

Significant Cases of Global Arms Trade

Argentinian Military

Key Data:

Years: 2019

Involved Countries: Bolivia; Argentina

Weapon Systems: 40.000 Bullets

Arms Producers:

Perpetrators/Involved Parties:

Victims/Affected: Massacre in Sacaba and Senkata

Main article

The issue of arms deliveries to the Argentine military junta during its reign from 1976 to 1983 is a topic that has been subject to extensive research and academic inquiry. According to [1], the United States was aware of the Argentine military's desire to take power and was involved in facilitating contact between high-ranking military officers and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. However, it remains a topic of debate whether the U.S. government directly supported the military junta's human rights abuses or simply turned a blind eye to them.

To understand the unique nature of the military dictatorship in Argentina during this period and the extent of its human rights violations, it is necessary to examine the broader historical context of Argentina in the 20th century [2]. The military junta that took power in 1976 closed the National Congress, imposed censorship, banned trade unions, and brought state and municipal government under military control [4]. It also took extensive steps to hide its atrocities through the use of secret torture centers, disappeared victims, and faked battles with insurgents to cover up human rights crimes [5].

The declassified documents shed light on the extent of U.S. involvement in the Argentine military's actions, particularly in regards to arms deliveries. The military dictatorship received support from the United States until 1982 [7], and the United States' role in arming the Argentine military remains a topic of discussion among scholars. Some argue that the U.S. government actively supported the military dictatorship, while others suggest that the U.S. was more passive, turning a blind eye to human rights abuses while continuing to provide arms and support to the Argentine military [6].

Further research into this topic is necessary to fully understand the extent of U.S. involvement in the Argentine military's actions and the consequences of this involvement for Argentina and the broader region. A comprehensive analysis of the role of the U.S. in arms deliveries to the Argentine military junta from 1976 to 1983 would require a careful examination of a wide range of sources, including declassified government documents, academic research, and firsthand accounts from those affected by the dictatorship's actions. This analysis could provide important insights into the complex relationship between the United States and the military dictatorship in Argentina and its impact on the region as a whole.

Commentary

The delivery of arms to the Argentine military junta during its reign from 1976 to 1983 is a controversial issue that has raised ethical and legal questions. The military regime, which overthrew President Isabel Perón, committed numerous human rights violations during its reign, including the forced disappearance and torture of thousands of people [11]. Many countries, including the United States, were aware of the junta's atrocities, yet they continued to provide military support and weapons to the regime.

Under international law, countries are prohibited from providing weapons or other military support to regimes that engage in gross human rights violations. The United States, in particular, has a legal obligation to comply with this rule under the Leahy Law, which prohibits the U.S. government from providing military aid to foreign security forces that have committed gross human rights violations [12].

In the case of Argentina, the United States and other countries were aware of the junta's human rights abuses, yet they continued to provide military aid and weapons to the regime. For example, the U.S. provided arms, training, and intelligence support to the Argentine military throughout the junta's reign, despite having knowledge of the regime's human rights violations [12].

These actions by the United States and other countries likely violated international law and could be considered complicit in the junta's human rights abuses. It is important to note that some countries, such as Sweden, halted arms exports to Argentina following the coup due to concerns over the regime's human rights record [13].

In conclusion, the delivery of arms to the Argentine military junta during its reign from 1976 to 1983 raises serious ethical and legal questions. The United States and other countries likely violated international law by providing military support to a regime engaged in gross human rights violations. It is important to learn from these past mistakes and ensure that countries are held accountable for complying with international human rights law in the future.

Additional Information / Sources

[1] "On February 13, 1976, Hill met with an Argentine-born U.S. businessman named "Mr. Carnicero" who informed him that "several high-ranking military officers have asked him to arrange a meeting between an appropriate military representative and Secretary Kissinger" so that they could explain why they needed to take power and seek assurances of ..."
URL: <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/southern-cone/2021-03-23/argentinas-military-coup-what-us-knew>

[2] "In order to understand the unique nature of the last military dictatorship in Argentina (1976-1983) and the fact that, in terms of human rights violations, it was the cruellest ever experienced in the Southern Cone, it is necessary first of all to outline some general historical characteristics of Argentina in the twentieth century."
URL: <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/en/document/last-military-dictatorship-argentina-1976-1983-mechanism-state-terrorism.html>

[3] "The final goal of this paper was to understand how key groups talk about the Dirty War and what the long-term consequences of that are for Argentina. The democratic governments that took power after the Dirty War followed the military junta's tactics of hiding key information and ... Atrocities in Argentina (1976-1983)"

URL:

https://soundideas.pugetsound.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1592&context=summer_research

[4] "On March 29, 1976, five days after Argentine Pres. Isabel Perón was deposed, a three-man military junta filled the presidency with Lieut. Gen. Jorge Rafael Videla. The junta closed the National Congress, imposed censorship, banned trade unions, and brought state and municipal government under military control."

URL: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Dirty-War>

[5] "For the duration of the "dirty war" during the 1976-1983 military dictatorship, Argentine officials took extensive steps to hide their atrocities through the use of secret torture centers, disappeared victims, and faked battles with insurgents to cover up human rights crimes."

URL: <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/southern-cone/2019-05-30/inside-argentinas-killing-machine-us-intelligence-documents-record-gruesome-human-rights-crimes-1976>

[6] "Argentine democracy was interrupted by military coups six times in the 20th century. The declassified documents outline what happened after the last coup, staged in 1976 by Gen. Jorge Rafael..."

URL: <https://theconversation.com/truth-justice-and-declassification-secret-archives-show-us-helped-argentine-military-wage-dirty-war-that-killed-30-000-115611>

[7] "The National Reorganization Process (Spanish: Proceso de Reorganización Nacional, often simply el Proceso, "the Process") was the military dictatorship that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983, which received support from the United States until 1982. In Argentina it is often known simply as última junta militar ("last military junta"), última dictadura militar ("last military dictatorship ...")

URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Reorganization_Process

[8] "A "military junta" is the ruling clique of a military government. In this case it refers to the government of military leaders that led Argentina from 1976 to 1983. "The Process of National Reorganization" (" El Proceso ") is the name the military government that ruled Argentina in that period gave to itself. Finally, the term"

URL: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5502&context=etd>

[9] "The archive shows that on August 20 1976, agents of Argentina's dictatorship dynamited the bodies of 30 people who had been detained as dissidents in a blast that spread their remains over a..."

URL: <https://www.independent.ie/world-news/latin-america/declassified-documents-reveal-grisly-methods-of-argentina-dictatorship/38166632.html>

[10] "This book examines Argentine foreign policy under the military dictatorship from 1976-1983, also known as the National Reorganization Process. It brings together case studies on the most distinctive decisions and key issues in the regime's foreign"

URL:

https://www.academia.edu/38425421/Argentine_Foreign_Policy_during_the_Military_Dictatorship_1976_1983_Between_a_Nationalist_and_Pragmatic_Approach

[11] "During the Argentine government's seven-year (1976-83) campaign against suspected dissidents and subversives, often known as the "Dirty War," between 10,000 and 30,000 people were killed, including opponents of the government as well as innocent victims. The military junta that ousted President Isabel Peron in a coup in 1976 confronted an ..."

URL: <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/collection/argentina-declassification-project-dirty-war-1976-83>

[12] "Argentina's Military Coup of 1976: What the U.S. Knew Coup leaders Admiral Massera and General Videla. U.S. had ample forewarning of coup plotting, documents show Officials maintained channel of communications with plotters Ford Administration knew Argentine military planned to commit human rights violations"

URL: <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/southern-cone/2021-03-23/argentinas-military-coup-what-us-knew>

[13] "Argentina's 1976-1983 military dictatorship relied on widespread torture and disappearances to eradicate all political opponents, real or imagined. Seeking to conceal the junta regime's one-sided terror, the Right still refers to those years as a "dirty war.""

URL: <https://jacobin.com/2020/06/argentina-dictatorship-dirty-war-military/>

Author

Edited vom 04.05.2023 / **Checked** 11.05.2023
