

Convicted Auschwitz Figure, Invited to U.S., Asks for Visa

The State Department is considering a visa request for a German scientist and former Nazi Party member who managed the I. G. Farben rubber plant at Auschwitz during World War II.

The scientist, Otto Ambros, 70, needs special permission for the visa in light of his conviction by a war crimes tribunal at Nuremberg in 1948 for misusing slave labor.

He has asked for authorization to visit the United States next month in an application filed with the U.S. consulate at Stuttgart.

Supporting the request is the Dow Chemical Co., which has invited Ambros to speak at an "internal seminar" the company is sponsoring at its Midland, Mich., headquarters May 12.

"He's a well-informed authority on the German chemical industry," Dow spokesman Mark Batterson said yesterday in response to a reporter's query. "He's not coming here because he's a convicted war criminal."

At Nuremberg, Ambros was

sentenced to eight years in prison, the stiffest penalty handed down against any of the 13 I. G. Farben executives convicted after an 11-month trial.

According to the prosecution, at least 25,000 persons died at the Farben factory, which was called I. G. Auschwitz, and at Monowitz, the concentration camp specially built for the company across the road from the plant site.

In light of employment figures at the synthetic rubber plant, this meant, the court was told, that, "Farben inmates died at the rate of more than 100 per cent each year . . . Inmates who had never performed any hard physical labor were forced to carry in double time 100 pound cement sacks and when they broke down, they were beaten or kicked by 'kapos' (inmate overseers) and IG foremen . . . In spite of the careful 'selection' (of workers), the life span of an inmate coming to I. G. Farben Auschwitz was approximately three months."

The labor force was culled from Jews and others herded into Auschwitz seven kilometers away where some 60 per cent were determined to be unfit for work and "selected" for immediate gassing in the death chambers at Birkenau.

Described as a brilliant chemist, Ambros pleaded innocent at the trial, his attorney declaring that he "never failed to give help if he was approached by anyone about a human problem."

Dow officials said it was their understanding the visa has already been granted, but Fred Smith, a spokesman for the State Department's Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, insisted that "no decision has been made. We've asked for a report from Stuttgart."

Dow Chemical was one of several American companies indicted with I. G. Farben in 1941 by a Federal grand jury in New York on charges of running a magnesium industry cartel in violation of an

antitrust laws. Dow pleaded no contest and paid \$140,000 in fines, but company spokesman Batterson said yesterday that "Dow has always denied that it engaged in any antitrust activities with I. G. Farben." He said a Senate inquiry headed by the late Harry Truman vindicated Dow's wartime production record.