
Chilean Court Sentences 78 Ex-Agents in Trial of Victim of Operation Colombo

04/02/2015



Among those sentenced on Monday were Manuel Contreras, Cesar Manriquez Bravo, Pedro Espinoza, Marcelo Moren Brito, Miguel Krasnoff and Raul Eduardo Iturriaga Neumann.

Contreras, the former head of DINA, the Chilean secret police under Pinochet, has been convicted in dozens of trials for human rights violations and has an accumulated prison sentence of 427 years.

On Jan. 8, Contreras was handed a 13-year sentence for the death and disappearance of Bernardo de Castro, a member of the Socialist Party of Chile, in the same operation.

Krasnoff, a former brigadier, and Moren Brito, who was a colonel, have accumulated prison sentences of close to 300 years.

The others convicted for perpetrating and being accomplices in the disappearance of Acuña, also on the list of victims in both Chile and Argentina, were slapped with sentences of four and 10 years.

Acuña, of the Chilean Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), was abducted by DINA agents and taken to Londres 38, a detention and torture center.

“During Miguel Acuña’s stay at Londres 38, he remained cut off from the outside world, blindfolded and tied up, subject to continuous interrogation under torture by DINA agents who worked at the center to obtain information about MIR members who they would then proceed to

arrest,” read the court ruling.

In July 1975, the government released a list of 119 Chileans who had died abroad, allegedly in clashes with security forces or between themselves.

The list, which included Acuña, contained names of the victims of Operation Colombo, an operation undertaken by the DINA to conceal the disappearances and deaths of the 119 people.

Colombo was the precursor to Operation Condor, a campaign of political repression and state terror involving intelligence operations and assassinations of opponents by the right-wing dictatorships then governing countries in the Southern Cone of South America.

According to official figures, some 3,200 people were killed by police officers during the Pinochet dictatorship.

Of these, 1,192 are reported to be still missing, and more than 33,000 are listed as kidnapped, tortured, and imprisoned for political reasons.
