only to IG in Europe.

1932 ICI joins CDC.

Because of buna rubber, strong links were established between IG and Standard Oil Co. of NJ and with Ford Company.

IG had a system of foreign holdings (est. 500) and assets which covered 93 countries on all the continents. (92)

Schmitz used camouflage (Tarnung) to disguise IG links. Though ownership on paper rested with citizens of the country, close inspection revealed that operations were actually controlled by agents of IG Farben, e.g. American company, General Aniline and Film Corporation. When US entered WWII, it called itself an independent corporation with no relation to IG. But it was created by IG under the name of American IG. Stock held by a dummy corporation set up by IG: IG Chemie of Switzerland ("Internationale Gesellschaft für Chemische Unternehmungen") (set up in 1928), which called itself an independent and neutral Swiss company.

Schmitz was president of IG and IG Chemie. When WWII started and Schmitz declared IG Chemie independent, the old ties were still there. The bank which handled IG Chemie's financial matters was one of IG Farben's foreign assets.

Camouflage also used to avoid taxes.

Herrn Klub - elite inner circle of Junkers and financiers

IG espionage went largely undiscovered by US organ, would be organized in complete support of a mechanized and sharply trained army which would strike suddenly and with overwhelming force. This became the well-known pattern of the Blitz." (100)

"Every foreign link of the entire nation should be used to pick up information and funnel it back to the intelligence center."

For the all-important U.S., IG set up a special organization, Chemnyco, Inc., of New York--to siphon out technical data of military importance.

Though its officials were mostly Americans, it was run by Germans or loyal German Americans. Its sole client was IG.

Where IG did not set up special intelligence agencies such as Chemnyco, NW 7 was represented by special agents called Verbindungsmaenner, well established sales representatives of IG whose spy work could be carried on under the cloak of everyday business. Kept IG informed on political developments. Also did straight military espionage.

Business concerns abroad were expected to help preserve German culture by building up purely German institutions. "Once a German always a German." (106) IG very active in spreading pro-German/Nazi propaganda.

Hired American high-powered public relations man Ivy Lee (did J.D.Rockefeller's make-over).

Vermittlungsstelle W. - Army Liaison Office created by IG. Liaison between Wehrmacht and IG. Headed by Prof. Carl Krauch, big leader in IG.

- all of Germany's synthetic rubber
- all Germany's lubricating oil
- part of its synthetic gasoline (Leuna plant)
- greatest bulk of German explosives
- 90% of plastics
- light metals

"IG took over control of every chemical plant of importance" in countries conquered by the Wehrmacht. (15)

IG was a big part in developing chemical/gas warfare: toxic gases were produced at Hoechst, Agfa and Leverkusen plants (34)

Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, the steel magnate, and Carl Duisberg credited as being the men most responsible for war production.

IG's major assignments: find synthetics for rubber and for Chilean nitrates.

IG participated in the plunder of conquered countries (Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, France and all the rest of Central Europe), seizing their factories and taking over.

Max Ilgner:

"The general policy of the Nazi government in respect to the conquered countries was to take as much out of those countries as possible. . IG played an important role in adapting the industries of those countries to the purposes of the Nazi war machine."

Deutsche Bank - one of Big Six German banks - big, German and Aryan; acted as respectable fence in stolen property.

Austria: Pulverfabrik Skoda Werke Wetzler - leading chemical concern

Czechoslovakia: Aussiger Verein of Prague - only major chemical concern

Belgium: Solvay Chemical Co. IG battled SS for control.

Poland: 3 dye companies: Boruta, Wola, and Winnica.

France: the French army collapsed after only 6 weeks of attack by Wehrmacht. Four years of Nazi occupation. The leaders of the French chemical industry (Kuhlmann Company the biggest) quickly expressed eagerness to help Nazis in any way. The leading French industrialists were willingly accepting the terms of the Germans. Dr. von Schnitzler:

"...based upon the 'slogan' of collaboration, an intercourse between the German and French industries had developed, which practically included the whole French industry..."

IG used slave labor extensively.

"foreign slave workers who had been shanghaied by the Nazis declared themselves free and were graduated to the status of "displaced persons"--DP's. Soon DP's by the tens and hundreds of thousands were on the move all over Germany...As many as ten thousand DP's made themselves at home in the IG building [main headquarters in Frankfurt-on-the-Main]." (12)

IG produced fully 95% of the poison gases for Germany. Developed Tabun - most deadly yet.

Because it worried that questions of title and legal claim might eventually become a concern, IG moved in behind the Wehrmacht in conquered countries not just to seize but to buy properties, on its own terms.