

Mr. Howard Bray
Fund for Investigative Journalism
1346 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

2/5/81

Dear Howard,

Promotions for the movie "The Formula" remind me of the real story. It might be of interest to one of the young people you help. I blundered into it in the summer of 1941 when I was working on a Nazi cartel series. There was no chance of getting it published then.

Esso, I.G. Farben and Imperial Chemicals made deals covering synthetic gas and synthetic rubber, among other things. In this country all the Nazi patents - and they worked well enough for Hitler to run his mechanized equipment - were held by a Jasco Corp. As I remember it, it was a Louisiana corporation and the name may have represented "Joint American Stock Co." The deal was that Esso would not use those patents. It is not, to the best of my recollection, that secret techniques were withheld.

I was working in the patent office, on stories I had sold. As I went through the records the recurrence of these transfers to Jasco caught my eye and I went back and made photostats of all of them. I told the Department of Justice, with which I then worked closely. Later I took the states to the British intelligence people with whom I then worked. When they returned my records I gave them to DJ. I've not been able to get them under FOIA because they could not be found. It may well be that when Joe Berklin left Justice he took them with him. He may have used them in his book on I.G. (He died several years ago.)

It might be easy to duplicate my work, with the name Jasco, less easy with Esso and IG. The patent office had an index to the patent transfers on 3x5 cards in those days.

Sorry you've not been able to get up. I'd like you to see what I've been able to do since you were here, with all my handicaps, particularly limited financial resources and new and more serious health problems.

I got a plastic artery in the left thigh in mid-September. The day I left the hospital clots broke loose and I returned for surgery to remove them. Those in the foot could not be reached. When I walk to the end of the lane and back I've had it and I'm awkward on steps. My physical activity is pretty restricted and I have to get up and move around more frequently.

Recently I obtained more information about Hoover's personal files, if that could interest one of your people. There may well be material that has not been used and can be gotten. I found a record of the return of some, from the Nixon White House. These were not destroyed when they gutted Hoover's files as soon as he died.

Best wishes

Harold Weisberg