

Chile Says Press Is Welcome To Investigate Human Rights

NYTimes

By DAVID BINDER
Special to The New York Times

OCT 25 1975

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24—The Chilean Minister of Justice said today that he would welcome investigations by journalists of alleged human-rights violations in his country.

But at a news conference here, the minister, Miguel Schweitzer, declared he was "not going to make a categorical answer" to the question whether Chile would allow the Inter-American Human Rights Commission to conduct an investigation now.

Mr. Schweitzer said, however, he endorsed a proposal by the Chilean Ambassador here that the commission conduct an investigation next spring in conjunction with the General Assembly of the Organization of the American States that Chile has proposed be held in Santiago. The commission is an organ of the O.A.S.

UN Team Rejected

The human rights issue has been troublesome for Chile and the O.A.S. as well as for the United Nations for almost a year.

Last July the Government of General Augusto Pinochet turned back a six-nation investigating team of the United Nations.

The team was reduced to five — Pakistan, Austria, Ecuador, Senegal and Sierra Leone — when Rumania withdrew, and it proceeded with its inquiry by interviewing 83 Chilean exiles.

On Oct. 14, the group issued a report charging that Chile still maintain 11 "torture centers" for political prisoners two years after a junta under General Pinochet seized power.

A majority of the 25 member countries of the Organization of American States have been pressing Chile to cooperate with the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. Mr. Schweitzer, who took office last April, conferred with Andrés Aguilar, chairman of the commission, and with other members earlier this week.

The issue has been complicated by Chile's proposal last

month to play host to the O.A.S. general assembly. The United States and other countries have indicated to Chile that it would be difficult to contemplate attending an O.A.S. meeting in Santiago if the Chilean Government refused to cooperate with human-rights investigations.

A United States official, commenting on the suggestion of Ambassador Manuel Trucco that a human-rights study be combined with the general assembly, said this would violate the mandate of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, which is required to prepare its reports well in advance of such meetings.

4,027 Under Detention

Mr. Schweitzer acknowledged that 4,027 followers of the late President Salvador Allende Gossens are in detention in Chile.

He said 512 were being held without charges under the state of siege imposed after the overthrow of President Allende on Sept. 11, 1973.

In addition, he said, 1,398 are facing trial in military courts. Among these, he said, is Luis Corvalán, head of the Chilean Communist party, who will face trial soon on charges of plotting to infiltrate the armed forces ideologically.

At the height of the Pinochet Government's campaign against the followers of President Allende a year ago, 10,000 Chileans were in prison or prison camps, Mr. Schweitzer said.

Asked about Chile's vote against Israel last week in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee of the United Nations on a resolution equating Zionism and racism, Mr. Schweitzer said he was still seeking information about it. "I'm proof that there is no anti-Semitism in the Chilean Government," he said.

Mr. Schweitzer, who is Jewish, has been a member of the Chilean bar for 45 years and is professor of law at Santiago University.