

Allende's Final Defiance

BUENOS AIRES — (UPI) — Chile's President Salvador Allende turned down an opposition offer of safe conduct to exile just before a coup that resulted in his death, saying, "I don't make deals with traitors," a Mexican newsman reported yesterday.

Allende reportedly told palace inhabitants that the only way he would leave the palace would be dead.

Manuel Mejido, the Chile correspondent of the newspaper Excelsior of Mexico, said he talked with aides and friends of the Marxist President and they confirmed that he committed suicide.

According to Mejido's account, before the ground attack on the palace began, Gen. Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, the head of the military coup forces telephoned Allende at 8:30 a.m. offering him an airplane and safe conduct out of the country

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for him and his family.

Allende answered, "I don't make deals with traitors."

A few minutes later, Adm. Jose Toribio Merino, another member of the junta, called to ask Allende to resign. "I don't surrender, that's for cowards like you," the besieged President reportedly said.

Allende summoned all those who had decided to remain with him in the palace at 10:30 a.m. and said, "Gentlemen, I have decided to stay. I have always said that only dead will they take me out of here."

After twenty minutes of heavy fire by coup forces,

there was silence and again the telephone rang. Pinochet gave Allende 15 minutes to surrender. He refused, but he ordered the women to leave, threatening to take them out himself if necessary.

The planes began to bomb the palace, but Allende's orders to the few who remained were, "Don't shoot until the infantry try to enter the palace."

The infantry arrived at the palace at 1:45 p.m. and broke down a side door.

Loudspeakers ordered Allende to surrender in 10 minutes.

Allende told those with him, "Go out, unarmed with your hands up, and I will follow, coming out last."

As the last of the palace personnel went down the stairs, they heard two shots. Allende had fired a small sub-machine gun through his mouth. It was 2:10 p.m.