

ARMY COMMANDER IN CHILE IS SHOT; FORCES ALERTED

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

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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 inves-
tigation 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.