

Chile Four Months Later: Leftists Falling Into Line

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SANTIAGO, Chile, Jan. 27— "The 11th of September," the radio announcements blare, "was for all Chileans, not just for some."

But more than four months after the violent coup d'état that overthrew the Marxist Government of President Salvador Allende Gossens and took his life, the ruling military junta has done little to convince his followers that there are "neither victors nor vanquished"—to use a phrase favored by Gen. Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, the new President.

Chile remains a country divided between an apparent majority of anti-Marxists either actively supporting the junta or passively accepting its excesses and a large leftist minority, cowed, silent and pessimistic.

Despite the absence of any effective political opposition or significant terrorist activity, the junta has not modified its dictatorial methods, continuing to govern with little regard for the constitutional rights of many citizens, particularly those suspected of Marxist sympathies.

With Congress and political activity in suspension, the military men govern by a succession of decrees, carried out, from the national seat of power to the smallest town, by military appointees, mainly active or retired officers. A siege atmosphere remains throughout

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the country as a result of the continued enforcement of a night curfew.

The university system, rocked by anti-Marxist purges of hundreds of professors and thousands of students, is under firm military direction. Labor-union activity remains largely dormant after the disbanding of the largest organization and a prohibition on strikes and unauthorized meetings of workers.

The press, already reduced by the disappearance of leftist periodicals, has been subjected to tightening censorship.

The National Stadium in Santiago, which became a powerful symbol of repressive measures in the weeks after the coup, has been cleared of political prisoners. But thousands, many of them arrested weeks after the military uprising, have been crowded into less visible places—Santiago's penitentiaries, prison camps in the northern desert and jails and military garrisons throughout the country.

After They Are Dead

At times the existence of "political prisoners"—the expression is prohibited in the mass media—is made known only after they are dead. The junta disclosed the other day that six "extremists" being transported as prisoners in a military jeep were executed after the vehicle was allegedly attacked near Quillota, about 70 miles north of Santiago. It was the first indication that political prisoners were being held there.

In all, the junta has officially disclosed the deaths of more than 100 prisoners shot while allegedly attempting to escape.

Estimates of political prisoners range from 3,000, the figure mentioned most often by military officials, to 10,000, the figure offered by church sources



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President Salvador Allende Gossens of Chile inside the presidential palace in Santiago last Sept. 11, as the military coup was under way. Junta leaders said that he committed suicide with the automatic rifle he carried.



Gamma

Gen. Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, seated, and an Army aide. His government rules by decree.

seeking legal aid for those held. Beyond dispute is the fact that almost none have ever been charged with any crimes nor have dates been set for their prosecution or release.

Apparently reacting to pressure from abroad, the junta has moved more decisively to grant safe-conduct passes to Chileans given asylum in embassies and to foreign leftists living in refugee camps in the Santiago area.

Safe Conducts Listed

According to the Foreign Minister, Vice Adm. Ismael Huerta, 3,419 Chileans who sought refuge in diplomatic missions have been given permission to leave the country, along with about 1,800 members of their families. Fewer than 300 remain in embassies without passes, it is said.

About 1,000 foreigners, mainly Brazilians, Bolivians and Uruguayans, are still in the refugee camps. According to diplomatic sources, West Germany has agreed to accept all but 275 of them, with the rest probably going to Cuba, the Netherlands and other countries before the Feb. 3 deadline set by the junta for the camps to be cleared.

Foreign embassies are closely watched by soldiers and policemen to guard against the possibility that more will seek asylum. Among supporters of the junta there is a tendency to belittle the number of prisoners and refugees as evidence of repression.

Miguel Otero, director of the

Institute of International Studies of the University of Chile, who recently returned from a tour of American and European universities to offer a defense of the junta said:

"There is an incredible number of cases of seekers of asylum or people already abroad who are being pursued by nobody but who, under the guise of being victims, fulfill the ambition of their lives — to go abroad with all costs paid and an assured permanent residence."

Increasingly in recent weeks the junta has been concerned with its image abroad. One mission after another—including professionals, politicians, jurists and anti-Marxist trade unionists — has been sent throughout Latin America, the United States, and Europe to explain the reasons for the coup and to counter or deny reports of excesses in its aftermath.

Modest Economic Successes

The austere economic program that the junta has put into effect to overcome the economic chaos inherited from the three-year Marxist Government has earned the praise of conservative economists and has reaped a number of modest successes, including loans from abroad and sharp production increases.

However, virtually all Chileans have been hit hard by a sharp decrease in their purchasing power as prices have been allowed to reach realistic

market values without corresponding increases in wages.

The economic burden has proved devastating for the poorest Chileans, who in four months have faced such increases as 250 per cent for bread, 600 per cent for cooking oil, 1,400 per cent for sugar and 800 per cent for chicken.

In the shantytowns where a fourth of greater Santiago's 3.5 million people live, concern over repression and civil liberties now places a distant second to concern over food prices.

For the 1,500 families of La Pincoya, an area of one-room and two-room wooden shacks beside dusty, unpaved alleys, the most important man in the community has become the food-stand owner.

"We are in debt to him from the beginning of the month until the end," said Mrs. Luisa Reyes. "Whatever money comes in goes to him."

Beans and Corn These Days

"This week beans and corn are the cheapest food, so everybody has been eating beans and corn for the last few days," she added.

Meat has almost disappeared as a regular part of the diet in the shantytown. The relatively few people who can afford it line up early for the cheapest cuts. Some families have sent their children to relatives in rural communities in the hope that they will be better fed during the current summer vacation.

In Nogales, another shantytown, a metal worker apologetically served a lunch of watery soup, bread and tea to a visitor. "We bought some rabbits to breed them for meat," he said, "but we could not wait that long."

Some Nogales residents who have lost their jobs for political

reasons or because of cutbacks in factories and public agencies in the aftermath of the coup have depended largely on charity from church organizations. Caritas, the Roman Catholic relief agency, for example, has supplied 15,000 families in the Santiago area with basic foods for three months.

The Government puts the unemployment level at 5 per cent, although a ranking official in the national labor agency conceded that the figure might be double that. Part of the rise has been due to the paring of the labor force in factories and state agencies where the rolls were bloated with fictitious posts during the Allende years. Some has resulted from the removal or suspension of workers labeled extremists.

Mademsa, a Santiago concern that produces stoves, refrigerators and other kitchen units, is an example of the sharp transformation in the aftermath of the coup.

In the last year of the Allende Government it was illegally taken over by its workers, roughly half of them leftists. Production fell because of raw-material shortages, absenteeism and mismanagement. The Government-appointed manager, Enrique Fornes, was a former train conductor whose sole credential was his ranking in the Socialist party.

On the day of the coup most workers went home. A few said they stayed after hearing rumors that arms might be distributed by Allende supporters; when the rumors failed to materialize even the most militant left.

According to workers, leftists among them, Mr. Fornes fled early with \$20,000 from the safe and has eluded arrest.

On Sept. 19 all workers returned to their jobs in response

to a junta directive, and the factory was restored to its former managers. On Sept. 29 troops arrested 30 leftist workers, only to release most on Oct. 8. Until a month ago troops appeared several times, detaining a total of more than 50 workers.

Reports of Torture

Several of the workers said they had been subjected to electric-shock torture administered by hooded air force officials in the hangars of a Santiago air base. Others said they had been beaten during interrogations at El Tacna, an army regimental base and school for noncommissioned officers in the capital.

According to the workers, their interrogators demanded the names of other leftists and the location of alleged arms caches, which were never found if they ever existed.

Eleven Mademsa workers have been in detention since Oct. 15; there are no charges against them. Their wives said that they had not received the men's wages and that they lived on collections made by sympathetic workers at the plant.

"The plant is run like the army now," said a leftist worker who was among those detained. "You just get there on time, do your job, listen to the section chief and keep your mouth shut. The leftist section chiefs are the toughest because they want to prove they are trustworthy."

According to management about 50 workers have been dismissed or suspended, leaving about 2,000 on the work force. Production has risen 15 per cent in stoves and 34 per cent in refrigerators over the last three months compared with the last three months of the Allende Government.