

Argentine Congress To Investigate Corporate Complicity with Military Regime



Buenos Aires, November 27 (PL-RHC)-- The Argentine Congress will create a bicameral committee to investigate corporate responsibility during the last military regime, from 1976 to 1983.

In a hard fought vote on the night of November 26th in the Senate, the Front for Victory (FpV) managed to turn into law the establishment of that parliamentary body as it counted on support from the legislators of the bloc of the Progressive Broad Front, Unen and the Civic Coalition ARI.

Senators of the Radical Civic Union voted against the legislation. They are now allied with the right-wing Republican Proposal (PRO), its members and those of the opposition Peronism.

Juan Carlos Romero, from the opposition, considered "it would be inconvenient for Congress to be involved in this activity that has nothing to do with legislative matters."

Head of the ruling bloc, Miguel Pichetto, said "there is a historic tradition of investigation committees that do not act as inquisition courts" and their creation "is part of the Congress' powers."

The initiative was presented by national deputy and labor relations lawyer, Hector Recalde, from the FpV. In the lower chamber it was supported by all blocs but the PRO, which abstained. The PRO leader, Mauricio Macri, will assume as new President of Argentina on December 10th.

This is a topic rejected by the business sector, publicly the Industrial Union (UIA). Some companies denounced during the parliamentary debate were Mercedes Benz, Ledesma, Loma Negra and Papel Prensa.

The objective of the initiative, according to the approved text, is "looking for truth, memory, Justice, reparation and the strengthening of democratic institutions."

The bicameral committee will have five deputies and a similar number of national senators. Their mission is to draft a report identifying "the economic and technical players that contributed to or benefited from the military regime by contributing their economic, technical, political or logistical support."

The new law also creates, within Congress, the National Archive of Memory, Truth and Justice, to make available to the public free all the documents used by the bicameral committee that are related to the issue.

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