

Armed Forces Capture Presidential Palace-- First Coup in 46 Years



UPI Telephotos

Salvador Allende was
elected Chile's president in 1970



Santiago

Salvador Allende, the first freely elected Marxist in the Western Hemisphere, was ousted in a violent coup by the Chilean military yesterday.

Police said Allende took his own life rather than surrender to the attacking rebels.

Allende's body, with a bullet through his mouth, was reportedly found in the presidential palace after a 20-minute attack by the military that included bombing planes and heavy artillery.

'SIEGE'

A four-man military junta took control of the government and declared a state of siege. Censorship and a curfew were imposed.

In a broadcast monitored after the coup, the junta said it would soon name new ministers, including some civilians, but that congress would remain in recess "until further order."

The new government said it would maintain diplomatic relations with all nations except for Cuba and a few others. It said Chileans "can be sure that your economic and social accomplishments will not suffer fundamental modifications."

The coup capped weeks of violent unrest in Chile, in which the armed forces finally joined growing groups of workers and professionals who had been demanding Allende's resignation. But the 65-year-old Allende held true to his firm commitment not to resign in his attempts to bring Socialism to Chile.

FINALE

In his last public statement, made by radio as two air force jets flew over the downtown government house, Allende said:

"I will not resign. I will not do it. I am ready to resist with whatever means, even at the cost of my life in that this serves as a lesson

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Chile's presidential palace in Santiago; photo taken earlier this year

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in the ignominious history of those who have strength but not reason."

The chief photographer for the Santiago daily *El Mercurio* said he saw Allende lying dead on a blood-soaked sofa in the anteroom of the palace dining hall. He said the president had shot himself once in the mouth.

Police Prefect Rene Carrasco confirmed the suicide. He said Augusto Olivares, a close Allende adviser, also killed himself.

The military refused to confirm the suicide and said a communique on Allende's fate would be issued today.

A list of 68 prominent So-

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cialist and Communist leaders was broadcast and they were ordered to appear at the Defense Ministry or face arrest. More than 100 Communist and Socialist party members were reported arrested in Santiago and Valparaiso—a part city where naval units began the coup early yesterday.

Yesterday morning, the chiefs of the army, navy, air force and national police had sided with the anti-Marxist opposition and issued a noon ultimatum for Allende to resign.

Moments after the deadline passed, two air force jets dropped bombs and fired rockets, severely damaging the fortress-like presidential palace. The president's official residence, about a mile away, was bombed after guards there "resisted the armed forces and police," the junta said.

HOLDOUT

Allende, midway through his six-year term as president, refused the demand for his resignation and held out for about three hours in the palace with his personal bodyguards and presidential police. The palace defenses crumbled in a final 20-minute assault by tank-

supported soldiers and national police.

No casualty figures were immediately available. A U.S. Embassy spokesman said no Americans were known to have been wounded.

Allende had insisted that he would lead Chile to socialism within a democratic framework, but growing opposition from Chile's large middle class made that impossible. His nearly three years in power were marked by political and labor turmoil, economic crisis and raging inflation.

The coup was the first time in 46 years that the traditionally nonpolitical Chilean military had overturned a civilian government.

Long-distance telephone and telegraph service in Santiago, a city of three million, was shut down while the siege and attacks occurred, and were not reopened until nightfall.

"The armed forces and the national police have united to begin the historic mission of liberating our homeland from the yoke of Marxism," the military said in a communique.

A military communique warned that any resistance to the coup would be crushed by military force. Troops blew up transmitters of several pro-Allende radio stations and erected barricades in front of the headquarters of the Chilean Communist party.

JUNTA

The military junta that seized power was composed of Army General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, Navy Admiral Jose Toribio Marino Castro, Air Force Brigadier General Gustavo Leigh Guzman and Colonel Cesar Mendoza Frank, commander of the national police.

Allende had named Pinochet and Leigh Guzman to their posts only two weeks ago in one of his frequent recent attempts to keep the military with him.

The junta announced it was in control of all Chile's provinces and of the city of Santiago, despite persistent sniper fire throughout the downtown area.

FIGHTING

The only fighting in the nation appeared to be in Santiago and even there it was sporadic, mostly confined to sniper attacks from roofs and much of that around the downtown presidential palace. The military said the port city of Valparaiso and the cities of Quilota, Quinteros and Talcahuano were under control of the Navy.

The armed forces, in announcing the takeover, pledged to respect the social and economic gains that workers won under Allende.

The armed forces' communique cited what it called "grave economic, social and moral crises" in the country to justify its demand that Allende resign.

The communique also cited what it called the Allende government's "incapacity to adopt measures to deter chaos."

Allende took over as the Western Hemisphere's first freely elected Marxist president in 1970 when a coalition of his Socialist party, the Chilean Communist party and other leftwing parties won the presidency but failed in an attempt to get control of congress.

STRIKES

His overthrow came after months of crippling strikes, by transport workers and other sectors of labor, which paralyzed the economy and pushed Chile to the edge of economic disaster.

The worst of the strikes was the 47-day walkout by 50,000 owner-drivers of the trucking industry over the past few weeks and of shopkeepers.

Allende attempted time after time to end the strike of the truckers and at one point brought leaders of the armed forces into his cabinet to try to restore order and get the crippled economy moving. He also threatened to seize thousands of trucks and assign to them non-striking drivers.

Allende's so-called "national security" cabinet, which included the military, lasted less than a month before it resigned.

A.P. & U.P.