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# DRAFT WORKING PAPER

D. J. / OSI

Chapter Nineteen

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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## The Decade of the Nazi War Criminal (U)

The Loftus interview on *60 Minutes* had far-reaching implications. In addition to raising Congressional and public interest in the US government's assistance to Nazi war criminals and collaborators in immigrating to America, the *60 Minutes* piece led the General Accounting Office to launch another major investigation that lasted for the next three years. The GAO concluded that various agencies of the Federal government, including the CIA, had maintained close contact with some of these figures. And, in some cases, the government had aided their immigration and worked with these individuals after their arrival in the United States. (U)

Even before the GAO issued its report in the summer of 1985, the Klaus Barbie case demonstrated the extent of American collusion with Nazi war criminals. The Department of Justice's investigation in 1983 exposed the Army's Counter Intelligence Corps's use of Nazi war criminals as intelligence sources and the "rat line" from Europe to South America. The Ryan report on Barbie appeared to confirm some of Loftus's charges that the US government had concealed its relationship with criminal adherents of the Third Reich. (U)

The Barbie investigation, coming immediately on the heels of the *60 Minutes* episode, fueled growing public speculation that the United States Government, especially

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its intelligence agencies, was involved with every unsolved Nazi war criminal case. Between 1983, when the Barbie case broke, and 1986, the world press seized upon the American connection with Nazi war criminals as topics of major speculation. Within a three-year period, cases such as Klaus Barbie, Robert Jan Verbelen, Josef Mengele, and Kurt Waldheim created international sensations. While American intelligence had links with two of the four major cases (Barbie and Verbelen), the media created an impression that the United States had information on the four individuals and facilitated their escape from justice. Thorough examinations by the Office of Special Investigation in the four cases failed to dispel this viewpoint. (U)

### **The Barbie Investigation (U)**

In February 1983, news reports circulated in the American press that the Central Intelligence Agency had protected Klaus Barbie while he lived in South America. Coming at the same time that the Bolivian Government finally extradited Barbie to France, these were serious charges. Sen. Patrick Moynihan, vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, commented in response to the allegations, "appropriate inquiries have been made at various agencies, including the most recent inquiries of Mr. Klaus Barbie."<sup>1</sup> (U)

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<sup>1</sup>See "Summary of Major Media Items on Intelligence," 14 and 16 February 1983, in DO Records,   Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (U)

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This benign statement did not convey the sense of urgency that US officials shared in the Barbie revelations. On 8 February 1983, the Agency's Office of General Counsel learned from the State Department that the US Army had employed Barbie, a German SS officer accused of the murder of thousands of French resistance members, after World War II.<sup>2</sup> In an effort to head off negative press reports (apparently John Loftus had already raised the issue with CBS News), the Reagan Administration planned to distribute a press release concerning the entire case.<sup>3</sup> Both the Department of Defense and the CIA's Directorate of Operations, however, opposed such a move and preferred not to make any statement at all. While the Agency denied that it had any connection with Barbie either in Europe or in South America, Agency officials worried that the CIC unit that had "smuggled" him out of Germany and Italy may have actually been an OPC cover unit.<sup>4</sup> (U)

Stanley Sporkin, the Agency's General Counsel, updated the DCI on the Barbie case on 16 February. He explained Barbie's activities for the American Government, the background of the Nazi war criminal investigations, and the options available to American policymakers in resolving the Barbie case. Sporkin offered four options to

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<sup>2</sup>The State Department informed the CIA the same day as the *New York Times* broke the story about Barbie. See Ralph Blumenthal, "Ex-Chief of Gestapo in Lyon is Linked to US Intelligence," *New York Times*, 8 February 1983, pp. A-1 and A-9. (U)

<sup>3</sup> [redacted] Associate General Counsel to General Counsel, "Current Information and Administration Action Concerning Klaus Barbie Matter," 16 February 1983, (S), in DO Records, [redacted] [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>4</sup>The confusion surrounding the OPC cover unit was initially stated in the above-cited memorandum. Subsequent memos corrected this false impression. The Agency recommended on 16 February that it "not make any public statement whatsoever concerning Barbie. To do so could be misconstrued by the media and/or general public." See "Klaus Barbie aka Klaus Altmann," [undated], (S), in DO Records, [redacted] [redacted] Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

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consider: maintain the *status quo* (that is, make no statement about Barbie); defer to the French Government for action in Barbie's case; launch an internal investigation into the American Government's complicity; or establish an independent inquiry to be headed by an "outsider of recognized standing." Sporkin personally supported an internal investigation by the Department of Justice, which he said would make the Executive Branch appear to be supportive of the Nazi war criminal investigation while protecting classified information.<sup>5</sup> (S)

Sporkin, however, warned DCI Bill Casey against placing contemporary values on historical actions. "We should not," the General Counsel advised, "appear to be making a deep commitment to justify what took place with respect to Barbie thirty years ago. If we make such a commitment, we will begin an endeavor from which it will be difficult to extricate ourselves and will create the appearance that somehow the current Administration bears some kind of responsibility for past events." "The focus of our effort," he told the DCI, "must be to make clear the distance of the questionable events in time. We must all recognize, too, that it was the documented policy of the United States to make pragmatic intelligence collection of ex-Nazis after World War II, because we were retooling our capabilities to deal with the new enemy, the Soviet Union."<sup>6</sup> (S)

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<sup>5</sup>Sporkin to DCI, "Allegations of Complicity by US Intelligence in Post-World War II Escape of Nazi Klaus Barbie," 16 February 1983, OGC 83-01316, (S), in DO Records, [ ] , Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. It is not certain what Sporkin meant by saying that it was "the documented policy of the United States to make pragmatic intelligence collection of ex-Nazis after World War II." The DDO, John H. Stein, approved of OGC's recommendations to support a DOJ investigation, although he still wanted the Agency to maintain its "standard practice of neither affirming nor

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In the meantime, Allan A. Ryan, Jr., director of the Office of Special Investigations, received permission from the Attorney General on 14 March 1983 to conduct an "investigation of the relationship between Klaus Barbie and the United States Government from the end of World War II to the present." Even before that point, Ryan had begun searching the Agency's holdings for records on Barbie. Indeed, the Agency permitted Ryan to conduct an "open review" of CIA's records without waiting for them to be sanitized.<sup>7</sup> (C)

The Agency began its name trace on Barbie (and on his alias, Klaus Altmann) on 17 February 1983 and had the results ready for Ryan on 1 March.<sup>8</sup> Ryan, who had taken leave from his normal duties as OSI's director to head the Justice Department investigation, visited CIA headquarters to examine the records and found that most of them were CIC documents.<sup>9</sup> The US Army also sent an attorney to inspect the CIA's holdings and compare them with its own documents on Barbie.<sup>10</sup> Agency records

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denying that Barbie was a CIA agent." See Stein to DCI, 22 February 1983, (S), in DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>7</sup>See [redacted]; Memorandum for the Record, "Klaus Barbie-Altmann-Meeting with OGC and DOJ/OSI Representative Alan Ryan," 22 February 1983, IMS/FPLG 83/21, (C), and [redacted], Memorandum for the Record, "DOJ/OSI Request to Review DO Records on Klaus Barbie," 25 February 1983, (C), in DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (C)

<sup>8</sup>[redacted] OGC to [redacted] et al, "Nazi War Criminal Investigation," 18 February 1983, OGC 83-01394, (S), and [redacted], Acting Chief, Operations Group to [redacted] Chief, FPLG, "Nazi War Criminal Investigation," 1 March 1983, DOR-00997, both in DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>9</sup>[redacted] to [redacted], OGC, "DOJ/OSI Notes on Klaus Barbie-Altmann," 3 March 1983, IMS/FPLG 83/28, (S), in DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>10</sup>[redacted] Memorandum for the Record, "Review of DO Records on Klaus Barbie by Chief, Security Team, Directorate for Counterintelligence, Department of the Army," 4 March 1983, (C), and [redacted] to [redacted], OGC, "Department of Army, Office of General Counsel Notes

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pointed to numerous other organizations and individuals, both Army and civilian, as well as other aliases used by Barbie during his years in hiding. The Agency tracked these names through its index systems and also arranged to have Ryan interview retired CIA officials knowledgeable about operations in Europe and Latin America.<sup>11</sup> (S)

While Ryan pursued leads from Washington to South America and France, he also battled leaks and legal action that threatened the course of his investigation.<sup>12</sup> The Barbie case naturally attracted interest throughout the country and even generated a book by a former CIC officer who had worked with Barbie in Germany.<sup>13</sup> Congress was also interested in the outcome of the Barbie investigation. At the end of March 1983, the DCI learned from Edward P. Boland that the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence wanted information on Barbie to prepare for hearings on "how the US

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on Klaus Barbie," 22 March 1983, IMS/FPLG-83/45, (S), both in DO Records, [ ] [ ] Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>11</sup> [ ] [ ] Intelligence Community Affairs, Office of General Counsel, to Forbes et al, "DOJ/OSI Investigation of Klaus Barbie," 29 March 1983, OGC 83-02579, (S). While in La Paz, for example, Ryan wanted to speak with the [ ] [ ] about Barbie's affairs in Bolivia. Ryan to [ ] [ ] 5 April 1983, (S), both in DO Records, [ ] [ ], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>12</sup>For his protests about a misleading report by CBS News, see Ryan to Robert Gelberd, Department of State et al, "CBS Report of Barbie Investigation," 7 April 1983, OGC 83-02995. The Ryan investigation and the Intelligence Community's ability to withhold records was challenged by a law suit brought by ABC News under the Freedom of Information Act. *American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., et al v. US Department of the Army et al*, Civil Action 83-1836, United States District Court for the District of Columbia, 24 June 1983, both documents in DO Records, [ ] [ ] Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (U)

<sup>13</sup>Erhard Dabringhaus, *Klaus Barbie: The Shocking Story of How the US Used this Nazi War Criminal as an Intelligence Agent* (Washington, DC: Acropolis Books Ltd., 1984).

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relationship with Barbie and his associates was considered, approved and reviewed, and how such procedures contrast with current policies and practices.”<sup>14</sup> (C)

### The Ryan Report (U)

By mid-July 1983, after several months of intensive investigation, Ryan provided the CIA with a copy of his draft report for a hasty declassification review so he could use it at an upcoming press conference.<sup>15</sup> The Agency suggested few changes be made to Ryan’s manuscript and, in fact, supported the Justice Department’s position for full acknowledgment of Barbie’s role in occupied Germany.<sup>16</sup> The CIA deleted only a couple of references to [redacted] employment by the Agency, station locations and sources, and the identity of one Army cover organization in Germany. Ryan and Agency officials rewrote the deleted sections, still carrying the main point across without damaging “sources and methods.”<sup>17</sup> The Agency declined to submit written comments

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<sup>14</sup>Boland to Casey, 25 March 1983, ER 83-1791. For Casey’s reply, see Casey to Boland, 29 April 1983, OEXA 83-0219/G. The House eventually decided to let the Ryan and GAO investigate Barbie. See [redacted], Legislative Liaison Division, Memorandum for the Record, “House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) Request for Information on Klaus Barbie, Nazi War Criminal, and Alleged Connection with CIA,” 17 May 1983, OEXA 83-0219/7, (C), all in DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (C)

<sup>15</sup>Ryan to [redacted], 22 July 1983, DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (U)

<sup>16</sup>[redacted] Memorandum for the Record, “Klaus Barbie, et al,” 26 July 1983, XAN 00647, (S), and [redacted], Chief, IMS/FPLG, to Acting Chief, IMS, “Klaus Barbie Investigation Report,” 26 July 1983, (C), both in DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>17</sup>For CIA’s deletions and proposed insertions, see [redacted] to Ryan, 29 July 1983, OGC 83-06156, in DO Records, [redacted], Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. Ryan’s investigation

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to the Attorney General for inclusion with the final report because it was satisfied with the substance of the investigation.<sup>18</sup> (S)

Based on his review of the Agency's records and interviews with current and former Agency officials, Ryan concluded, "at no time from the end of World War II to the present time has the Central Intelligence Agency had any relationship with Klaus Barbie." He also determined that the "CIA was not involved in the use, control, or financing" of the rat line from Austria to Italy and then to South America that allowed Barbie to escape in 1951.<sup>19</sup> (U)

Ryan's report persuaded the United States Government to apologize to France for delaying justice in Barbie's case.<sup>20</sup> It was an unprecedented move following an unprecedented investigation. Ryan's report went into extensive detail (including names, organizations, and a separate volume containing declassified source documents) and

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raised numerous, yet difficult, questions for the CIA. In going through the old records, Ryan tried to ascertain the relationship between the War Department Detachment and the Department of Army Detachment with CIC in Germany. He also wanted to know what cover organizations OPC had used overseas and what links the CIA had had with Krunoslav Draganovic, the clerical mastermind behind the rat line. Ryan also wanted to know why so many CIC members later had joined the CIA, and if the Agency had taken over the rat line from the Army. Other questions, including the Agency's knowledge about Barbie in Europe and in Latin America, were serious issues that required extensive research through hundreds of records and interviews of surviving witnesses. (U)

<sup>18</sup> C 7 to Ryan, 2 August 1983, OGC 83-06489, (S), in DO Records, C 7, Box 13, Folder 128, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>19</sup>US Department of Justice, Criminal Division, *Klaus Barbie and the United States Government: A Report to the Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, US Department of Justice* (Washington, DC US Department of Justice, 1983), pp. 145, 165-168. (Hereafter cited as the Ryan Report). (U)

<sup>20</sup>Stuart Taylor, Jr., "US Says Army Shielded Barbie, Offers Its 'Regrets' to the French," *New York Times*, 17 August 1983, pp. A-1 and A-8. (U)



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supplemented the 1977-78 GAO Report and its anticipated report in 1985.<sup>21</sup> Ryan left government service shortly after the 16 August 1983 press conference, but his report, researched and written in less than five months, set a new standard for the Office of Special Investigations to pursue in the flurry of cases that soon followed. (U)

### **Robert Jan Verbelen (U)**

The ink had barely dried on Ryan's report before the Attorney General called on the Office of Special Investigations to probe the US Government's relationship with Robert Jan Verbelen in Austria.<sup>22</sup> A native of Belgium and a member of a Flemish SS group, Verbelen had been convicted of war crimes in absentia by a postwar Belgian court and sentenced to death. Verbelen ended the war in Austria and found employment with the 430th CIC Detachment in Vienna as early as 1946. Although American intelligence dropped him as a source in the mid-1950s, the Austrian Government failed to extradite him to Belgium and an Austrian court acquitted him of murder in 1967. (U)

As OSI learned the sketchy details about Verbelen's use by American intelligence, it launched a full investigation. "In view of the continuing public interest in

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<sup>21</sup>The thoroughness of the Barbie report exposed it to other criticism. John Loftus claimed, "the US is not capable of giving a complete and truthful account of history." Flora Lewis, "Barbie's American Connections," *New York Times*, 26 August 1983, p. 25. Peter Dale Scott also blasted the Ryan Report for failing to examine other connections that Barbie supposedly shared in Europe and South America. Peter Dale Scott, "How Allen Dulles and the SS Preserved Each Other," *Covert Action Information Bulletin* 25 (Winter 1986), pp. 4-14. Christopher Simpson calls Ryan's conclusion that Barbie was the only Nazi war criminal smuggled out of Europe to be patently false. Simpson, *Blowback*, pp. xi-xv. (U)

<sup>22</sup>Verbelen Report, pp. 1-6. (S)

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this matter, OSI has, in the course of the present investigation, attempted to ascertain what were CIC's policies and actual practices with respect to the employment of war criminals and former Nazis or Nazi collaborators in postwar Europe," OSI's published report declared.<sup>23</sup> Verbelen was a CIC asset, but the possibility also existed that the CIA had some connection with the Belgian fugitive. OSI uncovered that it was a CIA request for information in 1956 that informed the Counter Intelligence Corps that their agent faced war crimes charges.<sup>24</sup> The Agency, according to OSI, persuaded CIC to transfer control of its agent to a "Western European intelligence agency," which allowed the Army to wash its hands of him. Whether or not he later worked for this unnamed agency (the West German BND) is uncertain. He also apparently served as an informant for the Austrian State Police.<sup>25</sup> (C)

OSI was under little outside pressure to complete the Verbelen report, thus it took time to do a thorough job. OSI submitted its report for CIA review in late 1986, and the Agency took another year to approve its release. Reviews in other agencies delayed the submission of OSI's final report to the Attorney General and the public until June 1988.<sup>26</sup> (U)

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid, p. 3. (S)

<sup>24</sup>OSI initially assigned Edward Bourguignon to the Verbelen case in late 1983. A year later, historian Elizabeth B. White of OSI took over the investigation. She visited CIA headquarters in the spring of 1985 to review Agency files. See Neal Sher to [redacted] "Robert Jan Verbelen," 30 December 1983, and Sher to [redacted] "Robert Jan Verbelen," 17 December 1984, in OGC working files, folders for 1984 and 1985. (U)

<sup>25</sup>Copies of the various pages reviewed and sanitized by CIA are found in DO Records, [redacted] [redacted] Box 3, Folder 26, CIA ARC. (U)

<sup>26</sup>For correspondence dealing with the declassification of the report, see Neal M. Sher, Director, OSI to [redacted] [redacted], Associate Deputy General Counsel, CIA, "Mandatory Declassification

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While OSI took more than four years to complete the Verbelen investigation, the report reinforced Ryan's earlier findings. The report confirmed that many CIC agents in western Europe, Austria in particular, were tainted by wartime Nazi affiliations and crimes.<sup>27</sup> Verbelen, for example, succeeded in hiding his past from the CIC for a decade. The CIA, while not directly involved with Verbelen, nonetheless learned damaging details about him and smoothed his way to leave the US Army's service quietly. Although OSI did not castigate the CIA for its actions, OSI believed that Verbelen "manipulated" the Agency as well as the Counter Intelligence Corps "into protecting him from being brought to justice for his crimes."<sup>28</sup> (U)

### The Search for Josef Mengele (U)

The delay in the release of the Verbelen report can be seen in the light of startling new developments in the hunt for Nazi war criminals. In 1985, the Office of Special Investigations launched a major search for Josef Mengele, a German SS *Hauptsturmfuehrer*, who had served as a doctor at the Auschwitz concentration camp where he conducted unspeakable horrors under the guise of medical experimentation. In

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Review under Executive Order 12356: Robert Jan Verbelen—A Report to the Attorney General," 24 October 1986; Mark M. Richard, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, to Robert Gates, Acting DCI, 24 February 1987, (S); [redacted] to Sher, 23 April 1987, OGC 87-51178, (S); Sher to [redacted] 15 October 1987; and [redacted] to Sher, 6 November 1987, OGC 87-53120, all in DO Records, [redacted] , Box 3, Folder 26, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>27</sup>Examples of other Nazis and collaborators used by CIC are discussed in Verbelen Report, pp. 83-90. (U)

<sup>28</sup>Ibid, p. 92. (U)

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early December 1984, OSI requested a name trace on Josef Mengele, born in Guenzburg, Germany, on 16 March 1911.<sup>29</sup> Five days later the Directorate of Operations informed [redacted] the Office of General Counsel's attorney now responsible for Nazi war criminal cases (he had succeeded [redacted]), that it had a sanitized file ready for OSI's review.<sup>30</sup> (S)

OSI, however, did not review the Mengele file for another two months. In the interim, the *New York Times* published a report on 23 January 1985 stating that American intelligence had arrested and released Mengele after the war. Mengele, who had been wanted by West Germany since 1959, had presumably escaped from Europe and fled to South America. Media coverage, based on declassified CIC reports obtained by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, encouraged speculation that the American Government had aided one of the most notorious Nazi criminals. Rabbi Marvin Hier exclaimed that the CIC reports "create reasonable doubt as to whether or not the US had a role in the case of Josef Mengele."<sup>31</sup> (U)

Calls from Capitol Hill for an investigation soon followed. In January 1985, Sen. Alfonse M. D'Amato (R-NY) appealed to DCI Casey to establish a special team "to conduct an intensive search of intelligence records for any and all information directly or

<sup>29</sup> [redacted] to [redacted] OGC, to [redacted] IMS/FPLG, and [redacted] OS/SAG, "Nazi War Crimes Investigations," 7 December 1984, OGC 84-53282, (S), in DO Records, [redacted] Box 1, Folder 9, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>30</sup> [redacted] to [redacted] "Trace Results on Alleged Nazi War Criminal," 12 December 1984, XAN 01002, (S), in DO Records, [redacted] Box 1, Folder 9, CIA ARC. (S)

<sup>31</sup> Ralph Blumenthal, "Papers Indicate Mengele May Have Been Held and Freed after War," *New York Times*, 23 January 1985, p. A-4. (U)

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indirectly concerning Dr. Josef Mengele."<sup>32</sup> Within a few days, the CIA's General Counsel, Stanley Sporkin and [redacted], formerly with OSI (and now an Assistant General Counsel), met with Sen. D'Amato and briefed him on CIA's progress in its review. The Agency later provided the senator with copies of declassified documents.<sup>33</sup> In February 1985, Attorney General William French Smith called upon the Office of Special Investigations to examine the available evidence and prepare a report about any collusion between American intelligence and Mengele. "We will use," Smith declared, "the effective techniques which OSI has used in the past to trace and locate Nazi war criminals."<sup>34</sup> (U)

The Mengele case proved unique in the annals of the Office of Special Investigations. The Federal government had conflicting information on whether Mengele was still alive and where he lived in South America. Mengele also used numerous aliases, complicating the international searches over the years. In addition to checking archives in the United States, OSI fostered ties to several countries, primarily West Germany and Israel, to develop leads and interview witnesses.<sup>35</sup> At a Congressional hearing in March, Assistant Attorney General Stephen S. Trott testified that "the FBI, the State Department, the Army, the entire intelligence community are helping us in this

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<sup>32</sup>D'Amato to Casey, 24 January 1985, ER 85-369; and D'Amato to Casey, 26 February 1985, ER 85-369/2, both in DO Records, [redacted], Box 1, Folder 9, CIA ARC. (U)

<sup>33</sup>[redacted] to [redacted] Chief, IMS/FPLG, "DDO Files Pertaining to Dr. Josef Mengele," 1 February 1985, OGC 85-50363, in DO Records, [redacted], Box 1, Folder 9, CIA ARC. (U)

<sup>34</sup>Associated Press, "Smith Orders Search for Auschwitz Doctor," *Washington Post*, 7 February 1985, p. A6. (U)

<sup>35</sup>US Department of Justice, Criminal Division, *In the Matter of Josef Mengele: A Report to the Attorney General of the United States* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 1992), pp. 8-11. (Hereafter cited as the Mengele Report). (U)

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investigation.” Trott reported that the specialized nature of this case called for other governmental agencies to become involved. “We also have the Drug Enforcement Administration and the US Marshals Service assisting our Office of Special Investigations helping us find this man, if indeed he is still living.”<sup>36</sup> (U)

The initial allegations centered on Mengele’s life in postwar Germany and whether American intelligence had utilized him or helped him to escape.<sup>37</sup> While proving or disproving the allegations posed an enormous challenge to OSI, further charges muddied the investigation. Sens. D’Amato and Arlen Specter held a news conference in late February where they produced declassified CIA documents that revealed the Agency’s monitoring of Mengele’s activities, including narcotics trafficking, since the early 1970s. D’Amato blasted the Agency for its inaction concerning these reports. “They just let the information land there. No one pursued this.”<sup>38</sup> Sen. Specter, in turn, saw this as just another example of the government’s disinterest in crimes committed during World War II. This is, he said, “a chapter in history that the United States wants to sweep under the rug. Nobody really gives a damn about Nazi war criminals.”<sup>39</sup> (U)

The media refused to allow the Mengele issue to disappear. The “Angel of Death” now became an international sensation—a bitter reminder of the mixed success of

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<sup>36</sup>Thomas O’Toole, “US Search for Mengele Expanded,” *Washington Post*, 20 March 1985, p. A18. (U)

<sup>37</sup>Mengele Report, p. 7. (U)

<sup>38</sup>Ralph Blumenthal, “Mengele Link to Drug Trafficking is Reported in CIA Documents,” *New York Times*, 26 February 1985, pp. A1 and A4. (U)

<sup>39</sup>Bill Peterson, “Nazi Fugitive Linked to Drug Trafficking,” *Washington Post*, 27 February 1985, p. A15. (U)

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the postwar Allied pursuit of Nazi criminals on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the war's end.<sup>40</sup> While the American Government searched its records for Mengele's life in Germany, self-anointed "Nazi hunters," including John Loftus, proclaimed their own theories.<sup>41</sup> Congress, in the meantime, held open hearings on the matter, seeking to clarify the role that the Federal agencies had played.<sup>42</sup> The search continued to become entangled with other leads as it now appeared that the Mengele family had business ties to the United States during the 1970s. (U)

The focus of the investigation shifted in June 1985 when Brazilian officials exhumed a grave in a suburb of Sao Paulo. Shortly afterward a team of international forensic experts concluded that the remains, indeed, were those of Mengele, who had died in 1979. The Attorney General accepted the scientists' conclusion. After lengthy DNA testing, the West German and Israeli Governments also declared the Mengele case closed. (U)

OSI's final report, released in 1992, turned out to be anticlimatic. It found that Mengele had no connection with the US Army or any American intelligence agency. While he had been captured and confined in several American prisoner of war camps at

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<sup>40</sup>Art Harris, "On the Trail of Mengele," *Washington Post*, 8 March 1985, pp. C1 and C8. The Mengele investigation coincided with President Reagan's controversial visit to a German war cemetery in Bitburg in early 1985. (U)

<sup>41</sup>United Press International, "Search for Mengele Faulted," *Washington Post*, 10 February 1985, p. A11. (U)

<sup>42</sup>Congress actually held three separate hearings to review the Mengele investigation: two before the discovery of the remains and one immediately afterward. Among those who testified, [redacted] a former CIA official in charge of examining forgeries, served as a representative on OSI's team that went to Brazil in the summer of 1985. See US Congress, Senate. Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice of the Committee of the Judiciary. *Searching for Dr. Josef Mengele*. 99th Cong., 1st sess., 19 February, 19 March, and 2 August 1985. (U)

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the end of the war, the Army did not identify him as a war criminal. The fact that Mengele remained in Germany until he escaped to South America via Italy in 1949 resulted from disjointed efforts by the US and Polish Governments to bring him to justice. The Office of Special Investigations found no evidence that either the Counter Intelligence Corps or the Central Intelligence Agency had had any relationship with Mengele in Europe or in Latin America. The investigation did not examine allegations of Mengele's role in drug trafficking in any detail and only briefly discussed the family's business affairs in the United States. (U)

CIA's role in the Mengele investigation consisted of name traces of Mengele, his aliases, personalities associated with him, and various businesses. While the Mengele case had all the signs of a scandal involving the Agency, the OSI investigation found no reason to castigate the CIA. For the most part, the CIA avoided criticism during the investigations of Klaus Barbie, Robert Jan Verbelen, and Josef Mengele. These three cases, among the largest Nazi war criminal investigations of the 1980s, revealed the intricate relationships that the United States had with Nazi war criminals in the years after World War II. While the Central Intelligence Agency was not directly involved with Barbie or Verbelen, it certainly knew about their use by the Counter Intelligence Corps. In Mengele's case, no CIA angle was discovered, but the Agency's research tools proved of great assistance in trying to track down Mengele's movements. (U)

In 1986, the world was rocked by a new scandal as attention shifted to Austria where former United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim's wartime role became



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the subject of intense speculation. The Agency fared far worse in this next major Nazi war criminal case of the 1980s. (U)