

Chile moves toward confrontation

THE PLOT TO KILL ALLENDE

Sunday, March 19th — SANTIAGO: Things here moving in the direction of a confrontation. Most everyone is agreed that this clash will probably come in the next month or six weeks during the Third World U.N. Conference (UNCTAD) to be held here in April-May.

Some Venezuelan friends of ours who are members of a Venezuelan group like MIR called MAS (Movement to Socialism) were given copies of the latest Socialist Party Inter-party bulletin which recognized the fact that PS militants were presently being "prepared for the inevitable clash."

Allende spoke today to the PS Central Committee and reiterated the statement that the nationalized industries will never be taken back. Tuesday and Thursday of this week there will be two large workers demonstrations which will be of utmost important as a gauge of working-class temperament in relation to the crisis that Chile now lives in.

Yesterday, MIR undertook a mobilization of peasants in the province of Nuble where several (more than fifteen) large farms were seized immediately and illegally. The government has tacitly approved and a few large growers were arrested for their part in defending their property with arms.

The Right claims that police stopped and arrested the drivers of two government agrarian reform agency trucks that were transporting machine-guns and rifles. So far the government has denied knowledge of the fact. The plot thickens, the soup boils over, and the class-struggle escalates. We, along with others, honestly feel that the next month or two will be decisive.

Power to the People
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SANTIAGO, CHILE; APRIL 3rd — Set against the background of national indignation over what was revealed in Jack Anderson's expose of the ITT-CIA plot to overthrow Allende, the government's discovery of another plot has increased polarization to the point that the discussion amongst Chileans is no longer "if" there will be an armed confrontation but "when"? Whereas the Anderson expose has only detailed that which the Chilean Left has insisted upon for years, that imperialism is determined to destroy socialist movements wherever they arise this new domestic plot has provoked an enormous crisis.

In order to understand this crisis, the conspiracy, which included plans to kill Allende, must be put into

context of the past week's general activity.

Last Thursday (March 23rd) the Central Labor Union (CLU) held a massive pro-government march to protest right-wing attempts to limit the size of the socialist sector of the economy. This march of over 200,000 workers and students was further spurred by the then recently released information about the United States Central Intelligence Agency's desire to prevent Allende from coming to power in 1970.

The growing mood of militancy among the workers was manifested in this march by the size of the MIR contingent. Consisting of several thousand people, this evidenced the organization's rapid growth in recent months (MIR is the furthest left party within Chilean politics.) Recognizing the imminence of a confrontation, the Miristas chanted "El proximo

desfile — lo haremos con fusiles!" ("The next march — we will have rifles!")

The following day, the 24th, the Right had scheduled a march of women in protest against the government's socialist economic program. The last time rightist women marched, in early December, fascist youths accompanied them spreading violence all over the capital and provoking a curfew and three days of martial law. In light of this an-



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precedent, a tense atmosphere surrounded the approaching second march, which had been called by the ultra-right National Party in conjunction with the openly fascist organization Patruya Libertad. There was much speculation in Santiago surrounding the possibilities of another day of violence.

On Friday morning the government announced that it had suspended the permit to march, on the grounds

that certain legal technicalities were ignored by the sponsors. It was also stated that advertisements calling for the march were in violation of the State Internal Security Act. Police were posted at the proposed assembly points and, though the reactionaries printed screaming headlines in their newspapers, they didn't show up in the streets.

At 4:00 A.M. Saturday the investigative police raided the headquarters of the fascist

movement Patria y Libertad, finding guns, chains, teargas bombs, molotov cocktails and sulphuric acid. Amongst papers found in the raid were plans explaining how Patria y Libertad militants were going to throw the acid at the women in order to provoke mass violence against leftist centers.

Eight people were arrested in the raids and on Saturday afternoon the national leader of Patria y Libertad, attorney Pablo Rodriguez, also was arrested and charged with infractions of the State Security Law. With their march canceled and their offices raided, the Right, infuriated, announced that the march was being firmly rescheduled for the coming Tuesday, March 28th.

However,

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However, on Tuesday, they were met by another surprise. In the early morning, the Ministry of the Interior announced that it was once again suspending the march. By noon it was public knowledge that more arrests had been made. The five arrests and fifteen warrants issued were the result of the government's discovery of a planned insurrection to be springboarded from the proposed right-wing march of Friday, March 24th. According to the Ministry of the Interior the plan had three main objectives:

- 1) the assassination of President Allende
- 2) an assault on the government palace
- 3) the storming of the Santiago prison in order to free Robert Viaux. (Viaux, a national symbol of the ultra-right, is an ex-general who was imprisoned by Allende for an earlier coup attempt.)

Among the five arrested on the 28th was another ex-general. Among the fifteen outstanding warrants was one for ex-Major Arturo Marshall who was named as the leader of the plot. Up until now, Marshall has not been found. The Ministry also says it has proof that the opposition attempted to approach *active* military officers and Carabineros (the police) but, according to General Ramon Viveros, sub-commander of the Carabineros, they were totally and firmly rejected.

Tuesday evening the capitalist press raged that the plot was only a frame-up by the government to give pretenses for cancelling the march and was even more adamant that an opposition demonstration would take place.

The next evening the Left called for an emergency street mobilization of youth and some 15,000 students appeared in the streets. The implications of this hastily called demonstration, self described as a

"preparatory measure," are clear. It is simply training to increase the rapidity and efficiency with which the Left can mobilize itself in case of emergency. It is expected that the Left will continue to call street mobilizations quite regularly during the next few weeks.

With the rapid advance of events in the last week, we hear people in the street, in buses, in coffee shops, and in stores discussing who will make the first move? How will the army participate? Is the Left prepared to conduct armed struggle? etc., etc.

Everyone knows that in the next couple of days the National Party, Patria y Libertad and the Christian Democratic Party will publically announce a date to hold their now twice-suspended march. The government may suspend it for a third time but in this case it probably would not be able to prevent it from taking place. With the arrests of the Patria y Libertad people, the fascists now have their "martyrs" and, of course, will do all that is possible to capitalize on this in order to build support for the march.

Many worker and student groups are presently very agitated by all the recent rightist activity and in the event of the march taking place there will probably be a significant number of Leftists who will take to the streets to physically confront the protestors.

The timing of the bourgeoisie is good. The last time they built large mobilizations was in December when Fidel Castro was visiting here. All that is currently happening coincides with the coming of the UNCTAD Conference, which opens here in Santiago on the 13th of April. With so much world attention focused here for the Conference, it will be the perfect time for the Right to cause trouble. However, with the rising anger of the working class and the "hard hand" of the government as of late, the bourgeoisie is liable to play out their hand too early. It all depends on whether or not the Chilean people will be sufficiently prepared to meet the challenge.