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Documents Show Spanish Royalty Supported Argentine Dictatorship

21/10/2014



Documents released on Tuesday show that the support of the Spanish government to the dictatorship of Rafael Videla in Argentina (1976-1981) which included exchange of gifts and medals and support for access to international forums.

Official documents obtained by the Spanish newspaper Publico revealed that King Juan Carlos “was in charge of facilitating deals between transition-era Spain and the Argentine government carrying out the infamous flights of death.”

According to the confidential reports, King Carlos said to Videla that he “hailed your government’s success in dealing with current economic problems.”

He also expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the visit of the Minister of Economy José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz who was the leader in the free-market deindustrialization under Videla that destroyed the Argentine economy.

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King Carlos added that Spain was “in the best of positions to clinch commercial and financial deals with the Argentine Republic.”

Only days after, Argentina signed a deal to resume meat exports to Spain.

It is added that General Videla, responsible for thousands of killings, in 1978 received the Grand Cross of the Order of Military Merit and the Collar of the Order of Isabella the Catholic from the Spanish monarchy.

According to the newspaper, 23 Argentine soldiers were also awarded medals, including Vice Admiral of the Navy, Antonio Vanek, head of a concentration camp. Also decorated were Brigadier Basilio Lami of the Air Force and General Jose Rogelio Villarreal, who during the night of the coup was responsible for the arrest of President Isabel Martínez de Perón.

The relationship went both ways, with among the Spanish military decorated by the Videla regime was captain Fernando Salas, Brigadier General Manuel Vallespín, and the chief of police in Madrid, Federico Quintero.

Publico also shows that during those years, the dictatorship of Videla and Suarez government established a system to support mutual participation in international organizations.

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