

Chile Hires Ad Firm To Polish Up Image

By Lewis H. Diuguid

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The Chilean military junta, as part of a broad effort to spruce up its international image, has hired the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency.

Kevin Corrigan of Thompson's offices here said the contract was signed in Santiago last month for "counselling in development of communications programs, mostly in the United States and Europe."

Corrigan is handling the account for a new subdivision of the Thompson agency called Dialog. He said its business is public communications, rather than public relations.

"We'll be advising them on reporting more effectively and fully to the media, such as The Washington Post, if you will, as well as specialty items," he said.

The junta's authoritarian measures against supporters of the late President Salvador Allende, whom it overthrew a year ago, have provoked intense criticism in parliaments and the press worldwide.

On Wednesday, Gen. Augusto Pinochet announced in a ceremony commemorating the coup that most prisoners would be allowed to

go into exile. A day earlier, the junta released Orlando Letelier the former ambassador to Washington. His detention without charge had triggered a concerted anti-junta campaign in this country.

Corrigan disclaimed any credit for having recommended Letelier's release, but he said he was glad to hear about it: "It's a step they must have thought about, and taken."

Although Corrigan emphasized that Thompson only counsels, but does not represent Chile, he said that the firm has registered itself as a lobbyist for Chile.

Corrigan is a former correspondent for the Latin American magazine *Vision* and speaks Spanish fluently. He lived in Chile when his father was a doctor for the U.S. Copper Company anaconda at its Chuquicamata mine, which Allende nationalized.

Chilean ambassador Walter Heitmann, also concerned about his nation's image, has hired an American as a liaison with the U.S. Congress. He is Henry Gardner, a retired Anaconda vice president for public relations. He served many years in Chile.