

When Nobody is the Good Guy

Operation Condor

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Group Website

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Process Paper

It was the summer of 2021, and a member of our group expressed his curiosity about South America after watching a video about foreign policy in the Nixon Administration. For this, we began by researching dictator Augusto Pinochet of Chile, and our exploration soon led us to understand the transnational political repression known as Operation Condor.

Our team began our research by analyzing dozens of articles and government documents, allowing us to understand the historical context of the Operation. The Cold War was an exigent chapter in American foreign policy because of the growing unease surrounding Communism in the Western Hemisphere. Researching deeper into the Southern Cone Nations affected by Condor, we came to learn that the U.S. had far more involvement in Latin American affairs than previously thought. Consequently, we interviewed professionals who were directly involved in and impacted by Operation Condor. These individuals included Jack Devine, former Director of the Latin American Division of the CIA; Martin Andersen, a former investigative journalist in Argentina; and John Dinges, a former political opposition writer in Chile under the Pinochet regime.

The medium in which we wanted to convey Operation Condor's successes, failures, and consequences was a website because of the professionalism and neatness that it provided. Furthermore, the website offered us a space to display the multimedia of the program, giving viewers a more immersive understanding of our research.

Many today argue that American participation in Operation Condor, while a success in deterring the Communist takeover of Latin America, was nothing less than a failure to protect human rights. However, as evidenced by countries like Chile and Argentina, U.S. involvement in Operation Condor seems to have advanced their current political stability. However, political

turmoil between left and right seems to persist in countries such as Peru and Bolivia as a consequence. While Operation Condor continues to raise ethical and political questions as to whether the United States' support of Latin American Juntas was warranted, one thing remains clear: Operation Condor - the good, the bad, and the ugly - will continue to remain one of the most contentious yet fascinating debates in history.