

13 Doctors in Chile Reportedly Slain After the Coup

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SANTIAGO, Chile, April 5—At least 13 doctors are believed to have been killed and 40 reportedly placed in detention centers by Chile's military junta in the aftermath of the violent coup that overthrew the Marxist coalition last September.

The coup has also led to the suspension from public hospitals of scores of doctors with Marxist beliefs—perhaps more than 200.

Beyond these hardships, for leftist doctors, the Chilean medical system is being shaken by the stringent economic policies of the new government and the efforts of conservative medical authorities to increase the role of private medicine in health services.

Among the doctors who have been killed, according to leftist physicians, members of the pro-Government Chilean Medical Association, and friends and relatives, are the following:

Jorge Klein, Jorge Avila and Enrique Paris, psychiatrists in Santiago; Héctor Garay, a Santiago doctor; Bruno García, a psychiatrist, and Juan Carlos Cerda, a general practitioner, in Valdivia; Hernán Henríquez, director of public health in Temuco under the Allende Government, and Jean Guichard and Arturo Hillers of Temuco; Absalón Wegner, a public health doctor in San Felipe; Claudio Tognola, a general practitioner in Tocopilla; Jorge Jordán Domic, a general practitioner in Ovalle, and Eduardo González, a general practitioner in Cunco.

The Chilean Medical Association listed Dr. Paris as dead last September, but a spokesman for the organization said that he was no longer certain. Friends of the doctor maintain that he died of injuries suffered during an interrogation by security officials in the days immediately after the September coup.

The junta has not officially disclosed the deaths of any doctors. Government officials who were asked to confirm the names reported either that there was no information on them or that there was no breakdown in fatality statistics according to profession.

No Charges Were Made

Government officials also said there were no available figures for detained physicians, but at least a dozen doctors are said to be held in a building at 632 Agustinas Avenue, downtown Santiago.

The other doctors are reportedly held in Santiago's public jail, a desert prison camp in Chacabuco—a one-time nitrate-mining area about 823 miles north of the capital—and other detention centers.

No official charges against the imprisoned doctors or those who were executed have been disclosed. In recent interviews, the Minister of Health, Col. Alberto Sporer, has said that some of the detained physicians were being investigated in connection with the discovery after the coup of about 30 clandestine hospitals.

Anti-Marxist physicians issued angry statements about the existence of the hospitals, which were supposed to provide first aid to leftists in case the uprising last September extended into a civil war. The Chilean medical system suffered serious disruptions under the Government of the late President Salvador Allende Gossens.

A number of reports, published abroad, of executions of Marxist doctors appear to have been exaggerated. For example, an organization called the

Emergency Committee to Save Chilean Health Workers, has paid for advertisements including one that appeared in the Jan. 27 issue of The New York Times, describing execution of Marxist doctors, nurses, nurses' aides and janitors in Santiago's Barros Luco Hospital.

The advertisement quotes the written testimony of an unnamed "young physician" who worked at the hospital to the effect that his life was saved by a nun who hid him and three other doctors in the hospital chapel while soldiers executed his colleagues.

Denied by Nuns

But all 10 nuns at the hospital, still stationed there, have denied that the incident occurred. "No one was executed in the hospital," said Sister Agnes, the chief nurse of the urology section, which is near the area where the incident was said to have taken place. "Not a shot was fired by the soldiers on the hospital."

The nuns' version was supported by Dr. Carlos Fenner, a Socialist who was director of the hospital under the Allende Government, and Dr. Axel Osses, also a leftist, who was assistant hospital director and was there when troops entered it on Sept. 13 and on subsequent days.

According to the hospital doctors—leftists and rightists—15 health workers were taken away by troops, in several visits to the hospital. Only three of the workers have not been released. The hospital authorities said they were alive, but in detention.

According to doctors at Bar-

ros Luco—a complex responsible for health service to about a million people in Santiago's vast southern, working class district—92 of the hospital's 4,400 employees have been dismissed since the coup, including 11 out of 340 doctors.

Doctor Protects His Staff

The treatment of Marxist doctors and medical programs appears to vary from hospital to hospital.

For example, the 17 neighborhood clinics under the Barros Luco hospital have been maintained by the new director, Dr. René Merino, who, according to several physicians interviewed, has strongly protected his staff regardless of political affiliation.

But in the western and northern slums of Santiago, the neighborhood clinics—heavily favored by the Allende Government—have been cut back in favor of the central hospital system, backed by conservative doctors.

The Psychiatric Hospital, the main source of mental care for several million lower-income people in the greater Santiago area, is one of the worst examples of the anti-Marxist purge in the medical system. According to the Chilean Medical Association, about half the 62 staff psychiatrists there have been dismissed by the new hospital authorities.

There have also been suspensions of leftist health personnel in the José Joaquín Aguirre Hospital and Salvador Hospital, respectively serving Santiago's eastern and northern health districts.

Under the Allende Govern-

ment, medical services for the poor were dramatically expanded through the neighborhood-clinic system.

But at the same time, medicine was plagued by the shortages and black market practices and the tense political atmosphere polarized the Marxist minority and anti-Marxist majority of the medical community.

Took Part in Strike

In the final weeks of the Allende Government, anti-Marxist doctors participated in the general strike of professional people and small-businessmen that preceded the military coup. Anti-Marxist make up about 75 per cent of the medical community of Chile.

"It got to the point where you could not tell a nurse or an aide what to do," said a surgeon at the José Joaquín Aguirre Hospital. "It was a constant class struggle. Now there is discipline; the rooms are clean; operations go on schedule."

On the other hand, a leftist doctor at Salvador Hospital asserted that "discipline is maintained only by fear."

"There is no one you can talk to, even in cases of legitimate complaints," he added. "You just do what you are told."

Conservative doctors freely admit that they have participated in denunciations of their leftist colleagues. "We will not gain anything by letting anti-social elements back into the hospitals," said Dr. Osvaldo Artaza, the secretary general of the Chilean Medical Association. "We have to settle accounts with those doctors who played politics."