

The “Dirty War” and Argentina’s Military Dictators: Women Killers and Baby Thieves

By [Global Research News](#)

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These are the pathetic wrecks of two of this Hemisphere’s once formidable monsters.

Jorge Rafael Videla and Reynaldo Bignone led Argentina during the Dirty Wars of the 1970s and 1980s.

These right wing dictators relied on “disappearings,” kidnappings and secret execution, of their political enemies to instill terror and prevent opposition. Among the more original and despicable acts they employed was stealing the babies from mothers they kidnapped and then placing them with other families.

The mothers were disposed of, sometimes by dropping them from airplanes into the Atlantic Ocean. It was for the baby thefts that these two men were on trial. Among their defenses was the mothers used their babies as “human shields.”



Reynaldo Bignone (left) and Jorge Rafael Videla in the courtroom where they would each be convicted for the plot to steal babies from the disappeared mothers who their regimes kidnapped, tortured and killed.

[Both were convicted.](#) Videla received a 50-year prison sentence; Bignone, 15 years.

It is worth noting that the right wing of our own national security apparatus provided aid and comfort to these criminals. It goes without saying that Henry Kissinger, who never met a right wing strong man he didn’t like, was initially behind our support for the military dictators in Argentina (during the Ford Administration). And after Carter cut off aid, it was restored by those serving the genial-seeming Ronald Reagan. The military aid helped the

Argentine army commit unspeakable crimes.

A Reagan official, Elliot Abrams, provided deposition testimony in the case against the dictators. He testified about how Washington knew of the baby stealing crimes and “urged Bignone to reveal the stolen babies’ identities as a way to smooth Argentina’s return to democracy.” Bignone ignored the advice, and of course the Reagan Administration did nothing to make the information public, preferring instead to cover up the crimes of its allies in Argentina.

Incidentally, Abrams had the title of Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. Ironies abounded in the Reagan Administration. Among them would be that Abrams himself would later accept a plea bargain in the Iran Contra case in which he also was involved in a cover-up; that is, withholding information requested by Congress. He accepted the plea bargain to avoid felony charges against him. But hiding information from Congress of crimes committed by the Reagan Administration in order to permit right wing dictators to continue to commit human rights abuses was evidently the patriotic duty of members of the Reagan Administration, because Reagan’s vice president, George H.W. Bush, pardoned Abrams for the crimes he pleaded guilty to. And his tawdry service in the Reagan Administration did not mean he would not be useful to later Republican Administrations. Having done his loyal best to subvert democracy, human rights, and international operations in the Reagan Administration, George W. Bush appointed him to the post of senior director of democracy, human rights, and international operations at the National Security Council in 2001.

Right wing as our national security policy is in the best of times, remember: in a new Republican administration the ultra right-wingers, the friends of war criminals, like Abrams, always come back.



Elliot Abrams, friend of rights abusers but not of congressional inquiry. (Photo: Jim Watson/AFP/Getty Images.)

Update [8/19/12]: Not a month after this report which shows that Elliot Abrams was our government’s enabler of official baby stealing, a report emerges that he is one of the top candidates for a big job in a possible Romney Administration. [The Cable](#), the blog of the editors of *Foreign Policy*, mention his name as the possible National Security advisor to the President. They refer to Abrams as a “technocrat.” I suppose this is because his experience in the Reagan and Bush Administrations were “technically” dealing with human rights issues.

I say “technically” because he never really discovered any human rights that our friends in Latin America and the Middle East every committed. He therefore had time to occupy himself with other things, such as obstructing Congress and then persuading George H.W. Bush to pardon him right before leaving office. If our National Security is handled as well as he handled Human Rights, we all ought to stock up on [duct tape](#).

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