Fritz Haber: War, Science, and Legacy:

Fritz Haber on December 9th, 1868. In 1918, he won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his work in synthesizing ammonia. In the modern world, half of the fertilizer in use depends on Haber’s process.

However, Fritz Haber’s lasting legacy is as “the father of chemical warfare” due to his work deploying chlorine and other poison gas during WWI. Regarding war and peace, Haber once said, "During peace time a scientist belongs to the World, but during war time he belongs to his country."

Haber was also an early developer of gas masks with filters. He was a patriotic German who was proud of his service during World War I, for which he was decorated. At one point during WWI, Haber was present to personally aid in the release of the gas. This was done in spite of the fact that gas use in warfare was banned by the Hague Convention of 1907, a convention signed by the Germans.

Fritz Haber was given the rank of captain by the Kaiser, rare for a scientist too old to enlist in military service.

Haber defended gas warfare against accusations that it was inhumane, saying that death was death, by whatever means it was inflicted.

He married Clara Immerwahr in 1901. Clara was also a chemist and the first woman to earn a PhD at the University of Breslau. She was opposed to Haber's work in chemical warfare. On 2 May 1915, following an argument with Haber over the subject, she committed suicide in their garden shooting herself in the heart with his service revolver. That same morning, Haber left for the Eastern Front to oversee gas release against the Russians. Haber left behind his grieving 13-year-old son Herrman, who had been the one to discover his dying mother.

Hermann, emigrated to the United States during World War II. He committed suicide in 1946 because of his shame over his father's chemical warfare work.

