

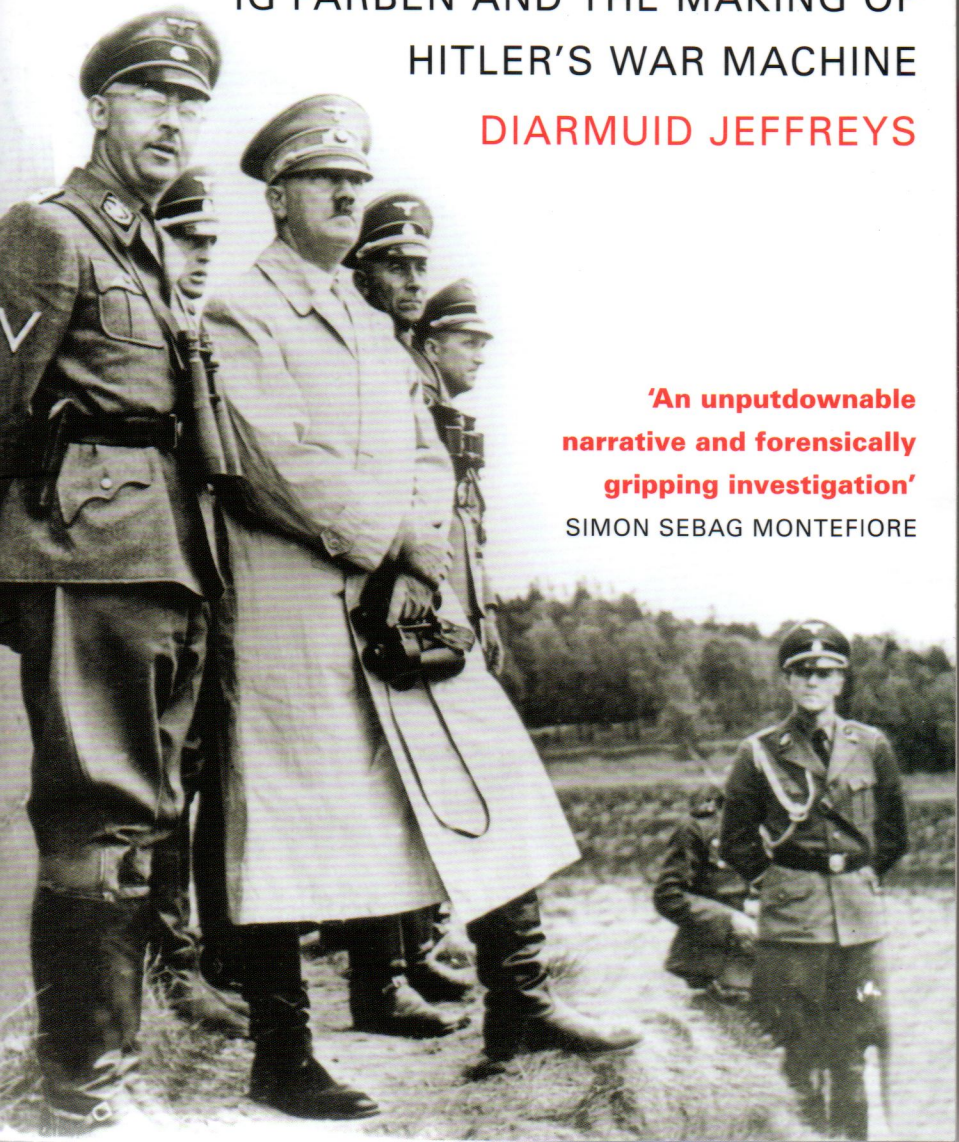
HELL'S CARTEL

IG FARBEN AND THE MAKING OF
HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

DIARMUID JEFFREYS

**'An unputdownable
narrative and forensically
gripping investigation'**

SIMON SEBAG MONTEFIORE



First published in Great Britain 2008
This paperback edition published 2009

Copyright © 2008 by Diarmuid Jeffreys

All rights reserved

First published in the USA in 2008 by Henry Holt and Company, LLC

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever
without written permission from the Publisher except in the case of
brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews

Every reasonable effort has been made to trace copyright holders of material reproduced
in this book, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publishers would
be glad to hear from them. For legal purposes the picture credits on
page 389 constitute an extension of the copyright page

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
36 Soho Square
London W1D 3QY

www.bloomsbury.com

Bloomsbury Publishing, London, New York and Berlin

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 9780747596554

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Typeset by Hewer Text UK Ltd, Edinburgh
Printed in Great Britain by Clays Limited, St Ives plc

The paper this book is printed on is certified independently in accordance with the rules of the FSC.
It is ancient-forest friendly. The printer holds chain of custody



Mixed Sources

Product group from well-managed
forests and other controlled sources

Cert no. SGS-COC-2061

www.fsc.org

© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council

Had Germany gone on to invade Great Britain, of course, things would have been very different, because then the mighty Imperial Chemical Industries would have become a target. Although ICI's bosses and the British government later shied away from admitting the connection, ICI and the IG had actually cooperated very closely on occasions during the 1920s and 1930s.* In 1929, for example, ICI had joined up with Norsk Hydro in the IG-dominated Nitrogen Syndicate, and in 1930 it signed an IG/Standard Oil/Royal Dutch Shell agreement designed to contain the spread of synthetic oil technology. In 1935, well after the concern had struck its contract with the Nazis, the IG provided ICI with technical assistance and advice on the construction of a large hydrogenation plant at Billingham, in the north-east of England. Yet, at the same time, the two companies were fierce rivals, forever encroaching on each other's markets in search of strategic advantage. In Czechoslovakia, for example, ICI had helped the Aussiger Verein keep the IG at bay for years, while the IG had used its connections in Japan to undermine ICI's Asian interests. Indeed, with the possible exception of the United States's DuPont Corporation, ICI was IG Farben's biggest international competitor. It stood to reason, therefore, that Max Ilgner's *Vowi* office had gathered extensive information on ICI's assets and products and in the event of a successful Nazi occupation these plans would have formed the basis of an acquisition spree that dwarfed anything in Poland or France. As it was, the IG merely contented itself with handing over its intelligence to the Luftwaffe for use in its blitz on Britain's cities and industrial installations.

Bombing campaigns could go in two directions, of course. While some of the IG's senior executives were swaggering along in the wake of the Wehrmacht, their colleagues back home were nervously watching the skies for the Royal Air Force. Well before the start of the war, the Reich authorities had concluded that Leverkusen, Oppau and Ludwigshafen, so close to Germany's western border, were vulnerable to enemy air attack. Each factory was therefore ordered to carry out regular air raid drills and to stockpile raw materials for production and repairs in case of disruption. These precautions had been relaxed when it seemed that Hitler's armies were on course for an easy victory, but by the middle of 1940 Allied bombing was gathering pace and IG officials were compelled to take the threat more seriously.

* A few days after ICI's connections to IG Farben first came up at the Nuremberg trial, an internal British Foreign Office memo noted gratefully, '*The Times* discreetly omits reference to ICI Ltd.'

'Behind the guns is always the money. Diarmuid Jeffreys' perfectly detailed vivisection of the IG Farben companies during the Nazi era is both sensible and powerful – thus a pleasure to read – and exceptionally compelling'

ALAN FURST, author of **The Polish Officer**
and **The Foreign Correspondent**

In 1925, six of Germany's leading chemical companies banded together in a cartel to protect their business from increasing international competition. Twenty years later the directors found themselves on trial at Nuremberg, accused of being 'the magicians who made the fantasies of *Mein Kampf* come true'. How had this group of leading companies, whose knowledge and expertise were the envy of the world, become Hitler's creature, directly involved in the Holocaust with their experimental IG Monowitz plant at Auschwitz? In this brilliantly researched and compelling book, Diarmuid Jeffreys shines a bright light on IG Farben's Faustian pact with the Third Reich to reveal in shocking detail the story of the original military-industrial complex.

'At last, a fresh and vibrant history – free from the taint of perpetrator sponsorship and corporate influence – that brilliantly chronicles the war monster IG Farben. Jeffreys' work will be consulted as a must for years to come'

EDWIN BLACK, author of **Nazi Nexus: America's Corporate Connections to Hitler's Holocaust**

Photographs: front: Adolf Hitler with the head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler © DPA Deutsche Presse-Agentur/DPA/PA Photos
back: Main harbour-loading facility for IG Farben, 1926 © AKG-images



BLOOMSBURY  www.bloomsbury.com

£8.99



ISBN 978-0-7475-9655-4



9 780747 596554 >