

40 Years are Nothing

40 Years are Nothing:

*History and memory
of the 1973 coups d'état
in Uruguay and Chile*

Edited by

Pablo Leighton and Fernando López

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INTRODUCTION

PABLO LEIGHTON AND FERNANDO LÓPEZ

*Volver
con la frente marchita
las nieves del tiempo
platearon mi sien.*

*Sentir
que es un soplo la vida
que veinte años no es nada
que febril la mirada
errante en las sombras
te busca y te nombra.*

(Carlos Gardel and Alfredo Le Pera, 1935)

The 1973 coups d'état in Uruguay and Chile presented a number of significant qualitative differences from other military coups in Latin America. In just three months, these dictatorial regimes marked the beginning of a new era in the subcontinent. There had been other significant coups in South America in the early and mid-20th century, such as the overthrowing of President Jacobo Árbenz in 1954, or the 1964 and 1966 military takeovers in Brazil and Argentina, which reshaped the political role of the armed forces across the continent. However, the coups d'état that took place in 1973 were notably different from previous dictatorial experiments. The new regimes in Uruguay and Chile became staunch bearers of a National Security State doctrine and introduced radical new economic policies. The events that took place in Montevideo and Santiago in June and September 1973 respectively became decisive battlefields of the Cold War in Latin America. More tellingly, they gave birth to extreme models of society built on the foundations of what can arguably be considered ideological genocides. These regimes relied on both rudimentary and sophisticated methods of repression and authoritarianism to establish neoliberal paths that have lasted until today.

The year 2013 marked the 40th anniversary of the fall of democratic rule in those countries. This book is inspired in the strong memories that these coups still create. As iconic Argentinean-Uruguayan tango musician, Carlos Gardel, sang in 1935, “because twenty years are nothing”, the people of Latin America and elsewhere remain holding strong feelings and opinions about these events four decades later, crossing more than two generations. The 40th anniversary led to the organisation of numerous commemorative events in Uruguay, Chile and around the globe. Surviving victims, relatives of the disappeared, human rights organisations and groups of various backgrounds and interests gathered throughout the year to remember, and among other ends, to keep the pursuit of justice. Despite the four decades and what can be described as some timid *ad hoc* efforts to address the issue, the Uruguayan and Chilean democracies and judiciaries continue to show deficiencies in bringing the perpetrators of severe human rights violations, both military personnel and civilian collaborators, to face justice.

The anniversary also gave scholars from all over the world an opportunity to reflect upon the significance of these coups. This translated into numerous seminars, conferences, debates and events at universities in the Americas, Europe and Australia. In this context, the editors of this book, with the support of the School of Humanities and Languages, University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia, organised a seminar in October 2013 to discuss the significance and legacies of the 27 June and 11 September 1973 coups in Uruguay and Chile. Titled *Forty years are nothing: History and memory of the 1973 coups d'état in Uruguay and Chile*, the event attracted researchers from Uruguay, Chile, Brazil, Colombia, United States (US) and Australia who presented on a wide range of topics linked to the anniversary. The event served as a platform to launch a number of projects including the subsequent founding of Latitudes—the Latin American Research Group Australia (www.latitudesgroup.info)—and this book, which is a compilation of papers presented at the seminar by specialists on Latin American studies. The range of topics addressed in the different chapters (and the numerous debates and conferences held around the world) demonstrate that the 1973 coups continue to be a key point of interest for researchers and that the study of this topic is far from exhausted.

Chapter One of the book gives an overview of the significant contribution made by the Uruguayan and Chilean regimes towards the formalisation of what would become the infamous transnational network of state terrorism known as Operation Condor. Fernando López discusses the endogenous and exogenous political and economic challenges faced by

these dictatorships and the strategies adopted to break the international isolation that ensued as a consequence of the numerous human rights violations conducted by the security forces and their accomplices, as well as the international campaigns conducted by exiles and their supporters.

Chapter Two explores the way in which Uruguay has struggled to implement the different mechanisms of Transitional Justice since the return to democratic rule in 1985. Despite strong criticisms from regional and international bodies, such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations (UN), Uruguay maintains an amnesty law that limits the powers and faculties of the judiciary to investigate crimes committed by members of the armed forces during the dictatorship. Pedro Teixeirensé provides an interesting background to the field of Transitional Justice and its implementation in Latin America. It also follows Uruguay's approaches to the application of these mechanisms throughout three distinct periods in the country's recent history, as well as the subsequent political challenges that emerged with the implementation of these mechanisms.

Chapter Three also focuses on Uruguay's struggle with Transitional Justice, though from a different perspective. It contrasts with some of the ideas offered by Pedro Teixeirensé and generates an interesting debate by evaluating the significant contribution made by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights' historic ruling against Uruguay in the *Gelman v Uruguay* case. Debbie Sharnak uses this case to delineate the evolution of human rights policy in Uruguay since the return to democracy in 1985. Most importantly it clearly identifies the slow changes that have taken place in the past decade and the clash between international human rights law and local legislation. The chapter concludes by making a clear case for a shift in the analytical frameworks used in the studies of Transitional Justice.

Chapter Four examines the cultural power of the Chilean junta led by Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990) during its first years, with an emphasis on the mass event of the first anniversary of the coup d'état, on 11 September 1974, broadcast live on national television. Pablo Leighton scrutinises how the violent Chilean dictatorship from the very beginning also developed culture and discourse to hold and justify its power. The chapter points to the rarely acknowledged sense of ceremony and spectacle of the Chilean regime through a televised simulcast event, which showed hundreds of thousands of people celebrating the first anniversary of the coup in Santiago. The author brings to light that the first year of the dictatorship was not only the most violent year but also one of the most hegemonic as well.

Chapter Five explores the unrecognised role of Australia's intelligence agencies in undermining Salvador Allende's government (1970–1973) and supporting the more well-known actions of the United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Chile. Florencia Melgar and Pablo Leighton show the difficulties in making that role transparent more than four decades after the coup. The actions of Australia in Chile have involved forms of censorship over the revelations in the years after the coup. A 1977 investigation by an Australian Royal Commission headed by Justice Robert Hope still has its section on Chile blacked out. The chapter reveals the internal conflicts between Prime Minister Gough Whitlam (1972–1975); the head of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, Bill Robertson; and Labor Minister, Clyde Cameron, about the withdrawal of agents from Chile. Finally, the authors show the haunting consequences of the relationships between Australia and Pinochet's regime through intelligence surveillance over the Chilean exiled community and the current extradition process of a Chilean human rights violator who also found refuge in Australia.

Chapter Six focuses on the legacy of the Chilean dictatorship through the memorial sites and practices of memory. Nicolás del Valle argues against a "museification" of memory, particularly when many of the crimes of the civil-military regime still go unpunished and the symbols of the dictatorship are still disputed. Specifically, the chapter examines the Chilean state policies over memorials and the struggle over memory sites by victims and relatives of victims who have marked former torture and detention centres and burial locations, among others. The author proposes a critique of a regime of memory and the governance of human rights in Chile.

Chapter Seven, finally, analyses the different theatrical elements present in three marches commemorating the dictatorships in Uruguay and Chile. Yael Zaliasnik explores performative strategies to acknowledge the vital characteristics of memories, such as kinetics, participation and the routes of these events. Specifically, the chapter studies the Uruguayan *Marcha del Silencio* (March of Silence) and in Chile the funeral procession of December 2009 for musician and man of theatre, Víctor Jara, as well as the August 2012 march from Villa Grimaldi to Simón Bolívar, two former torture and extermination camps. These marches sought to encourage citizens to act critically and to take a stand in the locations where they took place, defamiliarising our way of looking in order to confront facts, places and attitudes.

Forty years are nothing is aimed at a broad audience which includes specialists in Latin American Studies, the political, cultural and economic

history of Uruguay and/or Chile, memory, Transitional Justice, state terrorism, and those in the general public with an interest in these topics.

The editors would like to thank all the contributors for their valuable work in furthering the field of Latin American studies and for making this book possible. We also thank Blanche Hampton for her generous copy-editing work and Jorge Hernández for logistics. Pablo Leighton wishes to thank Bryoni Trezise and Bela Leighton Trezise for everything.

PREFACE

J PATRICE MCSHERRY

The Cold War was not cold in Latin America, where bloody military coups took place in one country after another in the 1960s and 70s. Counterinsurgency-trained armed forces were convinced of their mission to eliminate “internal enemies”, driven by a national security doctrine that exalted a “war against subversion” and justified harsh and illegal methods. The internal enemy could be anyone: not only communists or guerrillas, but dissidents, intellectuals, activists, party leaders, musicians, students, constitutionalist military officers, unionists, artists, priests and nuns. The result was a tidal wave of death and destruction in Latin America as hundreds of thousands of civilians were “disappeared”, tortured, and killed. Hundreds of thousands more were forced into exile.

The transnational system known as Operation Condor extended the dirty wars across borders, as far as Europe and the United States. Exiles and refugees who had escaped their own countries were targeted and pursued, seized, tortured, and illegally transferred to their home countries, where the great majority of them were killed. The secret Condor apparatus also assassinated key opposition leaders around the world. The Condor covert network included the US-backed anticommunist military regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, later joined by Ecuador and Peru in less central roles. The United States provided military aid as well as covert support.

The legacies and consequences of this era of state terror continue to reverberate in Latin American societies, which were deeply scarred by atrocity, grief, and fear, and continue to shape state-society relations to this day. This book comes at an opportune moment, as some four decades have now passed since the coups that abruptly altered the lives of millions of Latin Americans. The trauma of the coups and the ensuing years of repressive dictatorship implanted a culture of silence and fear, whose echoes linger to this day. This volume, focused on Chile and Uruguay, brings us new perspectives and insights with which to understand this recent history, especially the struggles to remember and commemorate

those who were lost, as well as to hold accountable those responsible for crimes against humanity.

Clearly, the Latin American national security states did not operate in a vacuum. During this period anticommunism was the overriding priority in US foreign policy, usually outweighing concerns for human rights. US military and intelligence forces helped to set up, and then worked closely with, Latin American intelligence agencies such as the Chilean Directorate of National Intelligence (*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*, DINA) and the Uruguayan National Directorate of Information and Intelligence (*Dirección Nacional de Informaciones e Inteligencia*, DNII). One of the key organizers of Operation Condor was DINA commander Manuel Contreras. In 2000 the CIA acknowledged that Contreras had been a paid asset between 1974 and 1977, a period when the Condor network was planning and carrying out assassinations in Europe, Latin America, and the United States (CIA 2000).

Washington, obsessed with the communist threat, interpreted Latin American social and political conflicts, or nationalist government policies, as indications of communist subversion instigated by Moscow. Of course, US security strategists also feared that economic, political, and military interests in the region were under threat by militant and organized political and social movements. In Chile and Uruguay, broad popular movements were fighting to transform exclusionary economic structures, demand basic rights, and democratise the state. Significantly, the *Unidad Popular* (Popular Unity) in Chile—the coalition of six left parties that supported presidential candidate Salvador Allende in 1970—was working through the constitutional system to develop a socialist project. Similarly, the newly formed *Frente Amplio* (Broad Front) in Uruguay in 1970 sought to make radical change through the ballot box. In other words, the prospect of elected leftist leaders—not only small guerrilla movements such as the Tupamaros in Uruguay—was considered dangerous and intolerable by powerful local elites as well as by Washington.

The system of state terror was international, sustained by arms, technology, finances, and other forms of support from Washington and the collusion of Latin American military regimes, united in the inter-American military system as well as the covert Operation Condor. US-backed counterinsurgents built what I have termed a parallel apparatus, a set of invisible structures and forces of the state, in order to eliminate political opposition while ensuring deniability. In both Chile and Uruguay, the United States intervened covertly to establish such parallel structures and forces and shape political outcomes. US covert operations to prevent Allende's election, then to prevent his taking office, and finally to provoke

a coup have been well-documented. In my work on Uruguay I have shown the tight interconnections among US military and police training programs in that country, inter-American counterinsurgency strategies, the emergence of right-wing death squads, and finally a Uruguayan Condor unit that operated in Buenos Aires and elsewhere.

Despite the heavy hand of the United States it is crucial to point out, as do several authors in this volume, that the Cold War was not only a conflict between that country and the Soviet Union and their respective allies. The post-World War II period was also a time of major anti-colonial and independence movements in Africa and Asia, protests against dependency, inequality, and social marginalization in Latin America, and demands for national control of resources, self-determination, and development across the so-called Third World. For some time much of the scholarly literature focused on the bipolar nature of the Cold War and tended to downplay the interests and roles of other states and national actors, such as economic elites, militaries, and civil societies in the developing world, where most of the Cold War's destruction took place. This period was much more complex than the traditional binary model allows. This book opens windows into the experiences of two countries in Latin America that, in fact, had long histories of constitutional government and democratic (if narrowly so) politics before the two coups of 1973.

This work brings us new perspectives and histories of the dictatorships and the ensuing struggles against impunity in Chile and Uruguay, after the dirty war years, when the transition to civilian government had begun (1990 in Chile and 1985 in Uruguay). The contributions of these scholars encompass a number of vital themes: the functioning of Operation Condor; the history of civilian government resistance to accountability in both countries; the Pinochet regime's use of media and spectacle to establish hegemony (in the Gramscian sense) during the dictatorship; the role of social movements seeking truth and justice and the original forms of protest they have created; the inconsistent role of the Australian government vis-à-vis the Chilean coup; the importance of memory and the ways in which memory continues to be a contested terrain in the region; and ways to keep remembrance and memorial sites alive and engaging, without becoming ossified. Each of the authors gives us fresh approaches, to see and interpret recent history.

In the course of decades of research on the Cold War in Latin America I have spoken to a number of survivors of the dirty wars and studied numerous testimonies. To hear of abductions in the middle of the night, barbaric tortures, and squalid secret prisons makes a profound impact. State campaigns of terror, protected by the armour of impunity, were

utterly calculated pillars of social and political control. As E.V. Walter (1969:9) once argued, states that employ terror consciously design a pattern of violence to produce the social behaviour they demand—not only in the present, but into the future. To “forget” state terror or “turn the page” creates a grave risk of repetition and excuses criminal acts. Moreover, crimes against humanity are, by definition, of concern to the entire international community, for they are crimes that shock the conscience and that cause enormous human tragedy. In Latin America, a vast need for justice exists. Whole societies as well as individuals and families were wounded, and a process of truth and justice is needed to address the crimes committed, reinstate the values of justice and the rule of law, and move forward.

Latin America may be the leading region in the world today in terms of recognising the importance of justice. Indeed, a number of trials have taken place, especially in Argentina. In 2013 in Buenos Aires a landmark trial began to investigate the crimes of Operation Condor for the first time. Twenty-five officials of the military regimes and of the Condor system—most of them Argentine, with one Uruguayan—were charged with crimes against 106 victims (Lessa 2014). Of those 106, 22 were Chileans and 48 Uruguayans, among other neighbouring countries, illustrating the scope of the trial. In Argentina the march of justice has advanced further than elsewhere in the region; as this volume shows, Chile and Uruguay have not progressed as far.

Understanding the causes and consequences of the state’s use of torture and murder as policy is not only a scholarly imperative, but also a moral one. This book will enlighten its readers and contribute to such understanding. In the final analysis, that understanding has a social and political purpose as well: to use the lessons of the past to press for change in the present, so that crimes against humanity are never again justified in the name of national security.

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CHAPTER ONE

REGIONAL COOPERATION AND STATE TERRORISM IN SOUTH AMERICA

FERNANDO LÓPEZ

The 1973 coups d'états in Uruguay and Chile began an era of dramatic changes for these countries, including the introduction of neoliberalism and the subsequent weakening of the labour and student movements, reforms of these countries' education systems and strong cultural censorship. After four decades Uruguay and Chile continue to experience the effects of these legacies, especially on the economic and educational fronts. The transnationalisation of state terrorism in the form of Operation Condor in 1975 is yet another legacy of these military coups. The governments of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia and Paraguay, with support from the Brazilian junta and the United States (US) government, formalised the Condor alliance to target opponents abroad, especially high profile exiles involved in the denunciation of human rights violations. It is unlikely that Condor would have been implemented on such scale without the cooperation between the security forces of the five countries that launched this plan.

Since their inceptions in 1973, the Uruguayan and Chilean regimes actively promoted cooperation between South American countries to secure their survival and that of other anticommunist governments in the region. Although these calls for mutual assistance were not new, its materialisation had been hindered or delayed by numerous factors including geopolitical ambitions and historical antagonisms. Since the mid-60s, the US and Brazil had frequently called for more cooperation with limited success. The Bordaberry and Pinochet regimes also worked intensively to formalise and expand this cooperation. Their efforts, however, were more successful than previous attempts from Washington and Brasilia. The work conducted by the Uruguayan and Chilean

governments, combined with the international political situation¹, enticed the armed forces in the Southern Cone to set aside old military and geopolitical rivalries and cooperate with each other during this particular time. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the relationships between South American armed forces had been marked by feelings of distrust and animosity. Such feelings evolved from bitter historical conflicts such as the Triple Alliance War, the Pacific War and the Chaco War, as well as from geopolitical ambitions and old territorial disputes. The rivalries and distrust between armed forces continued despite the evident cooperation that ensued in the early-to-mid-1970s. For instance, Brazil continued to distrust its neighbours, especially Argentina. Chile distrusted Bolivia and even developed biological weapons to use against Argentina in the event of a war between these two nations. Uruguay feared the expansionist ambitions of Brazil and Paraguay dreaded a new “Triple Alliance” (see Child 1983, Keen and Haynes 2004). Despite these issues, however, these South American regimes understood that cooperation was essential to facilitate the transnationalisation of state terrorism.

Studies on Condor have focused predominantly on two main issues: the role of the US in the gestation of the Condor alliance and its connections to the Inter-American Defence System (Calloni 1999, Calloni 2001, McSherry 2005) or the role of the leftist guerrillas in prompting this multilateral response (Dinges 2004). These standpoints partially answer the question of why this multilateral network was formalised in the mid-1970s. Two important factors hold the key to filling the gap left by these partial answers: the internal situation in each of the five Condor founding member states,² and the activities of the South American exiles in denouncing the regimes’ human rights violations. The influence exerted by the US over political developments in these countries since the beginning of the Cold War, and its close links with the Latin American armed forces for that matter, have been well documented and analysed by scholars (Aldrich 2007, Weiner 2008, Ferreira 2010). However, the analysis of the

¹ The politics of détente between the US and the USSR, and the global campaigns of solidarity with South American exiles generated a complex international political environment for the Condor regimes. Détente produced a number of outcomes from 1972 onwards, including the SALT-I treaty to limit nuclear arsenals, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (all of them signed in 1972), and the Helsinki Accord in 1975. The US engagement with the USSR angered the South American anticommunist regimes who felt betrayed by their number one ally in the Cold War. The solidarity campaigns with the exiles and the latter’s denunciations of human rights violations isolated the regimes from their allies and transformed them into international pariahs.

² Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina.

internal situation of each country and the activities of the exile community reveal that the formalisation of the Condor alliance involved much more than protecting US geopolitical and economic interests in the region. In fact, some US documents and other anticommunist sources suggest that the South American military governments, especially the Uruguayan and Chilean juntas, were not entirely subordinated to the US during this critical period. Hence, these regimes formalised the Condor alliance predominantly to protect their own interests and those of their local supporters.

By the mid-70s, all the future Condor partners encountered similar economic and political difficulties. Even Paraguay, whose economic situation appeared to be less problematic than that of its neighbours, experienced hardships. By then the Stroessner regime was already benefiting from the hydroelectric boom. The building of the Itaipú, Yaceritá and Corpus Cristi dams with Brazil and Argentina injected important quantities of capital into Paraguay's economy and generated a considerable number of jobs (see Hanratty and Meditz 1988, Lewis 1980). Although these funds allowed the *Stronato* to improve the country's infrastructure and build a number of projects, the benefits of the hydroelectric boom did not reach the most disadvantaged sectors. While the regime did not face any major economic problems, this did not necessarily mean that the government was free from challenges. Stroessner's major threats at the time were the Agrarian Leagues and their calls for land reforms. Their demands threatened to unsettle the power of the land-owning oligarchy, one of the main pillars supporting the dictator (Nickson 1982, Bareiro Saguier 1988, Hanratty and Meditz 1988).

Economic difficulties further eroded the legitimacy of the Uruguayan government during 1974 and 1975. In early 1974 US Ambassador to Montevideo, Ernest Siracusa, stated that Uruguay's prospects for that year would be quite pessimistic and that inflation was becoming a major problem for the regime's economic team. The US diplomat's statement was significant. Siracusa, a fervent supporter of President Bordaberry and the Uruguayan armed forces, frequently downplayed the regime's human right violations and dismissed international accusations as a communist plot to discredit the Uruguayan government. Until then, his reports had emphasised the positive features of the economic team and the alleged advances made by the civic/military regime. Although the government granted a general wage increase of 33 per cent to avoid clashes with workers and trade unions, the US embassy argued that this was not enough to "catch up with price hikes" and, subsequently, "real income took a further drop" (US Embassy Montevideo 1974a). Siracusa also reported internal divisions within the regime as a consequence of these economic

problems. Hardliners within the military believed that, “if the population was going to blame them for all these problems, they should get rid of the president and take complete control over the country’s policy-making” (Ibid). After a surplus of more than US\$60 million in 1973, the following year Uruguay faced a balance of payment deficit of US\$150–160 million. The US ambassador maintained that this deficit was caused, in great part by the increase in the prices of oil imports and the government’s inability to “place traditional exports due to the European Common Market beef import restrictions [...]” (US Embassy Montevideo 1974b).

The problem, however, was far deeper than that. These were the recurrent symptoms of an acute structural crisis that had begun in the 1950s and the traditional political forces in Uruguay had been unable to resolve. Germán Wettstein states that by the early 1970s the Uruguayan economy had entered a stage of “acute financial dependency [on regional and international creditors] and, between 1970 and 1973 the [...] repayments to service the foreign debt was equivalent to 50% of [Uruguay’s] annual exportable production” (Wettstein 1975, 33). This scenario was aggravated by the consistent stream of capital leaving the country since the mid-1950s, which averaged US\$60 million annually. In May 1974 inflation averaged 30 per cent and the US embassy forecasted that by the end of the year it would reach 80–90per cent. The government received substantial loans from the German Federal Republic (FRG), Argentina and Brazil. Yet, these would “provide only modest support for the balance of payments” (US Embassy Montevideo 1974b). All these problems, argued the US ambassador, generated “widespread discouragement within the [Uruguayan government] and in the private sector” (US Embassy Montevideo 1974b.). While Siracusa remained optimistic, this situation changed little throughout the following year.

The Chilean junta experienced similar problems. Since 11 September 1973 the Pinochet regime set out to eliminate all traces of Allende’s socialist experiment. It also targeted other political parties from the right, particularly, the Christian Democrats (PDC). Even though the latter had supported the coup, Pinochet and other hardliners blamed the Frei administration for creating the conditions, or “paving the way” for Allende’s victory in 1970. The junta believed that a new election would lead to a victory for the PDC, which, in time, would result in a new Marxist government. Thus, to break this cycle, Pinochet banned the Marxist parties and declared all other parties in recess (Correa and Subercaseaux 1990, 69). By 1975, Chile was in a serious economic recession. Like its Uruguayan counterpart, the Chilean junta had implemented a set of strict austerity measures to correct the situation as

recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

There were, however, different views on how quickly Chile should evolve into a market economy. The two well-defined camps within the regime (i.e. the corporatists and the neoliberals) maintained heated debates regarding the depth of the austerity plan. The corporatists included senior officers and civilian technocrats in the ministerial cabinet who wanted to implement similar economic policies to those introduced by the Brazilian regime and other neighbouring countries. General Leigh and Raúl Saez were the strongest advocates for this alternative. The neoliberals, on the other hand called for a strict free market economy with very little government participation. This camp included a number of technocrats influenced by the economic theories of Milton Friedman and a group of economists from the Chicago University known as the “Chicago Boys”. Peter Winn argues that these economists were close to the anti-Allende camp and the military even before the September coup. According to this author, 10 economists, most of them neoliberals, had been asked in late 1972 to prepare a plan for a post-coup economic policy for the navy, which was initially in charge of the economy for the junta. Coordinated by Roberto Kelly, a retired navy officer who would become head of ODEPLAN, the planning ministry, they created a promarket strategy known by its code name *El Ladrillo*, (The Brick) (Winn 2004, 62). Even earlier, during 1971-1972 and funded by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), another group of economists organised a post-Allende program for the *Sociedad de Fomento Fabril* (SOFOFA) (Society for Industrial Development) Chile’s manufacturers’ association. Most of these economists, including the key Chicago Boys, had a direct role in shaping the economic policies implemented by the junta (Ibid.).

Immediately after the coup, the IMF rewarded the regime for the implementation of a strict austerity plan, granting new loans and lines of credits to the value of US\$95 million (Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) 1973a). Friendly governments and international institutions granted Chile almost US\$470 million in foreign loans between 11 September 1973 and 1974, including US\$49 million from the US to purchase corn and wheat. The Brazilian junta granted US\$62 million, of which US\$12 million was to be used for the purchase of sugar from that country. Argentina provided a further US\$35 million to buy reproductive cattle (US\$20 million) and agricultural machinery (US\$15 million) (Ibid.). The World Bank provided US\$18.25 million and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) contributed a further US\$201 million (see Table 3, in (Petras and Morris

1975, 144). Chile's creditors, meanwhile, allowed the regime to renegotiate the foreign debt.

Despite all this support, Chile's economy remained stagnant. The austerity measures led to a dramatic increase in the cost of living and inflation reached 750 per cent by the end of 1973. Members of the junta recognised the unpopularity of the austerity plan and knew that it could have dangerous political costs. Thus, the government launched an aggressive media campaign to sell the plan and win support from the Chilean people. The policies, however, did not work and the economic stagnation continued. By late 1974, the country's foreign debt reached US\$4 billion and the authorities continued to face numerous challenges. The CIA predicted that it would take "... several years before Chile's balance-of-payments position improves significantly" (CIA 1973b, 12). The military junta attempted to reduce imports and increase the exports of its most profitable mineral resources. To reach these targets the government had to increase the productivity of the mining sector, which was not an easy task. Most mines lacked equipment and technicians, their infrastructure was in poor condition and most of them had been underperforming since the late 1960s (see Petras and Morris 1975, 106-108). As the junta struggled to resolve these problems, it toughened repressive measures to maintain its grip on power and to control the labour movement, especially in the mines.

The repressive measures created new challenges on the international front. In the aftermath of the 11 September coup, thousands of Chileans fled the country. Many of these refugees began to denounce the human rights violations conducted by the regime's security forces. These denunciations led to increased international pressures and isolation for the regimes and the gradual loss of military and economic aid from 1974. According to Thomas Wright, "two hundred thousand Chileans [...] went into exile for political reasons in [...] as many as 140 countries on all continents" during the Pinochet era (2007, 68). The military expected these exiles to remain quiet and avoid political activism against the junta. Any activity carried out abroad could have serious consequences at home, as the security forces frequently adopted punitive measures against exiles' relatives and/or friends. However, as soon as they settled in their host nations, many exiles began to provide testimonies, organise marches, carry out activities to embarrass the regime, publish newsletters and reports, lobby governments to discontinue diplomatic relations with the military junta and promote economic boycotts to key Chilean exports like wine and mineral products. While some activities were more successful than others, as a whole, they caused the Chilean junta numerous headaches. When

discussing these activities, however, one must consider that it is unlikely that the work of the Chilean exiles would have been as successful without the existence and support of grass roots groups, human rights and labour organisations, religion institutions and high-profile figures within the international community. The CIA's activities to sabotage Allende's government, Nixon's support for General Pinochet and the subsequent brutality displayed by the armed forces immediately after the coup sparked international outrage and led thousands of people around the world to mobilise and organise protests in support of the Chilean exiles.

By the late 1970s the Chilean expatriot activists had accomplished significant outcomes including cuts of financial and military aid to the Pinochet regime, particularly after President James Carter took office in the US (Meyssan 2007).³ The exiles provided key evidence at US Congressional hearings during 1973-1975, which led to the reduction of aid through the Military Assistance Program (MAP) and, especially, the decline of US government's public displays of support for the regime. In Canada, alongside unions and local grass roots groups, they lobbied the Canadian government to discontinue diplomatic relations with the junta. They successfully pressured companies to cancel contracts with the Chilean Air Force (Shayne 2009, 40). In Britain, the exiles and local supporters obtained the cancellation of defence contracts between the British and Chilean governments and the cessation of military training programs (Wilkinson 1992, 61-62). The Solidarity Campaigns in Australia included achievements such as the longest boycott of wheat ever imposed on the Chilean junta and the cancellation of landing rights to LAN Chile in Australia and New Zealand. Local trade unions refused to load or unload products to and from Chile at Australian ports. They also travelled to Chile to monitor the human rights situation of political prisoners and produced reports for the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which helped to expel Chile from the latter organisation in 1974 and further embarrass the Chilean military government (Baird 2007).

³ Until then, and despite the intense work carried out by Congress throughout 1973-1976, the US government continued to privately support the South American military regimes. This situation changed during the Carter administration. The new president sought to "put an end to his predecessors' practices ... and ... eliminate Latin American authoritarian regimes" (Meyssan 2007). While its achievements towards the latter goal were modest, the new administration was more sympathetic than its predecessors to the issue of human rights. This allowed the Latin American exiles and political refugees all over the world, particularly the Chileans and Uruguayans, to engage more efficiently with the US government and obtain further results.

Like most of their regional counterparts, the Uruguayan exiles merged their campaigns with the global human rights movement. They worked well with international human rights organisations like Amnesty International (AI) and other NGOs. Prominent Uruguayan politicians like Wilson Ferreira, Zelmar Michelini and Héctor Gutiérrez Ruiz, to name only a few, promoted the Uruguayan exiles' case in front of international institutions, such as the United Nations (UN), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the US Congress. Political organisations linked to the student and labour movements, such as the Workers–Students Revolution (ROE), University Students' Federation (FEEUU), Artiguist Liberation Union (UAL) and the National Labour Federation (CNT) also organised activities to denounce the human rights violations committed in Uruguay. The Uruguayan and Chilean exiles, together with representatives from Bolivia and Brazil, participated at the 2nd Bertrand Russell Tribunal in 1974. This tribunal evaluated the crimes committed by the military regimes in those countries and passed its findings and symbolic sentences to a myriad of international organisations, including the UN, UNESCO, ILO, World Health Organisation, OAS, the Pontifical Justice and Peace Commission, the World Council of Churches, the International Confederation of Workers (CMT, Brussels), the World Federations of Trade Unions (FMS, Prague) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (CISL, Brussels) (Jerman 1975, 161).⁴

All these activities increased the regimes' international isolation, which subsequently enhanced the effects of the internal problems and threatened their objective of holding power for a long period of time. In Chile, the severe economic problems and the regime's inability to stimulate the economy despite the considerable influx of foreign aid and loans raised questions about the junta's economic credentials. The harsh austerity measures generated discontent amongst the workers and even the middle sectors, which in large part had supported the military coup. To divert attention the regime resorted to the same tactics implemented by its Paraguayan, Bolivian and Uruguayan counterparts, announcing the discovery of Marxist plots seeking to destabilise the country. However, even the CIA doubted the veracity of the junta's claims (CIA 1975b).

In this environment the South American dictatorships, especially those of Uruguay and Chile expanded the economic and military cooperation

⁴ The list also included Amnesty International, the International Association of Democratic Jurists, the International Association of Catholic Jurists, the Permanent Secretariat of the Organisation of Non-aligned States, international youth organisations, leagues for the defence of human rights, all governments, and all members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the USA.

that had begun in the early 1970s to overcome their internal challenges and break the international isolation. Like Paraguay, Uruguay enjoyed benefits from a number of binational hydroelectric projects, especially from 1974 onwards. The construction of the Salto Grande Dam, between the governments of Uruguay and Argentina, began in April 1974 and concluded in 1979. In May 1973 the Uruguayan government established a commission to develop a new hydroelectric project on the *Río Negro* (Black River), known as the Palmar Dam. However, the latter did not start until 1976 when the government of Brazil provided large amounts of capital and technology to complete its construction. Both projects allowed Uruguay to further expand its electricity capabilities and generate much needed jobs for its stagnant labour market (see Nohlen and Fernández 1981, 412–443). The Uruguayan regime also expanded economic ties with its Bolivian counterpart. From 1974–1975 the Foreign Relations ministers of the Bordaberry and Banzer administrations held a number of meetings in the cities of Montevideo and La Paz. They sought to establish a *comisión mixta* (joint task force) to deal with matters concerning regional economic integration, as well as bilateral relations between the two nations. The commission made recommendations on areas such as reciprocal commerce, commercial and financial mechanisms and other forms of joint economic activities, port facilities, air traffic, waterways traffic, petroleum and oil derivatives, as well as technical assistance (*Departamento de Integración Económica* 1975, 1–3).

The path followed by the Pinochet regime did not differ from the one adopted by its Uruguayan counterpart. Between 1973 and 1975, Chile resumed diplomatic relations with Bolivia, Pinochet visited Paraguay on a number of occasions and maintained a friendly relationship with the government of Alfredo Stroessner. The junta also expanded economic and diplomatic ties with Uruguay. Both governments presented a unified voice and political front to oppose Cuba and the international human rights campaigns against these regimes at several OAS meetings during 1973–1975 (CIA 1974). The Chilean government benefited greatly from its economic ties with Brazil. For instance, in November 1974 alone, the Brazilian junta granted US\$40 million in credits and loans, which it extended during the following years (elmostrador.pais 2013).

The areas in which these countries achieved the greatest levels of multilateral cooperation were those concerning security, reaching unprecedented levels by the mid-1970s. As Stella Calloni (1999, 2001), John Dinges (2004), Patrice McSherry (2005) and José Luis Méndez Méndez (2006) have demonstrated, security collaboration between these armed forces gained momentum in the 1960s and, especially during the

early 1970s. In those years the security apparatuses of the future Condor regimes held numerous conferences and work meetings and their intelligence services even conducted a number of joint clandestine counterinsurgency operations (McSherry 2002). In early October 1975, President Bordaberry visited numerous countries in the Southern Cone urging his counterparts to work together and unite. He met with General Alfredo Stroessner, Ernesto Geisel, Colonel Hugo Banzer and General Augusto Pinochet. The tour across South America took place just before the Eleventh Conference of American Armies (CEA), in Montevideo later that month. It is true, as John Dinges (2004) argues, that the Chileans were among the most active in urging other intelligence services to share information and work together. Yet Bordaberry's trip in October allowed the Uruguayan dictator to meet with his counterparts, deepen political, economic, military and diplomatic ties with them and exchange suggestions and feedback. These contacts set the foundations for the secret meeting that took place in Santiago the following month, which formalised the Condor alliance. According to the CIA, Bordaberry

... [hoped] to find allies to counter what he [viewed] was a world-wide Marxist campaign to discredit the [...] anti-communist regimes. [He also saw] an urgent need to upgrade the region's economic infrastructure, and he [hoped] to achieve that objective by creating a strong network of bilateral agreements. [Early that year] Bordaberry signed accords with neighbouring governments to promote trade, transportation systems, and inter-connecting hydroelectric projects (CIA 1975a, 23).

The intelligence agency confirmed that the Chileans were the most receptive and appreciative of Bordaberry's call for cooperation (CIA 1975a, 23).

The Eleventh Conference of American Armies held in Montevideo in late October 1975, addressed two important topics: the wide range of threats present in the continent and security cooperation as a response to such challenges. High-ranking military officers from 15 American nations, including the US⁵, discussed "the subversive activities and the communist infiltration in the region ..." (Villaverde 1975a). At the opening of the conference the Commander-in-Chief of the Uruguayan Army, Lieutenant General Julio César Vadora, "strongly attacked Marxism, and particularly the Communist Parties, accusing them of 'bombarding' the Americas with a defamation campaign" (Villaverde 1975b). The defamation campaigns alluded to by Vadora referred to the South American exiles' activities mentioned earlier in this chapter. These campaigns posed a much higher

⁵ US Army Lieutenant General Gordon Sumners presided over the Inter-American Defence Board (IADB) at the time.

threat to these regimes' future plans than the guerrilla groups involved in the *Junta de Coordinación Revolucionaria* (JCR) (Revolutionary Coordinating Junta).⁶ There was consensus amongst the participating delegates about the need to increase cooperation on security matters to stop the alleged Marxist threat.⁷ The Bordaberry and, especially, the Pinochet regimes welcomed this development and took further measures to consolidate this collaboration. The following month, at the secret meeting of intelligence services in Santiago, the Chilean intelligence agency DINA (*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*) (National Intelligence Directorate) fine-tuned the details with their South American counterparts and launched Operation Condor, formalising an alliance that had been in the making since the early 1970s.

Before concluding this chapter it is necessary to point out that Condor must not be interpreted as a desperate response by a group of rogue intelligence agencies. Such a view oversimplifies the complex environment in which this alliance came into existence and pins the responsibility for its creation and implementation on a reduced number of actors. The transnationalisation of state terrorism beyond the Southern Cone of Latin America would not have been possible without some degree of support from non-military elements and the infrastructure provided by them. In 2013, for example, ex-Chief of the Chilean DINA, Manuel Contreras, estimated that up to 50,000 voluntary civilian informers in Chile had helped this intelligence agency (CNN 2013). In the 1960s, the Paraguayan Interior Minister, Edgar Insfran, established a wide network of *pyragües* (spies and informants linked to the *Colorado* party) who worked together with the Paraguayan Police's intelligence services to keep the government informed on suspicious communist activities. This network

⁶ Following the coup d'états in Uruguay and Chile, and the deterioration of the security situation in Argentina, the leaders of the National Liberation Army (ELN) from Bolivia, the Uruguayan National Liberation Movement–Tupamaros (MLN-T), the Leftist Revolutionary Movement (MIR) from Chile, and the Argentine Workers' Revolutionary Party–Peoples' Revolutionary Army (PRT–ERP) established the Revolutionary Coordinating Junta (JCR). The latter organisation sought to launch a coordinated effort to resist the repression conducted by the military governments in the Southern Cone. By mid-1975, however, these guerrilla groups faced numerous challenges and were not a threat to any of the South American military governments.

⁷ As mentioned in previous paragraphs, the issue of regional cooperation began to be discussed amongst South American armies in the early 1970s and continued to gain momentum during the following years. At the time these armed forces held numerous meetings and conferences to discuss the necessary arrangements for the implementation of security projects (See Mantorell 1999, chapters I and II).

covered the country and also infiltrated the Paraguayan exile community in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Europe. The *pyragües* became a key component of the regime's repressive infrastructure and an effective mechanism to spread fear amongst the Paraguayan population, as no one knew who was targeted by *pyragüe* surveillance. This network became a valuable asset when the regime joined Operation Condor in the mid-1970s (Justicia 2008, Lewis 1980). The international isolation generated by the solidarity campaigns conducted by the exiles and their supporters pushed these military governments to set aside differences and cooperate with each other. That isolation also led these regimes to develop ties with like-minded anticommunist figures and groups across Latin America and the rest of the world, including the *Confederación Anticomunista Latinoamericana* (CAL) (Latin American Anti-Communist Confederation) and the World Anticommunist League (WACL). These anticommunist allies supported and encouraged the regimes to take a more radical stand against the so-called global Marxist campaign (Anderson and Anderson 1986).

Thus, the South American dictatorships agreed in the early '70s to expand the regional economic and security cooperation that had begun in the early 1960s. The work conducted by the Bordaberry and Pinochet governments and a number of international developments like the politics of détente between the US and the Soviet Union, the solidarity campaigns to support the South American exiles and the ensuing international isolation, enticed the armed forces in the Southern Cone to set aside old military and geopolitical rivalries and cooperate with each other during this particular time. Although the relations between South American armed forces had been undermined by feelings of distrust and antagonisms during the 19th and the 20th centuries, most military leaders understood that mutual cooperation was an attractive alternative that could enable them to overcome, or at least mitigate, the internal and external challenges faced by the Condor partners.

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