

# After Coup: 'Chile Will Never Be the Same'

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SANTIAGO, Sept. 18—On the seventh day of the new military government, a conservative Santiago lawyer stood in front of La Moneda Palace, looking at the destroyed wing, which once held the presidential office.

"I didn't like Allende, but I didn't want him to go this way. Somehow I think it didn't really happen, but Chile of course will never be the same."

One week ago the roar of low-flying air force patrols woke up the people of Santiago, and before the day was out President Salvador Allende was dead and a military junta was in com-

mand. Two days earlier the military had allegedly demanded Allende's resignation, and the freely elected Marxist president had refused.

Sources close to the military say the coup began at 5 a.m. on Tuesday with the armed forces taking over all vital installations in the provinces. Reportedly, not every general in Santiago knew of the plans, and the plotters in the capital first awaited the results of the provincial operations.

Trouble came, the sources said, with Chile's paramilitary police, and three of its highest generals refused to move against the president. The fourth in rank, General Cesar Mendoza, was

therefore named police commander and is now the fourth man in the ruling junta. The fate of the three allegedly recalcitrant generals is still unknown.

At 9 that Tuesday morning, Allende spoke hastily over a crackling radio station.

"There is a navy uprising in Valparaiso, and at this moment planes are flying over. It is possible that they will shoot us. The workers must defend their government," he said.

The bombing of two radio towers cut Allende off the air for awhile. When

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he returned Allende sounded calm and clear. In a brief message to the nation, he said that these words were to be his last words.

From then on, telephone contact with the palace was no longer possible, but at the Reuter office a last message from the government information office came on the Telex printer.

"We know nothing definite," it said. So far at least no enemy troops arrived. . . . But now we hear them firing. . . ."

The message broke off as four tanks roared past to take up their positions in front of La Moneda Palace.

The military radio began to broadcast ultimatums to the Allende government. One block away from the palace I fled with employees of the transradio Telex station into the cellar of the building housing the station. Huddling around a tiny transistor radio we heard the military say that the palace would be bombarded if the president did not surrender.

Station Manager John

Bull, however decided he could not trust his staff in the cellar, fearing that Allende supporters among them might sabotage the equipment. So just before noon, just before the bombing of the palace started, Bull and heavily armed soldiers moved 40 people out to the streets.

Some of us, including two women and three small children were able to hide in a next door basement. "Let us pray," the older woman said. "Let us pray that they have a good aim. . . ."

Five hours later, with Allende dead and the palace burning, the fighting subsided. The nearby Hotel Crillon hoisted flags to celebrate the military victory.

At the hotel's iron gates, people who had been trapped elsewhere during the battle waved to be lit inside. In the lobby we heard the military communique announcing the "end of the Communist cancer."

Champagne was served with the compliments of the Crillon management, and on the third floor, in the servants' quarters, the maids and waiters cried in secret.

The hotel itself came under heavy attack several hours later, when a passing army patrol thought it heard sniper firing from the second floor.

Suddenly gunfire tore into the building, sending guests scurrying under beds and tables or screaming into the halls. On the front side of the hotel, not one room escaped being hit, and a maid approaching a window was shot in the face.

The dining room served as temporary jail, when 50 soldiers occupied the hotel and told the guests to put their hands up in the air. These included British and Belgian businessmen buying copper, Romanian officials preparing the way for a visit by President Nicolae Ceausescu, an Argentine couple on honeymoon, and four United Nations representatives.

When the soldiers left, they took two foreign correspondents with them as being "suspected of sniping," and most guests reported that items had been stolen from their rooms.

Since that day, a week has passed and the military says

the country is returning to "normality."

But the six days and six nights of shootings are not so easily forgotten and people still jump at the slam of a door or the bang of a car exhaust.

Information available on the number of dead is still conflicting, with the junta reporting "no more than 100," and a high-ranking police officer "more than 5,000."

As the ruling junta called for "normality" yesterday, their agents checked Santiago offices for suspects, and troops visited neighborhoods and apartment buildings with lists of persons wanted for questioning.

Reports from the provinces confirm that the hunt for Allende followers goes on relentlessly. Chileans

and foreigners alike are being arrested.

Many foreign embassies say they have no reliable information about which of their nationals are being held. However, the Netherlands embassy confirmed the arrest of five Dutch Catholic priests.

Today the military junta said that the bombarded home of Salvador Allende will be turned into a chapel. As for how Salvador Allende died, reports continue to conflict. The junta has announced that he committed suicide and his widow said she believes he did.

This weekend, however, a former close aide of the president came out of hiding briefly and declared that Allende was killed by an army captain.