

Corporate Complicity in Crimes Against Humanity: The Role of Ford Motor Company in the Argentine Disappearances (1976 -1983)

On 24 March 1976, the military seized power in Argentina as part of what they referred to as their 'calling' to restore law and order to a chaotic country. This violent coup began a dark period of state-sponsored torture and terrorism. The military's objective, to oppose any sector of life which could be viewed as a threat to their dictatorship, was officially known as the 'Proseco', but dubbed the 'dirty war' (1976-1983) by the public. Whatever its name, the facts are that between 1976 and 1983, an estimated 30,000 Argentines, including women and children, were 'disappeared', kidnapped and tortured. Since 1983, historians have increasingly drifted from laying exclusive culpability of the dictatorship's atrocities at the Argentine military's door, towards structural analyses that locate the source of the human rights abuses within broader economic, political and social conditions prevailing in Argentina before 1976. Indeed, as Verbitsky and Bohoslavsky make clear in their recent, ground-breaking text, the term 'military dictatorship' has now been abandoned, in favour of 'other more complex terms that more

closely reflect the reality of a bloc that was formed by civilian, military, business and church elements'.¹

Through an examination of the Ford Motor Company, this study focuses on the broader economic conditions and 'business' complicity that contributed towards the human rights abuses of the Argentine dictatorship (1976-1983). The Argentinian subsidiary of Ford, established in 1913 by Henry Ford had, by 1970, become an essential contributor to the Argentine economy and employed around 7,500 workers at its main plant in General Pacheco alone.² The company's active involvement in the disappearances of their own employees cannot be contested: executives and managers drew up 'black' or 'subversive' lists of unionists who had been disruptive, company vehicles were used to carry out the kidnappings and there was a clandestine detention centre on plant property.³ Moreover, after those disappeared 'failed to appear' at work, the company sent family members notices for the termination of their employment.⁴ Recent court cases reflect the international effort to hold corporations accountable for complicity in Argentine

¹ Horacio Verbitsky and Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky, *The Economic Accomplices to the Argentine Dictatorship Outstanding Debts* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 2.

² Mira Wilkins and Frank Hill, *American Business Abroad: Ford on Six Continents* (Wayne State University Press, 1964), pp. 56-57; Olivia Abrecht, 'US Corporate Accountability for Human Rights Abuses Abroad: A Case Study of Ford Motor Company in Argentina', *Carolina Digital Repository* (2015), p. 7.

³ Ian Steinman, 'When Ford built a torture chamber', *Jacobin*, 23 February 2018, found at <https://jacobinmag.com/2018/02/ford-factory-argentina-videla-mauricio-macri> [Accessed 01/01/21].

⁴ *Ibid.*

human rights during the military dictatorship. In 2018, Pedro Muller (the former head of manufacturing at Ford), Hector Sibilla (the former head of Ford's plant security) and Santiago Riveros (the former head of the Military Institutes of the Army), were convicted and sentenced to 10, 12 and 15 years in prison respectively.⁵

Speaking in 2014, a survivor of the Ford employee kidnappings, Carlos Propato, was so certain of Ford's direct complicity that he stated the company was not an 'accomplice' to the dictatorship, but was the dictatorship.⁶ He even suggested that the Ford executives were, in fact, the 'army's bosses'.⁷ Propato's words, alongside the outcome of the court case against the Ford executives, are testament to the extent of the corporation's involvement in the disappearances. The extent of Ford's involvement is of particular interest to people across the world and the company's international reputation has generated substantial public interest in the outcome of the court cases. As Banham claims, 'no matter the language, no matter the culture, no matter the vast gulf of differences separating you, eyes will register recognition... Ford has shaped the world around us'.⁸ In the case of the Argentine disappearances, however, this ability to shape the world is not always positive.

Even before the military regime took control, Ford had openly expressed their frustrations with left-wing unionists, who were represented by one of the most pugnacious Argentine unions, the Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor (SMATA).⁹ The company had commented on the increasing pressure they were experiencing under the rise of unionist demands; demands which were

the result of tensions within the union bureaucracy. In a 1974 *Time Magazine* article, Ford drew attention to the 'besieged' business community, deeming it necessary to call to the military for assistance and intervention.¹⁰ Just before the coup in 1976, Ford executives communicated with the armed forces and were persuaded, as the labour leaders had been, by the military's plans for improving the country's economic efficiency. Convinced that a more stable Argentine economy would emerge under military power, Ford actively supported the overthrow of Isabel Peron and praised the regime's immediate objectives to weaken trade union structures and the labour movement.¹¹ On 2 January 1977, almost a year into the dictatorship, Ford reiterated this support, buying a full-page ad in the *La Nación* newspaper, stating, '1976: Once again, Argentina finds its way; 1977: New Year of faith and hope for all Argentines of good will'.¹² The corporation's support of the military's usurpation of power and their active encouragement to suppress labour rights across the country, believing that with the military in control the country had 'found its way', was just the start of Ford's involvement in the systematic attack on unionists.

Just one day after the military regime took control, union representatives at General Pacheco, Ford's main production plant, saw the beginning of what would become years of unionist repression. Internal union representatives were summoned to a meeting with the plant's management, including the director of labour relations, Guillermo Galarraga. At this meeting they were firmly told - and explicitly warned - by Galarraga, to 'forget any union demands'.¹³

⁵ The Centre for Legal and Social Studies, 'The Ford Case: Prison Terms of 10, 12 and 15 years', 11 December 2018, found at <https://www.cels.org.ar/web/en/2018/12/causa-ford-condenas-de-10-12-y-15-anos/> (accessed 10/10/20).

⁶ Human Rights BA interviews Carlos Popato, 'Señalización Empresa 'Ford' Planta Pacheco' [Signalling the Ford Company's Pacheco Plant] Translated by Kitty Fellowes, 28 April 2014, found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5y6rC8nqiM> [Accessed 12/11/20].

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Russ Banham, *The Ford Century: Ford Motor Company and the Innovations that shaped the World* (New York, 2002), p. 18.

⁹ Horacio Verbitsky and Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky, *The Economic Accomplices to the Argentine Dictatorship Outstanding Debts* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 206.

¹⁰ 'Argentina: Trial by Terror', *Time Magazine*, 14 January 1974, found at <http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,908374,00.html> [Accessed 02/02/21].

¹¹ Willem De Haan, 'To know or not to know: Silent Complicity in Crimes against Humanity in Argentina (1976-1983)', *Business History*, 62 (2020), p. 16.

¹² *La Nación*, 2 January 1977, <https://news.google.co.uk/newspapers?nid=BZGggv0hN9sC> [Accessed 09/10/20] in Diane Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's 'Dirty War'* (Durham, 1997), p. 111.

¹³ Ian Stenman, 'When Ford built a torture chamber', *Jacobin*, 23 February 2018, found at <https://jacobinmag.com/2018/02/ford-factory-argentina-videla-mauricio-macri> [Accessed 01/01/21].

The events that followed and the consequences for those who did not adhere to Galarraga's demands, are summarised by the Argentine attorney, Quintana, who represented the disappeared at the trial of Muller and Sibilla:

The majority [of disruptive unionists] were kidnapped while they were on the production line. They were taken at gunpoint and made to walk by all the other workers so they could see what happened to their union representatives¹⁴

One way that Ford's management discreetly targeted disruptive unionist employees, who they believed were making excessive demands, was by giving a list of names to the military junta who they wanted 'removed'. The unionists that the company wanted 'removing' were named, by company management, on 'subversive' or 'black' lists, which were then given to members of the armed forces. The lists were passed between the executives, the managers of the plants, and, finally, the military who would then take the named employees to clandestine detention centres. Extensive information, including personal addresses and photo IDs, was given to the armed forces through these lists.¹⁵ 'Subversive' lists were, thereby, formulated and created from calculated research by Ford executives, evidencing a clear intention in who was kidnapped. According to Da Haan, whose work focuses on silent complicity in crimes against humanity, 'undercover agents' also infiltrated the factory floor, identifying the least suspecting troublemakers

and informing those creating the 'subversive' lists.¹⁶ The use of undercover agents in the creation of target lists, further evidences the complicity of Ford in the disappearance of their employees.

Another example of Ford's direct complicity was the construction and managing of onsite, illegal, clandestine detention centres. One known example, under Ford's control, was on the grounds of the Pacheco plant, in Buenos Aires. According to the company website, the plant was established in 1962 as a 'stamping and assembly plant' and remains today as one of the oldest manufacturing sectors in the country.¹⁷ However, throughout the civil-military dictatorship, it was a scene of brutal repression and a location of systematic human rights abuses. Through Gaudin's article, we learn that Judge Vence, who headed the investigation into the Ford detention camps, 'inspected the industrial site accompanied by 10 surviving workers'.¹⁸ All these workers recognised the location as the site of their torture camps and could explain the details of its operation.¹⁹ The Pacheco detention centre was constructed on the plant's soccer fields and run by military personnel who moved about the company grounds, illegally detaining Ford employees in company branded vehicles, as evidenced by a 2002 *La Nación* article, commenting on Ford's 'ties to the army'.²⁰ The article uses the testimonies of Pedro Troiani, a survivor, and Larry Rohter, an American journalist, to comment on the Pacheco plant's 'established barracks and detention centre'.²¹ Troiani, whose disappearance will be analysed closer, describes how he was taken, 'at gunpoint', and held captive at the plants 'Sport and Recreation Centre', a place he previously attended union meetings.²²

¹⁴ Tomás Ojea Quintana cited in Ian Stenman, 'When Ford built a torture chamber', *Jacobin*, 23 February 2018, found at <https://jacobinmag.com/2018/02/ford-factory-argentina-videla-mauricio-macri> [Accessed 01/01/21].

¹⁵ Uki Goñi, 'Argentina: Two ex-Ford executives convicted in torture case', *The Guardian*, 11 December 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/11/pedro-muller-hedro-sibilla-ford-executives-argentina-torture-case> [Accessed 12/12/20].

¹⁶ Willem De Haan, 'To know or not to know: Silent Complicity in Crimes against Humanity in Argentina (1976-1983)', *Business History*, 62 (2020), p. 12.

¹⁷ 'Ford Motor Company Pacheco Assembly Plant', *Ford Authority*, 29 May 2020, found at <https://fordauthority.com/fmc/ford-motor-company-plants-facilities/ford-motor-company-argentina-plants-facilities/ford-motor-company-pacheco-assembly-plant-pacheco-argentina/> [Accessed 10/10/20].

¹⁸ Andres Gaudin, 'Former ford executives charged with crimes against humanity in Argentina', *Latin America DataBase* (2013), p. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*; 'They link the Ford company with the dictatorship', *La Nación*, 28 November 2002, found at <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/politica/vinculan-a-la-empresa-ford-con-la-dictadura-nid453541/> [Accessed 02/02/21].

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Pedro Troiani cited in 'They link the Ford company with the dictatorship', *La Nación*, 28 November 2002, found at <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/politica/vinculan-a-la-empresa-ford-con-la-dictadura-nid453541/> [Accessed 02/02/21].

Troiani survived his kidnapping and on 21 January 2012, in an effort to bring awareness to the disappeared, returned to the entrance of the Pache-co plant where he stated: ‘when they took the first compañero, we thought it was an isolated act, but after that, another and another were kidnapped.’²³

A well-documented disappearance was that of Ford employee, Adolfo Omar Sanchez, who was kidnapped from his home at 1321 Zorzal Street, Tigre, in the Province of Buenos Aires on 28 March 1976 at 9pm.²⁴ Sanchez was a Ford union delegate and had been called to a meeting with ‘Galarraga, labour relations manager, Marcos, manager of the Pressing Plant, and Luis Pérez, labour representative’, close to the time of his kidnapping.²⁵ After Galarraga stated that Ford no longer recognised the status of the delegates, Sanchez was mockingly told that ‘he was going to know about General Camps.’²⁶ That evening, around seven or eight people came to his house and, despite Sanchez defending himself by saying that he was ‘neither a member of nor active in any political party whatsoever’, he was kidnapped.²⁷ After two months of illegal imprisonment in a clandestine detention centre, he was transferred to the Villa Devoto Prison in the Federal Capital on 19 May 1976, where he was to remain until 14

January 1977.²⁸ Adolfo Omar Sanchez’s testimony is supported by that of his colleague, Juan Carlos Amoroso, Ford’s head of Human Resources, who was kidnapped the same night.²⁹ In Amoroso’s account he had also attended the meeting with Galarraga, of his own kidnapping, he mentions that the soldier taking him away was holding his photo ID card, a document that only Ford managers and administration team would have had access to, and that Marcos and Pérez.³⁰ At this meeting, he claims that Galarraga turned to him and said to ‘give [his] regards to Camps.’³¹ Whilst the name ‘Camps’ meant little to Amoroso then, he would later come to know that it referred to General Ramón Camps, the head of the Buenos Aires Provincial Police, who was responsible for the murder of 5,000 people during the dictatorship.³² In their testimonies, Sanchez and Amoroso show how the military were in possession of company photo ID cards and, alongside the comments made by Galarraga, this highlights Ford’s awareness and involvement in the targeting of unionists occurring on their property.

Pedro Troiani’s testimony contributes further to the discussion of Ford’s direct complicity in employee disappearances.³³ Troiani, who had a history of pressing managers for better working conditions,

²³ Andres Gaudin, ‘Former Ford Executives charged with Crimes against Humanity in Argentina’, *Latin America Database* (2013), p. 3.

²⁴ Testimony of Adolfo Omar Sanchez (file No. 7683) extracted from ‘CONADEP Report: Nunca Más [Never Again]: Part II. H, 20 September 1984, found at http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/neveragain/neveragain_001.htm [Accessed 10/10/20].

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ ‘Caso N.572: Sanchez, Adolfo Omar’ [Case N.572: Sanchez, Adolfo Omar] Translated by Kitty Fellowes, *Equipa Nikzor*, Case No. 13/84 - Derechos Human rights, 30 September 2006, found at <http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/arg/causa13/casos/caso572.html> [Accessed 04/01/2021], p. 1.

²⁷ Testimony of Adolfo Omar Sanchez (file No. 7683) extracted from ‘CONADEP Report: Nunca Más [Never Again]: Part II. H’, 20 September 1984, found at http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/neveragain/neveragain_001.htm [Accessed 10/10/20].

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Testimony of Juan Carlo Amoroso (file No. 1638) extracted from ‘CONADEP Report: Nunca Más [Never Again]: Part II. H’, 20 September 1984, found at http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/neveragain/neveragain_001.htm [Accessed 10/10/20].

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Testimony of Juan Carlos Amoroso (file No. 1638) extracted from ‘CONADEP Report: Nunca Más [Never Again]: Part II.H’, 20 September 1984, found at http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/neveragain/neveragain_001.htm [Accessed 10/10/20].

³² Olivia Abrecht, ‘US Corporate Accountability for Human Rights Abuses Abroad: A Case Study of Ford Motor Company in Argentina’, *Carolina Digital Repository* (2015), p. 11.

³³ Testimony of Pedro Norberto Troiani (file No. 1638) extracted from ‘CONADEP Report: Nunca Más [Never Again]: Part II. H, 20 September 1984, found at http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/neveragain/neveragain_001.htm [Accessed 10/10/20].

was arrested on 11 April 1976 whilst on the company grounds at the Ford factory in General Pacheco.³⁴ He had been elected as the branch delegate in 1970, under the authorisation of Argentina's automotive industry workers union, SMATA, and, to his mind, maintained 'good relations' with the company up until his arrest.³⁵ In his testimony, however, he comments on an 'abrupt change in relations between the company' and his colleagues in the immediate aftermath of the coup.³⁶ From the 25 March 1976 onwards, Troiani and his colleagues claim to have become 'aware of the first arrests within the factory', which quickly escalated to three people a day being 'taken away' by people in military uniform.³⁷ In compliance with Ford's need to remain publicly oblivious to the human rights abuses, Troiani's wife was sent a telegram ordering her husband to report to work, or face dismissal. However, Troiani remains confident that the company was fully aware of his kidnapping citing the fact that the soldiers who carried out the kidnapping were driving company branded vehicles.³⁸ Moreover, when asking if he would need his documents, Troiani was told by the soldiers that he would not 'need them where [he was] going'.³⁹ Having realised that the company was involved in her husband's disappearance, his wife sent a telegram to the managers, met with the manager of Labour relations, Señor Fernández, and ultimately received fortnightly payments to keep quiet. Troiani's testimony and the actions of Ford in response to his disappearance, confirm the company's direct

complicity. No efforts were taken by Ford to find him and, as a member of SMATA, he was an obvious target for the company to want to disappear.

Troiani's testimony also provides insight into another way that Ford became complicit in the disappearances. In addition to 'subversive' lists and onsite clandestine detention centres, the company had a contract to supply vehicles to the military. Troiani recalls the soldiers driving a Ford F-100, a model which he himself had previously worked on.⁴⁰ Whilst the Ford F-100 was one vehicle used by the military, the Ford Falcon is perhaps best known for its role in the disappearances and has become a symbol of the dictatorship and of terror for the Argentine public. With its well-recognised role as a military vehicle, Ford put an advertisement in *La Nación*, promoting the Ford Falcon's supremacy on the streets and calling the vehicle, and its driver, 'champions'.⁴¹ Ford's history of actively supporting the military regime and their aims, meant they saw no shame in advertising a vehicle feared by the public because of its links to the military junta. In a declassified document from 1977, the Interior Minister, General Albano Jorge Harguindeguy, requested 90 Ford Falcons and, more suspiciously, he asked for them to be 'unidentifiable' and 'untraceable to state agencies'.⁴² In all the accounts of kidnappings between 1976 and 1983 that the journalist, Raúl Marzo, had heard, he remarks on the one thing they had in common - 'the dark green Ford Falcon'.⁴³ Even today the Falcon is still recognised as a symbol of terror or a 'death-mobile'

¹⁴ Kelly Hearn, 'Ford's past in Argentina', *The Nation*, 20 April 2006, found at <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/fords-past-argentina/> [Accessed 04/01/2021].

³⁵ Testimony of Pedro Norberto Troiani (file No. 1638) extracted from 'CONADEP Report: Nunca Más [Never Again]: Part II. H', 20 September 1984, found at http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_001.htm [Accessed 10/10/20].

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Kelly Hearn, 'Ford's past in Argentina', *The Nation*, 20 April 2006, found at <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/fords-past-argentina/> [Accessed 04/01/2021].

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Testimony of Pedro Norberto Troiani (file No. 1638) extracted from 'CONADEP Report: Nunca Más [Never Again]: Part II. H', 20 September 1984, found at http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_001.htm [Accessed 10/10/20].

⁴¹ *La Nación*, 2 January 1977, found at <https://news.google.co.uk/newspapers?nid=BZGggv0hN9sC&dat=19770101&printsec=frontpage&hl=en> [Accessed 11/11/20].

⁴² 'The Order that the Dictatorship gave for the Purchase of Green Falcon without Patents', *Clarín*, 23 March 2006, found at https://www.clarin.com/ediciones-antiores/orden-dio-dictadura-compra-falcon-verdes-patentes_0_rj-boqrk0Ye.html#:~:text=El%2016%20de%20diciembre%20se,garant%C3%ADa%20y%20forma%20de%20pago. [Accessed 01/09/20].

⁴³ Raúl Marz, 'The curse of the Ford Falcon: How an Argentinian classic became a symbol of evil', *Medium*, 23 February 2016, found at <https://medium.com/history-on-wheels/the-curse-of-the-ford-falcon-36cda9a8f97f> [Accessed 06/01/2021].

as the Argentine psychologist, Eduardo Pavlovsky, comments, to Argentinians who lived at the time of the regime.⁴⁴ The lasting impact is shown by the words of Miriam Lewin, a 49-year-old journalist who was kidnapped in a Ford Falcon and states that the car remains ‘a symbol of repression.’⁴⁵

As the attorney, Urquiza, summarises, Ford was just ‘one more gear in the machinery of state terrorism.’⁴⁶ Both Ford and the military had mutual incentive to suppress unionist activity and, whilst the company was discrete in their actions, members of the military made little effort to conceal their collaboration with the company. Jorge Ernesto Berguier, a former soldier working on the grounds of the Pacheco plant, openly admitted in 2005 that his commanding officer had said, in front of Ford employees, ‘we’re going to detain subversives, and we’re going to eat lunch at Ford. This is the company’s collaboration with the armed forces. You have to be thankful.’⁴⁷ There is, therefore, much evidence of Ford’s involvement in the disappearances of their own employees as well as evidence of the company’s communication and collaboration with the military. The evidence of testimonies confirms the way Ford pinpointed which unionists to target, supplied the military with vehicles and hosted a place to detain the victims and it has taken until recently for the executives, Muller and Sibilla, to be brought to justice. The image below depicts a mass demonstration in Buenos Aires on 24 March 2019, where ex-Ford employees, who survived their kidnappings, came out in support. The banner reads, ‘The Ford trial: a workers’ victory’ (See Figure 6).



Figure 6: A Mass demonstration in Buenos Aires, banner reads: ‘The Ford Trial: a workers’ victory’, 24 March 2019, photo by Victoria Basualdo, accessed 14/10/20, via <https://www.justiceinfo.net/en/40813-the-ford-trial-in-argentina-a-workers-victory.html>

The scholarship drawn upon throughout this study reflects the under researched nature of this field, with most written only in the last 10 years. Court trials concerned with corporate involvement in Argentine human rights abuses continue to throw up new detail and the increased global focus on corporate social responsibility (CSR) has encouraged greater critical engagement. Defined by Certanec as, ‘a concept whereby business entities voluntarily incorporate social, environmental and ethical standards into their operations in order to improve the lives of employees, the local community and society as a whole’, the UN, alongside non-legal organisations, have increased efforts to ensure CSR and promote transparency, integrity and accountability.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Eduardo Pavlovsky cited in Karen Roberts, ‘The Falcon Remembered’, *NACLA Report on the Americas Magazine*, 25 September 2007, found at <https://nacla.org/article/falcon-remembered> [Accessed 06/01/2021]; Raúl Marz, ‘The curse of the Ford Falcon: How an Argentinian Classic became a Symbol of Evil’, *Medium*, 23 February 2016, found at <https://medium.com/history-on-wheels/the-curse-of-the-ford-falcon-36cda9a8f97f> [Accessed 06/01/2021].

⁴⁵ Miriam Lewin, cited in Mike Culpepper, ‘The Ford Falcon: death mobile’, *Shrine of Dreams*, 27 October 2011, found at <https://shrineofdreams.wordpress.com/2011/10/27/the-ford-falcon-death-mobile/> [Accessed 07/01/2021].

⁴⁶ Ojea Urquiza, cited in Bill Van Auken, ‘Ford Motor charged as accomplice in Argentina’s Dirty War’, *World Socialist Web Site*, 25 February 2006, found at <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2006/02/ford-f25.html> [Accessed 07/01/2021].

⁴⁷ Jorge Ernesto Berguier cited in The Preliminary Statement of Pedro Norberto Troiani, ‘Solicitud de declaraciones indagatorias’ [Preliminary Statements] Translated by Kitty Fellowes, *Equipa Nikzor*, Case 18.018/02, Molinari, Antonio vs. Ford Personnel, 25 August 2005, p. 9.

⁴⁸ The UN has improved its oversight of abuses through the creation of the UN Special Representative for Business and Human Rights (2005) and the adoption of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by the UN Human Rights Council in 2011. The ‘Guiding Principles’ established that the state had a duty to protect its people from the human rights abuses of third parties and that better platforms for victims to be heard are needed; United Nations, *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (New York, 2011); See Ana Certanec, ‘The Connection between Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Respect for Human Rights’, *Economics and social issues review*, 10 (2019).

In Argentina, increased focus on CSR and transitional justice is what brought Ford to trial and what will, in the future, hold further corporations accountable for their involvement in the human rights abuses between 1976 and 1983.⁴⁹ Institutions, such as the Argentinean Institute Corporate Social Responsibility, have been established and the work of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch remains fundamental to international awareness of human rights abuses in the country. Increased knowledge of Argentine corporate complicity in the systematic targeting of unionists, during the military regime of 1976–83, has sparked legal action and bold initiatives to hold businesses accountable. In addition, there are increasingly frequent references to the military dictatorship as a ‘civil-military’ dictatorship, revealing how even the language now supports the link between the military and business sectors in the broader, repressive apparatus of those years.⁵⁰ Argentina has gone further than other countries in the prosecution of corporations, including Ford, but much remains to be done to hold corporations to account - and to bring either justice, or closure, to the victims and families of the state sanctioned abuses which define Argentina’s ‘dirty war’.



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⁴⁹ Whilst Ford, Mercedes and Ledesma executives have been prosecuted, other Argentine corporations, including the steel company, Acindar, the bus company, La Veloz del Norte and the mining firm, Minera Aguilar, amongst others, are also currently under investigation. See Victoria Basualdo, ‘The Argentine Dictatorship and Labour (1976-1983): A Historiographical Essay’, *International Labour and Working-Class History*, 8 (2018), pp. 8-26.

⁵⁰ Connie de la Vega, Amol Mehra, Alexandra Wong, ‘Holding businesses accountable for human rights violations: Recent developments and next steps’, *International policy analysis* (2011); Leigh Payne, Tricia Olsen, Gabriel Pereira, ‘Corporate complicity in Argentina: A preliminary Analysis’, *International Studies Association* (2014), p. 1.

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Secondary Material

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