



# JHUMUNC

THE JOHNS HOPKINS MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

## GUERRA SUCIA DE ARGENTINA (1976)

*Chaired by Donghyun (Paul) Jeong*

Session XXIII

# Guerra Sucia de Argentina (1976)

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*Topic A: End of Peronismo in Argentina*

*Topic B: Operation Condor*

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## Committee Overview

La Guerra Sucia, which translates to “The Dirty War,” was a period of state-sponsored terrorism against perceived dissidents and left-wing (“izquierdista”) activists that started in 1974 under President Juan Perón and lasted until the fall of the military junta in 1983.

Amidst economic failures and politically-incompetent leaders, far-right (“derechista”) military leaders were able to gain control of the nation after overthrowing the democratically-elected civilian government. The military junta now faces problems from within and abroad. Will Argentina revive itself from the worst economic and political crisis in its history, or will the military junta collapse upon itself and push Argentina into destitution?

It is now March 29, 1976, and the new military junta is the sole executor of legitimate violence within Argentina. You, as the leaders of this new Argentine

government, have gathered in your first cabinet meeting to discuss the fate of Argentina as it navigates through the most tumultuous period of its history. Throughout the committee, you will be faced with various crises, such as foreign interference, economic failures, domestic uprising, and internal conflicts.

## Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure for specialized committees will be more relaxed with a focus on more moderated caucuses. Delegates will represent influential individuals during la Guerra Sucia with all portfolio powers that come with it. For more information on JHUMUNC parliamentary procedure, please note the last few pages of the Conference guide or consult “Model UN Resources” under the “Resources” tab on our website, [jhumunc.org](http://jhumunc.org).



# Delegate Biographies:

## Jorge Rafael Videla

*President of Argentina*

Videla joined the National Military College in 1942 and rose in ranks within the Argentine Army with an uneventful record. He became the Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Argentine Armed Forces in 1975.<sup>1</sup> In 1976, President Isabel Perón appointed him as the Lieutenant-General of the Army, the top command within the Argentine Army.<sup>2</sup> He is part of the First Military Junta, representing the Army, and formally became the President of Argentina on March 29th.<sup>3</sup> While he holds the title of the President, in practice he shares power with the other two heads of the junta.<sup>4</sup>

## Emilio Eduardo Massera

*Admiral of the Argentine Navy*

Massera joined the Naval Military School in 1942 and rose in ranks in the Navy. In 1974, he became the Admiral of the Navy, the highest position in the Argentine Navy.<sup>5</sup> During the 1976 coup d'état, Massera was part of the First Military Junta and de facto ruled Argentina with Videla and Agosti.<sup>6</sup>

## Orlando Ramón Agosti

*Brigadier General of the Argentine Air Force*

Agosti graduated from Military Aviation School in 1947 and rose in ranks in the Air Force. In January of 1976, he was appointed as the

Brigadier General, the chief commander of the Air Force.<sup>7</sup> Agosti was part of the First Military Junta and assumed executive control over the nation along with two other members of the junta. The Air Force, due to its smaller size and its nature, had been less active in Operation Condor and associated political repression.<sup>8</sup>

## Roberto Eduardo Viola

*Chief of Staff of the Argentine Army*

Viola was born to Italian immigrants and joined the Army, and was appointed as the Chief of Staff of the Army by Jorge Videla in August 1975.<sup>9</sup> He served as the second-in-command of the Argentine Army under the First Junta. He would later go on to replace Videla as the Lieutenant General and the head of the Second Junta.<sup>10</sup>

## Armando Lambruschini

*Chief of Staff of the Argentine Navy*

Lambruschini entered the Naval Military School in 1942 and served as the Captain aboard ARA General Belgrano.<sup>11</sup> He was promoted to Chief of Staff of the Navy in 1975 by Admiral Massera, which made him the second-in-command within the Navy.<sup>12</sup> He would later replace Massera and become the Admiral and the Naval representative of the Second Junta.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seoane, Maria. *El Dictador: La Historia Secreta y Publica de Jorge Rafael Videla*. (Penguin Random House, 1 July 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Tikkanen, Amy, et al. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "Jorge Rafael Videla". (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Seoane, Maria. *El Dictador: La Historia Secreta y Publica de Jorge Rafael Videla*. (Penguin Random House, 1 July 2012).

<sup>5</sup> Viau, Susana. "En el mismo barco." *Página 12*, (14 December, 1998).

<sup>6</sup> Seoane, Maria. *El Dictador: La Historia Secreta y Publica de Jorge Rafael Videla*. (Penguin Random House, 1 July 2012).

<sup>7</sup> Sims, Calvin. "Orlando Agosti, 73, Argentine Junta Member". *The New York Times*. (11 October 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> "Roberto Viola, 69, Who Headed Argentine Military Dictatorship". *The New York Times*. (2 October 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "Murio Lambruschini, miembro de la segunda junta militar." *La Nación*. (17 August 2004).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

## **Omar Domingo Rubens Graffigna**

*Chief of Staff of the Argentine Air Force*

Graffigna joined the Military Aviation School and became the Chief of Staff of the Air Force in 1976.<sup>14</sup> He was second-in-command in the Air Force under the First Junta and would later replace Agosti as the Brigadier General and the Air Force branch of the Second Junta.<sup>15</sup>

## **Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri**

*Division General of the Second Army Corp*

Galtieri joined the National Military College at 17 to study civil engineering and served in the Army in the engineering branch.<sup>16</sup> By 1975 he became commander of the Argentine engineering corps. He strongly supported the 1976 coup d'état and became the Division General of the Second Army Corp under a military junta.<sup>17</sup>

## **Jorge Isaac Anaya**

*Chief of Naval Operations*

Anaya joined the Naval Military School and rose in the naval ranks. In 1955, Anaya participated in a coup against Perón, in which he became known for torturing dissidents. He worked for the CIA in an anti-communist program afterwards and commanded several ships throughout his career.<sup>18</sup> By 1976, he was the Chief of Naval Operations and commanded the Naval Police and Naval Intelligence. He would go on to become the Admiral, replacing Lambruschini as the naval representative of the Third Junta.<sup>19</sup>

## **Basilio Lami Dozo**

*Brigadier Major of the Argentine Air Force*

Dozo was born to Syrian and Lebanese immigrants who moved to Argentina post-World War I. Dozo joined the air force and rose in ranks and participated in the 1976 coup d'état.<sup>20</sup> As a high-ranking officer, Dozo goes on to replace Graffigna as the Brigadier General and the Air Force branch of the Third Junta.<sup>21</sup>

## **Albano Eduardo Harguindeguy**

*Minister of the Interior*

Harguindeguy graduated from the National Military College in 1943 and rose in ranks within the Army.<sup>22</sup> He was appointed as the head of the Federal Police in 1975 by Isabel Perón and as the Interior Minister by Jorge Videla in 1976, following the death of Cesario Cardozo, former Interior Minister.<sup>23</sup> As the Interior Minister, Harguindeguy maintains control over the Federal Police.<sup>24</sup>

## **Otto Carlos Paladino**

*Secretary of the State Intelligence*

Paladino took office as the secretary of intelligence in 1976. Secretariat of State Intelligence (SIDE), the intelligence agency of Argentina, was involved in various intelligence collecting operations under Operation Condor in coordination with Operation Condor member states.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Juzgado Central de Instrucción Número 5, Spain. "Sumario 19/97." 14 October 1998.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> "Murió Jorge Isaac Anaya, impulsor de Malvinas". *Perfil*. (10 January 2008).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Juzgado Central de Instrucción Número 5, Spain. "Sumario 19/97." 14 October 1998.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Roberto Santoro. "MURIÓ EL REPRESOR HARGUINDEGUY." *Tea & Deportea*, October 29, 2012.

<sup>23</sup> Miles, Nick. "Argentine Junta Member Confined." BBC. (13 July 2004).

<sup>24</sup> Roberto Santoro. "MURIÓ EL REPRESOR HARGUINDEGUY." *Tea & Deportea*, October 29, 2012.

<sup>25</sup> Seoane, Maria. *El Dictador: La Historia Secreta y Publica de Jorge Rafael Videla*. (Penguin Random House, 1 July 2012).

## Ramón Juan Camps

*Chief of the Buenos Aires Provincial Police*

Camps was an Argentine army colonel who led the Buenos Aires police. He oversaw twenty detention centers and worked closely with *Batallón de Inteligencia 601*.<sup>26</sup> The Buenos Aires police force had extensive local intelligence network and carried out frequent illegal detentions and tortures of journalists and suspected leftist activists.<sup>27</sup>

## César Augusto Guzzetti

*Minister of Foreign Relations*

Guzzetti was appointed as the Foreign Minister by the First Junta after the 1976 coup d'état. He maintained contact with Henry Kissinger in attempts to mitigate the concerns by the US Congress over human rights violations in Argentina prior to the coup and under the military junta.<sup>28</sup>

## Carlos Guillermo Suárez Mason

*Commander of the Batallón de Inteligencia 601*

Suarez Mason joined the army and became director of military intelligence in 1972. As part of the military intelligence, he partook in the *Operativo Independencia* against left-wing guerrillas and was appointed as the Commander of First Army Corp by President Isabel Perón.<sup>29</sup> Under the military junta, he was the commander of the *Batallón de Inteligencia 601*, a special military intelligence service that infiltrated guerrilla groups and participated in assassinations and disappearances of dissidents.<sup>30</sup>

## José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz

*Minister of Economy*

Martinez de Hoz was an influential economist and businessman in Argentina. In 1968, he became the CEO of Acindar, one of the largest steel manufacturers in Argentina, and brutally oppressed the union workers of Acindar, murdering hundreds of workers using the family connections with the military.<sup>31</sup> In 1975 he was appointed as the Economy Minister and endorsed neoliberal economic policies, believing trade barriers prevented the Argentine economy from prospering.<sup>32</sup> He also had personal connections with David Rockefeller, which he used to secure major loans for the Argentine government from Chase Manhattan and IMF.<sup>33</sup>

## Robert Charles Hill

*Ambassador of the United States to Argentina*

Hill was a Republican diplomat who had served as the US Ambassador to several Latin American countries. He was deployed as the US Ambassador to Argentina by President Richard Nixon.<sup>34</sup> Hill advocated for human rights in South America even as Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told South American regimes that the US would turn a blind eye to human rights abuses.<sup>35</sup> As the American ambassador, Hill will act as the primary point of contact for the Argentine government with the American government.

<sup>26</sup> "Ramon Camps: el peor de todos." *Terra Actualidad*. 18 March 2006.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Campbell, Duncan. "Kissinger approved Argentine Dirty War." *The Guardian*. 5 December 2003.

<sup>29</sup> "Fallecio ayer el ex general Suarez Mason." *La Nacion*. 22 June 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Andersen, Martin. *Dossier secreto*. (Westview Press, 1993.)

<sup>31</sup> "Significativa Propuesta realizada a Acindar." *Rio Negro*. 25 January 2009.

<sup>32</sup> Rapoport, Mario. "La saga de los Martínez de Hoz y el banquero arrepentido." *Buenos Aires Economico*. 5 May 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Anderson, Martin. "Kissinger and the Dirty War." *The Nation*. 31 October 1987.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.



## Robert Scherrer

*FBI Legal Attaché in Buenos Aires*

Scherrer was an FBI special agent who was tasked with ensuring that Operation Condor was executed successfully.<sup>36</sup> He was stationed in the US Embassy in Buenos Aires and was tasked with gathering intelligence from local sources for the FBI.<sup>37</sup> As the FBI agent directing operations in Argentina, Scherrer coordinated operations of the FBI and CIA with Argentine and Chilean intelligence agencies. Scherrer also had extensive sources and connections across the intelligence agencies in Operation Condor.<sup>38</sup>

## Françoise de la Gosse

*Ambassador of France to Argentina*

Gosse was the French Ambassador to Argentina during the military junta's rule of the nation.<sup>39</sup> The French government officially took the position of condemning the military dictatorship but continued to maintain a military mission to Argentina.<sup>40</sup> The *Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire* (DST), French intelligence agency, is present and cooperating with Argentine and other South American intelligence agencies.<sup>41</sup> The French Ambassador will be the primary contact for the Argentine government with the French government, military, and intelligence.

## Georges Grasset

*Chaplain of the Organisation Armée Secrète*

Grasset was a far-right French Catholic fundamentalist priest and an influential leader of the *Organisation Armée Secrète*.<sup>42</sup> He was the personal confessor of Jorge Videla and maintained a close relationship with much of

the Argentine military officers.<sup>43</sup> He has command over the *Cité Catholique* in Argentina and members of the OAS from Algeria that he directed to Argentina following the end of the Algeria War.<sup>44</sup>

## Gustavo Valdivieso Quehille

*Ambassador of Chile to Argentina*

Quehille was the Chilean Ambassador to Argentina appointed by Chilean dictator Pinochet in 1975. The Chilean government is the central actor in Operation Condor, its intelligence agency cooperating actively with the Argentine counterparts.<sup>45</sup> As the ambassador, Quehille will be the primary point of contact for the Argentine government to the Chilean government.

## Raúl Eduardo Iturriaga Neumann

*Deputy Director of DINA*

Iturriaga was a Chilean army general and deputy director of *Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional* (DINA), the Chilean intelligence service.<sup>46</sup> He was involved in Operation Colombo in 1975 in which DINA "disappeared" political dissidents who had fled to Argentina.<sup>47</sup> By 1976, Iturriaga was in control of a network of DINA agents in Argentina coordinating with Argentine intelligence agency SIDE under Operation Condor.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Dinges, John; Bourdon, William. *Les Années Condor, comment Pinochet et ses alliés ont propagé le terrorisme sur trois continents*. (La Découverte, 2005).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> "Disparitions : un ancien agent français mis en cause." *Le Figaro*. February 6, 2007

<sup>40</sup> Tomasevski, Katerina. *An End to Torture: Strategies for its Eradication*. (Zed Books, 1988).

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Horacio, Verbitsky. "Breaking the silence: The Catholic Church in Argentina and the dirty war." *Open Democracy*. 28 July 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Robin, Marie-Monique. "Escadrons de la mort, l'école française." *Algeria Watch* (13 December 2003).

<sup>44</sup> Horacio, Verbitsky. "Breaking the silence: The Catholic Church in Argentina and the dirty war." *Open Democracy*. 28 July 2005.

<sup>45</sup> Abramovici, Pierre. "Operation Condor Explained – Latin America: the 30 years' dirty war". *Le Monde diplomatique*

<sup>46</sup> Claudia Lagos and Patrick J. McDonnell. "Pinochet-era general is caught." *Los Angeles Times*. 3 August 2007

<sup>47</sup> *La Gran Mentira*. (Equipo Nizkor, 2 February 2005).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

## Reynaldo Bignone

*Lieutenant-General*

Bignone was a general in the Argentine Army.<sup>49</sup> He was involved in operations during the junta, and worked his way through the ranks to play a central role in the planning and execution of an upcoming Falkland Islands invasion. In the future, Bignone will be installed as the final president of the military junta and successor to Leopoldo Galtieri in the wake of the Falklands War.<sup>49</sup>

## Carlos Alberto Lacoste

*Lieutenant-General*

Lacoste was an Argentine navy vice-admiral and politician who briefly served as interim President of Argentina. In December 1981 the then head of state General Roberto Viola was ousted in a *coup d'état*, and Lacoste served as interim President of Argentina before the succession of Lieutenant General Leopoldo Galtieri<sup>50</sup>. He has connections with several football (soccer) associations, including FIFA and CONMEBOL.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Claudia Lagos and Patrick J. McDonnell. "Pinochet-era general is caught." *Los Angeles Times*. 3 August 2007



## Topic A:

### *End of peronismo in Argentina*

## Introduction

Throughout most of the mid-20th century, Argentina had been ruled by the influential president Juan Perón. His death and the succession of the presidency to his incompetent wife and vice president, along with worsening economic and political problems, led to the military coup in 1976.

## Historical Background

### *Rise of Juan Perón*

Juan Perón was born in Buenos Aires in 1895 and joined the military in 1911.<sup>50</sup> He rose in rank within the military during the 1943 coup, which removed the conservative civilian government led by President Ramón Castillo, in which he played a significant part.<sup>51</sup> His influence within the new military government grew as he expanded his role as the head of the Department of Labor, consolidating power by winning the support of the left-wing activists and labor unions through socially progressive policies.<sup>52</sup> He consistently improved the working conditions and sought to give more political leverage to the workers over the employers.<sup>53</sup> He also won the loyalties of labor union leaders by settling disputes in

favor of them as long as they offered him political support.<sup>54</sup>

Through these policies, Perón gained enough political support to be a formidable contender against the conservative opposition.<sup>55</sup> In the 1946 elections, the centrist Unión Cívica Radical (“Radical Civic Union,” or UCR) party, far-left socialist and communist parties, and the moderate right-wing parties created an alliance to keep Perón away from power.<sup>56</sup> However, using his popular support, Perón secured his victory in the elections, becoming the 29th president of Argentina.<sup>57</sup>

### *Argentina Under Perón*

Under Perón’s presidency, the Confederación General del Trabajo (“General Confederation of Labor,” or CGT), the national labor union which played a crucial role in bringing Perón to power, was given significant power by the new administration. Important government positions were filled by pro-labor union politicians, and labor unions grew from 500,000 to 2 million.<sup>58</sup> Perón also expanded social security and health insurance, along with raising wages, to close the wealth gap.<sup>59</sup>

In the few years following his inauguration, the Argentine economy grew

<sup>50</sup> Page, Joseph. *Perón, a Biography*. (Random House, 1983).

<sup>51</sup> Rock, David. *Authoritarian Argentina*. (University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>52</sup> Crawley, Eduardo. *A House Divided: Argentina, 1880–1980*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Keen, Benjamin. *A History of Latin America* (6 ed.). (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000), 325.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Rock, David. *Authoritarian Argentina*. (University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>59</sup> Alexander, Robert Jackson. *Juan Domingo Perón: A History*. (Westview Press, 1979).



rapidly due to his policies of diversification and decentralization of the economy as well as the development of new industrial sectors.<sup>60</sup> His plan, backed by the temporary trade surplus due to the sudden increase in exports to European powers during World War II, achieved a high growth rate and increasing wages, making Perón immensely popular.<sup>61</sup>

However, as the relations with the strongly anti-communist United States deteriorated amidst American concerns that Argentina was turning to communism, coupled with Perón's efforts to remain neutral between the United States and the Soviet Union, exports to the United States fell sharply while the imports of capital goods needed to fuel the growth of the industrial sector remained high.<sup>62</sup> This unfavorable trade wiped out the trade surplus from earlier years, stopping the wage increase and pushing the Argentine economy into stagnation.<sup>63</sup>

In order to consolidate power, Perón oppressed any opposition to his rule. Influenced by the fascist dictators Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, Perón tightened his grasp on power by consolidating the labor unions and the media under his control.<sup>64</sup> His oppressive regime exiled or blacklisted the *inteligencia* class, the educated middle class of Argentina, particularly university faculty and students.<sup>65</sup> He also relied on extrajudicial

arrests and torture of members of the opposition political party.<sup>66</sup>

## *Revolución Libertadora*

Despite the declining economy and the political oppression, Perón won the 1952 elections by a large margin by appealing to the CGT and the military.<sup>67</sup> However, the political stability of Argentina had considerably worsened by this point, with frequent violent demonstrations by the Peronistas and terrorist attacks. By 1954, Perón lost the support of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the military when he began pushing for controversial reforms such as the legalization of divorce and became involved in scandal.<sup>68</sup>

The tension between peronistas and the opposition climaxed in 1955 with the Bombing of the Plaza de Mayo, where a nationalist faction of the military bombed a crowd of peronistas gathered in the plaza in front of Casa Rosada (the office of the Argentine president), killing 364 people, most of whom were civilians.<sup>69</sup> This bombing, which was part of a coup attempt against Perón, elicited a violent response from peronistas, which led to the ransacking of Catholic churches.<sup>70</sup>

Despite the failure of the first coup attempt, Perón was eventually overthrown by another military coup later that year and went into exile.<sup>71</sup> The nationalist faction of the military, backed by the RCC, established

<sup>60</sup> Edwin Williamson, *The Penguin History of South America*. (Penguin Books, 1992).

<sup>61</sup> McIntyre, Loren. "Which Way Now for Argentina?" *National Geographic*. March 1979.

<sup>62</sup> Page, Joseph. *Perón, a Biography*. (Random House, 1983).

<sup>63</sup> Rock, David. *Authoritarian Argentina*. (University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>64</sup> Eatwell, Roger. *Contemporary Political Ideologies*. (Continuum International Publishing Group, 1999), 196.

<sup>65</sup> Rock, David. *Authoritarian Argentina*. (University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>66</sup> Feitlowitz, Marguerite. *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*. (Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>67</sup> Nohlen, Dieter. *Elections in the Americas*. (Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>68</sup> Rock, David. *Authoritarian Argentina*. (University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>69</sup> Cichero, Daniel E. *Bombas sobre Buenos Aires: Gestión y desarrollo del bombardeo aéreo sobre la Plaza de Mayo del 16 de junio de 1955*. (Vergara Grupo Zeta, 2005), 163.

<sup>70</sup> Peterson, Harold F. *Argentina and the United States: 1810-1960*. (SUNY Press, 1964).

<sup>71</sup> Lonardi, Eduardo. "The Victor Indicts His Fleeing Foe". *Life Magazine*. 17 October 1955.

a provisional government led by General Eduardo Lonardi.<sup>72</sup> The new military government became increasingly anti-peronista, and ruled until 1973 when it agreed to allow democratic elections again.<sup>73,74</sup>

## Fall of Peronismo

### *Return of Perón*

The military junta permitted democratic elections to be held in 1973 amidst public outcry, with the stipulation that peronistas be barred from running.<sup>75</sup> Héctor Cámpora, an izquierdista who represented Perón, ran and won the election, which allowed Perón to return to Argentina from his exile.<sup>76</sup> In 4 months, Cámpora resigned from office, which allowed Perón to run for the elections and become the president once again.<sup>77</sup>

The economy under Perón's third term began to improve, largely due to the efforts by José Ber Gelbard, the advisor to the economy ministry chosen by Perón.<sup>78</sup> He sought to find an economic solution that satisfied both the CGT and the management and created a plan to negotiate price controls and stimulate the economy.<sup>79</sup> The plan was successful, and inflation, which had run rampant since 1955, was brought down to manageable levels.<sup>80</sup> As the economy stabilized, the old interventionist policies

during his first two terms, such as nationalizing banks, were brought back.<sup>81</sup> The temporary economic resurgence was brought to a halt in the 1973 Oil Shock, inflation returned, along with the stagnating economy.<sup>82</sup>

### *Beginning of the Dirty War*

Perón's supporters consisted of people from across the political spectrum, with his pro-labor union and social reforms policies popular with the far-left and his policies of nationalism popular with the far-right.<sup>83</sup> However, the divide between the izquierdista and the derechista movements within peronismo grew as right-wing radicals gained power within the CGT and the military.<sup>84</sup> This divide erupted into violence when Perón arrived in Buenos Aires after his 18-year exile. Known as the Ezeiza Massacre, right-wing snipers opened fire on the crowd of 3.5 million peronistas gathered to welcome Perón, targeting specifically the Montoneros, a leftist peronista guerrilla group.<sup>85</sup>

Perón chose to support the derechistas over the left, as the radical right-wing faction grew in influence in part due to support by the RCC.<sup>86</sup> The CGT leadership was gradually replaced by derechistas, as well as the military and various sections of the government. Jose Lopez Rega, a fascist and adviser to Perón, was given

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Robben, Antonius C.G.M. *Political Violence and Trauma in Argentina*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

<sup>74</sup> Nohlen, Dieter. *Elections in the Americas*. (Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Collier, Ruth B. and Handlin, Samuel. *Reorganizing Popular Politics: Participation and the New Interest Regime in Latin America*. (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010).

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Cámara Argentina de Comercio y Servicios. *Las exportaciones argentinas: Evolución reciente y caminos para su expansión*. September 2016.

<sup>81</sup> Edwin Williamson, *The Penguin History of South America*. (Penguin Books, 1992).

<sup>82</sup> Rock, David. *Authoritarian Argentina*. (University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>83</sup> Christian, Shirley. "Buenos Aires Journal". *The New York Times*. 13 January 1990.

<sup>84</sup> McBrewster, John, et al. *1973 Ezeiza Massacre*. (Alphascript Publishing, 2009).

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Rock, David. *Authoritarian Argentina*. (University of California Press, 1993).

overwhelming authority over the entire government.<sup>87</sup> He went on to form the Alianza Anticomunista Argentina (“Argentine Anticommunist Alliance”), also known as the Triple A, a far-right death squad that targeted the violent and moderate left.<sup>88</sup> This marked the beginning of the Dirty War, a period of state-sponsored terrorism against dissidents.

Even before Perón’s return, the tensions between Triple A and the left-wing paramilitary groups such as the Montoneros or the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (“People’s Revolutionary Army,” or ERP) were rising.<sup>89</sup> The Triple A was responsible for organizing the Ezeiza Massacre, and in retaliation, Montoneros assassinated José Ignacio Rucci, the right-wing Secretary-General of the CGT.<sup>90</sup> When Montoneros took responsibility for the assassination, Perón turned against the left-wing completely and empowered Rega’s Triple A to completely wipe out the left, forcing Montoneros to move underground.<sup>91</sup>

## Military Coup

### *Isabel Perón’s Failure*

On July 1, 1974, amidst the deteriorating political climate of Argentina, Juan Perón died of illness, leaving the presidency to his wife and vice president, Isabel Perón.<sup>92</sup> She quickly lost support from various constituents and began to oppress the left-leaning activists, similar to her husband.<sup>93</sup> Rega grew influential in Isabel

Perón’s administration, having broad powers as well as control over the Triple A.<sup>94</sup> Gradually, Rega replaced most of the skilled policymakers under Juan Perón’s administration with his own supporters and used his influence to secure personal wealth.<sup>95</sup>

During this period, the Montoneros, which had lain low during Juan Perón’s presidency, as well as the ERP, waged a violent resistance against the government. Far-left groups funded themselves through kidnappings of business executives and participated in guerrilla warfare and assassinations of key right-wing figures.<sup>96</sup> Triple A, backed by the government, waged an equally violent counteroffensive seeking to eliminate all left-wing activists. By 1975, the violent clashes between the two extremist groups began targeting civilians as well.<sup>97</sup> The government inaugurated Operativo Independencia (“Operation Independence”), which sought to eliminate the leftist guerrillas in the Tucuman region.<sup>98</sup> The operation became infamous for brutalities committed by the government troops. Amidst the violence, incompetence, and failing economy, Isabel Perón and Jose Rega began to lose popularity.<sup>99</sup>

By June, the new Economy Minister Celestino Rodrigo appointed by Rega attempted to solve the growing trade deficit problem through economic shock therapy, which resulted in sudden inflation.<sup>100</sup> This event led to protests from all members of the public, including the CGT which had been

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Lewis, Paul. *Guerrillas and Generals*. (Greenwood Publishing, 2002).

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Page, Joseph. *Perón, a Biography*. (Random House, 1983).

<sup>93</sup> Crawley, Eduardo. *A House Divided*. (St. Martin's Press, 1985).

<sup>94</sup> Reed, Robert. "Juan Perón & Cocaine Politics". *Consortium News*. 12 November 1999.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Lewis, Paul. *Guerrillas and Generals*. (University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

<sup>97</sup> Andersen, Martin. *Dossier Secreto*. (Westview Press, 1993).

<sup>98</sup> Crawley, Eduardo. *A House Divided*. (St. Martin's Press, 1985).

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Lewis, Paul. *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*. (University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

supporters of Perón. Jose Rega, hated by the public, left the country in July after being appointed as the ambassador to Spain.<sup>101</sup>

In the following months, Isabel Perón attempted to appeal to the public and the military by appointing new Economy Minister Antonio Cafiero and new heads of the military.<sup>102</sup> However, the economy continued to spiral out of control, with inflation reaching the record of 700% following another economic shock therapy.<sup>103</sup> Trade deficits had nearly depleted foreign currency reserves, and strikes and business lockouts further marred the economy that was already deep into recession.<sup>104</sup>

### *The First Military Junta*

After Rega's departure for Spain, Isabel Perón appointed Jorge Videla to the chief position of the Armed Forces High Command, replacing the pro-Rega General Alberto Laplane.<sup>105</sup> In the midst of rising violence by the left-wing guerrillas, she gave the military the authority to suppress these groups, in an attempt to regain the support of the military.<sup>106</sup> However, by December of 1975, General Héctor Fautario, the last general who remained loyal to Perón's government, was dismissed after a coup attempt.<sup>107</sup>

With the last peronista general excised from the military, General Jorge Videla had support from the Armed Forces High Command, the public, and the UCR to

overthrow Isabel Perón.<sup>108</sup> In the early morning of March 24, 1976, Isabel Perón was detained, arrested, and deposed as the president.<sup>109</sup> The military junta, consisting of General Jorge Videla representing the Army, Admiral Emilio Massera representing the Navy, and Brigadier Orlando Agosti representing the Air Force, assumed executive control of the nation and declared martial law.<sup>110</sup> Hundreds of peronista officials, unionists, and activists were detained and later "disappeared" under the new military government.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Augustyn, Adam, et al. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "Jose Lopez Rega". (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009).

<sup>102</sup> Braun, Carlos and Tella, Guido D. *Argentina, 1946-87: The Economic Ministers Speak*. (Palgrave MacMillan, 1990).

<sup>103</sup> Lewis, Paul. *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*. (University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Tikkanen, Amy, et al. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "Jorge Rafael Videla". (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009).

<sup>106</sup> Crawley, Eduardo. *A House Divided*. (St. Martin's Press, 1985).

<sup>107</sup> "17. Argentina (1916-present)". University of Central Arkansas Political Science Department, accessed 30 June 2019.

<https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/western-hemisphere-region/argentina-1916-present/>

<sup>108</sup> Rinas, Fernando S. "El papel de la prensa durante el proceso militar." *Argentina a Diario*. 24 March 1976.

<sup>109</sup> Lewis, Paul. *Guerrillas and Generals*. (University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

<sup>110</sup> Tikkanen, Amy, et al. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "Jorge Rafael Videla". (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009).

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

## Questions to Consider

1. *How will the Dirty War continue under the new regime?*

The ERP, one of the violent guerrilla groups, had been defeated by December of 1975. However, the Montoneros, while weakened, still remains active and had carried out a violent attack just 9 days prior to the coup. Triple A, the violent right-wing guerrillas that had fought the Montoneros, has essentially disbanded, its peronista leaders fleeing the nation fearing the new military government. How will the new regime continue the Dirty War started by the previous regime?

2. *How will the military government consolidate power?*

Despite the success of the coup, there are influential Peronistas remaining in Argentina. College and high school students, professionals, and union leaders remain active in political organizations that may pose a threat to the new regime. Violent suppression may lead to temporary silencing of the opposition but may draw international criticism. The new regime can continue Isabel Perón's Dirty War against the left, or resort to other tactics to consolidate power.

3. *How can the Argentine economy be revived?*

One of the key reasons for the downfall of peronismo is an economic failure. The military junta inherited a nation with record-high inflation and trade deficits. Domestic and foreign companies alike had been struggling with the CGT, whose

negotiating power had been greatly enhanced by Juan Perón's progressive policies. Suppressing the labor unions may lead to higher growth for the companies, but may result in human rights violation and degradation of the quality of life for average citizens.

4. *What will foreign relations look like for the new regime?*

Juan Perón maintained relative neutrality vis-à-vis both the First and Second World. His regime had diplomatic ties and crucial economic relations with the Western world, as well as relations with the Soviet Union and Cuba. The United States and France, concerned that Perón's third position policy would lead to loss of Western influence in Argentina, had supported the military coup as well as other counter-insurgency operations against leftist guerrillas in Latin America under Operation Condor, hoping that the region will become more aligned with the West.

5. *How will the three branches of the military work together?*

Even though Jorge Videla, General of the Army, was declared as the official President of Argentina, in practice, the leadership of the nation is split among the three branches of the military. While they cooperated during the coup in order to overthrow Perón, the various leaders within the military have conflicting interests. The new military leaders lack constitutional legitimacy unlike civilian presidents and may be replaced with greater ease.



## Conclusion

As the long-lasting reign of peronismo comes to a close in Argentina, the new right-wing military government will be tasked with saving the Argentine economy while maintaining its power amidst the dissidents and political opposition. The Peronistas, while not in control of the government anymore, still poses a formidable threat to the new regime. The committee will also be faced with various foreign influences with economic and political interests in Argentina.

The nascent military government has yet to prove itself to its citizens and the international community that it can successfully lead Argentina. In the short term, the committee must successfully defend its regime against peronista guerrilla groups and dissidents while gaining the support of foreign actors. In the long term, the overall success and survival of the military junta will depend on the economic success and internal unity. Both the continuity of the government as a whole and each delegate's self-interest will play a role in determining the future of Argentina.





## Topic B:

### *Operation Condor*

## Introduction

Operation Condor began in 1975 as international coordination between intelligence agencies of South American nations with the goal of combating leftist guerrillas. The right-wing dictatorships of South America targeted not only the violent paramilitary groups but also left-leaning activists, journalists, and political dissidents. The United States provided financial and technical assistance to Operation Condor, which resulted in serious human rights violations in the member states.

## Historical Background

### *Kennedy Doctrine*

As the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union escalated following World War II, the United States (US) began to implement policies that sought to fight the spread of communism in the Western Hemisphere. John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the US, declared in his inaugural address the Kennedy Doctrine.<sup>112</sup> Kennedy's administration struggled to stop the spread of communism to American countries, especially after the Cuban Revolution that brought communism to the doorstep of the US.<sup>113</sup>

President Lyndon Baines Johnson continued Kennedy's policies through the

enunciation of the Johnson Doctrine, which took a hardline stance against communism in Latin America.<sup>114</sup> The US military and the CIA became active in supporting anti-communist leaders, even going as far as overthrowing democratically elected presidents.<sup>115</sup> Throughout the 1960s, the United States supported various coups d'état in left-leaning Latin American states.

### *End of Leftist Regimes in South America*

The United States began supporting conservative, anti-communist hardliners that opposed the leftist regimes of Latin American countries. From the mid-1950s to 1970s, the left-leaning governments were overthrown violently by American-backed dictators. These nations in the Southern Cone would later go on to become active participants in Operation Condor.

In 1954, General Alfredo Stroessner overthrew the moderate right-wing president Federico Chavez of Paraguay and implemented a strict martial law indefinitely.<sup>116</sup> A staunch anti-communist, he detained and arrested left-wing dissidents and completely suspended all civil liberties. The United States supported the overthrow and provided \$146 million as aid between 1962 to 1975 to his regime.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>112</sup> Kennedy, John F. "Inaugural Address" (speech, Washington, DC, 20 January 1961).

<sup>113</sup> Kennedy, John F. "Alliance for Progress Address" (speech, Washington, DC, 13 March 1961).

<sup>114</sup> Johnson, Lyndon B. "Statement by the President Upon Ordering Troops into the Dominican Republic" (speech, Washington, DC, 28 April 1965).

<sup>115</sup> Gleijeses, Piero. "The United States Invasion of the Dominican Republic, 1961-1965." *Latin American Studies*. 28 October 2011.

<sup>116</sup> Bruneau, Thomas C. "Government and Politics." *Library of Congress Federal Research Division*. December 1988.

<sup>117</sup> Cooper, Allan D. *The Geography of Genocide*. (University Press of America, 2008).

In 1964, the Brazilian military, with the backing of the United States, overthrew President João Goulart, a left-leaning member of the Brazilian Labor Party.<sup>118</sup> Goulart drew ire from the United States by maintaining the non-aligned foreign policy and proposing socialist economic policies.<sup>119</sup> The United States, suspicious of Goulart's communist sympathies, empowered various conservative groups and the military that opposed Goulart to eventually overthrow him.<sup>120</sup>

In 1971, Hugo Banzer Suarez, the military general of Bolivia, overthrew President Juan Jose Torres in a military coup.<sup>121</sup> The Nixon administration, fearing Torres' socialist policies and sympathy to workers' unions as signs of communist sympathy, The United States financed and provided advisors to Banzer that proved crucial to the success of the coup.<sup>122</sup>

In 1973, Juan Maria Bordaberry, the civilian dictator of Uruguay, took control of the nation along with the military junta to counter the supposed communist threats.<sup>123</sup> The US provided military aid and training to the military junta who sought to eliminate the communist guerrilla group called the Tupamaros.<sup>124</sup>

## Chilean Coup of 1973

In 1970, Salvador Allende of the leftist Popular Unity party won the presidential elections in Chile, defeating two conservative candidates and preventing an American plot to allow the incumbent pro-American President Frei Montalva to circumvent the constitution and win another presidency.<sup>125,126</sup> Chile sought closer relationships with Fidel Castro's Cuba and sought socialist policies that concerned the West.<sup>127</sup> Amidst declining economy and growing political tension between the left and the right, President Allende won another presidency in 1973 despite attempts by the United States to incite a right-wing coup against him.<sup>128</sup>

During the decades prior to the coup, the Chilean military had undergone de-politicization and therefore had less political influence than other Latin American militaries that had successfully overthrown the civilian governments.<sup>129</sup> The military had been underfunded and therefore had grievances against the civilian government.<sup>130</sup> The military had also been heavily influenced by American anti-communist ideology due to cooperation with the American military and military schools.<sup>131</sup>

Amidst a declining economy, the Chamber of Deputies controlled by the conservative coalition denounced the president and accused him of

<sup>118</sup> Kingstone, Steve. "Brazil remembers 1964 coup d'état". *BBC News* (1 April 2004).

<sup>119</sup> Skidmore, Thomas. *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-1985*. (Oxford University Press, March 1990)

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Zunes, Stephen. "U.S. Intervention in Bolivia". *Huffington Post* (25 May 2011).

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Lessa, Alfonso. *Estado de guerra - de la gestación del golpe del 73 a la caída de Bordaberry*. (University of Michigan Press, 1996).

<sup>124</sup> US Library of Congress. *Pachequism, 1967-72*.

<sup>125</sup> Nohlen, Dieter. *Elections in the Americas: A data handbook, Volume II*. (Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>126</sup> Central Intelligence Agency. *CIA Activities in Chile*. 18 September 2000.

<sup>127</sup> Porpora, Douglas V, et al. *Post-Ethical Society: The Iraq War, Abu Ghraib, and the Moral Failure of the Secular*. (University of Chicago Press, September 2013).

<sup>128</sup> Central Intelligence Agency. *CIA Activities in Chile*. 18 September 2000.

<sup>129</sup> Gonzáles, Mónica. *Los Mil y un Días del Golpe*. (Catalonia, 2013).

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Rafael Sagredo and Cristian Gazmuri. *Historia de la Vida Privada en Chile. Tomo II: El Chile moderno de 1849 a 1925*. (Taurus-Aguilar chilena ediciones, 2006)

unconstitutional attempts to limit the economic freedom of Chile.<sup>132</sup> The Chamber requested the military to take action if Allende's government did not comply.<sup>133</sup> The United States also offered to support a coup if the military decided to carry one out.<sup>134</sup> In September of 1973, the military, led by General of the army Augusto Pinochet, overthrew the Allende government, bombing the Chilean presidential residence and killing Allende.<sup>135</sup>

Pinochet and his military junta ruled Chile with the support of the United States. Similar to post-coup Argentina under the military junta, the Chilean junta violently suppressed the political enemies and leftist activists.<sup>136</sup> The CIA and the US military provided financial support to the Pinochet regime despite many of the officers involved in human rights abuses.<sup>137</sup>

## Operation Condor

### *Beginning of the Cooperation*

The overthrow of Chilean president Allende and the following Pinochet regime led to the official formation of the Operation Condor. While cooperation between the newly formed right-wing dictatorships of Latin America existed prior to the Operation, Chile took the leading role in creating a supranational coalition between Latin American intelligence services.<sup>138</sup>

In 1974, Chilean, Bolivian, and Uruguayan police leaders met with Alberto Villar, who was a co-founder of Triple A

under the Perón regime.<sup>139</sup> As then-Argentine President Juan Perón began to turn against the left-wing Peronistas, Argentina agreed to cooperate with the other right-wing dictatorships to combat left-wing guerrillas in South America.<sup>140</sup> During this period, refugees from these countries who fled the state-backed terrorism to Buenos Aires were assassinated by the Argentine police according to the cooperation guidelines.<sup>141</sup>

Operation Condor was formally created on November 25, 1975, between the military intelligence agencies of Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia.<sup>142</sup> During Isabel Perón's presidency, Argentine intelligence, along with other intelligence agencies, targeted various left-wing activists.<sup>143</sup> Their official targets were the leftist guerrillas such as the Montoneros and the ERP, but the government extended the target to include political opponents and suspected leftists as well.<sup>144</sup>

### *Argentine Coup of 1976*

The Argentine military had the full support of the US in its anti-communist operations, despite its concerns that Argentina under the control of the military junta would create similar problems as with Chile and Uruguay, where mounting human rights concerns made American support difficult.<sup>145</sup> As Isabel Perón became more unpopular throughout 1975 and 1976, the U.S. was aware of the upcoming coup

<sup>132</sup> Chile Chamber of Deputies. "Agreement of the Chamber of the Deputies of Chile" 22 August 1973.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Kornbluh, Peter. *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*. (The New Press, 2003).

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Abramovici, Pierre. "Operation Condor Explained – Latin America: the 30 years' dirty war". *Le Monde diplomatique* (May 2001).

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Plummer, Robert. "Condor Legacy Haunts South America." *BBC News* (8 June 2005).

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> United States. Department of State. "1976BUENOS01042." February 1976.

planned by the military. The United States was also aware of the planned state-sponsored terrorism by the new military regime but decided to not intervene in the coup. The US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger later made this clear to the new regime that the US would support the military junta despite the human rights abuses.<sup>146</sup> With the American support, the Argentine Coup d'état of 1976 successfully overthrew Isabel Perón's government and began to actively suppress Peronistas, left-wing activists, and any dissident to the regime.

## Foreign Influence

### *American Involvement*

Since the Eisenhower administration, the United States had attempted to contain the spread of communism.<sup>147</sup> The US played a key role in the establishment of the right-wing bloc in the six Southern Cone nations and went on to support those regimes despite reports of human rights abuses under the excuse of stopping communist guerrillas.

American attempts at containing communism in Latin America started in the 1960s at the US Army School of the Americas (SOA).<sup>148</sup> The SOA was founded in an American fort in Panama Canal Zone with the goal of training the Latin American militaries with pro-American and anti-communist doctrines.<sup>149</sup> The client nations

sent students who were trained to go on to become military leaders in their respective nations.<sup>150</sup> Many graduates from the SOA were later involved in right-wing state terrorism and human rights violations.<sup>151</sup>

According to the declassified CIA documents, the US officials were notified about the 1974 meeting between the police leaders of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia, and Paraguay that established cooperation in fighting leftist guerrillas.<sup>152</sup> The US was also aware of the official formation of the Operation Condor in 1975 and the anti-communist supranational intelligence collecting efforts carried out under the Operation.<sup>153</sup> The US Defense Intelligence Agency reported the efforts by the Argentine and Chilean intelligence agencies carrying out operations, mainly in Argentina. Their operations stretched out across the territories of the nations in the Operation Condor.<sup>154</sup>

The United States was also aware of the assassinations and tortures against the left-wing activists under Operation Condor.<sup>155</sup> The United States turned a blind eye to the violence within the members of the Operation but warned against spreading the operation to activists who fled to non-member states, such as France or Portugal.<sup>156</sup> However, the CIA provided intelligence regarding individuals sought out by the South American intelligence agencies, and the FBI had also carried out searches within the US for such individuals.<sup>157</sup> The US,

<sup>146</sup> Osorio, Carlos. "National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 104." *National Security Archive* (3 December 2003).

<sup>147</sup> Ambrose, Stephen. *Eisenhower: The President (1952–1969)*. II. (Simon & Schuster, 1984).

<sup>148</sup> Grimmett, Richard F., and Mark P. Sullivan. *US Army School of the Americas: Background and Congressional Concerns*. (Library of Congress, 2001).

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> McCoy, Katherine E. "Trained to Torture? The Human Rights Effects of Military Training at the School of the Americas". *Latin American Perspectives* (2005).

<sup>152</sup> McSherry, Patrice. *Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America*. (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Osorio, Carlos. "Operation Condor on Trial." *The National Security Archive* (8 March 2013).

<sup>156</sup> Editors. "New Operation Condor Files Show Terror, Torture in Argentina." *TeleSur* (12 December 2016).

<sup>157</sup> McSherry, Patrice. *Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America*. (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).



according to officials from the State Department, was both aware of, and had the capability to stop, the violent counterinsurgency operations planned by the Operation Condor, but decided against stopping them. The United States would go on to warn the South American nations about the human rights abuses fearing international criticism over supporting dictatorships, but did not go as far as condemning the regimes.<sup>158</sup>

Despite these concerns over human rights, the US continued to covertly support the Operation Condor, providing intelligence, training, financial assistance, and advanced telecommunication and tracking technology from the base in Panama Canal Zone.<sup>159</sup> According to a CIA document, the intelligence agencies of the Operation Condor member states communicated with each other using a communication system called CONDORTEL, which relied on American infrastructure based in the Panama Canal Zone.<sup>160</sup> The CIA also played a key role in establishing a network of advanced computer systems for the Operation member states.<sup>161</sup>

### *French Involvement*

Military cooperation between France and Argentina goes back to 1959 when a permanent French military mission was established in Buenos Aires.<sup>162</sup> From 1954 to 1962, France had fought the Algerian war, where French intelligence gained experience

in counterinsurgency operations and torture. From 1959 to 1981, French military mission, consisting of veterans of the Algerian War, trained their Argentine counterparts in counterinsurgency and took important positions as officers of the Argentine Army.<sup>163</sup>

While the official position of French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's government was that of condemnation of state-sponsored terrorism, French military and the French intelligence agency, the DST, cooperated secretly with both Chilean and Argentine intelligence to help the right-wing dictators suppress left-wing activists.<sup>164</sup>

During this period, the French far-right became interconnected with the Argentine right-wing movement. *Cité Catholique*, far-right Catholic fundamentalist movement, greatly increased its presence in Argentina during the period of military rule before the return of Juan Perón to Argentina in 1973.<sup>165</sup> The *Cité Catholique* condoned the use of torture as a means of stopping subversives and strongly opposed communism.<sup>166</sup> It influenced the Argentine military due to the strong Catholic fundamentalism that was present within its ranks.<sup>167</sup> Catholic priests of Argentina were also influenced by the hardline stance of *Cité Catholique*.<sup>168</sup>

*Organisation Armée Secrète*, a French terrorist organization that fought against the Algerian independence movement, also participated in the anti-communist operations in Argentina. The chaplain of the

<sup>158</sup> Dinges, John. *The Condor Years: How Pinochet and His Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents*. (The New Press 2004-2005).

<sup>159</sup> Greg Grandin. *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War*. (University of Chicago Press, 2011).

<sup>160</sup> Dandan, Alejandra. "Los crímenes de la represión que no reconoció fronteras." *Página 12*.

<sup>161</sup> Greg Grandin. *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War*. (University of Chicago Press, 2011).

<sup>162</sup> Robin, Marie-Monique. "Escadrons de la mort, l'école française." *Algeria Watch* (13 December 2003).

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Tomasevski, Katerina. *An End to Torture: Strategies for its Eradication*. (Zed Books, 1988).

<sup>165</sup> Robin, Marie-Monique. "Escadrons de la mort, l'école française." *Algeria Watch* (13 December 2003).

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

OAS, Georges Grasset, brought members of the OAS as he took charge of the Argentine branch of the *Cité Catholique*.<sup>169</sup> The members of the OAS had experience in counterinsurgency operations and urban warfare, as well as torture and other means of suppressing dissidents from their operations in Algeria.<sup>170</sup> Many members of the OAS were also part of the *Cité Catholique*.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.



## Questions to Consider

1. *How will the Operation Condor continue under the new regime?*

Argentina joined the Operation Condor before the 1976 coup, but the new military leaders are as aggressive as, if not more so than the previous peronista regime. With the absence of the right-wing paramilitary groups, the new right-wing government's intelligence agencies, police, and military will need to coordinate amongst themselves and with foreign agencies to effectively continue the Operation.

2. *How will human rights be addressed?*

Even though the US and France are supporting Operation Condor, both nations, at least publicly, oppose human rights violations, which has led to troubles between Condor nations and the West. Protecting the basic freedoms of Argentinians might appease the West, but may lead to the downfall of the military junta.

3. *How will Argentina interact with foreign powers?*

Foreign assistance is crucial to the survival of the regime. Argentina relies heavily on technical, financial, and military support from its Western allies, but overreliance on allies may lead to loss of sovereignty for Argentina. The interests of the allies may conflict with Argentine interests at times, which will require careful political navigation to avoid a crisis.

4. *What will be Argentina's relationship with South American nations?*

The South American dictatorships have temporarily united under Operation Condor to face their common threat of leftist guerrillas and dissidents. However, Argentina has had troubled relations with its neighbors, in particular with Chile, which had been leading Operation Condor. The two nations have an ongoing territorial dispute over Beagle Channel which may escalate to a military conflict. The tension between the two core member states may drive the whole Operation to a failure.

5. *What will be the fate of political refugees in Argentina?*

Due to military coup in surrounding nations, Argentina had been flooded with refugees from other Condor member states. The purpose of the Operation Condor is to allow transnational assassinations and arrests across all South American states, which means political dissidents in Argentina are no longer safe from their respective governments. To what degree will Argentina allow foreign intelligence agencies to operate within its borders, and how will its own intelligence agency, police, and military cooperation with their foreign counterparts?

## Conclusion

The peronista regime in Argentina has come to an abrupt end, but the period of right-wing supremacy will likely continue under the new regime, born with the blessing of the anti-communist United States. However, given the delicate political balance of the Cold War era, much of the influence held by the United States over the military – as well as the shared network of influence that now connects all governments under Operation Condor – must be kept as secretive as possible.

The new military government has the daunting task of suppressing political dissidents and leftist activists while simultaneously appeasing Western standards of human rights. Garnering public support, by the carrot or by the stick, is critical in supporting the legitimacy of the new government and easing Argentina's transition from a leftist democracy to a military dictatorship. It is also tasked with the critical mandate of saving Argentina from the economic and political crises that the Peronistas imposed upon the public. A

good economy often translates into a happy public, and for the good of Argentina, a ragtag group of military dissidents must step into the business of governing a state as well as maintaining a tight military operation.

The committee will likely face internal conflicts, domestic dissidents, and challenges from leftists and former peronista allies throughout the continent. As a member of Operation Condor, Argentina serves as a vanguard of capitalism and conservative values in an increasingly leftist, communist-leaning Latin America. The committee must be able to band together with its allies to resist the spread of leftism, both domestically and regionally, in order to preserve the economic and military support of the United States. However, Argentina must also be wary of challenges from its allies within the Operation, particularly in the face of territorial disputes with Chile.

While the future is yet unclear, the only thing that is certain is that the decisions of the new military government will shape the future of Argentina for decades to come.

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