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SUBJECT Joseph Mengele

HARRY REASONER: Are there still unreconstructed Nazis, and maybe new-generation Nazis, alive and well in South America? Millions of Americans believe there are, based not on solid information, but on novels like "The Odessa File" and "The Boys from Brazil." The funny thing is, they're right.

Oh, there's new ^{wo?} evidence that they are cloning a new assortment of Hitlers or planning a commando raid on Berlin. But they are there, keeping alive a tradition, convinced it was only bad luck that spoiled their plans for a new world order.

Among them, left over from the most evil of the Nazi hierarchy, Joseph Mengele, now 68, the only remaining big-name Nazi neither in prison nor dead, but in hiding.

Grenada Television of Great Britain went to Paraguay to find him. Frequently using a hidden suitcase camera, because they could not go openly as a television team, they posed as a group writing a book about South America's Germans. Their film begins with a question: Who is Joseph Mengele?

MARGARET ENGLANDER: He was the cruelest man in the world. Not in Ausch -- not only in Auschwitz. I think there doesn't exist a [unintelligible] creation that would be more cruel as he was.

REASONER: If Joseph Mengele is ever caught, ever brought to trial, Margaret Englander, a survivor of Auschwitz, will be the principal witness against him. She remembers him this way:

ENGLANDER: He pointed out with his thumb one to the

File PD 8 (Paraguay)

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right, one to the left. To the right it meant life, to the left meant death.

REASONER: Margaret Englander and her daughter were spared by Mengele at the railhead. And he made her his clerk, witnessing the life-and-death selections for more than a year.

Auschwitz was Hitler's most appalling efficient system for killing Jews and other undesirables. But Dr. Mengele made it his personal laboratory, with an endless supply of humans for his experiments. Prisoners were subject to extreme heat and cold, until they died, as Mengele measured the effects. He inoculated prisoners' eyes with dye, as he searched for the clue to making a blue-eyed master race.

And at the end of the war, Block C at Auschwitz was filled with twins. He collected them, making comparative studies by dissecting them dead and alive. If a twin died of, say, a brain disorder, Mengele shot the surviving twin to see if it too showed signs of the disorder.

ENGLANDER: He made experiments on twins, and he took one day four children with him in his car and gave them chocolate and many things that children like. In the middle of the road, he took out his revolver and he shot them.

REASONER: Mengele sterilized Margaret Englander's daughter, and he finally selected her to die.

ENGLANDER: Yes. He selected her to die. Two days later, we had been liberated.

REASONER: Within a year, at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, Mengele was named as a major war criminal. Yet there was no pursuit of him by the Allies, and it would be years before unforgetting Auschwitz survivors pieced together what had happened to Mengele and developed the case against him. What they learned was that after the war he had simply gone home.

Home was the town of Ginzburg in Bavaria, the most likely place to find him, if only the West German authorities had cared. But Ginzburg was dominated then, as it is today, by the Mengele family. Karl Mengele & Son, farm machinery, is the largest firm in town.

Here, no one would dare inform on the boss's son. It was the source of his protection then and of the money that has supported him since.

Then the trail led to Argentina, which he entered on a false International Red Cross passport. It bore this photo and was issued in Genoa, Italy in 1949 in the name of Ludwig

Gregor. This is not, in fact, a picture of Mengele, who looked more like this in 1949. Instead, police experts think it is an earlier picture of this man, Mengele's younger brother.

He must have felt secure in Buenos Aires, for in 1956 he went to the West German Embassy, provided this picture, now with moustache, and revealed his true name. The embassy apparently helped him get an Argentine identity card, and he became the owner of a small textile factory.

At a restaurant gathering spot for Germans in the capital, Mengele met for the first time another Nazi fugitive, the mastermind of Hitler's plan to wipe out the Jews, Adolf Eichmann.

In 1960 the Israeli secret police swept down on Eichmann after finding him in this house in Buenos Aires. The kidnaping of Eichmann was first on their list, but they were looking for leads to Mengele.

Isser Horal (?) headed the Israeli secret police at the time. After he kidnaped Eichmann, he questioned him about Mengele.

ISSER HORAL: At the moment the name of Mengele was mentioned, Eichmann went into a panic, and he refused to tell us anything about Mengele.

REPORTER: Why do you think Eichmann was frightened of Mengele?

HORAL: I'm not sure, but he might be supported by him, or he might be just afraid of him because he was a powerful -- a very, maybe, a strong personality amongst the Nazi refugees in South America.

But eventually he told us something. He mentioned the name of a certain boarding house. And we understood that it was a refuge for [unintelligible] criminals. And it might be that Mengele found refuge there.

REASONER: Horal first spirited Eichmann safely onto an Israeli airliner, and only then set out for the house to search for Mengele. But Mengele was gone.

Wilhelm Sassons (?) first met Mengele in Buenos Aires in 1949. Sassons, on the left, is a former Nazi SS captain sentenced to die for war crimes and twice escaped from Allied jails.

WILHELM SASSONS: I met Mengele the first time in '49. He was a brilliant man, from an intellectual point of view, a good philosopher, historian, a very good medical man.

REASONER: Sassons is one of thousands of Nazis not being prosecuted, simply because he committed lesser crimes and has not been pursued to Argentina. He says Mengele has avoided capture through a combination of luck, brains, and enough money to flee when necessary.

By now, the West German Government had issued this arrest warrant for Mengele and was asking Argentina to extradite him. So Mengele fled across the border, across the River Parana, to Paraguay. There, Mengele has found complete protection, thanks to the one-man rule of dictator President Alfredo Stroessner.

Like Mengele, Stroessner's family came from Bavaria. Tens of thousands of Germans have migrated to Paraguay over the last century.

One of Stroessner's closest friends, the man on the left here, Colonel Hans Rudel (?), was Hitler's most decorated pilot. In 1971 Rudel wrote, "Mengele has suffered enough. There is no proof that he did what he is accused of."

This document is proof of Mengele's Paraguayan citizenship, gotten with the help of influential Nazis in Paraguay, who swore falsely in 1959 that Mengele already had lived there for five years.

This hardware store in Asuncion, the capital, helped funnel money to Mengele from the family back home in Gunzburg. The hardware store owner is a Nazi, Werner Shubias (?). The British television crew used a hidden camera to film him in an Asuncion restaurant, where he said he used to see Mengele regularly. In translation, he told them he believes Mengele did not commit any war crimes.

WERNER SHUBIAS: Yes, I'm convinced of that. If he has done something, it's only because he was acting under orders. I see Mengele only as a human being. As a human being, he has my sympathy.

WOMAN: What sort of human being was he?

SHUBIAS: Like everybody else: honest, educated, a very well educated man, much more than we are.

REASONER: Mengele bought a house on this street in Asuncion, but may have sensed that Israeli secret police would be trailing him. He kept moving, first to the quiet border of Encarnacion, with quick escape possible, if necessary, back across the river to Argentina. Here, Mengele found a colony of Germans. The architecture even smacks of the homeland. Much of the area is in military zones, where President Stroessner's

protection was assured.

At the Hotel Tyrol, where Stroessner is a frequent visitor, the British television reporters took their hidden camera to interview owner Armando Reynartz (?). Reynartz is a Belgian who joined the Nazis during the war. He said Mengele had stayed at the hotel.

ARMANDO REYNARTZ [translated]: He just dropped in. I can't say very much. I didn't know him very well.

WOMAN: Did you speak to him?

REYNARTZ: Just casually.

WOMAN: Was he nice?

REYNARTZ: Yes, a nice man.

WOMAN: What sort of character was he?

REYNARTZ: He was a doctor here.

WOMAN: Do you think he did what he's accused of?

REYNARTZ: What was this man accused of? He was a doctor in the camps. We always hear the rubbish that you probably know was written in the newspapers.

WOMAN: He was accused of killing many Jews.

REYNARTZ: Now, that's rubbish. I don't believe that.

REASONER: Twenty miles away, Mengele also took refuge in this farmhouse in 1962. Reynartz confirmed this to the British television reporters, who took their hidden cameras to this well-known haven for Nazis on the run. Aban Krug (?) is the owner.

WOMAN: Were you a close friend of Mengele's?

ABAN KRUG [translated]: I am not allowed to say. Who can guaranty it? You believe that a man like Mengele came here. Well, it has even been said that I had Bormann here.

My house was a strange house, you can believe me. My house was a place where people, no matter where they came from, they came to me. The same way as you come to me now. They came to me for a reason, mostly when they had money. By that time I was famous. Our times were hard. I've saved many people, mainly Europeans and Germans from the Third Reich, from the police, when they were trying to blackmail them. I was a famous man and

I had a big house.

WOMAN: When was he staying with you?

KRUG: Whether Mengele stayed with me, no one can say. Nobody ever introduced himself to me as Mengele.

REASONER: Had Israeli intelligence considered a commando operation against Krug's farm?

Isser Horal.

HORAL: No. Because all these hideouts were strongholds, and they could have been stormed only by armed force. And this, of course, was out of the question in the situation at the time. So I gave up.

REASONER: Aban Krug talked of the protection surrounding his farm at the time.

KRUG: I wouldn't advise anyone to start anything with me. I'll tell you that. Anyone who laid hands on me wouldn't get out of here alive. He wouldn't get out of here alive.

REASONER: The Israelis, faced with the protection around Mengele, dropped all efforts to capture him alive. But the West German Embassy learned where Mengele was, and asked Paraguay to extradite him. President Stroessner refused.

In 1966 Mengele was spotted in the Argentine town of El Dorado, after crossing the river from Paraguay. There, a Brazilian took this clip of film of Mengele, which has been closely studied and verified as Mengele by German and Israeli intelligence.

Then, a turnabout in Israeli policy. President Stroessner suddenly became a man to be wooed, when Paraguay was elected to a seat on the Security Council at the United Nations. Israel badly needed votes there, fearing it might be censured as an aggressor after the Six Day Arab-Israeli War.

Still, there were signs that Mengele was an embarrassment to some in Paraguay. The then-Israeli Ambassador, Benjamin Varom (?).

MAN: Can you describe the time when the Paraguayan Foreign Minister suggested that the issue of Mengele might best be dealt with by Israeli commandoes?

BENJAMIN VAROM: Well, he didn't speak of Israeli com-

mandoes. At one of our meetings where he expressed his unhappiness about this matter popping up ever -- always again in the press, he said, "Ambassador, you understand, this is really not a question for diplomats; it's a question for commandoes."

Perhaps his subconscious spoke and said, "Let's get rid of the man. Take him a way. Take him off our hands." That may have been his innermost feeling.

REASONER: For almost a decade afterwards, there was little mention of Mengele. But just two years ago, a bizarre incident involving this man ultimately led to evidence that Mengele is still in Paraguay.

Emanuel Wolf (?) is a butcher in Asuncion, a Jew, a survivor of Auschwitz. A notorious Nazi, Edward Rauschman (?), had died in a local hospital. Rauschman had been commandant of another of Hitler's extermination camps, and later helped hide Nazis in South America.

Well, Emanuel Wolf made the mistake of saying publicly that he could identify the dead man as Rauschman. That night, Wolf's apartment above the butcher shop was sprayed with bullets, apparently the handiwork of a Nazi gang.

The leader of that gang is Enrique Mueller (?), widely known in Asuncion as Nazi Mueller. Through him, the trail finally leads back to Mengele.

While filmed with a hidden camera, Mueller confirmed that he sees Mengele every month.

WOMAN: Tell me in confidence, you said you've seen Mengele?

ENRIQUE MUELLER: Yes, every week, every month.

WOMAN: What's the full name he goes by?

MUELLER: That's the way people get interrogated.

WOMAN: What's the impression he makes on you?

MUELLER: We meet regularly every month to play cards.

WOMAN: What's he like as a person?

MUELLER: Just like you and me. All he did then was his duty, what the Americans do today, the same bloody experiments which carried out then. Everybody knows Mengele here.

WOMAN: Do you think he really did what people accuse

him of?

MUELLER: Yes. And I would be prepared to support it myself. What we were trying to do then was to rid ourselves of society's cripples. You can take that as you like. And when I look at them all today, the way they all run around here, all I can say is that Mengele didn't do anything more than scratch the surface.

REASONER: When Mueller was pressed for details of how Mengele received his money, he grew increasingly suspicious.

MUELLER: He'd got a brother who was a millionaire in Germany.

WOMAN: How does he get his money from him?

MUELLER: How do I get my money from Germany? In deutschemark checks, which I change on the black market, and then I've got my money. That's no problem.

WOMAN: Is it true that he gets money through German firms?

MUELLER: Do you have to ask such stupid questions? You shouldn't. Leave Mengele alone.

ENGLANDER: I wouldn't like to see him that he should die. Definitely not. I would like to see him he should be in life for the rest of his life and to suffer. Yes, this is which I would like to see him. He should be in life and he should be suffering and he should hear the survivors to tell him what he did with us.

REASONER: In West Germany now, 34 years after the close of the war, the statute of limitations against Nazi war criminals is scheduled to run out at the end of this year. But the showing there of the American television series "Holocaust" has suddenly produced impassioned debate to remove that deadline. There is a move now in the West German Parliament to extend forever the time when a Nazi war criminal could be identified, charged, and tried.

And Joseph Mengele? Mengele and almost 4000 others already have had formal war crime charges filed against them. So for them, and him, the statute of limitations does not apply. The problem is to catch them.