

Nazi hunter picks up trail of `Dr. Death' in Chile

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SANTIAGO—A top Nazi hunter says the Simon Wiesenthal Center has strong evidence that a former SS member known as "Dr. Death" is in southern Chile or Argentina.

Efraim Zuroff, the centre's director in Israel, yesterday flew to the southern Chilean city of Puerto Montt, where SS doctor Aribert Heim's daughter has lived for years.

Zuroff and centre Latin America director Sergio Widder will then travel to Bariloche across the Andes in Argentina tomorrow.

Searchers think Heim is alive, Zuroff said, because a bank account with \$1.6 million and other investments in his name in Berlin have not been claimed by Heim's children.

To do that, they would have to produce proof that Heim was dead.

Zuroff said the centre has received information "that has strong potential" to help efforts to find Heim.

Heim, who would be 94, tops the centre's list of most-wanted Nazi war criminals.

A reward worth \$500,000 is jointly offered by the centre and the German and Austrian governments for information leading to his capture.

In Germany, Heim was indicted on charges he murdered hundreds of inmates at Mauthausen concentration camp, where he was the camp doctor.

"His crimes are fully documented by himself, because he kept a log of the operations that he carried out," Zuroff said.

"He tortured many inmates before he killed them at Mauthausen, and he used body parts of the people he killed as decorations."

After World War II, Heim was held for 2 1/2 years by the United States military but was released without being tried.

He disappeared in 1962, reportedly after being tipped off that the German indictment was imminent.

The Chilean government is helping in the investigation, Zuroff said.