Operation Condor

Handbook
TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. RULES OF PROCEDURE .................................................................................................................. 3
   A. General Rules .......................................................................................................................... 3
   B. Committee Proceedings .......................................................................................................... 3
   C. Documents ............................................................................................................................ 5

II. FURTHER READINGS ................................................................................................................ 6

III. REMINDERS FOR DELEGATES ............................................................................................. 10
I. Rules of Procedure

A. General Rules

Rule 1: Scope

This Rules of Procedure document is applicable to Operation Condor at KUMUN 2016. Unless otherwise stated by the Secretary-General or the Under-Secretary-General responsible for the committee in the duration of the conference, this generalized set of rules for this committee is to be followed as specified.

Rule 2: Language

All debates and discussions within the committee are to be conducted in English. Also, all documents that are produced by the committee should be written in English.

Rule 3: Dress Attire

All members of Operation Condor will follow the standard dress code (i.e. formal Western wear), which is applicable for most Model UN Conferences.

Rule 4: Electronics

Since Operation Condor is set in the 1970s, the delegates are not permitted to use any sort of electronic devices during the committee sessions.

B. Committee Proceedings

Rule 5: Agenda Setting

Due to the comprehensive nature of the committee, Operation Condor will have an open agenda and will not attempt to set a specific agenda for the committee proceedings.

Rule 6: Members
All members of Operation Condor will have equal voting rights. However, the unnamed CIA agent in the committee will additionally have a special ‘veto’ right due to the nature of this committee.

**Rule 7: Forms of Debate**

There will be a General Speaker’s list for Operation Condor, which will be created upon the commencement of the committee. In addition, Operation Condor will also have other kinds of debate, namely:

*Moderated Caucus:* In this caucus, the members of Operation Condor will be expected to engage in a formal debate on a particular issue for a specified period of time. In this form of debate, the members are not permitted to cross talk and must only enter the discussion when they are recognized by the committee directors.

*Unmoderated Caucus:* This caucus will allow the members to lobby with each other in an informal manner. More importantly, members should use the unmoderated caucus to draft any documents that are required from the committee. Similar to the moderated caucus, each unmoderated caucus will also have a specified time limit.

*Emergency Meetings:* These will be similar to unmoderated caucuses, except that they can have an unlimited time frame, allowing members to resolve the emergency without any interruptions. Ultimately, the unnamed CIA member of Operation Condor possesses the right to halt the meeting as he sees fit.

**Rule 8: Voting Procedure**

For all documents, the members of Operation Condor will raise a motion to move on to voting on that specified document and require two-thirds majority for the documents to be accepted by the committee. Other motions such as closure of debate are inapplicable to Operation Condor.

However, the unnamed CIA agent in the committee reserves the right to veto any document that does not meet his/her approval.
No abstentions will be allowed in Operation Condor.

C. Documents

Rule 9: Committee Documents

Documents that should be produced by the committee are as follows:

- Joint Directives
- National Directives
- Press Releases
- Pacts

Rule 10: Joint Directives

Joint Directives will be produced for the purpose of collective action undertaken by the members of Operation Condor. These directives will require simple majority to pass, but need to be approved by the chairs first.

Rule 11: National Directives

These special kinds of directives will be drafted by members belonging to a specific country (e.g. Argentina). National Directives will be sent to the committee directors after being drafted and committee directors will accept if they deem appropriate. The purpose of these directives shall not be limited but every participant shall be able to draft national directives considering their limits of their own intelligence agency.

Rule 12: Press Releases

Members of Operation Condor should not reveal any information about their covert operations in these press releases. However, these press releases are to be used skillfully to put up a false image for the consumption of the target audience. All press releases must first be approved by the chairs and require unanimity in order to be passed.

Rule 13: Pacts
Pacts can be created on both a bilateral and multilateral level between the members of Condor. These pacts can be kept secret from the rest of the committee, but if these members wish to announce these pacts, they must first have it approved by the chairs and the crisis team.

**Rule 14: Contact with the Crisis Team**

Members of Operation Condor can expect the Crisis Team to respond to their documents and other-related queries in due time. Also, members can send their personal queries directly to the Crisis Team for feedback; these queries can range from information about their military capabilities to request for intelligence gathering on a certain issue. Unlike other crisis-committees, the personal queries will not be handled by the chairs due to their active role within their committee and must be directly addressed to the Crisis Team.

**Rule 15: Confidentiality**

All discussions and documents within the committee must not be disclosed until after the conference has ended.

II. **Further Readings**


In this book, readers will gain insight into the role U.S played in sponsoring state terrorism across Latin America in the Cold War era. Under Operation Condor, the U.S succeeded in creating a military coordination network between its allies in Latin America and itself. The key members of Operation Condor who participated with the U.S were, namely Bolivia, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Peru and Ecuador. Both the U.S and these countries proceeded with covert attacks aimed at leftist organizations in Latin America, eliminating any political opposition they were faced with in the process. Through evidence from several testimonies, declassified documents and sources from other scholars, the authors of this book will demonstrate the extent of U.S role in Operation Condor and also shed light on how the
members of this comprehensive scheme collaborated with each other to hunt, seize and execute their political opposition across the borders of Latin America.

Link:
https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=tSDg6xa4z2YC&pg=PA264&lpg=PA264&dq=Predatory+States:+Operation+Condor+and+Covert+War+in+Latin+America+description&source=bl&ots=kwrRFKH6qWM&sig=fOItWsvPjzyv4Amg2vRiDs5xndo&hl=tr&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiwq8znsKjMAhUjC8AKHdIPC1UQ6AEISTA#v=onepage&q=&f=false


In this paper, Sherry and Patrice (2002) discuss the origins of Operation Condor, providing evidence for the formation of the repressive network prior to its institutionalization in 1975. For instance, an intelligence officer from Brazil revealed that in the 1960s training bases were set up for guerilla warfare, interrogation techniques and repression tactics, thereby implying that the apparatus to train allies of U.S in Latin America prior to Operation Condor was available beforehand. Indeed, the evidence sheds light on the preparedness of members of Operation Condor and how they were able to develop coordination links with each other, thanks to prior establishment of training bases before the institutionalization of the plan.


Similar to the first two readings provided above, this paper explores the clandestine network known as Operation Condor in the 1970s. Again, authors Sherry and Patrice reemphasize that Operation Condor should be labeled as a ‘global anticommmunist alliance’ that was led by the U.S, following from its policy of containment for Soviet communism in the Cold War era. New evidence has revealed that several key U.S officials and agencies, such as the Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Department and State Department were involved in Operation
Condor, often assisting Condorian members with counter-subversive operations aimed at eliminating their political opposition. Through multiple sources of information, the authors pick up the fragments of this inter-American anticommmunist alliance and reveal how this organization carried its activities in a coordinated manner.


Until 1960s, Chile was considered relatively stable in Latin America. However, as the Cold War politics affected the region altogether, the socialist revolutions taking places across Latin America also took their root in Chile. In 1960s, the Chilean government was led by Frei who received support from Johnson administration in the U.S. However, as Chile turned more leftist-oriented and elected Allende, the U.S was dissatisfied and decided to support the coup that would install someone more anti-communist in Chile. This article chronicles the events that led to the Chilean Coup and explains the origins behind it.

Link: http://www.coldwar.org/articles/70s/CoupinChile1973.asp


Through examination of case studies on regimes in Argentina, Chile, Guatemala, Peru and Uruguay, the authors reveal the extent to which U.S foreign policy undermined democratic norms and political stability in Latin America during the Cold War era. Nevertheless, while most books portray Operation Condor as a very coordinated network, the authors in this book reveal the power asymmetry between U.S and various members of Operation Condor, thus implying that information-sharing and coordination in other-related activities was imperfect in nature.

Link: https://books.google.com.tr/books?hl=tr&lr=&id=acGNAgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=operation%20condor&ots=kb7eqxAhjG&sig=u5rlwZot6xGtoDE1ZHijd23TYU&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=operation%20condor&f=false

During the period 1975-1977, human rights violations multiplied and descended in the form of a wave within the Latin American region. Countries like Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Bolivia where civilian dictatorships had been overthrown joined hands with like-minded dictators in Brazil and Paraguay to form an international cooperation system dubbed Operation Condor. In this article, Dinges provides an overview of Operation Condor and the extent of its activities in Latin America.


In this paper, the cross-border activities of the Chilean state security agency, the National Directorate of Intelligence (DINA) are discussed in an extensive manner. To put these activities into perspective, examples of notable assassinations are provided in the paper. For example, opponents to the idea of a coup in Chile like General Carlos Prats and his wife were murdered by DINA agents. Their murder, however, was dressed up as a car bombing in Buenos Aires, 1974, signifying thus the covert nature in which these assassinations were carried against opponents of Operation Condor member states. As these examples demonstrate, the members of Operation Condor enjoyed free reign in eliminating any opposition they faced in the region.

Link: [http://search.proquest.com/docview/202671974?pq-origsite=gscholar](http://search.proquest.com/docview/202671974?pq-origsite=gscholar)


In this report, Kornbluh discusses the support U.S provided to Pinochet’s regime, using evidence gathered from testimonials of U.S and Chilean victims, organizations like the Institute for Policy Studies and Amnesty International and from declassified archives on Chile. Through these documents, Kornbluh reveals how extensive U.S support was for Pinochet during his regime in Chile.

Link: [http://search.proquest.com/docview/202672704?pq-origsite=gscholar](http://search.proquest.com/docview/202672704?pq-origsite=gscholar)
III. Reminders for Delegates

• For information on your characters, please refer to the study guide where all your roles have been laid out for you. Please note that any deviations from your given roles will not be permissible during the committee sessions. If there is anything that you wish to clarify during the committee sessions with regards to your characters, please send a request to the crisis team so that they can clarify it for you.

• Due to the flexible nature of the committee, you will from time to time be introduced to additional information about your characters if it fits the nature of the committee. Your characters would often be involved in crises and using your character profiles, you should try to overcome the crises by sticking to your profiles.

• Please read the guide thoroughly, especially with regards to the specific information about the kinds of activities that were undertaken in the context of Operation Condor.

• You should put great emphasis on the section in the guide on Chilean coup d’état since the focus of the committee will be towards that particular topic.
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 coordination 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 other's "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 psychological 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 Condor intelligence 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.
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 Uruguyan legislators known for their opposition to the Uruguayan military regime, Zelmar 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.

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 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 DNA 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 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 gala 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 anticorunumist 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 Paragunyan Archives invited General Francisco Brites, chief of the Paragunyan 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
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 kidnappers 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 (Alganaraz, 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 (OCOA). 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 Lagarriguín 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] Lagarriguín 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, 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. 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. 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. 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.

Acknowledgments

Research conducted in Paraguay, Chile, and Argentina in 1996 was made possible by grants from SUNY-New Paltz, and travel to Chile and Argentina in 1998 was sponsored by the Provost and the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences of Long Island University/Brooklyn. The author is grateful to the Research Released Time Committee and the Trustees of Long Island University for their support and to Margaret Crahan, John Ehrenberg, Martha Huggins, Tony Pereira, and I. Lenny Markovitz for their comments on this work. The usual caveats apply.

J. PATRICE McSHERRY is Associate Professor of Political Science at Long Island University (Brooklyn Center, 1 University Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11201) and author of Incomplete Transition: Military Power and Democracy in Argentina as well as numerous articles on the military and politics.

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.


(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 Condorcountries (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.


(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).


(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 savage military counterterror in Guatemala, see the recently declassified secret report by Viron Vaky at the website 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

(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.


(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).


(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).


(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 anticomunist international. Many top military officers in Argentina were P-2 members.

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


(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).


(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.


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


(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.


(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).

(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).


(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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Operation Condor was a secret intelligence and operations system created in the 1970s through which the South American military regimes coordinated intelligence information and seized, tortured, and executed political opponents in combined cross-border operations. Condor’s key members were Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Brazil, later joined by Ecuador and Peru. In Condor operations, combined military and paramilitary commandos “disappeared” refugees who had fled coups and repression in their own countries and subjected them to barbaric tortures and death. Security forces in the region classified and targeted persons on the basis of their political ideas rather than illegal acts. The regimes hunted down dissidents and leftists, union and peasant leaders, priests and nuns, intellectuals, students, and teachers as well as suspected guerrillas (who are, in a lawful state, also entitled to due process).

Long before the repressive network was formally institutionalized in 1975 and code-named Operation Condor, the militaries engaged in intelligence sharing and coordinated cross-border operations. A Brazilian intelligence officer disclosed in 2000 that in the 1960s, intelligence officers from other Condor countries came to three Brazilian bases for training in counterguerrilla warfare, “interrogation techniques,” and methods of repression (Gosman, 2000a; 2000b; Clarín, May 10, 2000). This former member of the intelligence apparatus Serviço Nacional de Informações (National Information Service—SNI) said that, beginning in 1969, combined teams “gathered data, later used in the political repression” (Notisur, July 7, 2000). Martín Almada, the Paraguayan educator who in 1992 discovered the Paraguayan police files known as the Archives of Terror, received information that Brazil...
offered training in torture to other militaries in the 1960s (Ambito Financiero, May 15, 2000) and said that documents show that Brazilian intelligence assisted Chilean putschists in the 1973 coup against Salvador Allende (Gosman, 2000a). Human rights groups in the region have estimated that Condor commandos "disappeared" hundreds of persons in cross-border operations: some 132 Uruguayans (127 in Argentina, 3 in Chile, and 2 in Paraguay), 72 Bolivians (36 in Chile, 36 in Argentina), 119 Chileans, 51 Paraguayans (in Argentina), 16 Brazilians (9 in Argentina and 7 in Chile), and at least 12 Argentines in Brazil (Notisur, July 7, 2000:5, Gosman, 2000b; Cardoso, 2000: 44). These figures are likely underestimates; in the Paraguayan Archives of Terror in 1996, I saw thousands of photos and fichas of persons, many of various Latin American (and some European) nationalities, on the prisoner and suspect lists of security forces of several South American countries, some dating from 1974, and some 200 persons passed through Automotores Orletti, the key Condor detention center in Argentina.

The most secret aspect of Condor ("Phase III") was its capability for assassination of political leaders especially feared for their potential to mobilize world opinion or organize broad opposition to the military states. Victims in the mid-1970s included the Chilean Orlando Letelier—foreign minister under Allende and a fierce foe of the Pinochet regime—and his U.S. colleague Ronni Moffitt, in Washington, D.C.; the Chilean Christian Democrat leader Bernardo Leighton and his wife, in Rome; the constitutionalist Chilean general Carlos Prats and his wife, in Buenos Aires; the nationalist former president of Bolivia Juan José Torres, in Buenos Aires; and two Uruguayan legislators known for their opposition to the Uruguayan military regime, Zelmar Michelini and Héctor Gutiérrez Ruiz, also in Buenos Aires. In the first two cases, agents of Pinochet's Gestapo-like state security agency, Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional (Directorate of National Intelligence—DINA), "contracted" right-wing Cuban exiles in the United States and neofascist organizations in Italy to assist in carrying out the crimes. A U.S. expatriate and DINA assassin, Michael Townley, played an operational role in at least three of these terrorist acts. Clearly, Operation Condor was an organized system of state terror with a transnational reach. It was an anticomunist international that went far beyond targeting "communists," and it signified an unprecedented level of coordinated repression by right-wing military regimes in Latin America.

The purpose of this article is, first, to explore Condor's origins, both conceptually and organizationally, using the massive new database of declassified U.S. documents in conjunction with other material, and second, to examine the relationship between the U.S. government and Condor. The article is
part of an ongoing research effort to investigate thousands of U.S. documents and reconstruct the hidden history of covert operations in the hemisphere. A flood of information about Condor has emerged in the past few years, but it is just beginning to be studied, synthesized, and analyzed. While documentation is still fragmentary concerning many sensitive aspects of Condor, increasingly weighty evidence indicates that U.S. officials considered Condor a legitimate “counterterror” organization and that Condor was assisted and encouraged by U.S. military and intelligence forces.

EMERGING OUTLINES OF OPERATION CONDOR

Although victims of Condor and some observers began perceiving Condor’s existence in the mid-1970s, the organization was truly a well-kept secret of the cold war. The 1992 discovery of the Archives of Terror provided new, and rare, documentation of the functioning of Condor, confirming earlier testimonies of victims and hitherto incomplete evidence. The investigation of Condor initiated by the Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón, whose extradition request led to the 1998 arrest of General Augusto Pinochet, produced new revelations. In June 1999 the first of three tranches of declassified U.S. documents was released pursuant to a directive by President Bill Clinton. Until that time, the extent of U.S. government information regarding Condor was unknown. The only document on Condor in the public domain was a cable by FBI agent Robert Scherrer, sent from Buenos Aires to Washington in September 1976. We now know that the State Department, the Defense Department, and the CIA were all well-informed of Operation Condor and of what the CIA calls “precursors to Condor” years before 1976 and that U.S. agencies supported or collaborated with some Condor operations.

Condor was established officially in November 1975 during the First Inter-American Working Meeting of Intelligence in Santiago. A letter from DINA chief Manuel Contreras dated October 1975 found in the Paraguayan Archives provides proof that cross-border coordination was to be formalized in a November meeting. The letter 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 establish “an excellent coordination and improved action to benefit National Security” (Manuel Contreras letter to General Francisco Brites, Item 151, 1975). The proposal for the meeting included a plan of action and an organizational structure as well as a security system with three elements: an office of coordination and security, including a computerized central data bank of
suspect persons, organizations, and activities, “something similar to Interpol, but dedicated to Subversion”; an information center with special communication channels, a cryptography 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. The “technical personnel” were undoubtedly the agents who carried out Condor operations, including disappearances and assassinations.

As we have seen, unformalized Condor-style coordination was occurring years earlier, and newly declassified U.S. documents and other recent research suggest that the specific concept of Condor as an inter-American cross-border “counterterror” organization may have taken shape in the late 1960s or early 1970s. Some cross-border assassinations and abductions took place before the 1975 meeting. The 1974 car-bomb assassination of General Prats in Buenos Aires—which occurred when Argentina was still a democracy—was coordinated among DINA operatives, right-wing Argentine terrorists, and Argentine military and police officers; the so-called Operation Colombo in 1974-1975, when 119 missing Chileans were found dead in Argentina, also bore the imprint of Condor. The 1973 abduction and murder of the U.S. citizens Charles Horman and Frank Teruggi in Santiago also fit the profile of a Condor operation in some ways (McSherry, 2000). In fact, in Latin America, Condor-style commando and “hunter-killer” operations can be traced back to the formation of death squads in Guatemala in the 1960s and the 1970 kidnapping and murder of Chilean General Rene Schneider.

In the following section, I draw on the seminal work of Michael McClintock and others to propose a linkage between U.S. counterterror doctrine of the 1960s, implemented in Vietnam, Guatemala, and elsewhere, and the emergence of Condor. There were many parallels between Condor and the CIA-led Phoenix Program in Vietnam and with the U.S. Army’s Project X in the 1960s. In fact, a perceptive journalist wrote in 1976: “The assassinations of leading Latin American officers and politicians in the last three years have become so numerous that there is a growing feeling amongst observers of the continent’s politics that something akin to Operation Phoenix is now underway” (Gott, 1976). There is no doubt that Condor’s ruthless operations against political opposition advanced the security agenda of the U.S. national security establishment in its war against communism and revolution in Latin America. The U.S. government was the leader of the global anticommunist crusade, and Condor must be understood in the context of the hemispheric anticommunist alliance led by the United States.
U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS DOCTRINE

Some historians have traced methods of terror and psychological warfare to the incorporation of Nazis into Latin American militaries (and, in several cases, U.S. counterintelligence units) after World War II (Simpson, 1988; Irusta, 1997). Space constraints do not permit consideration of this influence here, but in previous work I have shown that in the late 1940s U.S. military and CIA strategists, with their European counterparts, set up and trained "stay-behind" guerrilla forces in Italy and elsewhere in Europe—forces that included extreme-right and fascist networks—in an effort to combat the advance of communism (McSherry, 1999b). By the 1960s, counterinsurgency strategists decided to fight revolutionaries and guerrillas by creating counterguerrilla forces made up of military officers and paramilitary irregulars who used the methods of terror. Modeled on the special operations forces of the U.S. military, these counterinsurgent guerrillas used dirty-war methods and psychological warfare to deceive and destroy perceived enemies. According to McClintock, a classified U.S. Army Special Forces manual of December 1960, Counter-Insurgency Operations, was one of the earliest to mention explicitly, in its section "Terror Operations," the use of counterinsurgent terror as a legitimate tactic (McClintock, 1991: 132).

McClintock cited other secret U.S. Army Special Operations handbooks from the 1960s that endorsed "counterterror," including assassination and abduction, in certain situations. Counterterror doctrine and operations remain classified today (U.S. Army, n.d.), but they signify the use of extralegal terrorist methods to neutralize enemies. As McClintock noted, U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine and operations essentially legitimized the use of state terror (McClintock, 1991: 121, 130; see also McClintock, 1992, esp. chap. 10; Simpson, 1988; and Johnson, 1998). As one March 1961 article in Military Review stated, "Political warfare, in short, is warfare . . . [that] embraces diverse forms of coercion and violence including strikes and riots, economic sanctions, subsidies for guerrilla or proxy warfare and, when necessary, kidnapping or assassination of enemy elites" (McClintock, 1991: 131). The Special Forces in Vietnam received orders in 1965 to "conduct operations to dislodge VC-controlled officials, to include assassination," and specified that small commando units would be "ambushing, raiding, sabotaging, and committing acts of terrorism" against the Viet Cong (McClintock, 1991: 138-139).

The now-infamous CIA and School of the Americas (SOA) military training manuals, declassified in the mid-1990s, were drawn from Project X manuals (Jentzsch, 1997; Fischer, 1997; Latin American Working Group, 1997;
Priest, 1996; 1997). Project X was part of the U.S. Army’s Foreign Intelligence Assistance Program, first developed in 1965-1966 at the U.S. Army Intelligence School at Fort Holabird in Maryland (Office of House Representative Joseph Kennedy, 1997: 6-14). It formed the basis of U.S. intelligence training in Asia and in Latin America until the late 1970s. Joseph Blair, a retired major and former Phoenix operative who taught at the School of the Americas for three years, said that the author of the SOA manuals drew from intelligence materials used during the Vietnam War that advocated assassination, torture, extortion, and other “techniques.” President Carter tried to end such training, but in 1982, under the Reagan administration, Project X manuals were used again to update army manuals and to train new generations of officers in Central America and elsewhere. The Human Resource Exploitation Manual of 1983 was based on the 1963 KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation Manual of July 1963 (Cohn et al., 1997). According to one U.S. counterintelligence officer, some Project X materials were based upon lessons drawn from the Phoenix Program, and the army intelligence school taught a course on Phoenix at the same time as the Project X manuals were being written (Priest, 1997).

The training manuals provided documented proof that army and CIA instructors taught Latin American officers methods of torture, including use of electroshock against prisoners; the use of drugs and hypnosis to induce psychological regression; the sequential use of sensory deprivation, pain, and other means in interrogations; assassination methods; and the use of threats against and abduction of family members to break down prisoner resistance (see the manuals at www.parascope.com/articles/0397/kubark06.htm and www.soaw.org/soam.htm; see also Weiner, 1997; McPherson, 1999: 621-632; McSherry, 2000). The KUBARK [CIA] Counterintelligence Interrogation Manual, for example, stated:

Interrogations conducted under compulsion or duress are especially likely to involve illegality and to entail damaging consequences for KUBARK. Therefore, prior Headquarters approval at the KUDOVE level [code name unidentified by author] must be obtained for the interrogation of any source against his will and under any of the following circumstances: 1. If bodily harm is to be inflicted. 2. If medical, chemical, or electrical methods or materials are to be used to induce acquiescence. 3. [excised].

In the SOA and elsewhere, thousands of Latin American officers were taught such methods and the doctrine that justified them. Many of these officers returned to their countries to become key organizers of campaigns of terror and repression or leaders of coups that imposed national security states in the
region. It is important to recall that some Latin American armies, such as those of Uruguay and Chile, had been respectful of democracy and constitutionalism until the 1970s.

PHOENIX AS A PREDECESSOR OF CONDOR

Phoenix, the secret, CIA-led operation in Vietnam, was a computerized counterinsurgency program that used assassination, terror, and psychological warfare to decimate civilian sympathizers of the revolutionary Viet Cong (Valentine, 1990). In so-called hunter-killer operations, commandos were expected to carry out atrocious abuses of human rights. One special-operations commando wrote that his commander instructed him to leave no survivors in one Vietnamese village (Doe, 1999: 635).\(^3\) Counterterror operations were set up in 1965 by William Colby, then Chief of the CIA’s Far East Division of Clandestine Services (Barry, 1986: 8; McGehee, 1996) and later head of Phoenix. Much of the “dirty work” was done by paramilitary hunter-killer squads and criminal thugs drawn from the ranks of South Vietnamese officers and civilians, while U.S. personnel provided lists of suspects, participated in interrogations, and supervised, controlled, and financed the program. There was no due process, and tens of thousands of civilians were tortured and killed.

A 1966 U.S. Army booklet discussed a “counterterror campaign” in Vietnam that included the formation of “selected Vietnamese troops...organized into terror squads” that posted pictures of huge eyes (printed by the U.S. Information Service) on their assassinated victims as well as the doors of suspects’ homes (McClintock, 1991: 133). This psychological-warfare technique to instill terror was later used by Guatemalan death squads such as La Mano Blanca. In short, Phoenix was a U.S.-administered “counterterror” operation that employed surrogate forces and used terrorist methods to create a climate of fear and eliminate perceived enemies, a modus operandi that evokes the anticommunist “dirty wars” in Latin America.

A 1986 congressional study of Special Operations Forces indicated that one of their basic tasks continued to be “assassination and abduction,” along with hostage taking, random killing and maiming, sabotage, capture, and termination. “A&A” was defined as “illegal special operations employed offensively for sociopolitical purposes. Official actions to capture or kill key insurgents and transnational terrorists (‘Termination’) are legal and defensive. Assassination and abduction are direct, discriminating, essentially decisive, economical and occasionally unique ways to achieve required results” (Collins,
Elite commandos that corresponded to the special-forces prototype were established throughout Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, and such commando-style organization and operations characterized Operation Condor.

Declassified U.S. documents confirm that U.S. security officers saw Condor as a legitimate “counterterror” organization. One 1976 Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) report stated, for example, that one Condor team was “structured much like a U.S. Special Forces Team” and described Condor’s “joint counterinsurgency operations” to “eliminate Marxist terrorist activities.” This report noted that Latin American military officers bragged about Condor to their U.S. counterparts. Numerous other CIA, DIA, and State Department documents referred to Condor as a counterterror or counter-subversive organization, and some described its assassination capability in a matter-of-fact manner. In 1978, for example, the CIA wrote that by July 1976 “the Agency was receiving reports that Condor planned to engage in ‘executive action’ outside the territory of member countries” (CIA, “Classified Reading Material re: ‘Condor’ for Ambassador Landau and Mr. Propper,” August 22, 1978). In fact, the CIA was well aware of such operations earlier—although the name “Operation Condor” was not yet used for such cross-border actions.

For example, a November 1973 CIA cable reported that Chilean General Arellano Stark had “left Santiago on a special mission . . . [to] discuss with the Argentine military any information they have regarding the activities of General Carlos Prats . . . . Arellano will also attempt to gain an agreement whereby the Argentines maintain scrutiny over Prats and regularly inform the Chileans of his activities” (Komisar, 1999). This intelligence arrangement—which the CIA knew of and evidently approved—was set up a year before the assassination of Prats, who was killed at a moment when his official security protection (provided by the Argentine army and police) was absent.

Comparison of two declassified CIA documents written in the summer of 1976 reveals more information through an inadvertent clerical error (information blacked out in one document is visible in another). The first report, a top-secret CIA National Intelligence Daily (no. 168) of June 23, 1976, included a paragraph censored in the second document. It read: “In early 1974, security officials from Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia met in Buenos Aires to prepare coordinated actions against subversive targets.” This report demonstrates CIA knowledge of a meeting of Condor security officers earlier than admitted by the agency in 1978. In the 1978 memo mentioned previously, the CIA said that it learned of Condor in 1976, and the FBI apparently first learned of Condor in that year. The earlier date is
confirmed by the CIA's September 2000 report to Congress, which states: "Within a year after the [September 1973 Chilean] coup, the CIA and other US government agencies were aware of bilateral cooperation among regional intelligence services to track the activities of and, in at least a few cases, kill political opponents. This was the precursor to Operation Condor, an intelligence-sharing arrangement among Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay established in 1975" (CIA, Report to Congress, "CIA Activities in Chile," September 18, 2000; www.odci.gov./cia/publication/chile [hereafter Report to Congress]).

A secret CIA Weekly Summary (no. 1398) of July 2, 1976 contained almost identical language as the June 23 report, but the above information was blacked out. It did establish the date when the Condor countries set up their computerized database on "subversion": "intelligence representatives from Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina decided at a meeting in Santiago early in June [1976] to set up a computerized intelligence data bank—known as operation 'Condor'—and to establish an international communications network." (A later CIA report noted that the specialized telecommunications system was called "CONDORTEL" [CIA Directorate of Operations, February 14, 1978], and, in fact, it appears that the CIA and/or the U.S. military provided CONDORTEL to the militaries, as explained below.) This CIA report also stated that Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile were operating covertly against refugees in Paris and against "targets in Argentina," including 24 Uruguay and Chilean refugees under UN protection, who were abducted and tortured in 1976. Clearly, the CIA was well informed about secret Condor operations, including those in Europe that indicated Condor's transnational capabilities, raising the question of why it was unable to avert the Letelier/Moffitt assassinations by Condor agents in Washington, D.C., in September 1976.

Overall, Condor must be seen in the context of the national security doctrine and counterterror model promoted by the United States in the anticommunist crusade. These were disseminated to Latin America through the training of tens of thousands of officers in Panama and elsewhere. The cold war national security doctrine, with its legitimation of dirty war and counterterror, fused with already antidemocratic and messianic attitudes among many Latin American officers. The result was a virulent "holy war" mentality among the militaries and especially their intelligence forces, a mentality that envisioned mass killings, disappearance, and torture as fitting responses to communism and subversion—and to peaceful movements for social change in their countries.
CONDOR-STYLE OPERATIONS BEFORE 1975: GUATEMALA, CHILE, AND ARGENTINA

In the 1960s, U.S. counterinsurgency strategists taught their Guatemalan counterparts counterterror techniques. The U.S. colonel John Webber led the effort to introduce the counterterror system in Guatemala: in 1968 Webber said that he encouraged the formation of counterterror units, basically death squads (Barry, 1986: 8; Jonas, 1983: 288-289). “Disappearances” as a counterinsurgency strategy first appeared in Latin America in 1960s Guatemala. A declassified State Department memo of 1967 reported that “at the center of the Army’s clandestine urban counter-terror apparatus is the Special Commando Unit formed in January 1967. . . . Composed of both military and civilian personnel, the Special Unit has carried out abductions, bombings, street assassinations, and executions of real and alleged communists” (U.S. Department of State, 1967: 2). One anguished 1968 memo written by the U.S. embassy official Viron Vaky, declassified in 1999, argued passionately that U.S. policy in Guatemala served to encourage and condone savage and indiscriminate atrocities by the Guatemalan military that were having a devastating effect on the society. Vaky wrote: “Is it conceivable that we are so obsessed with insurgency that we are prepared to rationalize murder as an acceptable counter-insurgency weapon? Is it possible that a nation which so reveres the principle of due process of law has so easily acquiesced in this sort of terror tactic?” (Viron Vaky to ARA, “Guatemala and Counter-terror,” March 29, 1968; www.seas.gwu/nsarchive/ NSAEBB/NSAEBB11/docs/05-01.htm).4

In Chile, the abduction and murder of General Schneider in 1970 was carried out by a group of military officers and right-wing Chilean paramilitaries associated with Patria y Libertad (Fatherland and Liberty—P&L), a group once paid by the CIA that committed terrorist acts before and during President Allende’s term (Bonasso, 2000a). The CIA saw Schneider as a major obstacle to a military movement against Allende. Schneider, the constitutionalist head of the Chilean army, opposed a military coup promoted by the United States in 1970 to prevent Allende’s presidency. The P&L terrorists were part of one of the “three groups of plotters” that the CIA admits it worked with and encouraged to abduct Schneider. It provided tear gas, submachine guns, and ammunition to another of the groups and paid the group that killed Schneider US$35,000 after the assassination, claiming that it did so “for humanitarian reasons” (CIA, Report to Congress, September 2000, 4, 10-11). The CIA’s attempts to foment a coup were part of the so-called Track II strategy, undertaken by order of the Nixon administration to forestall the
election of Allende. This crime evokes Condor Phase III operations, which targeted influential persons for “neutralization” in order to advance the anticommunist crusade. While it apparently involved only Chileans and their U.S. collaborators, such bilateral coordination—and the methods it employed—may be seen as an antecedent of Condor. The Schneider case provides supporting evidence for the proposition that Condor operations had their roots in the counterinsurgency doctrines and counterterror operations promoted by the United States in Chile and elsewhere.

It is highly significant that General Prats—Chile’s next appointed army commander—was also seen as an obstacle to the overthrow of Allende, given the general’s constitutionalist commitments. He had been forced to resign in 1973 and had gone into exile in Argentina. One of his assassins was Michael Townley. According to Townley, members of the right-wing Argentine terrorist group Triple A were also involved. Another assailant was a far-right Chilean operative named Enrique Arancibia Clavel, who was also reportedly involved in the earlier Schneider assassination (La Tercera, November 12, 2000) and in Operation Colombo (Bonasso, 2000a; 2000b). In November 2000 an Argentine court found Arancibia Clavel guilty of the Prats assassination.

Manuel Contreras, the former head of DINA, has long insisted that the Prats assassination was organized by the CIA and that Townley was a CIA agent working inside DINA (Bonasso, 2000c). In 2000 he repeated these claims in media interviews and in testimony for the Prats trial. Contreras said that early in 2000 he provided FBI investigators numerous incriminating documents showing a CIA role in the assassinations of Prats and of Letelier and Moffitt in Washington, D.C., crimes attributed to DINA or to Condor. While clearly Contreras is an expert in deception and lies with transparent motivation to shift blame from DINA, his assertions have never been investigated. With the killing of Schneider and the exile of Prats, the way was clear for Pinochet’s ascension to army commander in chief—and the bloody 1973 coup. With the later murder of Prats in exile, a potential leader of the anti-Pinochet forces was eliminated, strengthening Pinochet’s regime and securing the Nixon administration’s goal of crushing Allende’s experiment with democratic socialism in Chile.

OTHER CONDOR-STYLE STRUCTURES AND OPERATIONS IN 1973-1974

There is more evidence of pre-1975 Condor operations. In a 1973 abduction case, a Bolivian named Jorge Ríos Dalenz was disappeared in Santiago
in a Condor-style operation. Ríos had been a leader of the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (Movement of the Revolutionary Left—MIR) in Bolivia (separate from the Chilean organization of the same name) until the 1971 coup of General Hugo Banzer prompted him to flee to Chile. He lived there quietly until the September 1973 coup, when he was kidnapped by a military commando (García Mérida, 1998). Martín Almada was abducted in Paraguay in November 1974 by combined forces and taken to an interrogation and torture session. He testified that there were Chilean and Argentine officers present (Urien Berri, 2000).

According to a still-classified 1979 U.S. Senate committee report, based on CIA intelligence, DINA asked the CIA in 1974 for authorization to open a Condor headquarters in Miami (Kornbluh, 1998: 15; Schemo, 2000). The initiative was rejected, but Argentine operatives did set up an intelligence and operations center in Miami in the late 1970s, apparently with the assistance of the CIA (McSherry, 1997: 182-186). Moreover, the Senate report stated that Phase III Condor assassinations were planned in 1974, targeting three leftists in Europe, but aborted when the CIA warned authorities in France and Portugal (Calloni, 1994: 57).

In my 1996 research in the Paraguayan Archives I found documents that provided evidence of cross-border intelligence coordination involving the Condor countries and the United States. One Paraguayan intelligence report entitled “Meeting of Latin American Extremists,” dated March 14, 1975 (before Condor’s official formation), listed its distribution as follows: “A”—“D”—“H” AGREMIL ARG/BOL/CHI/URU/USA/VEN. I also found documents detailing a U.S.-led military network called the Comisión Permanente de Comunicaciones Militares Inter-Americanas (Permanent Commission of Inter-American Military Communications—COPECOMI) that existed in the 1970s. The headquarters of COPECOMI was in the Canal Zone, and it apparently served as a means to upgrade the communications capabilities of the armies and link them together. In June 1973 a meeting (the Conference of Chiefs of Communications of the American Armies) was held in Brasília in which discussion took place regarding how the network should operate. (Interestingly, only a few armies attended this conference: Venezuela, Chile, Costa Rica [the National Guard], Paraguay, and Brazil as an observer; there were written communications from the other Latin armies.) One document, “Permanent Instructions for Transmissions for the Network of Inter-American Military Communication [RE CIM in Spanish],” originating in Fort Clayton (Canal Zone) and dated October 1973, was sent confidentially to 18 Latin American armies. Another discussed how to integrate the overlapping communications systems of the Conference of American Armies, RECIM, and COPECOMI; how COPECOMI should be financed (at the time the U.S.
Army mainly financed the system); and how very high frequency signals could be used for military communications to give them greater security and speed (Committee reports, Conference of Chiefs of Communications, June 1973). U.S. military officers played a prominent role in these conferences. This communications system appears to have been used for the Condor network.

Operation Colombo, the psychological warfare operation involving Chile's DINA, Argentine intelligence officials, and Triple A paramilitaries, occurred in 1974-1975. The mutilated bodies of 119 missing Chilean leftists, many of whom were originally detained by Chilean security forces in 1974 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 Chile's Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Left Movement—MIR) and other leftist groups. Years later, however, secret DINA files were discovered showing that the 119 were disappeared and brought out of Chile as part of a combined Chilean-Argentine security operation called Operation Colombo, linked to Chilean and Argentine Condor operatives. DINA and the Triple A had planted the false stories and false identifications of the victims as part of a psychological-warfare campaign designed to obscure and confuse (CODEPU, 1994; 1996; Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación de Chile, 1991: 482-484).

Research conducted in the Paraguayan Archives by the attorney Kathryn J. Zoglin also substantiates the view that the Condor system emerged long before 1975. In her studies of the documents, Zoglin found that militaries in the Southern Cone coordinated their so-called war against subversion and met to share intelligence from approximately 1973 through 1982. One document she found, dated 1973, was a secret memo notifying Paraguayan officials of the Second Congress of the Latin American Anti-Communist Federation, scheduled for May in a Paraguayan city. Delegates from Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay were invited to this conference. In another meeting report from 1973, Zoglin found that Brazilian security officials offered Paraguay extensive collaboration, and all the delegates concluded that the time had come to take offensive action against communism (Zoglin, 2000: 3). All this information puts early operations that fit Condor's profile, such as the assassinations of Horman and Teruggi, in a new light.
THE HORMAN AND TERUGGI CASES

The murders of Horman and Teruggi in 1973 reflect characteristics of a Condor operation (for background see Hauser, 1978; McSherry, 2000). A search for “Operation Condor” in the U.S. State Department web site produces numerous files on the Horman case, indicating that the State Department itself has associated the case with Condor. Several of the files released in 1999 report accusations by a Chilean intelligence officer that a CIA officer was present in the room when the Chilean general in charge of military intelligence made the decision to execute Horman (because he “knew too much”). Clearly, a CIA presence would indicate high-level cooperation between U.S. and Chilean intelligence in the murder of Horman, and, indeed, State Department investigators suspected as much at the time (McSherry, 2000). A high-ranking U.S. military officer may also have tipped off the Chileans about where Horman lived; a hotel clerk told a CBS journalist in 1973 that Lt. Col. Patrick Ryan took a hotel card with Horman’s new address. The Horman family believes that the card was given to the Chilean military, and Horman disappeared soon afterward. Horman and his friend Terry Simon had been stranded in Viña del Mar at the time of the coup, and there they met U.S. officers who hinted of their involvement. A former Chilean government official also said at the time that a Chilean military man had told him of seeing a large intelligence file on Horman’s activities in the United States that he presumed was of U.S. origin (Hauser, 1978: 233, 244). State Department investigators suspected CIA involvement in Horman’s murder in the 1970s. It stands to reason that the Chileans would not eliminate U.S. citizens without such a green light, a fact noted by State Department officials in the 1970s documents (McSherry, 2000).

Documents declassified in 2000 revealed that Frank Teruggi, also murdered in Chile shortly after the coup, was under U.S. Army and FBI surveillance in 1972 because of his leftist political activities, news that outraged his family (Teruggi documents, National Security Archive; www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/news/20001113). One intelligence memo reported Teruggi’s address in Chile. These documents too raise the question of whether U.S. agents passed this information to the Chilean junta and provided a green light for his abduction and murder. Coordination of secret extralegal abductions and assassinations between national intelligence services was a central feature of Condor.
OTHER LINKS TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

The seizure of Chilean Jorge Isaac Fuentes Alarcón, accused of acting as a courier for the Chilean MIR, sheds light on U.S. involvement. Fuentes was arrested by Paraguayan police as he crossed the border from Argentina to Paraguay in May 1975. Chile’s Rettig Commission reported that the capture of Fuentes was a cooperative operation by Argentine intelligence services, Paraguayan police, and the U.S. embassy in Buenos Aires (which reported the results of Fuentes’s “interrogation” to Chilean police, while the FBI searched for suspects associated with Fuentes in the United States) (Weiner, 1999; McSherry, 2000; Dinges, 2000). In this case U.S. security officials clearly acted as a link in the Condor chain.

There are other linkages. A U.S. embassy official told the scholar Saul Landau, for example, that an Argentine military source reported to him in 1976 that the CIA had played a key role in setting up computerized links among the intelligence and operations units of the six Condor states (Landau, 1988: 119). This system may refer to CONDORTEL or to the computerized central data bank of suspects, “something similar to Interpol, but dedicated to Subversion,” mentioned in Contreras’s letter.

There were two significant revelations about U.S. links to Condor in 2000 and 2001. The first was a declassified 1978 cable from Ambassador to Paraguay Robert White to the secretary of state that linked Condor to the former U.S. military headquarters in the Panama Canal Zone. In the cable White reported on a meeting with the commander of Paraguay’s armed forces, who identified a U.S. army facility as the site of a secure telecommunications base for Condor intelligence coordination throughout Latin America (White cable, 1978; foia.state.gov/documents/StateChile3/000058FD.pdf). According to the Paraguayan general, intelligence chiefs from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay used “an encrypted system within the U.S. telecommunications net[work],” which covered all of Latin America, to “coordinate intelligence information.” In the cable, White drew the connection to Operation Condor and advised the Carter administration to reconsider whether this linkage was in the U.S. interest. He received no response. Clearly, such technological and infrastructural support was a crucial component of Condor intelligence and “hunter-killer” operations, reflecting a significant collaboration by the U.S. military. Moreover, it would have allowed U.S. intelligence to monitor all of Condor’s operations planning and intelligence sharing reported through this communications facility, helping to explain the up-to-date information held by the DIA and the CIA regarding secret Condor operations and meetings.
The Army SOA and the Panama headquarters of the U.S. Army Southern Command served as the center of the continental anticommunist alliance. According to one military graduate, “The school was always a front for other special operations, covert operations” (Nelson-Pallmeyer, 1997: 31; see also Fischer, 1997: 189). Another officer, an Argentine navy man whose unit was organized into kidnap commandos (“task forces”) in 1972, said that the repression was part of “a plan that responded to the Doctrine of National Security that had as a base the School of the Americas, directed by the Pentagon in Panama” (Ginzberg, 2000).

The second astonishing piece of information was the admission by the CIA itself in September 2000 that DINA chief Manuel Contreras was a CIA asset between 1974 and 1977 and that he received an unspecified payment for his services (CIA, Report to Congress, September 18, 2000, 17). During these same years Contreras was known as “Condor One,” the leading organizer and proponent of Operation Condor. The CIA did not divulge this information in 1978, when a federal grand jury indicted Contreras for his role in the Letelier-Moffitt assassinations. Contreras was sentenced to a prison term in Chile for this crime and convicted in absentia in Italy for the Leighton attack. The CIA claims that it did not ask Contreras about Condor until after the assassinations of Letelier and Moffitt in September 1976. This assertion is hardly credible, especially given the CIA’s admission that it knew of the “precursor to Condor” and its assassination plans shortly after the 1973 coup in Chile. Moreover, the CIA helped to organize and train DINA in 1974, and it retained Contreras as an asset for a year after the Letelier/Moffitt assassinations. The CIA destroyed its file on Contreras in 1991 (Marquis and Schemo, 2000).

That Contreras was a CIA asset adds more weight to well-founded suspicions that the CIA and U.S. military intelligence forces were secret sponsors of Condor. Robert White, the former U.S. ambassador, has written the following about CIA assets (2000: 54, emphasis added):

CIA activities in foreign countries are usually described as falling into two categories: clandestine collection of information and covert action. . . . In my experience, there exists a third category, a hybrid that parades as information-gathering but in reality is a form of covert action. The CIA contends that it has no choice but to recruit uniformed criminals such as General Manuel Noriega of Panama and political assassins such as Emmanuel Constant in order to gather intelligence. This claim is false and self-serving. These tropical gangsters enjoyed profitable contractual arrangements with the CIA not because they were particularly good sources of information but because they served as paid agents of influence who promoted actions or policies favored by the Agency.
It seems entirely plausible that as DINA chief and Condor One, Contreras was an “agent of influence” for the CIA.

There is substantive new evidence of CIA penetration of and coordination with the intelligence organizations of the Condor countries. Contreras stated in 2000, for example, that Pinochet had instructed him to ask the CIA for assistance in setting up DINA shortly after the 1973 Chilean coup. He had met with General Vernon Walters, deputy director of the CIA, and in March 1974 the CIA had sent eight agents to Chile to help organize DINA—and, Contreras added, they had tried to assume key leadership positions permanently within DINA (La Tercera, September 21, 2000; Franklin, 2000; Jornal do Brasil, September 22, 2000). According to Contreras, the Pinochet regime had refused to accept this level of CIA dominance, but nevertheless the CIA had worked closely with DINA until it was replaced by the Central Nacional de Informaciones (National Information Center) in 1977 in the wake of the Letelier/Moffitt assassinations. The CIA played a similar role in other Latin American intelligence agencies. For example, the Technical Department for the Repression of Communism in Paraguay (La Técnica), the nerve center of dictator General Alfredo Stroessner’s repressive apparatus, was originally organized with U.S. support.

Michael Townley’s relationship to the CIA also remains murky. He admitted his role in the Prats, Letelier-Moffitt, and Leighton crimes. He turned state’s evidence in the Letelier/Moffitt assassination trial, served a short sentence, and entered the witness protection program. In Chile, Townley had claimed that he was a CIA operative, and so did the defense attorney of accused Cuban exiles in the Letelier/Moffitt assassination trial in the United States. In fact, Townley was interviewed by CIA recruiters in November 1970 (CIA, memo dated March 1978, heading excised) and was judged to be “of operational interest as a possible [phrase excised] of the Directorate of Operations in 1971” (CIA, Security Analysis Group to C/SAF March 6, 1978), although the memo carefully states that the “Office of Security file does not reflect that Mr. Townley was ever actually used by the Agency.” A separate affidavit states that “in February 1971, the Directorate of Operations requested preliminary security approval to use Mr. Townley in an operational capacity” (CIA General Counsel, affidavit by Robert W. Gambino, November 9, 1978).

Townley also had close ties to the U.S. embassy and to high-ranking foreign service officers, who knew of his ties to the fascist Patria y Libertad (U.S. Embassy in Ecuador, Second Secretary David H. Stebbing to Arnold Isaacs, Chief of Chilean Political Affairs, U.S. State Department, October 17, 1973). The years 1970 and 1971 were crucial in Chile, when right-wing attempts to destabilize Allende were prevalent. Given the CIA’s doctrine of
“plausible deniability” and its record of deception, it may be impossible to
determine whether Townley and Contreras were acting as CIA agents in Con-
dor operations or whether the CIA sanctioned any Condor atrocities. The cir-
cumstantial evidence raises serious questions, however.

CONCLUSION

This article has sought to shed light on several shadowy aspects of Condor,
especially its roots and its links to the U.S. government. The question
remains: why was savage “counterterror” sanctioned by the foremost West-
ern superpower when the use of such methods violates every principle of law
and human rights upon which the United States is founded?

During the cold war U.S. policy makers framed their strategies in the
developing world as responses to the threat of communist subversion
directed by Moscow. Their real fear, however, seemed to be not guerrillas but
new popular movements in the class-stratified nations of Latin America and
elsewhere that were demanding political and socioeconomic change. As one
1970 CIA report stated, “Cooperation among Latin American revolutionary
groups across national boundaries is not extensive. . . . Insurgency move-
ments thus far have remained essentially national in scope. . . . Most revolu-
tionary groups in Latin America have struggled merely to survive” (CIA
Directorate of Intelligence, intelligence memorandum, “Cooperation among
Latin American Terrorist and Insurgent Groups,” no. 1464/70, September 21,
1970). A 1976 CIA memo similarly acknowledged that “guerrilla groups in
South America have never posed a direct challenge to any government. Most
of the groups have been too small and weak to engage security forces
directly” (CIA, “Terrorism in South America,” August 9, 1976).

The 1960s and 1970s were a turbulent time in Latin America. The Cuban
revolution occurred in 1959, challenging U.S. hegemony, and throughout the
hemisphere a clamor for political inclusion and social justice was rising from
millions of newly awakened people. Populist, nationalist, and socialist move-
ments emerged that challenged the entrenched privileges of local oligarchies
as well as U.S. political and corporate interests. Nationalist and socialist
leaders ascended to the presidency in the early 1970s in Chile (Allende),
Bolivia (Torres), Argentina (Perón), and Peru (Velasco). In this context, U.S.
national security strategists and their counterparts in Latin America began to
define large parts of Latin America’s civilian populations as potentially or
actually subversive. The new security doctrine of counterrevolution targeted
“internal enemies.” To paraphrase Charles Tilly, elites were faced by chal-
lenges to the prevailing distribution of power and resources (1978: 53), and
they turned to repression. Fearful of “losing” its sphere of influence, Washington seemed to prefer Latin America “safely” under military rule.

President Richard Nixon and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger wanted to punish the Chilean people for electing Allende and send a warning to other Latin Americans who dared to defy U.S. imperial preferences. As Nixon put it in a National Security Council meeting of November 6, 1970: “Latin America is not gone, and we want to keep it. . . . If there is any way we can hurt him [Allende] whether by government or private business—I want them to know our policy is negative. . . . No impression should be permitted in Latin America that they can get away with this, that it’s safe to go this way” (White House Memorandum of Conversation: NSC Meeting-Chile [NSSM97], 1970, www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20001113/).

As early as the late 1940s, U.S. national security strategists deemed the use of terror to be “effective,” and “techniques” of assassination were taught in the 1950s, as recently declassified documents on Guatemala have shown (“CIA and Assassinations: The Guatemala 1954 Documents,” Electronic Briefing Book no. 4, and “U.S. Policy in Guatemala, 1966-1986,” Electronic Briefing Book no. 11, National Security Archive, 1997). Moreover, as Jeffrey A. Sluka has pointed out, “the structures, tactics, and technology of state terror have been diffused, in fact aggressively marketed and exported as a form of ‘military aid’ to developing countries” (2000: 9). As Army Field Manual 31-16 instructed: “The Chiefs of Mission and brigade commanders should encourage the military chiefs of the host countries to adopt organizations similar to those that have proven to be efficient in countering guerrilla forces” (U.S. Army, 1968). While some officials in the U.S. government were dismayed and outraged by such strategies, as was most of the U.S. public, they were usually overruled or disregarded. During most of the cold war, the U.S. national security establishment ranked security interests and anticommunism above human rights and democracy. The result was that the counterterror doctrine and special-forces model promoted by the United States were adopted by militaries worldwide. Some of them went on to torture and murder thousands of their own people. Moreover, the historical record suggests that a line can be traced from the counterterror doctrine and model to the development of Operation Condor.

The stamp of approval for Condor provided by U.S. military and intelligence forces—the legitimation of methods of terror against “internal enemies;” the use of a major communications network located in a U.S. facility in Panama; the recruitment of Contreras, Condor One, as a paid CIA asset; and routine U.S. collaboration with murderous Condor intelligence units in the Fuentes Alarcón case and many others—undoubtedly encouraged Condor commanders to act with impunity as they planned and committed horrific
transnational abductions and assassinations. The new evidence increasingly illuminates the depth of U.S. involvement and complicity in cold war repression in Latin America and in the human rights crimes of Operation Condor.

NOTES

1. Chapter 8, “Combatting Terrorism,” states: “Combatting terrorism involves two sets of actions to oppose terrorism: antiterrorism (defensive measures) and counterterrorism (offensive measures). . . . Counterterrorism programs, which will not be addressed here, are classified and addressed in various national security decision directives, national security directives, and contingency plans” (U.S. Army, n.d.).

2. I studied copies of the manuals at the National Security Archive in Washington, D.C., in July 1999. 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 Guerilla,” “Interrogation,” “Combat Intelligence,” and “Analysis I.”

3. This anonymous U.S. operative of the Phoenix Program described how he was ordered to “take out a village” in Vietnam. His superior told him that “we are not to take prisoners, that all of these people are Communist sympathizers.” There were no survivors of this U.S. operation. The Bob Kerrey case, made public in 2001, seems to be another example of such methods.

4. Vaky concluded that “counter-terror is wrong as a counter-insurgency tactic” and expressed the fear that “we will stand before history unable to answer the accusations that we encouraged the Guatemalan Army to do these things.”

5. For example, one secret CIA document written by David Phillips urges the Santiago CIA station to “stonewall all the way” regarding U.S. involvement with the Schneider operation and “presume . . . absolute denial will be the order of the day even with ambassador and other Embassy colleagues” (CIA, October 28, 1970). See also Warren Christopher, State Department, to Santiago Embassy, Roger Channel Telegram, “Letelier/Moffitt Assassination Case: Contingency Press Guidance on Allegations of CIA Involvement,” August 1978, which reproduces “a CIA message received August 29 concerning expected allegations of CIA involvement in Letelier/Moffitt case.” Government officials are instructed to deny any CIA linkage and even told what to say by the CIA.

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Pulling Back the Veil on Condor

by JOHN DINGES

July 13, 2000

For three years, from 1975 through 1977, the countries in what is known as the Southern Cone of South America underwent a human rights crime wave unprecedented before or since in the region. Military regimes in place for more than a decade in Brazil and Paraguay were joined by like-minded military rulers who had overthrown civilian regimes in Uruguay, Chile, Argentina and Bolivia. Perhaps the most closely guarded secret was a system of international cooperation known as Operation Condor, an intelligence organization in which multinational teams tracked down and assassinated dissidents outside their home countries. At least 13,000 people were killed, and hundreds of thousands were imprisoned in concentration camps in the six countries participating in Condor.

Now, the discovery of secret-police documents in Paraguay and other recently declassified documents in the United States is pulling back the veil from Operation Condor. The new information paints a picture of up-to-the-minute knowledge of Condor operations by US officials, including detailed intelligence just before Chile sent a team to Washington, DC, where they killed a prominent opposition leader with a car bomb on Embassy Row. Other documents provide a feasible scenario for the origins of Operation Condor and point to the intriguing early involvement of an FBI agent. This is my reconstruction of what happened:

In May 1975, Paraguayan police arrested two men, Jorge Fuentes Alarcón and Amilcar Santucho, who represented what they considered a major new guerrilla threat, a united underground organization of armed groups from several countries, called the Revolutionary Coordinating Junta, or JCR.

The arrests were seen as an intelligence bonanza, according to Paraguayan and US documents. Last year the Justice Department declassified a letter, dated June 6, 1975, from an FBI agent, Robert Scherrer, to a Chilean police official. Scherrer, who had taken great interest in the arrest of the two revolutionaries, describes the results of "interrogations" of the two men.

"[Fuentes] admitted that he is a member of the Coordinating Junta and was acting as a courier for said group," Scherrer wrote. Santucho, his traveling companion, was the brother of Argentina's most famous guerrilla leader, Roberto Santucho. Scherrer, whose job included intelligence liaison with the Southern Cone countries, told his Chilean counterpart that the FBI would follow up by investigating two people living in the United States, in New York and Dallas, whose names were discovered in Fuentes's address book (one of them was identified by Scherrer as Fuentes's sister). There can be little doubt that Scherrer was aware that the "interrogation" in Paraguay meant brutal torture--in fact, he discussed the Paraguayans' use of torture in a 1979 interview with me in which he also described Fuentes's arrest.

When the Paraguayans were finished interrogating Fuentes, they turned him over to Chile's secret police, the DINA. Two days later, DINA chief Manuel Contreras wrote an ebullient thank-you note, dated September 25, 1975, to his Paraguayan counterpart, conveying "the most sincere thanks for the
cooperation given us to help in the mission my agents had to carry out in the sister republic of Paraguay, and I am sure that this mutual cooperation will continue and increase in the accomplishment of the common objectives of both services." Another long letter followed: Contreras invited three Paraguayan intelligence officials to attend a "strictly secret" meeting in Santiago along with intelligence chiefs from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Uruguay. The Paraguay archive contains the agenda of the meeting, which was held November 25-December 1, 1975. It included discussion of codes and secret communications methods, and a "flowchart" of the new organization. The Fuentes/Santucho "success" appears to have provided the impetus and the model for the formal organization of the six countries into Operation Condor. Fuentes was seen, tortured but alive, by a dozen witnesses inside a secret prison known as Villa Grimaldi, on the outskirts of Santiago. He was taken away in January 1976 and is presumed dead.

Nine months later, an apparent Condor mission struck in Washington. On September 21, 1976, a car bomb exploded on Massachusetts Avenue, killing Chilean exile leader and former US ambassador Orlando Letelier and a US associate, Ronni Moffitt. FBI agent Scherrer was assigned to investigate. In the 1979 interview, Scherrer told me how he got a major lead in the case. He had contacted an Argentine military intelligence officer who had been in Santiago the week the assassination occurred: "It was a wild Condor operation," the source said, carried out by "those lunatics in Santiago." Scherrer drafted a cable, dated September 28, 1976, that described Condor to Washington FBI headquarters. For many years that cable was virtually all that was known about Condor, and it left the impression that Condor was discovered after the Letelier assassination. We now know, thanks to the new documents, that US officials knew about Condor before the Letelier assassination. In fact, CIA and State Department officials wrote about Condor's assassination plans in six documents before the assassination, and in one on the very day of it.

That remarkable document is labeled "INR Afternoon Summary, September 21, 1976." It describes Condor as "inspired by Chile" and designed for "the covert elimination of subversives." Another INR (the State Department's Intelligence and Research Department) document and two CIA documents discuss internal squabbling among the Condor members: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay were planning "the assassination of leftist targets resident in Western Europe," according to the August 13 INR document, but Brazil was refusing to participate. An August 12 CIA report says training sessions for the European assassination operations are scheduled to be held in Buenos Aires. The documents are among thousands on Chile ordered declassified by the Clinton Administration in the wake of the 1998 arrest in London of former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet.

The new evidence does not indicate US foreknowledge of Chile's plot against Letelier, but the existence of an international assassination ring led by Chile must have been of inescapable relevance on the afternoon of the car bombing. Yet it was almost a year before the US investigation focused directly on Chile, eventually resulting in the indictment of Condor organizer Contreras and two other DINA officers.

The newly declassified documents--in Paraguay as well as the United States--are helping to reveal a wide range of Condor operations, which included assassination plans or attempts (some of them aborted) in the United States, Portugal, France, Italy and Mexico, and the arrest and torture of an undetermined number of foreigners, including citizens of Spain, Britain, France and the United States. Those Condor activities are at the heart of a variety of new and revived judicial investigations of human rights crimes of the era: The US Justice Department has recently revived its investigation of the Letelier murder and is now focusing on Pinochet's involvement. Brazil is releasing documents about Condor, and its Congress is probing possible Condor involvement in the 1976 deaths in Argentina of two former Brazilian presidents, João Goulart and Juscelino Kubitschek. An Argentine judge has traveled to Chile twice in six months to

Latin Americans seem determined to push forward to a final accounting of their past. But so far the United States has gone no further than the release of revelatory—but often heavily censored—documents from that era. (A final release of Chilean documents is scheduled for mid-September.) The flood of new information and new investigations adds up to a compelling argument for the US government to go beyond its current posture—a kind of Clinton-era "limited hangout" policy—and move quickly to a final truth-telling, along the lines of the official Truth and Reconciliation investigations our country has applauded in Chile, South Africa and other countries on the front lines of the cold war. In the case of Operation Condor, the revelations about the FBI role in the Fuentes case, as well as the detailed US intelligence about Condor before an act of Condor terrorism in Washington, raise questions about what else was known and done in the liaison relationships between our intelligence services and military missions and their counterparts in the Condor dictatorships.

FBI agent Scherrer (who died in 1995) was aware of the moral dilemmas into which he was thrust. "I agree with the necessity to exchange information on terrorists," Scherrer told me in a 1979 interview. "I think they should be rounded up, but tried, not slaughtered."

The issue is not only whether a single FBI agent crossed a line by distributing and acting on information he knew was gained by torture. The real question goes to the shared objectives among US agencies and Gestapo-like secret-police organizations in Latin America, and to the US policies that justified working with them in full knowledge and tacit approval of their methods.

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**About John Dinges**

John Dinges has been writing for many years on Latin America. His latest book is *The Condor Years: How Pinochet and His Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents.* [more...](http://www.thenation.com/doc/20000724/dinges/print)

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