

# ARMY COMMANDER IN CHILE IS SHOT; FORCES ALERTED

General, Neutral in Struggle  
for Presidency, Critically  
Wounded by Gunman

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By JUAN de ONIS

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SANTIAGO, Chile, Oct. 22—  
An unidentified gunman today  
shot and critically wounded the  
Commander in Chief of the  
Chilean Army, Gen. René  
Schneider Chereau.

The attack on General  
Schneider came 48 hours be-  
fore Congress was scheduled  
to vote for the election of Dr.  
Salvador Allende, a Socialist  
senator and a declared Marxist,  
as President of Chile for a six-  
year term.

All units of the armed forces  
and the national police, a total  
of 70,000 men, were placed on  
maximum alert. A widespread  
search for the gunman and sev-  
eral collaborators began in this  
capital.

## Military Command Meets

The high command of the  
armed forces, after a three-hour  
emergency meeting, said in a  
statement that the attack had  
been a "despicable action" that  
would bring no change in "the  
permanent attitudes of the  
armed forces to fulfill their  
mission."

The army, navy and air force  
commanders ordered an investi-  
gation to bring to military jus-  
tice those "directly and in-  
directly responsible" for the  
attack on General Schneider.

The general, a 56-year-old  
professional soldier, is known  
to have taken a strong position  
in favor of neutrality by the  
armed forces in the political  
struggle in Chile.

## Extreme Right Blamed

This has been continuing  
since Dr. Allende won a plural-  
ity in the three-man presi-  
dential election on Sept. 4,  
narrowly defeating Jorge Ales-

sandri Rodriguez, an independ-  
ent candidate supported by the  
right. In the vote in Congress  
on Saturday Dr. Allende has  
been assured of a majority by  
the support of the other candi-  
dates and of the governing  
Christian Democratic party.

Leaders of Dr. Allende's left-  
wing coalition, which includes  
the Communist party, attrib-  
uted the assassination attempt to  
"anti-patriotic groups of the ex-  
treme right in collusion with  
foreign elements."

At the military hospital, Gen-  
eral Schneider was listed in  
critical condition after 90 min-  
utes of surgery for three  
wounds from .45-caliber bullets.  
Surgeons said that one bullet  
had perforated his thorax and  
passed within an inch of the

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heart. He was also struck in the  
neck and right hand.

The general was attacked on  
the way from his home to the  
Ministry of Defense this morn-  
ing. He was accompanied only  
by his driver.

An automobile cut in front  
of the general's sedan on a one-  
way street in a residential  
neighborhood. Two men, de-  
scribed by witnesses as in their  
early twenties, jumped out of  
the automobile and ran toward  
the general's car.

One of the men smashed in  
a rear window with a small  
sledgehammer. The other stuck  
a pistol through the broken  
glass and fired five or more  
shots. The gunman then fled  
to a second automobile wait-  
ing on a side street and drove  
away, while the other attacker  
left in the car that had cut off  
the general's sedan.

One of the cars believed to  
have been used in the attack  
was found abandoned later.

Dr. Allende visited the mili-  
tary hospital shortly after Gen-  
eral Schneider was taken from  
the operating room. Talking  
with reporters, Dr. Allende re-  
called that his coalition had  
been calling for Government ac-  
tion against extreme right-wing  
groups that, he said, were con-  
spiring to prevent his reaching  
office "by any means or meth-  
od."

On the street where the at-  
tack occurred, Fernando Man-  
silla, a recently retired lieuten-  
ant colonel in the Chilean Air  
Force who lives nearby, looked  
absently down at chunks of  
automobile safety glass in the  
roadway.

"This is the first time this  
has happened in Chile, shooting  
a military commander for poli-

tical reasons," he said. "It's  
against our principles and our  
history."

## Officers Share Shock

His shock was shared by the  
officers at the gray Ministry of  
Defense building to which Gen-  
eral Schneider had been driv-  
ing. Sergeants and corporals  
strapped on pistols to guard the  
iron gates. Later, armed soldiers  
were detailed to positions  
throughout the building.

After visiting the hospital,  
Dr. Allende, accompanied by  
two automobiles filled with  
bodyguards, drove to the Pres-

idential Palace and conferred  
with President Eduardo Frei  
Montalva for 45 minutes.

After the meeting, Dr. Allen  
said he had asked Mr. Frei  
to take strong measures to  
halt what he called a "plan of  
sedition" that was taking place  
under the direction of "insane  
or mercenary minds."

Mr. Frei's Christian Demo-  
cratic party attributed the at-  
tack to "fascist" elements. The  
right-wing National party also  
condemned the attack.

## Secret Influx Reported

The left-wing press has been  
charging for weeks that  
agents of the United States  
Central Intelligence Agency and  
anti-Communist exiles from  
Cuba have been entering Chile  
secretly to carry out a plan  
to prevent Dr. Allende from  
becoming President.

Edward A. Korry, the United  
States Ambassador to Chile, is-  
sued a statement last night  
denying these charges. He said  
that before the presidential  
election he had proposed to  
the Chilean Government that  
all travel by United States  
officials to this country be sus-  
pended and had offered to ask  
all United States consulates  
abroad to dissuade United  
States citizens from coming to  
Chile. Mr. Korry said that the  
offer had been rejected by  
Chilean authorities.

United States officials were  
concerned that the attack on  
General Schneider would be  
used by anti-American elements  
here to step up a campaign  
that seeks to link United States  
diplomats here with right-wing  
extremist groups.

Diplomatic observers be-  
lieved that the strong public  
reaction evident here against  
the attack on General Schnei-  
der had strengthened Dr.  
Allende's position in regard to  
both the election in Congress,  
which is already a formality,  
and to the armed forces, which  
have taken a strong position  
against illegal action by either  
right-wing or left-wing extrem-  
ists.

See this file 7 Apr 71  
for memo on dates.

See this file 7 Jul 75.