

The return of the condor? Signs of a Latin America under siege

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University of the Mothers (UNMA) closed by Argentine National Police, photo: X / @PCArgentino

Argentina woke up on September 2 with the University of the Mothers (UNMA) fenced off and surrounded by members of the national police, who prevented workers from accessing the center.

The Argentine President, Javier Milei, since his arrival to the Government, started a crusade against public education -which he accuses of 'indoctrinating'- which implied hard cuts to the economic means for its own development, among many other coercive measures. Meanwhile, he favors teaching in private centers, in his opinion, they are much more 'objective' in their curricula.

The Mothers' University, formerly the Popular University of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, was founded by the homonymous association that was born on April 30, 1977, when 14 women marched in front of the Executive to demand the dictator Jorge Rafael Videla to know the whereabouts of their disappeared children.

Beyond the current Argentine president's war against the public, we must add the fight against memory. In this sense, the persecution against the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo has not only been limited to trying to destroy academic institutions but to also erase the atrocities of the military dictatorship of the 1970's as well.

At the end of February 2024, the new authorities of Argentine public television excluded from its programming 'Mothers of the Plaza', a program broadcast since 2008, which served to denounce the cases of forced disappearances of the dictatorship.

In this process of dememory, furthermore, after the commemoration of the Day of Memory, Truth and Justice on March 24, the authorities carried out actions in response. Thus, painted over handkerchiefs of the Mothers, located in front of the headquarters of the Comando Monte XII, in Misiones, were covered; and the monument in homage to those same women, in the municipality of Marcos Juarez in Cordoba, was removed.

Last Monday's picture serves to visualize, in its symbolic and practical expression, something even more terrifying.

The Argentine dictatorship was part of what is known as Plan Condor, which led to the creation of dictatorial regimes - under the umbrella of Washington and the Latin American national oligarchies - in countries such as Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil and Uruguay, as well as the persecution and murder of more than 100,000 people.

The context was the Cold War and, under the protection of the anti-communist Truman Doctrine -a conjunctural update of the Monroe Doctrine-, the US justified its interference in what it still considers its "backyard".

The consequences included the staging of various coups d'état, the financing of armed counterrevolutionary groups, the persecution of leftists and even the physical disappearance of their militants, as well as the creation of regimes in line with its interests. At the same time, it also served as a test laboratory for the implementation of the neoliberal model, whose main reference will always be Augusto Pinochet's Chile.

The Latin American oligarchies and their political-partisan manifestations have developed based on a model of dependency, where they act as 'viceroys' at the service of the metropolis and at the expense of their peoples. The strongly reactionary and lackey character of these oligarchies is in conflict, in a natural way, with any process of popular and national emancipation in the region.

However, they are fundamental in a general scenario of geopolitical struggle, where the U.S. needs to maintain control in Latin America. All this, favored, in turn, by an organizational advance of the extreme right at the international level, which also attends to this rising conflict.

The strongly reactionary and lackey character of the oligarchies to external interests naturally conflicts with any process of popular and national emancipation in the region.

In 2021, the former president of Bolivia Evo Morales denounced the implementation of a 'Plan Condor 2' in the region, after it was made public the shipment of weapons, military and anti-riot material, by the Argentine government, then led by Mauricio Macri, during the coup d'état in Bolivia, in 2019.

In recent weeks, we have witnessed a new offensive against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which has manifested itself in different spheres: the non-recognition of its political system, its institutions and its sovereignty; cyber attacks and power cuts; and the hijacking, in collusion with the authorities of the Dominican Republic, of a Venezuelan presidential plane.

In parallel, the pressure against other States has been manifested in the interference attempts of U.S. diplomats in Mexico and Honduras, which, in the end, have been failures due to the forceful response of sovereign defense implemented by their leaders.

Meanwhile, the government of Ecuador, which violated the sovereignty of Mexico with the illegal kidnapping of Jorge Glas in the Mexican Embassy a few months ago, in a macabre staging of irony, signed new agreements with the U.S. Southern Command focused on "the implementation and promotion of human rights".

Similarly, Gabriel Boric, who has stood out as a leader against Venezuelan sovereignty in recent weeks, followed this same script. The Southern Command and the Chilean Navy, on September 2, kicked off, the Multinational Naval Exercise UNITAS 2024, making this the second time, in less than a month, that the Chilean government has participated in naval exercises in the Pacific Ocean together with the US.

"Why is this region so important? With all its rich resources and rare earth elements, you have the lithium triangle, which is necessary for today's technology. Sixty percent of the world's lithium is in the lithium triangle: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile. You have the largest oil reserves, light sweet crude discovered in Guyana more than a year ago. You have the resources of Venezuela as well, with oil, copper, gold. We have the lungs of the world, the Amazon. We also have 31% of the world's fresh water in this region. I mean, it's out of the ordinary. We have a lot to do. This region matters. It has a lot to do with our national security and we have to step up our game," declared Laura Richardson, head of Southern Command, in late January 2023.

However, Richardson is wrong: they do not, and will not, have all those resources. But that is why we are seeing new versions of Videla, Banzer or Pinochet walking around Latin America, once again on the arm of the United States of America.

Source: [Cuba en Resumen](https://cubaenresumen.com/2023/01/10/la-regionalizacion-latinoamericana-entre-los-estados-unidos-y-china/)

