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PROGRAM The Today Show STATION WRC-TV
NBC Network

DATE May 27, 1983 8:15 AM CITY Washington, DC

SUBJECT Klaus Barbie

BRYANT GUMBEL: Still more revelations about one of World War II's most wanted war criminals, the infamous Klaus Barbie.

It's known that he worked for U.S. counterintelligence immediately following World War II. But, was he a CIA agent paid with our tax dollars, even in the 1970's?

Investigative reporter Ernest Volkman has written in an upcoming edition of "Family Weekly" magazine that Barbie's CIA activities and his criminal activities continued in the years that he was in Bolivia. What kind of criminal activity are we talking about here, Mr. Volkman?

ERNEST VOLKMAN: Name it. First of all, he ran, or helped to run Bolivia's cocaine traffic which, as a lot of people know, beginning around 1971 was virtually nationalized by the military junta that was running the country. He recruited for them a gang of paramilitary thugs that in fact was the enforcement squad for the cocaine traffic.

GUMBEL: How large a gang are we talking about here?

VOLKMAN: Somewhere around 6,000 people all together. These are the people who guarded the landing strips to make sure people didn't steal the cocaine. These were the people who made sure that the farmers weren't cheating when they were selling the cocoa base for the cocaine. These were the people who made sure that the traffic rolled nice and smoothly.