

C.I.A. Knew Where Eichmann Was Hiding, Documents Show

By **SCOTT SHANE** June 7, 2006

WASHINGTON, June 6 — The [Central Intelligence Agency](#) took no action after learning the pseudonym and whereabouts of the fugitive Holocaust administrator Adolf Eichmann in 1958, according to C.I.A. documents released Tuesday that shed new light on the spy agency's use of former Nazis as informants after World War II.

The C.I.A. was told by West German intelligence that Eichmann was living in Argentina under the name Clemens — a slight variation on his actual alias, Ricardo Klement — but did not share the information with Israel, which had been hunting for him for years, according to Timothy Naftali, a historian who examined the documents. Two years later, Israeli agents abducted Eichmann in Argentina and flew him to Israel, where he was tried and executed in 1962.

The Eichmann papers are among 27,000 newly declassified pages released by the C.I.A. to the National Archives under Congressional pressure to make public files about former officials of [Hitler's](#) regime later used as American agents. The material reinforces the view that most former Nazis gave American intelligence little of value and in some cases proved to be damaging double agents for the Soviet K.G.B., according to historians and members of the government panel that has worked to open the long-secret files.



Elizabeth Holtzman, a former congresswoman from New York and member of the panel, the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Records Interagency Working Group, said the documents showed that the C.I.A. "failed to lift a finger" to hunt Eichmann and "force us to confront not only the moral harm but the practical harm" of relying on intelligence from ex-Nazis.

The United States government, preoccupied with the cold war, had no policy at the time of pursuing Nazi war criminals. The records also show that American intelligence officials protected many former Nazis for their perceived value in combating the Soviet threat.

But Ms. Holtzman, speaking at a news briefing at the National Archives on Tuesday, said information from the former Nazis was often tainted both by their "personal agendas" and their vulnerability to blackmail. "Using bad people can have very bad consequences," Ms. Holtzman said. She and other group members suggested that the findings should be a cautionary tale for intelligence agencies today.

As head of the Gestapo's Jewish affairs office during the war, Eichmann put into effect the policy of extermination of European Jewry, promoting the use of gas chambers and having a hand in the murder of millions of Jews. Captured by the United States Army at the end of the war, he gave a false name and went unrecognized, hiding in [Germany](#) and Italy before fleeing to Argentina in 1950.

Israeli agents hunting for Eichmann came to suspect that he was in Argentina but did not know his alias. They temporarily abandoned their search around the time, in March 1958, that West German intelligence told the C.I.A. that Eichmann had been living in Argentina as Clemens, said Mr. Naftali, of the University of Virginia.

The West German government was wary of exposing Eichmann because officials feared what he might reveal about such figures as Hans Globke, a former Nazi government official then serving as a top national security adviser to Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, Mr. Naftali said.

In 1960, also at the request of West Germany, the C.I.A. persuaded Life magazine, which had purchased Eichmann's memoir from his family, to delete a reference to Mr. Globke before publication, the documents show.

Ironically, in view of the information the C.I.A. received in 1958, documents previously released by the C.I.A. showed that it was surprised in May 1960 when the Israelis captured Eichmann. Cables from the time show that Allen Dulles, the C.I.A. director, demanded that officers find out

more about the capture.

Since Congress passed the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act in 1998, the Interagency Working Group has worked to declassify more than eight million pages of documents.

Norman J. W. Goda, an Ohio University historian who reviewed the C.I.A. material, said it showed in greater detail than previously known how the K.G.B. aggressively recruited former Nazi intelligence officers after the war. In particular, he said, the documents fill in the story of the "catastrophic" Soviet penetration of the Gehlen Organization, the postwar West German intelligence service sponsored by the United States Army and then the C.I.A.

Mr. Goda described the case of Heinz Felfe, a former SS officer who was bitter over the Allied firebombing of his native city, Dresden, and secretly worked for the K.G.B. Mr. Felfe rose in the Gehlen Organization to oversee counterintelligence, a Soviet agent placed in charge of combating Soviet espionage.

The C.I.A. shared much sensitive information with Mr. Felfe, Mr. Goda found. A newly released 1963 C.I.A. damage assessment, written after Mr. Felfe was arrested as a Soviet agent in 1961, found that he had exposed "over 100 C.I.A. staffers" and caused many eavesdropping operations to end with "complete failure or a worthless product."

The documents also provide new information about the case of Tscherim Soobzokov, a former SS officer who was the subject of a much-publicized deportation case in 1979 when he was living as an American citizen in Paterson, N.J. He was charged with having falsified his [immigration](#) application to conceal his SS service, which ordinarily would have barred his entry. But the charge was dropped when a C.I.A. document turned up showing that he had disclosed his SS membership.

The newly declassified records show that he was employed by the C.I.A. from 1952 to 1959 despite "clear evidence of a war crimes record," said another historian at the briefing, Richard Breitman of American University.

Because it valued Mr. Soobzokov for his language skills and ties to fellow ethnic Circassians living in the Soviet Union, the C.I.A. deliberately hid details of his Nazi record from the Immigration and Naturalization Service after he moved to the [United States](#) in 1955, Mr. Breitman said.

But Mr. Soobzokov ultimately did not escape his past. He died in 1985 after a pipe bomb exploded outside his house. The case has never been solved.

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