

Operation Condor: Clandestine Inter-American System.
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IN THE 10 YEARS SINCE THE COLD WAR'S END, THE WORLD HAS SEEN A GRADUAL opening up of formerly Secret state archives on both sides of the East-West divide, as well as truly astonishing developments in human rights and international law.

Spanish judge Baltasar Garzon's request for the arrest and extradition of General Augusto Pinochet in October 1998 was perhaps one of the most astounding of these developments, not least because this case involved a former ally of the U.S. government in the Cold War. Clearly, the collapse of the Communist bloc and the end of the bipolar system were major structural changes on the international level, allowing concerns with human rights and justice to emerge with new strength and begin to challenge the limits set by Cold War geopolitics. In effect, the struggle against impunity is becoming "globalized," a positive aspect of the larger phenomena of globalization. Yet profound questions remain. If a new threat to global U.S. interests were to emerge or a powerful challenge to the hegemony over the Western political and economic model were to arise, would concerns with human rights again be swept aside in the name of national security? Would the ends again justify the means?

The arrest of Pinochet refocused world attention on the dirty wars of the Cold War era in Latin America. A key focus of Garzon's investigation is Operation Condor, a shadowy Latin American military network whose key members were Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Brazil. Condor represented a striking new level of coordinated repression among the anticommunist militaries in the region, and its existence was suspected, but undocumented, until fairly recently. Condor enabled the Latin American military states to share intelligence and to hunt down, seize, and execute political opponents in combined operations across borders. Refugees fleeing military coups and repression in their own countries who sought safe havens in neighboring countries were "disappeared" in combined transnational operations. The militaries defied international law and traditions of political sanctuary to carry out their shared anticommunist crusade. This article shows that Condor was a parastatal system that used criminal methods to eliminate "subversion," while avoiding constitutional institutions, ignoring due process, and violating all manner of human rights. Condor made use of parallel prisons, secret transport operations, routine assassination and torture, extensive psychological warfare (PSYWAR, or use of black propaganda, deception, and disinformation to conquer the "hearts and minds" of the population, often by making crimes seem as though they were committed by the other side), and sophisticated technology (such as computerized lists of suspects).

Condor must be understood within the context of the global anticommunist alliance led by the United States. We now know that top U.S. officials and agencies, including the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Defense Department, were fully

aware of Condor's formation and its operations from the time it was organized in 1975 (if not earlier). The U.S. government considered the Latin American militaries to be allies in the Cold War and worked closely with their intelligence organizations. U.S. executive agencies at least condoned, and sometimes actively assisted, Condor "countersubversive" operations. Although evidence is still fragmentary, it is now possible to piece together information from numerous sources to understand Operation Condor as a clandestine inter-American counterinsurgency system.

This article draws on a wide variety of data: the "Archives of Terror" in Paraguay; [1] testimonies of victims in the files of Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales [CELS, Argentina]; declassified U.S. documents; Argentine military documents; reports of the Comision Nacional sobre la Desaparicion de Personas [CONADEP, Argentina] and the Comision Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliacion [the Rettig Commission of Chile]; interviews in Chile, Argentina, and Paraguay carried out between 1996 and 1998; newspapers from Latin America, Europe, and the United States; and works by scholars and former CIA agents. The evidence demonstrates that Operation Condor was a supranational structure of organized state terrorism that went far beyond targeting "communists."

The article first examines the (scanty) literature on Condor and on state terrorism to situate the discussion in a theoretical context. Condor's structures and operations are reviewed and briefly compared with the "stay-behind" projects in Europe, secret programs designed by the West for guerrilla warfare and covert operations aimed to undermine Communist and leftist advances. Finally, the article's conclusion reflects upon the ideologies and doctrines that gave rise to Condor and the question of ends and means.

The Literature on Condor and on State Terrorism

Keith M. Slack's (1996) [2] article very cautiously assessed the existence of Condor and of U.S. involvement. To be fair, much remained shadowy even a few years ago. New evidence emerged from Garzon's investigation, including a 1976 FBI memo on Condor; U.S. documents released in June 1999 prove Condor's existence beyond a doubt. Some knowledgeable officials have spoken out. In 1999, a high-ranking Argentine military source familiar with junta secrets in 1976 told an Argentine journalist that Henry Kissinger had assured the Chilean and Argentine juntas of the Ford administration's support and cooperation for counterinsurgency operations and for Operation Condor, during an inter-American meeting in Santiago on June 10, 1976.[3] The journalist obtained declassified U.S. State Department documents from 1976 to 1978 showing that the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires was well informed about Condor.

Similarly, former Interior Minister Alfredo Arce Carpio of Bolivia told another Argentine author in 1998, "the coordinatio n among Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, Chile, and Paraguay, known as Operation Condor, existed.... The military governments of Latin America agreed to have a common project of intelligence and interchange of prisoners." [4] nothing contained within the document would, prima facie, constitute a violation of international law. Governments are not barred...from exchanging information on what they believe to be criminal elements operating within their territory... .[T]he arrangement...would be legal under international law.... The question, of course, is how the

information gathered in the described system would be used - for the legitimate pursuit of persons who had in fact committed crimes or for the suppression of political dissent?

Slack's reading of the Paraguayan Archive evidence is rather narrow and legalistic, nonetheless. Despite his valuable categorization of the Archive's evidence of Condor, he finds most of the material ambiguous. Yet it includes plentiful documentation of coordinated operations among the military states to seize each others' "subversives" and transfer them secretly to clandestine prison systems. [5] Slack also places too much weight on finding references to the word "condor" ("adding to this ambiguity is the fact that there are very few documents...that use the word "condor" specifically"). He understates the brutal nature of the military regimes in question when he analyzes the key 1975 document in which Chile's Colonel Contreras invites his counterparts to a meeting to coordinate counterinsurgency strategy:

However, at the time it was well documented that these states were committing massive human rights abuses. Slack allows that "the information accumulated and disseminated by this system quite conceivably was used to violate human rights," and concludes that the Archive "strongly suggests the existence of formal, organized repression across international borders, but the definitive 'smoking gun' is not contained within the archive..." (Slack, 1996: 506). Seeking smoking guns is understandable, but intelligence services consider plausible deniability a major priority. A recently declassified U.S. assassination manual from the 1950s, for example, stated: "No assassination instructions should ever be written or recorded" (Weiner, 1996; Doyle, 1997).

As scholars such as Michael Stohl and William Stanley have observed, state violence and state terrorism are thorny subjects for U.S. scholars. They do not fit neatly into conventional theoretical frameworks, and, additionally, the concept of terrorism is ambiguous and fraught with analytical difficulties. [6] Liberal theories of pluralism and democracy do not explain the use of terrorism by states, as Stanley (1996) shows. These theories assume that states are legitimate expressions of the preferences of citizens or interest groups, thus offering few conceptual tools with which to explain state violence against them. Marxist theories often fall short. John McCamant (1984) argues that the emphasis of Marxist theories on oppression, particularly economic oppression by elites, often neglects an analysis of repression by states. Stanley posits that the use by a state of a grossly disproportionate level of violence against unarmed citizens, which may mobilize new popular opposition, seems to challenge Realist assumptions about the state's rational use of force. [7] Stohl (in Slater and Stohl, 1988: 160), on the other hand, argues that Realism implies that states are obliged to use whatever means necessary to protect national security and state survival. The evidence in this article lends weight to the latter proposition. Stohl (Ibid., 1988: 155-205; in Stohl and Lopez, 1984: 43-58) points out that states, particularly superpowers, may choose to employ terrorist methods or what he identifies as "surrogate terrorism" to achieve strategic objectives, and he provides numerous examples of such U.S. and Soviet practices during the Cold War. He argues that "the strategies and tactics of terrorism have become integral components of the foreign policy instruments of the modern state" (Stohl and Lopez, 1984: 55).

E.V. Walter's (1969) classic analysis of 19th-century political terrorism is still one of the best in terms of explaining the objectives of states that use terrorism. Walter argued that state elites manipulate fear as a means of controlling society and maintaining power. Terror is used to engineer compliant behavior not only among victims, but also among target populations. Walter's differentiation between victims and larger targets is key. While victims suffer direct consequences, the targets -- larger sectors of society -- understand the message. The underlying goal of state terrorism, Walter suggests, is to eliminate potential power contenders and to impose silence and political paralysis, thereby consolidating existing power relations. The proximate end is to instill terror in society and the ultimate end is control.

Not only are there methodological obstacles to scholarly investigations of state terrorism (primarily the difficulty of obtaining credible information), there are also issues of acute political sensitivity, especially when one begins to touch upon U.S. policy and operations. "Terrorism" is an acceptable term when applied to foreign governments, but to apply it to one's own government borders on taboo. As Stohl and Lopez (1984: 3) note, analysis of state terrorism may be dismissed as "skewed," "biased," "ideological," "not in the mainstream of the literature." Much of the English-language literature on terrorism focuses on individual and small-group terrorism rather than on state terrorism (for a notable exception, see McPherson, 1999: 621-632).

Some (not all) of the militaries in Latin America had used torture and other elements of state terrorism before the Cold War era. The national security states institutionalized state terrorism, however, creating qualitatively new systems. U.S. "modernization" of military, intelligence, and police forces during the Cold War served to strengthen the forces engaged in repression. Martha Huggins (1998: ix, x) shows that U.S. financing, training, and advice to police in Brazil were designed to ensure U.S. influence within, and access to, the force, to promote pro-U.S. attitudes, and to develop U.S. "assets" -- personnel loyal to U.S. interests. She demonstrates that foreign police training -- and similarly, for our purposes, training of military and intelligence forces -- by a powerful modern state is designed to advance the offering country's own security agenda. Although U.S. officials claimed that assistance to the Brazilian police would promote professionalism, democracy, and justice, in actuality it had the opposite effect. Police that employed terrorism, torture, death squads, and the like continued to receive U.S. assistance, financing, and cooperation. Huggins' book provides a rich case study of the ways in which U.S. security assistance centralized Brazil's internal security services and made them more militarized and authoritarian. Many Condor operations dovetailed with U.S. countersubversive policy as well.

[8]

In recent years we have learned much about U.S. sponsorship of terrorism during the Cold War, including assassination attempts against Fidel Castro and campaigns of terror such as Operation Mongoose in Cuban territory; [9] the CIA-led Phoenix Program in Vietnam, a computerized counterinsurgency program that used assassination, terrorism, and psychological warfare against civilians; [10] and the financing of right-wing paramilitary and terrorist groups like Patina y Libertad in Chile and the Nicaraguan contras. [11] The infamous School of the Americas and CIA training manuals released in the mid-1990s

proved that army and CIA instructors taught Latin American officers methods of torture, including use of electroshock against prisoners, the use of drugs and other means to induce psychological regression, assassination, and coercion against family members to compel compliance. [12] The CIA trained Honduran intelligence unit Battalion 3-16-- which carried out torture -- in interrogation, surveillance, and psycho logical manipulation in the 1980s. [13] In 1997, General Eladio Moll of Uruguay testified before parliament that during the 1970s U.S. national security officers urged their Uruguayan counterparts to execute prisoners after interrogation, something the Uruguayans generally did not do. [14] Another Uruguayan intelligence officer said in 1981 that U.S. training manuals listed 35 nerve points where electrodes could be applied during torture. [15] Retired Army Major Joseph Blair, who participated in the Phoenix Program, has criticized the School of the Americas repeatedly for teaching torture, assassination, and extortion. [16] The historical record is clear, if unnerving, that use of surrogate terrorism was U.S. policy during much of the Cold War. This record must be faced squarely, not only for its ethical and moral implications, but also because it meant that Condorintelligence units and military states knew they had the "green light" for their operations. [17]

Condor's victims included guerrillas and militants as well as political leaders, activists, and dissidents who denounced social injustice, organized political opposition, or challenged the military states. In Walter's terms, the larger targets of Condor were rebellious sectors of society and popular movements demanding democratic or social change. The Argentine and Chilean juntas specifically sought to "change the mentality" of their people. Radical demands characterized much of the region in the 1960s and 1970s as new aspirations for equality and social justice swept the Third World. Several policy responses could have been chosen, but in the polarized conditions of the Cold War, the national security states chose repression.

Operation Condor in the Inter-American Context

Operation Condor was a top-secret arrangement among South American military intelligence agencies so united in their ideological convictions that they continued to cooperate even when their own military governments were close to war. [18] Condor was a highly sophisticated system of command, control, intelligence, exchange of prisoners, and combined operations. It allowed the militaries to act with impunity in associated countries, and to utilize clandestine structures parallel to the state apparatus to avoid accountability and maintain maximum secrecy. Suspects who were legally arrested could be passed into the covert Condor system, at which point all information available to the outside world about the person ceased. The person "disappeared" and the state could deny responsibility and knowledge of the person's whereabouts. Condor employed complex infrastructures and covert elimination mechanisms (such as burning bodies or throwing them into the sea). The Condor apparatus bypassed the official state judicial and penal structures that remained functioning during the military regimes.

Condor was formally launched in 1975 by then-Colonel Manuel Contreras of Chile's fearsome state security agency, the National Directorate of Intelligence, or DINA. Condor's countersubversive operations extended into the rest of South America, Central and North America, and Europe.

[19] The most secret aspect of Condor ("Phase III") was its capability to assassinate political leaders especially feared for their potential to mobilize world opinion or organize broad opposition to the military states. Victims included former Chilean minister Orlando Letelier -- a fierce foe of the Pinochet regime -- and his American colleague Ronni Moffitt, in Washington, D.C.; Chilean Christian Democratic leader Bernardo Leighton and his wife, in Rome; nationalist ex-president of Bolivia Juan Jose Torres, in Buenos Aires; and two Urugunyan legislators known for their opposition to the Uruguayan military regime, Zelmari Michelini and Hector Gutierrez Ruiz, also in Buenos Aires. In the first two cases, DINA assassination teams "contracted" local terrorist and fascist organizations to assist in carrying out the crimes. Clearly, Operation Condor was an organized system of state terrorism with a transnational reach.

Condor allowed the militaries in the Southern Cone to put into practice a key strategic concept of Cold War national security doctrine: hemispheric defense defined by ideological frontiers. The more limited concept of territorial defense was superseded. To the U.S. national security apparatus--which fostered the new continent-wide security doctrine in its training centers -- and to many Latin American militaries, the Cold War represented World War III, the war of ideologies. Security forces in Latin America classified and targeted persons on the basis of their political ideas rather than illegal acts. [20] The regimes hunted down dissidents and leftists, union and peasant leaders, priests and nuns, intellectuals, students, and teachers -- not only guerrillas (who in any event were also entitled to due process).

The 1992 discovery of the Paraguayan Archives of Terror [21] provided new, and rare, documentation of the functioning of Condor, confirming earlier testimonies of victims and hitherto incomplete evidence. Intact secret archives from the national security states have been uncovered in only two countries, Paraguay and Brazil (Davis, 1996; Pereira, 1998). The files document the workings of an integrated system of repression that operated through official government channels. Although such a system had been widely perceived earlier, it is important to recall that until very recently, military commanders had argued that the regimes were not responsible for disappearances, or that torture and assassination were not systematic, but only isolated "excesses." Condor was truly a well-kept secret of the Cold War; in fact, the extent of U.S. knowledge of Condor was unclear until June 1999.

The U.S. government sponsored and collaborated with DINA and with the other intelligence organizations forming the nucleus of Condor, despite the fact that the military dictatorships were killing and torturing thousands of people. In the Paraguayan Archives there were official requests to track suspects to and from the U.S. Embassy, the CIA, and FBI. The CIA provided lists of suspects and other intelligence information to the military states. The FBI searched for individuals wanted by DINA in the United States in 1975. [22] In June 1999, the State Department released thousands of declassified documents [23] showing for the first time that the CIA and the State and Defense Departments were intimately aware of Condor; one Defense Department intelligence report dated October 1, 1976, noted that Latin American military officers bragged about it to their U.S. counterparts. The same report approvingly described Condor's "joint counterinsurgency operations" that aimed to "eliminate Marxist terrorist activities"; Argentina, it noted, created a special Condor team "structured much

like a U.S. Special Forces Team." [24] A CIA document called Condor "a counter-terrorism organization" and noted that the Condor countries had a specialized telecommunications system called "CONDORTEL." [25] In fact, an Argentine military source told a U.S. Embassy contact that the CIA was privy to Condor and had played a key role in setting up computerized links among the intelligence and operations units of the six Condor states. [26]

Declassified U.S. documents and documents in the Archives show that FBI officer Robert Scherrer, stationed in Argentina, was collaborating with Condor operations in 1975. He apparently did not report Condor to his Washington superiors until 1976, however, when he linked it to the recent assassination of Letelier and Moffitt. [27] Apparently, DINA held discussions with the CIA in 1974 about opening a Condor headquarters in Miami. [28]

The Army School of the Americas (SOA) and the Panama base of the U.S. Army Southern Command served as a center for the continental anticommunist alliance, and there are indications that the planning of covert operations took place there. Certainly, many officers who designed and implemented military terrorism in Latin America were graduates of the SOA. One military graduate of the School said, "the school was always a front for other special operations, covert operations." [29] Garzon has asked the United States for any documentation linking the School with Condor. [30]

Whether Condor was the brainchild of the U.S. national security apparatus remains unclear, but significant in itself is the accumulating evidence that collaboration with Condor operations to target and seize leftists was U.S. policy (if secret). Condor certainly exemplified documented U.S. priorities in Latin America. U.S. officials worked to centralize military and police command structures and intelligence systems, modernize communications, and foster strategic and operational coordination in the struggle against Communism. The United States played a central role in financing, organizing, and training the police, military, and intelligence forces of Latin America, modernizing and professionalizing them, and increasing their technological capabilities. We now know that Pentagon and CIA training manuals taught methods of population control, coercive interrogation, censorship, infiltration, surveillance, torture, assassination, use of drugs on suspects, and other repressive techniques. Although the documentary record is still fragmentary and many sources remain classified, emerging evidence on Condor and the European stay-behind armies suggests that there was an "underside" of the Cold War that was fought secretly, using clandestine operations and parallel armies that escaped democratic control and violated basic human rights.

Again, Operation Condor must be understood within the broader context of the Cold War and the security architecture shaped by the United States after World War II. The Condor system takes on deeper meaning when viewed alongside the European stay-behind projects discovered in 1990, part of a U.S.-led, covert effort to set up authority structures parallel to (and often, opposed to) elected governments and democratic institutions. [31] Like the stay-behind armies, Condor was a clandestine component of a regional anticommunist front and part of a covert strategy of the states involved, known only to select officials. Operation Condor operated inside of, or parallel to, formal military alliances such as the Rio Pact and the Conference of American Armies,

as the stay-behind programs operated secretly within NATO. (A NATO Experts Working Group on Latin America kept close tabs on developments in Latin America in the 1970s.) [32] Finally, there is evidence that the stay-behind program in Italy, known as Operation Gladio, was linked to Condor.

Comparing Condor to the European "Stay-Behind" Projects

After World War II, top U.S. national security strategists grew increasingly alarmed by the advances of Communism in Eastern Europe and in the Far East. U.S. national security specialists embarked on a secret, multibillion-dollar project to develop global covert warfare [33] and propaganda machinery to wage the Cold War against Communism. National Security Council Directive 10/2 of June 1948 authorized a vast program of clandestine: propaganda, economic warfare, preventative direct action including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition, and evacuation measures...subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas, and refugee liberation groups, and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements... [to be done so that] any U.S. government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if uncovered the U.S. government can plausibly deny any responsibility... (Church Committee Report, Book IV, 1976:29-31, cited in Simpson, 1988: 102).

The earliest uses of targeted U.S. covert operations were in the Greek civil war and in the Italian elections of 1948, in which the Communist Party (PCI) stood poised to gain power. Respected domestically for its central role in the Italian antifascist resistance, the PCI was subject to a covert U.S. campaign of political manipulation, paramilitary action, and propaganda to undermine its popularity. The Italian operation, which was considered successful, set a precedent for CIA covert operations and dirty methods that became standard practice. [34]

Throughout Europe, U.S. and British officials, operating within NATO, set up secret stay-behind armies to prepare for a Communist invasion -- and prevent Communist electoral victories. These paramilitary forces incorporated fascists and former Nazis (Searchlight, 1991). One NATO source told Searchlight (a British nongovernmental organization) that the two-pronged strategy of Britain's Stay Behind was "to destabilize any left-leaning government, even a Social Democratic one, and in the event of a Warsaw Pact attack to function as a guerrilla army using classical guerrilla tactics" (Ibid.). [35] The U.S. pushed for a secret clause in the North Atlantic Treaty requiring the secret services of all joining nations to establish their own branches of the secret army -- and to oppose Communist influence, even if the population voted for Communist candidates in free elections (Simpson, 1988: 100-102; Willan, 1991: 27; Rowse, 1994). The covert project (known as Gladio in Italy, Operation Stay Behind in the U.K., and Sheepskin in Greece, among other names) encompassed all of Europe and Scandinavia, including neutral countries. Agents set up hundreds of arms caches all across Europe; one was at the U.S. Army's Camp Derby (Lauria, 1991: 15; Willan, 1991: 170).

Charles deGaulle pulled France out of NATO partially due to the secret protocol, which he considered a violation of sovereignty, and he regarded the secret network to be a danger to his government (Willan, 1991: 27; Kwitney, 1992). Discovery of the covert project in 1990 caused a political firestorm in Europe. In that year, the European

Parliament passed a strongly worded denunciation of the clandestine organization, its antidemocratic implications, and the terrorist acts associated with it. [36]

Italian investigators discovered connections between the secret Gladio plans and well-known terrorist acts, attempted military coups, and the undermining of democratic institutions in the 1970s and 1980s. Later, investigators linked Gladio with terrorist attacks officially attributed to left-wing guerrillas, such as the Red Brigades' 1978 assassination of Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro, who was moving to include the Communist Party in a coalition government. (In 1974, Henry Kissinger and a U.S. intelligence official had warned Moro against a rapprochement with the Communists, in a meeting that greatly upset Moro [Willan, 1991: 220].) A parliamentary commission on terrorism concluded that the infamous 1980 bombing of the Bolognarail station, which killed 85 people and wounded 200, used bomb materials from a Gladio arsenal. [37] One major neofascist figure, Licio Gelli, was found guilty by an Italian court in this bombing case, but later the conviction was overturned, causing a national outcry. According to Arthur Rowse (1991), after collaborating with the Nazis in World War II, Gelli joined the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Corps. He was the founder (in 1964) of the global Masonic lodge Propaganda-Due (P-2), an anticommunist organization with close links to military and intelligence organizations (notably the CIA) and powerful political figures worldwide. [38] P-2 was outlawed in Italy in 1981 after it was discovered to have infiltrated its members into strategic government, military, and intelligence positions, in preparation for taking over the government. P-2 also wielded significant influence in Argentina. [39]

A 1992 British Broadcasting Company (BBC) documentary on the Cold War featured an interview with U.S. Colonel Oswald LeWinter, who asserted that the CIA had penetrated or controlled right-wing terrorist organizations, including P [2,] and recruited members on the basis of anticommunism. [40] Gelli was a key figure linking U.S. officials, the CIA, and Argentine military commanders, among others, [41] and there was overlap between Gladio and P-2. European journalists reported that a former NATO operative said that the CIA deputy station chief in Rome, Ted Shackley, introduced Gelli to General Alexander Haig, then Nixon's chief of staff and later, from 1974 to 1979, NATO Supreme Commander. Gladio reportedly received major funding with the approval of Haig and Henry Kissinger, then head of the National Security Council. [42]

During the investigation of Gladio, former Italian Defense Minister Paulo Taviani told a judge that the Italian secret services were directed and financed by CIA officers stationed in the U.S. Embassy. [43] Indeed, General Giovanni de Lorenzo, who headed the secret service called SIFAR (1956), later headed the Carabinieri (1962), and then became Defense Minister (1964), conducted secret counterterrorism planning with U.S. officials but did not inform his own government. [44] SIFAR compiled surveillance information on tens of thousands of Italians (Statewatch, n.d.). De Lorenzo's Operation Solo was a plan to take over media networks, arrest politicians, seize the offices of leftist parties, and even to assassinate Moro. [45] These sorts of operations are strongly reminiscent of those carried out by the Condor militaries and they illuminate the key role of the CIA. De Lorenzo was the key Gladio contact with the U.S. government, and Vernon Walters was a key U.S.

link to De Lorenzo (Rowse, 1994: 3).

In short, evidence suggests that key individuals formed part of a global anticommunist network that involved P-2, Condor, Gladia, the CIA, and defense and intelligence personnel in Western countries. Although direct evidence of CIA involvement in Condor remains scarce, the agency was as deeply involved in the Latin American military intelligence organizations as it was in Europe's.

[46]

The Origins of Condor

DINA, the Chilean intelligence organization that set up the logistics of Condor, was created shortly after the September 1973 coup. Its first incarnation was as the secret DINA Commission, an ideologically extreme and committed group of army colonels and majors. [47] The junta officially established DINA in June 1974 as an autonomous intelligence agency reporting directly to the junta, more powerful than the intelligence branches of the four armed forces. DINA's mission was to eliminate internal enemies, and the agency quickly became the main perpetrator of a pattern of terrorist practices, such as disappearance and torture (Comision Nacional, Rettig Report, 1991: 449--452). One DINA operative explained DINA's strategy as follows: "First the aim was to stop terrorism, then possible extremists were targeted, and later those who might be converted into extremists." [48] (Similar language was used in 1977 by Argentine General Iberico St.-Jean when he said: "First we will kill all the subversives; then we will kill their collaborators; then their sympathizers; then those who are indifferent....") [49] These statements reflected the extremist concepts of the national security doctrine that formed the philosophical foundation of the national security states.

DINA's Manuel Contreras visualized Condor as an application of modern technology and communications to the anticommunist crusade. In August 1975, Contreras flew to Washington, D.C., to meet with Vernon Walters, the CIA Deputy Director and a veteran of covert operations. The subject of the meeting remains secret. [50] A month later, Contreras wrote a memo to Pinochet asking for an extra \$600,000 for "the neutralization of the junta's principal opponents outside Chile," in Argentina, the USA, Italy, and elsewhere. [51] Contreras traveled in 1975 to Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, and Venezuela to advocate cross-border intelligence cooperation (Dinges and Landau, 1980:155--157; Brandt, 1998). A letter from Contreras dated October 1975 in the Paraguayan Archives invited General Francisco Brites, chief of the Paraguayan police, to "a Working Meeting of National Intelligence" to be held in Santiago under "strict secrecy." The purpose of the meeting was to be the establishment of "an excellent coordination and improved action to benefit National Security." [52] The minutes of the meeting, dated October 29, 1975, included a proposal for action and an organizational structure. The document's introduction was worded in the apocalyptic language of the national security doctrine, and stated that: Subversion, for some years, has been present in our Continent, sheltered by politico-economic concepts that are fundamentally contrary to History, Philosophy, Religion, and the traditions of the countries of our Hemisphere. This described situation recognizes no Frontiers or Countries, and the infiltration penetrates all levels of National life.... [I]t is to confront this Psycho-political War that we have determined that we must function in the

international environment not with a command centralized in its internal functioning, but with an efficient Coordination that will permit an opportune interchange of intelligence and experience as well as a certain level of personal relations among the chiefs responsible for Security. [53]

The document proposed a security system with three elements: an Office of Coordination and Security that would include a computerized central data bank of suspects, "something similar to Interpol, but dedicated to Subversion"; an information center with special communication channels, a cryptology capability, telephones with scrambling mechanisms, and message systems; and permanent working meetings. The Chileans offered Santiago as the headquarters of the system, specifying that the "technical personnel" of the system would be equally represented by participating countries. These technical personnel would have diplomatic immunity, and the Chileans proposed that they be from the intelligence services. It appears that the "technical personnel" were the intelligence agents who carried out Condor operations, including disappearances and assassinations, and they were to have free passage in member countries. (Two Chilean members of the unit who were preparing the Letelier assassination, for example, acquired false passports in Paraguay in 1976 [Dinges and Landau, 1980: 184, 188--193].) The ensuing days of meetings in Santiago were focused on each country's "situation of Subversion and the forms of combating it," as well as the construction of the system of intelligence coordination.

The sanitized technical language masked the nature of the Condor system, which represented the internationalization of military repressive structures and operations respecting no civilian or constitutional law. Essentially, the intelligence organizations "exported" their dirty wars by pooling their resources to better track and eliminate political opposition across borders.

Condor Counterinsurgency Operations

In 1974 and 1975, as large numbers of people disappeared and disfigured bodies began to be found, Latin Americans perceived a terrible new level of death squad operations. The mutilated bodies of 119 missing Chilean leftists, many of whom originally had been detained by Chilean security forces and others who had disappeared, were discovered in 1975, mainly in Argentina, but also in several other countries. Chilean newspapers printed sensationalist stories blaming deadly "vendettas" within Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), a revolutionary (but not a guerrilla) organization, and other leftist organizations. Other stories warned of a dangerous guerrilla army massing in Argentina and poised to attack Chile. Years later, secret DINA files were discovered showing that the 119 were disappeared and murdered as part of a combined Chilean-Argentine security operation called Operation Colombo, linked to Chilean and Argentine Condor operatives. DNA and Argentine intelligence organizations had planted the false stories and false identifications of the victims as part of a PSYWAR campaign designed to obscure and confuse (the best source is CODEPU, 1994; see also Comision Nacional/Rettig Report, 1991: 482--84; CODEPU, 1996). Clearly, the objectives were to discredit leftist and human rights organizations opposed to the coup, to create fear and disorientation, to provide heroic justification for the countersubversive campaigns of the militaries, and to win support for the Chilean military regime. (Significantly, Argentina was still under the civilian rule of Isabel

Peros in these years.)

In other cases, some 30 bodies appeared in Buenos Aires, but were so disfigured by torture that they were unrecognizable. Another 20 bodies washed up on shore in Uruguay, showing signs of torture, gunshot wounds, and rape; authorities said the victims were Asians from off-shore fishing boats (Blixen, 1995b: 4). Dozens of Bolivians and Chileans living under the protection of the United Nations in Buenos Aires were seized and disappeared in 1976 (Comisión Nacional/Rettig Report, 1991: 598-99; Sivak, 1998: 119--122). Bolivian ex-President Torres was assassinated in Buenos Aires that year, as were the two Uruguayan legislators opposed to their country's military regime, Michelini and Gitoerrez Ruiz. The military states made little distinction between local revolutionary insurgents such as Argentine ERP militants, Chilean MIR members, and Uruguayan Tupamaros, and unarmed political opponents of the military states and their families and friends.

Condor's combined operations in the Southern Cone were carried out by squadrons of two or more South American military and/or police commandos to abduct victims and bring them to torture centers in police commissaries, military barracks, or abandoned buildings. Targets were immediately deprived of any rights, blindfolded, maltreated, and never acknowledged to be prisoners by the regime. There was no semblance of due process for the prisoners -- and there were many thousands of prisoners. In Argentina, where Condor operations were extensive, a former garage called Orletti Motors became a central clandestine detention center for Condor, holding prisoners from Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, and elsewhere. Uruguayan and Chilean intelligence, police, and military officers operated freely with logistical assistance from the Argentines.

In CELS microfiches #30 and #31, there are 22 testimonies of the few survivors of Orletti, which was under the command of the First Army Corps. In 1975, General Albano Harguindeguy was the subzone commander of the Buenos Aires area; Orletti was under his jurisdiction, as were six other clandestine torture centers. After the March 1976 military coup, Harguindeguy became the junta's Interior Minister. Anibal Gordon -- a civilian who was a former operative in the notorious Triple A death squad -- was in charge of operations in Orletti. Uruguayan and Chilean intelligence officers were regularly present in Orletti, participating in torture and interrogation of prisoners.

Several cases illuminate Condor operations in Orletti. Victor Lubian, who provided testimony in November 1978, was born in Argentina but moved to Uruguay at five years of age. He became active in the 1970s in the Federation of University Students of Uruguay, an organization declared illegal, by military decree, in December 1973. In January 1974 he returned to Argentina, but six months later he was detained in his house by a parapolice commando of Argentines and Uruguayans. He was held in Orletti until July 24, when he was transferred to Montevideo with other Uruguayans in a Uruguayan Air Force plane (CELS microfiches 30 and 31). On October 23, 1976, Lubian was charged there with "assisting a subversive association," and on November 29 was transferred to Establecimiento Militar de Reclusion number 1, the notorious Libertad prison.

Lubian described the methods of the torturers in Orletti: "they created

a relation of absolute dependence under an omnipotent and anonymous authority, one could do nothing for himself, not the most basic thing...a glass of water, or to be able to go to the bathroom, were worth more than all the money in the world." Prisoners who collaborated were rewarded with drinks of water and beaten if they didn't, creating a sense of personal responsibility for torture. Drugs were some times used on prisoners to disorient them and make them talk. Lubian testified that some torturers enjoyed using aberrant, sadistic sexual tortures directed against both men and women. The torturers all used the same name, Oscar: they called themselves Oscar 1, Oscar 2, and Oscar 3, etc.; Oscar 5 was a doctor who kept victims alive. Lubian believed all were Uruguayan army officers. One officer known as "302" was Jose Gavazzo, the executive chief of operations who operated out of Orletti.

Lubian witnessed members of the Santucho family in Orletti. Mario Roberto Santucho, the leader of the Argentine guerrilla organization Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP), was killed in a military operation on July 18, 1976. Yet afterwards, other members of his family, who were not involved in politics, were tortured and killed out of pure sadism. In Orletti, brother Carlos Santucho was hung from a hook over a tub of filthy water and repeatedly lowered into it. He appeared to have lost his mind from torture, raving in a delirious manner. Lubian said the guards forced his sister, Manuela Santucho, to read aloud the newspaper story of Mario's death. Then they tortured and raped her, using methods that he called "the product of sick imaginations."

Enrique Rodriguez Laretta was a well-known Uruguayan journalist who was seized because his son was a political militant. He testified that there were pictures of Hitler on the walls inside Orletti. He recognized the voices of two Uruguayan union leaders who had disappeared in Argentina. According to Rodriguez Laretta, the guards were Argentines and his kidnapers were officers of the Uruguayan army. The Uruguayans participated directly in the torture. Rodriguez Laretta also described Oscar 1, 2, and 3, and identified officers in the Uruguayan military intelligence organization SID (Servicio de Informaciones de Defensa) and OCOA (Organismo Coordinador de Operaciones Anti-Subversivos). SID was directly under the command of the Uruguayan junta and one of its commanders was Gavazzo.

Another Uruguayan case was that of Sara Mendez. Late on July 13, 1976, a 15-man commando broke down the door of her Buenos Aires apartment, and seized and tortured her. She perceived that there were two teams, one Argentine and one Uruguayan, and she identified Gavazzo. The men took her baby and brought her to Orletti. She was transferred with the group of Uruguayans to Montevideo, and was eventually released in May 1981, but she has not been reunited with her son. In recent years, human rights groups have gathered substantial evidence that baby trafficking by the militaries was systematic and well organized across borders, another dimension of Condor operations (Algaraz, 1999; Brown, 1999).

Sergio Lopez Burgos was a Uruguayan unionist who was detained and maltreated after the June 1973 coup in Uruguay. He moved to Argentina in April 1975 and became a legal resident, with permission to work. He, with a colleague, formed a commission-in-exile of the Convencion Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT, National Convention of Workers), which

was dedicated to solidarity activities with labor unions suffering repression in Uruguay. In July 1976, Lopez and his colleague, Leon Duarte, were seized in a Buenos Aires cafe by a team of 12 men in civilian clothes that included Uruguayan army officers. The two shouted to others in the cafe that they were unionists and that this was a disappearance. The kidnappers were infuriated and one whipped out an identification and shouted that this was an Argentine army operation and that people should remain calm. Lopez had his jaw broken as the squadron dragged him out of the cafe. He testified that he was taken to Orletti, where he saw Hector Mendez, a Uruguayan leader of the Congreso Obrero Textil and the CNT. For 12 or 14 days, the prisoners ate only three times. Lopez reported that he saw a guard raping a semi-conscious woman prisoner.

All told, 169 Uruguayans disappeared between 1971 and 1981, and an astounding 127 of them disappeared in Argentina (Barahona de Brito, 1997: 48). General Amauri Prantl, head of the Uruguayan Defense Intelligence Service, supervised the secret Condor operations, coordinating the actions of police, military, and intelligence operatives and units under the Oficina Coordinadora de Operaciones Anti-Subversivas (OCA). Prantl worked with Argentine General Otto Paladino -- then head of the State Intelligence Service, or SIDE -- in coordinating cross-border operations (Ibid.).

There was a curious sequel to the evidence about Uruguayan officers in Condor. Gavazzo and several other officers based in Orletti were pardoned by Argentine President Menem in 1989, at the request of Uruguayan civilian president Sanguinetti, along with Argentine military officers accused of human rights crimes and sedition. For an Argentine president to pardon Uruguayan officers was clearly an odd, and constitutionally dubious, move. In 1995, Gavazzo was jailed in Uruguay for extortion, but he has not admitted to human rights abuses (Blixen, 1995b: 1; Blixen, 1995a: 3).

Cases of Chileans Who Disappeared

A key case illuminating U.S. involvement in Condor countersubversive operations was that of Chilean Jorge Isaac Fuentes Alarcon, who was seized by Paraguayan police as he crossed the border from Argentina to Paraguay in May 1975. Fuentes, a sociologist who was apparently a courier for MIR, was traveling with Amilcar Santucho, another brother of the ERP leader. The Rettig Commission learned that the capture of Fuentes was a cooperative effort by Argentine intelligence services, personnel of the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires (who reported the results of Fuentes' interrogation to Chilean police), and Paraguayan police. Fuentes was transferred to the Chilean police, who brought him to Villa Grimaldi, a notorious DINA detention center in Santiago. He was last seen there, savagely tortured (Comision Nacional/Rettig Report, 1991: 595-596; CODEPU, 1996: 78-83).

Recently declassified documents include a letter from the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires (written by Robert Scherrer) informing the Chilean military of the capture of Fuentes. Scherrer provided the names and addresses of three individuals residing in the United States whom Fuentes named during his interrogation, and stated that the FBI was conducting investigations of the three. [54] This letter, among others, confirms that U.S. officials and agencies were cooperating with the military dictatorships and acting as a link in the Condor chain.

Perhaps most striking is that this coordination was routine (if secret), standard operating procedure within U.S. policy.

Another Chilean case was of a man born in Argentina who moved to Chile after the Argentine coup of 1966. Patricio Biedma married Luz Lagarrigua and had three children; he also became involved with MIR. After the 1973 coup in Chile, the family moved back to Buenos Aires. There, Biedma was seized and disappeared in July 1976, for his activities in Chile. He was held in Orletti Motors and interrogated by a Chilean intelligence officer. Luz Lagarrigun went to Cuba and for years had no idea of what had happened to him. In 1983, after the fall of the military government in Argentina, she returned there to search for her husband. She learned nothing about his fate, however, and neither did CONADEP, the Argentine commission on the disappeared. Several years later, a young man came forward and said he had known her husband in Orletti. He told her that Biedma was like a father to him in the detention center, teaching him how to survive and staying close to him. They were together 45 days, but then the young man was released. His family sent him to Spain, where for years he was afraid to say anything about his experience. [55] Lagarrigun never learned what finally happened to her husband.

The Paraguayan Archives have actually solved some cases of the disappeared. One such case involved two Argentine members of the Peronist Youth, Dora Marta Landi and Alejandro Logoluso, who went to Paraguay after the 1976 coup in Argentina. They were arrested in Asuncion in March 1977, but the authorities told their parents they were later freed. The Argentine junta consistently denied any knowledge of their whereabouts. Official documents found in the Archives proved, however, that the two had been detained by the Paraguayan police and then on May 16, 1977, delivered to an Argentine military unit (two army intelligence officers and one navy officer from an infamous torture center). They were flown in an Argentine navy plane to Buenos Aires, where the trail ended. The Paraguayan police report included their photos and fingerprints and the names of the Argentine officers who took them. [56]

High-Level Assassinations

The first major Condor-style assassination occurred in 1974, before the official founding of Condor. Chilean General Carlos Prats, a constitutionalist who was Allende's commander-in-chief and who had opposed the 1973 coup, was murdered in Buenos Aires along with his wife in a DNA car bombing. In 1975, Chilean Christian Democratic leader Bernardo Leighton and his wife were ambushed and wounded in an assassination attempt in Rome. The assassination in Washington, D.C., of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt occurred in 1976. DNA agents contracted fascist terrorists in Italy -- including several involved in the Gladio network -- and Cuban exiles in the right-wing Cuban Nationalist Movement to assist in carrying out the respective crimes. A U.S. expatriate and DNA assassin, Michael Townley, links all three cases. In Chile, Townley claimed that he was a CIA operative, as did his defense attorney during the Letelier assassination trial in the United States, but the CIA said he was not. He was a U.S. Embassy informant and a militant in Patria y Libertad, the right-wing terrorist group funded by the CIA. [57]

Townley eventually revealed the details of the Letelier and Moffitt

assassinations in a U.S. court. He and a Chilean officer named Armando Fernandez Larios obtained false passports in Paraguay, telling diplomats there they had CIA approval for a secret mission in the United States. Townley and Fernandez originally communicated with Colonel Benito Guanes, [58] the Paraguayan army intelligence chief who since has been linked to Condor. U.S. Ambassador George Landau became suspicious, however, and informed the CIA; which told him there was no such mission. [59] Two other DNA agents eventually traveled on false Chilean passports to Washington, and they sent word to General Vernon Walters at the CIA when they arrived. Thus, Dinges and Landau posit that the CIA--under Director George Bush at the time -- knew DNA was planning a covert operation in Washington, D.C., yet did not notify law enforcement or Letelier himself. In September 1976, Townley arrived in Washington and recruited individuals from the Cuban Nationalist Movement, all but one of whom had been involved in the CIA-backed Bay of Pigs operation (Landau, 1978: 12; Branch and Propper, 1982: 349-352). They monitored Letelier, bought explosives, built a bomb, and placed it under his car. The CIA neglected to inform federal investigators about what it knew for months after the crime while prosecutors tried to identify the assassins. Indeed, the CIA promoted the hypothesis that the crime had been committed by the Left, and insisted that DNA was not involved (Landau, 1978: 33-35; Dinges and Landau, 1980: 382-398; Corn, 1994: 329). Meanwhile, the Chilean junta denied responsibility and Contreras blamed the CIA (Valenzuela and Constable, 1991: 105-106). Given the CIA's knowledge of DNA operations, and its close links to DNA and to Cuban exile groups, its behavior raises suspicions. The CIA's reaction resembled the classic black propaganda tactic of blaming the other side in order to deceive and confuse.

Since turning state's evidence in the Letelier case, Townley has been in the Witness Protection Program. The Clinton administration refused to let Spanish lawyers interview Townley in 1998 (Vest, 1998). Armando Fernandez, who was also accused of a role in the Prats murder, lives in Miami today, also under federal protection, running an import-export business. He has been sued by the family of a Chilean economist tortured and murdered by DNA, in a groundbreaking case (Imerman, n.d.; Kidwell, 1999). Two of the Cubans convicted in the Letelier hit managed to elude authorities until 1990 and 1991, respectively. Two others escaped conviction on appeal, and in 1990 were associated with the Cuban-American National Foundation in Miami (Landau and Anderson, 1998; New York Times editorial, 1990).

DINA operatives and Pinochet himself met with Italian neofascist Stefano Della Chiaie (who was suspected of involvement in the 1980 bombing in Bologna) in Madrid and discussed the assassination operation to take place in Rome against Leighton. [60] Townley, testifying in an Italian court about that crime, said that it was carried out via "a global anti-Marxist agreement." He admitted that he met 10 or 15 times with Della Chiaie to organize the attack. [61] In October 1975, Della Chiaie's terrorist organization, Avanguardia Nazionale, carried out the assassination attempt (Cuya, 1993). Another Italian fascist convicted of terrorist bombings, Vincenzo Vinciguerra, testified in court that members of his paramilitary organization, Ordine Nuovo, were tools of the secret services (Willan, 1991: 138, 141) and linked to Gladio. Vinciguerra said Gladio had carried out bombings attributed to the Left, that it was linked to NATO, and that it recruited among fascist circles. Vinciguerra added that the network had been used for domestic

purposes "by national and international forces...principally the United States of America." [62] He confirmed that the Leighton attack was arranged by "a secret structure of the Latin American intelligence services called Operation Condor" (Blixen, 1995c: 3). In 1995, an Italian court found Contreras and other DINA officers guilty in absentia of the Leighton attack. [63]

Della Chiaie also participated in the 1980 coup in Bolivia, along with former Gestapo chief Klaus Barbie and Argentine military officers, an event that graphically illustrated the global nature of the right-wing anticommunist alliance during the Cold War. [64]

The Role of National Security Ideologies and Doctrines

Why did U.S. officials form alliances with antidemocratic and fascist groups and militaries? The secret 1954 Doolittle Report sheds light on this question. It made the case that the United States faced a total war against "an implacable enemy whose avowed objective is world domination." Echoing the alarmist National Security Directive/68 (NSC/68) of 1950, [65] it continued: There are no rules in such a game. Hitherto acceptable norms of human conduct do not apply. If the United States is to survive, long-standing American concepts of "fair play" must be reconsidered.... We must learn to subvert, sabotage, and destroy our enemies by more clever, more sophisticated, and more effective methods than those used against us. [66]

As Kathryn Olmsted (1996: 110) observes, this manner of thinking evolved into a philosophy in which the ends justified the means, giving rise to abuses. The philosophy formed the basis for a strategic national security doctrine that was diffused to Latin American militaries. In Latin America, doctrines of internal war emerged during the 1960s that blended the militaries' traditional organic and authoritarian conceptions of their role with newer U.S. and French counterinsurgency doctrines. The new national security doctrine encouraged a concept of countersubversive war subject to no rules or ethics, a "dirty war" that had to be won at all costs. Moreover, a large part of the civilian population was defined as potentially or actually subversive; domestic conflicts were viewed through the East-West prism and "internationalized." The Chilean Truth and Reconciliation Commission (or Rettig Commission) captured well the intrusion of the international forces of the Cold War in Chile, especially after the 1959 Cuban Revolution, and the internationalization of domestic political conflicts:

The announcement or appearance of [insurgent] "focos" and the idea...that they corresponded to an inspiration and central direction for Latin America led many states, and fundamentally the United States, to initiate a counterinsurgency movement. Like the focos themselves, this movement was simultaneously local, in each country, and central, exhibiting a certain coordination among all the Latin American countries. The central coordination was the charge of the United States, which took advantage of its military training schools to teach, year after year, generations of military officers of many countries. Counterinsurgency was a technique...but also seems to have hidden within it an implicit doctrine or philosophy... (Comision Nacional/Rettig Report, 1991: 44).

National security doctrines and anticommunist ideologies appear to have

been an important determinant of state terrorism in Latin America, as they dehumanized whole categories of people and provided a quasi-religious rationale for their torture and destruction. We now reflect upon the significance of such ideologies in the international system.

Conclusions

Michael Stohl argues that the bipolar structure of the international system provided the framework that shaped international behaviors and standards. In 1988, he stated:

The two superpowers not only are the strongest military powers, but they also have a considerable influence on the establishment of behaviors which thereafter become norms in the international system. Further, by practicing certain forms of behavior (which I will argue constitute terrorism) and condoning and supporting such behavior by other states and groups, the superpowers contribute mightily to the overall level of terrorism in the international system (Stohl, in Slater and Stohl, 1988: 157).

U.S. Cold War doctrine as exemplified by the Doolittle Report contended that ruthless methods were needed to "win" during the Cold War. Similarly, in 1984 General Paul Gorman, chief of the Southern Command, said that counterinsurgency was "a form of warfare repugnant to Americans, a conflict which involves innocents, in which noncombatant casualties may be an explicit object" (Valentine, 1990: 425). This view apparently seeks to justify, in the name of preserving democracy, violation of the Geneva Conventions and other international human rights covenants. It reflects the "hard-line" Realist concept, as posited by Stohl, that states should use whatever means necessary to protect perceived national security interests. Yet, as stated eloquently by author Douglas Valentine (1990: 14), "as successive American governments sink deeper and deeper into the vortex of covert operations -- ostensibly to combat terrorism and Communist insurgencies -- the American people gradually lose touch with the democratic ideals the at once defined their national self-concept." The point is that a nation claiming to be democratic does not "win" by employing violations of human rights and democratic principles, but rather destroys itself.

Richard Falk (1997: 180) contends that "a strong human rights culture is the necessary underpinning of an effective regime of human rights" and that "that culture itself cannot take significant hold unless the political culture is supportive of human rights." During the Cold War, a doctrine and philosophy at odds with a human rights culture arose in the U.S. national security apparatus; it existed and was fortified in many of the militaries throughout Latin America as well. The Cold War is over, but national security cultures live on, especially in military and intelligence forces. Until such forces and the larger political cultures internalize respect for human rights and lawful action, the dangers exemplified by Operation Condor continue to exist.

To argue that the state may operate outside the law and that abuses are justified for a higher interest is destructive to the concepts of democracy and human rights. State terrorism is as abhorrent as individual terrorism; "counterterrorism" that employs the methods of terrorism is equally repugnant; there is no "good" terrorism and "bad" terrorism. "The ends justify the means" is a corrosive ideology that subverts the advances that humanity has made over time to establish

laws and procedural safeguards to protect rights -- advances that underlie democratic systems. The entire fragile edifice of human rights protections, built up so slowly and painfully by civilized societies over the course of history, is damaged and weakened by such ideologies.

Condor was a shadow system of organized violence with totalitarian mechanisms for dealing with political opposition. Condor intelligence units committed criminal acts across borders, violating national and international law, in the name of fighting "communist subversion." Acting with secrecy and total impunity, bypassing constitutional structures, and defying the corpus of rights and liberties associated with democracy, Condor represented a return to the past--but with the resources of the modern state. Literally millions of people in Latin America lost their lives or their freedom during the Cold War, and tens of thousands were imprisoned, tortured, and killed by regimes that claimed to act in the name of democracy. The U.S. national security apparatus may or may not have been the inspiration for Condor, but it was profoundly complicit. The evidence is all too clear that the U.S.-led "anticommunist crusade" became a crusade against the principles and institutions of democracy and against progressive and liberal as well as revolutionary forces in Latin America and elsewhere. [67]

The House of Representatives recently voted to reduce funding for the School of the Americas, and some Clinton spokespersons have acknowledged the damage done by the United States during the Cold War. [68] In 1999, President Clinton apologized for the U.S. role in Guatemala's dirty war while visiting that country. These are encouraging, although tenuous, steps.

The Pinochet case and the movement for an international criminal court indicate that fledgling institutions of justice and the rule of law are emerging at the international level at the end of the 20th century. If states and their rulers can be held accountable to law and to human rights norms, state terrorism and Condorstyle operations may be inhibited in the future, Yet as Falk suggests, states and citizens must first internalize a human rights culture that recognizes that no ends justify the means of disappearance, torture, and assassination.

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NOTES

(1.) The Paraguayan Archives contain over 8,000 files on detained and

disappeared political prisoners from numerous Latin American countries, almost 2,000 identity cards and passports, 574 files on political parties, unions, and other political or social organizations, over 500 tapes of infiltrated political meetings and conferences, and 10,000 surveillance photos of suspects (see the December 1995 brochure of Centro de Documentacion y Archivo, Asuncion). See also Blixen (1995d), Boccia Paz et al. (1994), Calloni (1994), the Equipo Nizkor web site, McSherry (1999), Meilinger de Sannemann (1994a and b), Nickson (1995), and Sivak (1998).

(2.) This is one of the very few academic articles published on Condor.

(3.) See Amato (1999). Researchers already had evidence that Kissinger gave a "green light" to the Chilean and Argentine juntas. See McSherry (1997: 81) and Andersen (1988-1989).

(4.) Martin Sivak, quoted in "Bolivia, en las huellas del Condor," Revista Informe R(1998: 22). The author is grateful to Osman Morales for obtaining this magazine for her in Bolivia. All translations are by the author unless otherwise specified.

(5.) Among the thousands of photos of prisoners from many nations that I viewed in the Archives in 1996, red lines were drawn through some those who were killed. Some reports verified that torture was used.

(6.) For a good discussion of these difficulties, see Crenshaw (1995), especially Crenshaw's introduction.

(7.) See Stanley's (1996) excellent critique of the literature.

(8.) While one State Department memo, apparently written by Philip Habib, warned against high-level assassinations by Condor countries (see "Roger Channel" memo dated August 18, 1976), Defense Department and CIA documents discussed Condor's assassination capability matter-of-factly and exalted Condor as a counterinsurgency or counterterrorist organization. See Department of Defense Intelligence Information Report, Number 6 804 0334 76, and CIA document dated February 14, 1978, on foia.state.gov.

(9.) See Blight and Kornbluh (1998) and Elliston (n.d.). Many newly declassified State Department documents ("Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963") may be found at www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusX/index.html.

(10.) The best source is Valentine (1990); see also Doe (1999). In the latter's account, an anonymous U.S. operative of the Phoenix Program was ordered to "take out a village" in Vietnam. His superior told him, "we are not to take prisoners, that all of these people are Communist sympathizers." There were no survivors of this U.S. operation.

(11.) For Chile, see U.S. Senate (1976:178). For Nicaragua, see Manual del Combatiente por la Libertad, a comic-book-style, CIA-authored manual distributed to the contras; see also the CIA "assassination manual," called "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare," written for the contras in the 1980s (Brinkley. 1984). In June 1984, the manuals were discovered and in October 1984, when they were made public, Congress reacted angrily.

(12.) Seven Pentagon and CIA manuals were released in 1996 and 1997 after the Baltimore Sun threatened to sue. They are entitled "Handling of Sources," "Counterintelligence," "Revolutionary War, Guerrillas, and Communist Ideology," "Terrorism and the Urban Guerrilla," "Interrogation," "Combat Intelligence," and "Analysis I." For an excellent analysis of the manuals, see Latin American Working Group (1997) and Haugaard (1997).

(13.) CIA, Human Resources Exploitation Training Manual, 1983, obtained by Baltimore Sun; see Cohn and Thompson (1995), Doyle (1997: 39), and LeMoyne (1987).

(14.) U.S. Embassy officers denied the charge. "Uruguay: un ex marino acusa a los EE.UU.," Clarin (Argentina, July 22, 1998). (15.) San Francisco Chronicle, November 2, 1981, cited in Blum (1995, web site; no pagenumber).

(16.) Blair has written many op-ed pieces himself. See also Jentzsch (1997:14) and Fischer (1997: 182-240).

(17.) For a fascinating and poignant 1968 critique by a State Department official decrying that the U.S. was condoning savagely military counterterror in Guatemala, see the recently declassified secret report by Viron Vaky at the web site of the National Security Archive (subject line: "Guatemala and Counter-terror," dated March 29, 1968).

(18.) A key case is Argentina and Chile's conflict over the Beagle Islands, which came to the point of war in 1978.

(19.) The Argentine military was instrumental in training the armies of Central America and the Nicaraguan contras in counterinsurgency warfare in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Reagan administration encouraged this involvement and the CIA was deeply involved as well. See Armony (1997) and Monkman (1992).

(20.) There is much documentation of security officials categorizing people according to their perceived subversive traits. For Uruguay, see Weschler (1990: 90-91); for Argentina, see McSherry (1997: 119). U.S. agents supplied blacklists to armies in Guatemala in 1954, Indonesia in 1965 (see Kadane, 1990), and Chile in preparation for the 1973 coup; it used them in Panama during the 1989 invasion. Mass registration, organized by the CIA in Vietnam, served as the basis for assassination lists during the Phoenix Program; indeed, the symbol of Phoenix was a brightly colored bird clutching a blacklist in its claw (Valentine, 1990).

(21.) Dr. Martin Almada, a Paraguayan educator, discovered the archives. He had studied at the University of La Plata in Argentina, a university regarded by Argentine military intelligence as a center of subversion. He was seized, disappeared, and tortured in clandestine detention centers in Paraguay. Following a tip, Almada and a judge discovered extensive files belonging to the Stroessner security apparatus in a Paraguayan police garrison in 1992, and in 1993, more files were unearthed in the National Directorate of Technical Matters (La Tecnica) in the Interior Ministry. The Paraguayan Archives were sorted and computerized by the Centro de Documentacion y Archivo, an agency created by the Supreme Court of Justice in February 1994, with the assistance

of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Some Paraguayan Congressmen protested AID involvement, given U.S. collaboration with the Stroessner dictatorship.

(22.) Weiner (1999). In the Paraguayan Archives, I found correspondence documenting similar coordination in other cases.

(23.) See foia.state.gov.

(24.) Department of Defense Intelligence Information Report, number 6 804 0334 76.

(25.) CIA document available on foia.state.gov, dated February 14, 1978.

(26.) Landau (1988: 119); personal correspondence with author, February 13, 1999.

(27.) This report was first discussed, to my knowledge, in Dinges and Landau (1980:237-239), and was recently declassified (see the secret "Chilbom" cable, document ch23-01, on the web site of the National Security Archive).

(28.) Peter Kornbluh (1998:15) cites a still-classified 1979 U.S. Senate committee report for this information. According to Juan Pablo Letelier, Contreras wanted to link up with the Cuban exile community in Miami, but the CIA called off the idea after the assassination of Letelier's father in 1976. Conversation with Juan Pablo Letelier, New York, May 5, 1999. The Argentines did set up an intelligence and operations center in Miami in the late 1970s, however, apparently with the assistance of the CIA, and used it for Condor-type operations including money-laundering, arms shipments, and transfers of funds to Argentine officers training the contras in counterinsurgency in Central America. See McSherry (1997: 182-186).

(29.) This graduate also told Father Roy Bourgeois of SOA Watch that school instructors taught torture methods on homeless Panamanians taken off the street. Nelson-Pallmeyer (1997: 31); see also Fischer (1997: 182-240).

(30.) See court document "Procedimiento: Diligencias previas 108/96-L, Terrorismo y Genocidio, Juzgado de instruccion Numero cinco, Audiencia Nacional Madrid, Providencia," point 3, February 28, 1997, on web site <http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/arg/doc/usa.html>.

(31.) A flurry of articles appeared in 1990 in the U.S. press, including "Guerrilla Network Uncovered in West Europe," New York Times (November 14, 1990); Flora Lewis, "Running Scared," New York Times (November 14, 1990); Clyde Haberman, "Italy Discloses Its Web of Cold War Guerrillas," New York Times (November 16, 1990); "Greece to Investigate Plan for Guerrilla War," New York Times (November 21, 1990). See also "Austrian Demands Details on Cold War Arsenal," New York Times (January 22, 1996); "U.S. Reveals Secret Arms Caches in Austria," New York Times (January 30, 1996); and Kwitney (1992: 444). Two of the best sources on the Italian operation are Willan (1991) and Rowse (1994).

(32.) See Department of State memo (foia.state.gov) by Henry Kissinger

to this NATO Working Group, dated March 1976, in which he argued that the Argentine junta was "moderately conservative" and not a threat to U.S. interests. For more on Kissinger's aggressive (and pivotal) support of the Pinochet regime, see Komisar (1999).

(33.) For U.S. use of paramilitary action during the early Cold War, see Berger (n.d.).

(34.) For an account of later CIA operations in Italy and in Central America, see the memoir by former CIA officer Duane R. Clarridge (who later led the Latin American section of CIA operations in the 1980s and oversaw the Argentine army operation in Honduras). The book is not a serious history, however, given its penchant for selective and self-serving versions of events. See Clarridge with Digby Diehl (1997).

(35.) See also Ed Vulliamy, Guardian (U.K., December 10, 1990) in the Statewatch compilation of European reporting on the stay-behind armies (ensuing European newspaper citations are taken from Statewatch).

(36.) European Parliament Joint Resolution of November 22, 1990, in Statewatch report (May 1991).

(37.) See Willan (1991), Ed Vulliamy, Guardian (U.K., January 16, 1991), and Rowse (1994).

(38.) For background on Gelli, see Andersen (1993: 87-94).

(39.) See Burns (1983) and Lewis (1993: 173-74). P-2 laundered enormous amounts of funds through its international network of businesses, the Catholic Church, and the underworld, according to Lewis; its political purpose was to serve as an anticommunist international. Many top military officers in Argentina were P-2 members.

(40.) Pagina/12 (Argentina, June 13, 1992).

(41.) See Andersen (1993: 87-94), Rowse (1994), Willan (1991: Chapter 3), "Licio Gelli a la sombra: La Conexion Rioplatense," in El Periodista de Buenos Aires 159 (September 25 to October 1, 1987: 5-10), and "Investigan la posible conexion entre Licio Gelli y la mafia," in Clarin (August 18, 1992).

(42.) In Statewatch compilation: William Scobie, Observer (November 18, 1990); Richard Bassett, Times of London (July 24, 1990); see also Searchlight (1991).

(43.) William Scobie, Observer (November 18, 1990).

(44.) Wolfgang Achtner, Sunday Independent (November 11, 1990).

(45.) Wolfgang Achtner (November 11, 1990), Rowse (1994:4), and Christie (1984).

(46.) In Latin America, the United States played a key role in setting up intelligence bodies such as DINA in Chile, la Tecnica in Paraguay, the intelligence apparatus in Guatemala, Department 5 in El Salvador, and

Battalion 3--16 in Honduras. These intelligence organs were characterized by terrorist methods and savage violence. See, respectively, Nickson (1995: 127), Garst (1995: 4), Valentine (1990: 422), and Cohn and Thompson (1995).

(47.) Comision Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliacion (1991:43), Valenzuela and Constable (1991: Chapter 4).

(48.) Andlisis (Santiago, March 7, 1988), cited in Barahona de Brito (1997: 55).

(49.) This quotation has been extensively cited; see, for example, Gillespie (1982: 250).

(50.) Walters was involved in the overthrow of Mossedegh in Iran in 1953, the Brazilian coup of 1964, Gladio operations in Italy in the 1960s, and the Chilean coup of 1973. In the 1980s, he was the liaison between the Argentine army and the contras. See Sklar (1988: 87) and Rowse (1994).

(51.) This memo is reproduced in Landau (1978: 44). The original was obtained in 1995 by an Italian court investigating the assassination attempt against Leighton and his wife. See Komisar (1998).

(52.) Letter from Manuel Contreras, item 151 of Archives.

(53.) "Primera Reunion de Trabajo de Inteligencia Nacional," Document 157,1. This is the same memo that Slack analyzes.

(54.) National Security Archives web site, Chile document 30-01, dated June 6, 1975.

(55.) Author interview with Luz Lagarrigua (July 19, 1996, Santiago); see also Comision Nacional/Rettig Report (1991: 596-597).

(56.) Paraguayan Archives. For Paraguayan cases, see Schemo (1999).

(57.) See Dinges and Landau (1980: 349, 382-389), Valenzuela and Constable (1991: 104), and Landau (1978: 21).

(58.) See Landau (1978:29). This may be the earliest source with information on Condor, although the name was not yet known.

(59.) See Dinges and Landau (1980: 383). George Landau is no relation to political analyst Saul Landau.

(60.) Townely letter in FBI report entitled "Direccion de Inteligencia Nacional," document ch02-01, National Security Archive web site. For more on Della Chiaie, see Willan (1991) and Christie (1984).

(61.) "Un agente de la internacional negra," Pagina/12 (Argentina, May 20, 1995); "Sugiere un ex agente chileno que Pinochet ordeno crimenes," La Jornada (Mexico, May 21, 1995).

(62.) Court testimony cited by Willan (1991: 141).

(63.) See articles in Clarin (Argentina, June 24, 1995).

(64.) "Identifican en Bolivia a asesores de Garcia Meza," Tiempo Argentino (June 27, 1985).

(65.) NSC/68 was a strongly worded policy document that portrayed the Cold War in terms of a global struggle between the United States and a menacing enemy "animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seek[ing] to impose its absolute authority on the rest of the world." NSC-68 (1950) in Paterson (1989: 301).

(66.) U.S. Senate Select Committee, Final Reports, Book I, Foreign and Military Intelligence, page 9, cited in Olmsted (1996: 13).

(67.) Consider Kissinger's attitude toward democratic electoral processes in Chile and Italy. After Allende's election, he said, "I don't see why we need to stand idly by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people" (Valenzuela and Constable, 1991:23). In September 1974, according to Italian newspapers, he said, "Wouldn't you blame us...if we allowed Italy to fall to the communists without doing anything to prevent it?" (Willan, 1991: 220).

(68.) In 1994, for example, the ambassador to Nicaragua said U.S. policy had been "tailor-made for dictators" in its support of undemocratic governments that protected U.S. investments; he said he now had instructions to encourage the development of genuine democracy. See "Envoy in Nicaragua Says U.S. Won't Meddle," New York Times (February 10, 1994). One Sandinista leader commented that his statement was "very close to what we have always said" and "they always denied it."

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