

Chile Coup Fast in a Farm Area

By JONATHAN KANDELL
Special to The New York Times

TALCA, Chile, Sept. 23—In this agrarian center, the military coup d'état of 12 days ago started early in the morning when local army troops took control of the radio stations and ordered all leftist leaders to turn themselves in to the police.

Upon hearing the news, German Castro Rojas, the Socialist Governor of Talca Province, padlocked his office building, rounded up 15 armed followers and drove to the hills, intending to blow up the Maule Dam and inundate the city.

On the way, they assaulted a police station, gunned down an officer and took away the weapons of the others. But the clash delayed them long enough to permit soldiers to overtake them a few miles from the dam.

Many Leftists Jailed

"Castro Rojas should have fought to the final consequences like a man," said the troop commander, Lieut. Col. Efraim Jaña openly annoyed that the Governor had been captured alive. "Like a vulgar criminal, he got down on his knees and begged us not to shoot him."

And with that, the battle for Talca ended. Colonel Jaña installed himself in the Governor's office, declared martial law and then presided over the kind of changeover that swept Chile overnight from its northernmost city, Arica, to Punta Arenas, 2,600 miles to the south.

Mr. Castro Rojas and his armed band are in jail waiting to be tried by a military tribunal. About 100 other leftists,

Undoing of Allende Policies Quickly Follows Ouster

including the Mayor, the heads of the local Communist and Socialist parties and labor and peasant leaders, are also being held, most of them without charges.

Dozens of other Marxists fled to the Andes and continue to be hunted by soldiers who have set up roadblocks and are enforcing a strict nighttime curfew. The thousands of left-wing sympathizers who remained behind are bitter, resigned or apprehensive over the changes yet to come.

"The soldiers came here the night after the coup," said a housewife in a Communist-run state cooperative farm a few miles south of Talca. "They took the men out and searched every house for guns. They would have taken my husband

but I cried so much they let him go in the end."

The woman, and most of the 30 families who grow potatoes on the 500-acre cooperative, heard the late President Salvador Allende Gossens' last words on the radio the morning of the coup, vowing to "resist to the end."

"Allende's biggest mistake was not giving us weapons," said the woman. "A lot of people, even women, would have fought. But please, please, don't use my name or the soldiers will come back here again."

During Dr. Allende's first year in office, her family moved into the cooperative, and bought a television set, refrigerator and sewing machine on easy credit from the state banks.

Now, despite assurances from the military Government that "the conquests of the working class will not be taken away," she is convinced that the cooperative will not be allowed to continue, and that the hint for leftists will soon engulf her family and neighbors.

But most of Talca's residents are not Marxists, and for them the Allende years were an unmitigated disaster. Under the Allende regime non-Marxists were swept out of local government posts, the city's newspaper was illegally seized and then vandalized by leftists, and farm production throughout the area dropped alarmingly.

This year, Talca—which is a traditional breadbasket for Santiago, the capital, 150 miles to the north—reached only half its wheat quota, one-fifth of its normal sugar beef production and less than half its normal milk output.



The New York Times/Sept. 24, 1973