

mustaches — those days are over. Today's Interpol detective is likely to be something quite different. With its world headquarters outside Paris, Interpol has managed to maintain an image of effective police work that has only recently begun to crumble. Behind the front lies a history they have unsuccessfully sought to erase.

Hitler's Tool

For seven years, from 1938-1945, Interpol belonged to Adolf Hitler.

Interpol's files and network proved to be a boon to the Nazis. As each city was taken, commando groups were instructed to gather every police file they could find. Interpol began to 'centralize' beyond its wildest dreams.

On December 8, 1941, notice was given to member countries that Interpol was moving to Wannsee, a wealthy suburb of Berlin. Artur Nebe, head of the Nazi Kriminalpolizei (KRIPPO), was to head it up. Dr. Carlos Zindel, later to play an important role in Interpol's postwar formation, was appointed as 'special counsellor' to Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Gestapo and president of Interpol. The note announced that under its new German leadership (Interpol) would be a real centre of criminal police.

As the Nazi machinery moved into high gear, the 'Jewish problem' required a 'solution.' To that effect, Heydrich called the meeting of top Nazi officials on January 20, 1942, in Interpol's new offices. The 'final solution' was presented during the meeting lasting 4 hours. Lunch was served — drinks were taken — cigars were smoked.

Given the number of Jews, Gypsies and other deemed 'criminal' the matter fell heavily upon KRIPPO and other police agencies to handle the roundup and deportation of 6 million to the camps.

While the programme went into effect, Heydrich ordered a new publication on *The International Police Commission and its Work* to be printed. Oscar Dressler, Interpol's Secretary-General since 1924, consented and worked with Heydrich on the book.

After Heydrich's assassination in 1942, Ernst Kaltenbrunner took over and completed the task.

Non-Political

In addition to wars on drugs, prostitution and counterfeiting, Interpol has also declared war in that publication on 'the Gypsy nuisance.'

Credit is given for this entry to 'the Austrian government' who brought it to Interpol's attention: Dressler, the Secretary-General, and most of the Interpol hierarchy were Austrian. Before the Second World War, Interpol was located in Vienna.

Since the extermination of Jews had not become full public knowledge and Gypsies were also one of the targets for the Nazis' 'solution', Interpol's 'war' on them can now be seen in its most sinister aspects. Despite reassurances in the publication that Gypsies were not being attacked per se, restrictions were laid down for political rights, no children of school age to travel with them, can only live in designated areas, can have no weapons — and files are to be kept on each.

Thirty years later, Interpol engaged once again in a war on the 'nomads' of Europe. They were 'hippies' and American youth: old habits are hard to break.

In a language Interpol officials were to voice in the '60's and '70's, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, the new president with the death of Heydrich, wrote to all member nations on July 28, 1943 to assure them that he would 'continue the strictly non-political character of Interpol. Meanwhile the ovens of Dachau, Buchenwald and Treblinka burned into the night.

And in the smoke of their belching chimneys went the worth of Interpol's world.

Rebirth

With the collapse of the Third Reich, the hope of some European police that Nazism was the wave of the future was shattered, and with it, Interpol.

It was left to Florent Louwage of the Belgian Political Police and Harry Soderman of Sweden to gather what was left of Interpol in 1946 and bring the organization back together.

Through the Belgian Embassy, the United States was invited to attend a June conference in Brussels. But Dean Acheson, acting as Secretary of State, was cautious. On May 15 he telegraphed the Ambassador in Belgium that a decision to attend was 'in abeyance pending advice Justice Department.' 'We assume,' he stated, 'this is the same organization founded in Vienna 1923 taken under Nazi domination 1938 and headquarters removed Berlin at which time US ceased relationship.' Acheson asked for 'information, subsequent history, and background of present Belgian sponsorship' of the 'new' Interpol.

On May 17 the Embassy telegraphed Acheson that Norton R. Telford, 'FBI representative in Paris) and later to become an Interpol delegate on J. Edgar Hoover's behalf, had sent a report FBI Washington. Acheson was told that the 'Belgian government is not the sponsoring organization but has merely consented to transmit invitations at request of Belgian and other interested police officials.'

Four days later, Tom Clark, US Attorney General, evidently acting on Telford's report, recommended to the Secretary of State that the US not attend the Brussels conference. 'The majority of the European Police Departments have not yet been sufficiently re-established,' Clark said, adding that 'this confidence has been made on a rather arbitrary basis.'

J. Edgar Hoover, however, was engaged in his own private diplomatic relations.

While the State and Justice departments evidently saw no value in Interpol and refused to permit a delegation to attend, Hoover was mysteriously elected vice-president at the 1946 Brussels conference, a position he was to hold until 1950.

Thus when the 1947 invitations went out, the Department of State suddenly had a change of mind. 'It now appears,' Acheson wrote to Clark on May 6, 'that the International Criminal Police Commission has been reconstituted.'

Clark replied on May 26 informing the State Department that '...at the annual meeting of the International Criminal Police Commission in Brussels, Belgium, in 1946, Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation as elected Vice-President.' Upon his acceptance of this elective post, steps were taken to make the Federal Bureau of Investigation an official member of the Commission.

At the 1947 meeting, Telford was again designated to represent the FBI by Hoover. Without waiting for State Department approval, Clark said that 'Telford has received appropriate instructions from Mr. Hoover to represent the Bureau at the General Assembly.'

US Participation

This was not Hoover's first sojourn with Interpol. As early as 1935 he had been following the organization with direct communications to the organization's officials, Oscar Dressler in particular. Dressler, the Secretary General of Interpol from 1924-1945 was to collaborate the Nazification of Interpol.

For the 1937 convention in London, the Assistant Director of the FBI, W. H. Drane Lester attended on Hoover's behalf. Noting some 'animosity' between some European delegations, Lester later reported that 'Within the next decade, it is very probable that the organization will play an increasingly important part in the detection and apprehension of criminals in Europe...' Lester hardly suspected that 5 years later, on January 20, 1942, the 'final solution' conference would be held at Interpol offices in Wannsee, Germany by Nazi officials.

US participation in Interpol was heavily pushed by European officials. Lester reported to Hoover that they were 'desirous of having the United States become a member regardless of any amount (of dues) contributed.' Interpol officials indicated that should the US join, 'the Commission would be willing to accept any reasonable amount annually.'

Lester recommended that the US join.

A few months later, the bill to join Interpol was submitted by the Attorney General, Homer Cummings. Interpol's 'activities do not in any manner affect diplomatic relations or political matters, Cummings wrote, 'but are restricted solely to the exchange of information relative to technical and scientific methods of crime detection and to the exchange of fingerprints and other data concerning International criminals.'

By May 24, 1938, the Congress voted to join Interpol.

One year later, Interpol was Nazi dominated and figures in Haydrich's plans for Europe.

Thus both in the pre- and post-war periods, Hoover's prestigious name was sought and gained by Interpol officials. Both times it was done by Nazi sympathisers.

Untainted Leaders

In 1946, Florent Louwage brought the shattered pieces together once again, becoming Interpol's president for years to follow. According to Harry Soderman, the other moving force in Interpol's rebirth, 'he was the only prominent member of the old Commission who had come untainted out of the ordeal and he was now (in 1946) head of the Belgian Political Police.'

Captured Nazi war documents (some classified for the first time) however, tell a different story. Louwage collaborated with the Nazis as late as June 1944 and is listed in *Internationale Kriminalpolizei* (the Nazi Interpol magazine) as being on staff. He was also a frequent contributor. Soderman is also mentioned in that magazine.

Thus Interpol's rebirth in 1946, with J. Edgar Hoover as its vice-president for 4 years, was instigated by two men who worked with the Nazis as late as 1944, according to their own documents.

SS 337 259

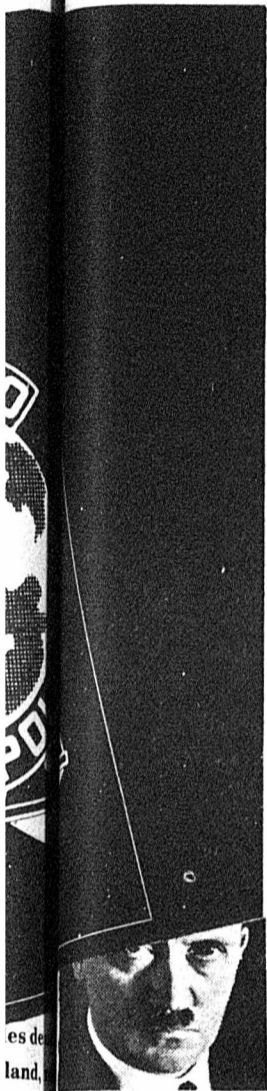
Almost three decades later, some members of Hitler's SS, fearing prosecution, are still at large. Others returned slowly and quietly to powerful positions once held by their Nazi bosses.

Thus in 1968, on a warm summer day in Tehran, Persia, SS 337259, born Paul Dickopf in 1910, assumed a position first held by his senior in the SS, Reinhard Heydrich. SS 337259 was elected President of Interpol.

Hundreds of law enforcement officers from around the world, including British top police officials, enthusiastically applauded as the former SS officer graciously smiled to the assembly.

Completely bankrupt in 1946, twenty-five years later Interpol owns a new 7-storey building, a large radio station, additional buildings and land with a few million Swiss francs locked away for good measure. 'Frugal management' is the reason, one official cites.

However, those familiar with post-war Nazi activities might speculate differently, based on Interpol's admission that substantial contributions have been made by 3 countries: Venezuela, Brazil and Switzerland. All were made after the ascension and during the reign of SS 337259, Paul Dickopf.



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