

Argentina has long been a country influenced financially, socially, and politically by foreign governments and corporations alike. These outside actors have significantly impacted

Argentina's history; namely playing a part in some of the most important and controversial

portions of the South American country's past. Argentina was seen as a jewel by European investors; a land rich with natural resources and an urban population in awe of European culture. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, Argentina was economically tied to Europe; in exchange for their vast reserves of grain and meat, they received finished goods from European nations. However, the Argentine Economy weakened over time and when the Great Depression hit the global economy in the 1930s, foreign investors moved into Argentina, purchasing factories, railroads, and *estancias*. Focusing on the most infamous portion of Argentine history, the Dirty War, the research paper explores the role that foreign actors played in that conflict, specifically focusing on the Ford Motor Company and the United States Government. The American auto manufacturer had been in the country since before the First World War and by the 1970s, Ford was both the largest supplier of vehicles to the Argentine military. In addition, their automobiles were popular among the Argentine working as their cars came to symbolize "middle class mobility [and] versatility". Using Ford as an example of American involvement the paper determines how connected to the dictatorship the State Department was and how responsible they are for what happened in Argentina. Spurred on by our readings of the dictatorship, I wanted to know if the United States was in any way involved with the dictatorship, or if it was at the very least supportive of the regime. In terms of sources, I had a wealth of news articles from the last ten to fifteen years at my disposal as there have been numerous lawsuits against Ford after the amnesty laws of the 1980s were lifted in the early 2000s. Moreover, there is a literal treasure trove of declassified State Department communications that were declassified by the Obama administration that reveal former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's stance on the dictatorship and gage American involvement. Overall, the newly declassified States Department memos and documents detailing the Ford Motor Company's connection the Argentine government, the United States had a strong stake in the "success" and continuation of the military dictatorship. Considering Ford's clear links to the military, the fact that they often used them to eliminate problematic employees, and the large profits generated by the Argentine branch of the company, the U.S. had a motive to protect the company. Paired with the State Department's close communications with the Argentine government, it can be concluded that the United States had knowledge of the military dictatorship's activities and was at the very least complicit in its actions. When confronted by Victor Navasky, the editor of *The Nation*, with regard to his actions, Kissinger coldly brushed the man aside, saying "how is it that a short article in an obscure journal such as yours about a conversation that was supposed to have taken place years ago about something that did or didn't happen in Argentina resulted in sixty people holding placards denouncing me...at the airport when I got off the plane in Copenhagen?". The only thing that will convict Kissinger, the Ford Motor Company, or the Argentine generals who escaped prosecution will be the pages of history. Based on evidence made available through the National Security Archive, verbatim transcripts of meetings, and lawsuits filed in Argentine courts, it is clear that Ford, the U.S. State Department, and Henry Kissinger not only had incentives to cooperate with the Dictatorship, but also were undeniably

complicit, and in some cases helpful, with the atrocities committed during the Dirty War.