

Chile Poor Are Visited By General

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SANTIAGO, Chile, Sept. 20—The frail wooden shacks of the Ho Chi Minh shantytown were adorned with miniature Chilean flags commemorating Armed Forces Day.

Yesterday was the eighth day after the military coup d'état that overthrew the Marxist coalition Government of the late Salvador Allende Gossens, and the 1,500 families of Ho Chi Minh—most of them staunch supporters of the dead President—were about to catch their first glimpse of one of the new regime's important officials.

Gen. Oscar Bonilla, the new Minister of Interior, arrived in the late afternoon, heavily escorted by soldiers.

The visit, according to the advance men, was to give the general a first-hand look at the problems of the poor, and to demonstrate that the new military Government had already gained the acceptance of what was widely believed to be a solidly Marxist constituency.

A Frightening Rumor

General Bonilla strode across the dusty, unpaved main street, approached a woman in the first house of the shantytown, and asked her what her most serious concern was.

"We are scared by the rumors that we are going to be bombed by the military," Mrs. Nilda González answered unhesitatingly. "The police told us we would be bombed."

After assuring her that the rumors were unfounded, General Bonilla asked about the practical problems of the shantytown.

The answers could apply to any of the dozens of "campamentos"—as these sprawling squatters' settlements that ring Santiago are called.

There are the long lines for scarce food, particularly bread; the lack of schools and immediate medical aid; a poor water supply, and flimsy shelter from the still cold weather.

An Extra Burden

Dr. Allende tried but never solved these problems during his three turbulent years in office, and the military junta that succeeded him will have the additional burden of dealing with a community that viewed the late President as a strong defender of its interests.

The Ho Chi Minh campamento lies in Las Condes, the wealthiest district in the capital. The squatters who settled the property—a former farm strip—were given deeds to the land by Dr. Allende after he assumed office.

The residents — most of them factory workers—gave him 42 per cent of their votes in 1970, and 68 per cent in the legislative elections last March, despite the crumbling of the country's economy.

When the armed forces began their coup last week, they found their stiffest resistance in the factories and many of the campamentos, where until yesterday occasional shots still rang out at night.

There were no clashes at Ho Chi Minh, but the police and army scoured all the shacks of the campamento in a fruitless search for weapons.

"Is Allende Really Dead?"

While substantial crowds—mainly of housewives—gathered around the tall, bespectacled man, bespeaking them strong support, at the fringes, small groups of young men quietly revealed their distrust of the new Government and bitter resignation over the loss of the old regime.

"The soldiers were very rough during the arms search," said a blue-shirted youth who called himself Roberto. "They made the men go outside and lean their hands against the walls, and then they made a mess inside."

There was no talk of resistance, but a considerable sense of isolation among the residents, many of whom had whom had not left the camp not left the campamento since the first day of the coup because of the strict curfews.

"Tell me, is Allende really dead?" asked Roberto. "Some people still say he disguised himself and escaped."