

**NUNCA MAS: THE REPORT OF THE ARGENTINE NATIONAL COMMISSION
ON THE DISAPPEARED (CONADEP) - 1984**

Recommendations

The facts presented to this Commission in the depositions and testimonies speak for themselves. They lead us to recommend to the various State authorities certain measures that will help to ensure that this curtailment of human rights is never repeated in Argentina. The aim of these recommendations is also to press for a judicial investigation into the facts denounced to us. We therefore recommend:

1. That the body which replaces this Commission speeds up the procedures involved in bringing before the courts the documents collected during our investigation.
2. That the courts process with the utmost urgency the investigation and verification of the depositions received by this Commission.
3. That the appropriate laws be passed to provide the children and/or relatives of the disappeared with economic assistance, study grants, social security and employment and, at the same time, to authorize measures considered necessary to alleviate the many and varied family and social problems caused by the disappearances.
4. That laws be passed which:
 1. Declare forced abduction a crime against humanity.
 2. Support the recognition of and adhesion to national and international human rights organizations.
 3. Make the teaching of the defence and diffusion of human rights obligatory in state educational establishments, whether they be civilian, military or police.
 4. Strengthen and provide ample support for the measures that the courts need to investigate human rights violations.
 5. Repeal any repressive legislation still in force.

Conclusions

Up to the time of the presentation of this report, CONADEP estimates that 8,960 people are still missing. It bases this estimate on the information it received and comparisons made with figures given by national and international human rights organizations. This is not a final figure, since CONADEP realizes that many cases of kidnapping have not been reported. The figure may also include people who did not communicate their release to the appropriate organization in time.

Abduction was also used as a method of repression prior to the military coup of 24 March 1976. It was, however, from the date on which the forces usurping power took absolute control of the resources of the state, that the method became widespread. The kidnappings were carried out by members of the Security Forces who concealed their identity. The victim was then taken to one of the approximately 340 secret detention centres in existence. In the course of its investigations, CONADEP inspected a large number of these establishments used by the de facto government. They were under the command of high-ranking officers in the military and security services. The prisoners were kept in inhuman conditions and subjected to all kinds of torture and humiliation. Our investigations to date show that a provisional figure of 1,300 persons were seen in these secret centres prior to their ultimate disappearance.

Seeing proof of the extent of the use of torture in these centres, and the sadism with which it was carried out, is horrendous. Some of the methods used have no precedent elsewhere in the world. Some depositions referred to the torture of children and old people in front of their families to obtain information.

CONADEP has shown that as a result of these methods, prisoners were murdered, their identities concealed, and in many cases their bodies destroyed, to prevent subsequent identification. We also established that people alleged by the forces of repression to have been killed in combat were in fact taken alive from a secret detention centre and killed in simulated military confrontations or in fake attempts to escape.

Among the victims still missing and those who were subsequently released from secret detention centres are people from all walks of life:

	%
Blue-collar workers	30.2
Students	21.0
White-collar workers	17.9
Professionals	10.7
Teachers	5.7
Self-employed and others	5.0
Housewives	3.8
Military conscripts and members of the security forces	2.5
Journalists	1.6
Actors, performers, etc.	1.3
Nuns, priests, etc	0.3

	100.0

We can state categorically - contrary to what the executors of this sinister plan maintain - that they did not pursue

only the members of political organizations who carried out acts of terrorism. Among the victims are thousands who never had any links with such activity but were nevertheless subjected to horrific torture because they opposed the military dictatorship, took part in union or student activities, were well-known intellectuals who questioned state terrorism, or simply because they were relatives, friends, or names included in the address book of someone considered subversive.

This Commission maintains that it was not just a question of some 'excesses', if that means aberrant acts, being committed. These atrocities were common practice; the normal methods used daily during the repression. Despite their claim in the 'Final Document of the Military Junta on the War Against Subversion and Terrorism' that the forces of subversion had 25,000 recruits of whom 15,000 were 'technically able and ideologically trained to kill', the Military Courts set up to judge these crimes sentenced only approximately 356 individuals. This demonstrates clearly that other measures were used to annihilate thousands of people who opposed them, terrorists or not. Hence the claim that subversion and terrorism were in effect defeated is invalid: certain terrorist organizations were wiped out, but in their stead a system of institutionalized terror was implemented which undermined the most basic human, ethical and moral principles and was backed by a doctrine which was also foreign to our national identity.

CONADEP prepared 7,380 files, comprising depositions from relatives of the disappeared, testimonies of people released from secret detention centres, and statements by members of the security forces who had taken part in the acts of repression described above. It carried out numerous investigations in different parts of the country and collected information from the Armed Forces, the Security Forces and other private and public organizations. As a result of its investigations, CONADEP was able to present evidence before the courts, comprising 1,086 dossiers proving the existence of the main secret detention centres, giving a partial list of the disappeared seen alive in these centres, and a list of members of the Armed Forces and Security Forces mentioned by victims as responsible for the serious crimes they denounced.

The destruction or removal of documentation providing details of the fate of the disappeared before government was handed over to the constitutional authorities hindered the investigation with which this Commission was entrusted by decree. Nevertheless, there is enough evidence to allow us to confirm that people who are still missing passed through the secret detention centres and that the truth as to their subsequent whereabouts will come out as progress is made in determining which individuals are responsible for the acts of repression committed.