

7 May 1973

SUBJECT: Klaus Barbie - Altmann (201-0019126)

1. During World War II Klaus Barbie was a member of the German Security Service, principally in Lyons, France. He was described as being brutal and cruel and reportedly shot his French agents when they were no longer useful. After the war the Communist press accused him of having been responsible for the deaths of 5,000 partisans. Following the war he was a witness in several trials involving war criminals and his wartime activities were investigated by the American authorities. The investigation was inconclusive and he was released.

2. From 1946 to early 1951 he was a source for CIC (in West Germany) and considered to be a valuable source of information. In 1951 because of French and German efforts to apprehend him, he was documented as Klaus Altmann and routed through Austria and Italy to Bolivia where he was resettled. The U.S. Army had no contact with him following his settlement in Bolivia.

3. In 1967 ACSI expressed an interest in the possibility of coordinating an operation involving Barbie/Altmann. They had uncovered the case following a decision to exploit German ethnic groups in Latin America for intelligence purposes. CIA's position (FI Staff and WH) was that the war criminal charges against Barbie/Altmann required serious consideration since exposure of CIC's role in evacuating him from Germany to avoid prosecution would have serious consequences for the U.S. Government; ACSI would have to demonstrate Barbie/Altmann's ability to supply unique information of significant importance under secure operational conditions before our COS would be justified in coordinating any proposal. (The proposal apparently died there.)

4. In April 1970 France Soir of Paris planned to publish a story on Barbie: that he had been sentenced to death in absentia in 1947, that he had been used by U.S. intelligence and the Gehlen service, and that he had been protected by U.S. intelligence against French attempts to have him arrested and extradited (i.e. from West Germany). (At this point General Walters who was in Paris was to be briefed.) In May 1970 OACSI advised that Senator Javits' office had received a letter dated 16 June 1966 regarding Barbie. Javits had sent the letter to State, who sent it to Army, who responded.

6. A story was published in October 1971 that France would request extradition. In January 1972 Beate Klarsfeld, "Nazi-hunter", arrived in Bolivia to press the case. According to one version she was thrown out of Bolivia, according to the Bolivian authorities she was leaving voluntarily to gather more evidence.

7. The extradition request has dragged on, with the Bolivian court yet to make a decision on the matter. Alfredo Arce Carpio, the new Minister of Interior, recently said that Barbie/Altmann would

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either be extradicted to France or turned over to Peru, which wants him on fraud charges, that the question of Barbie's Bolivian citizenship (naturalized) would not be a consideration since it was obtained fraudalently.

8. CIA has had no contact, direct or indirect, with Barbie/Altmann.

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