

WXPost MAR 18 1976

Chile Torture Held Reason to Curb Aid

Three congressmen called yesterday for a cutoff of military aid to Chile, saying a six-day visit convinced them "people are still being detained, still disappearing and still being tortured."

Reps. Thomas R. Harkin (D-Iowa), Toby Moffett (D-Conn.) and George Miller (D-Calif.), all freshmen, said "as long as U.S. aid keeps flowing through the pipeline, there is no deterrent to the military junta's repressive human rights policies."

They endorsed the Senate ban on military aid to Chile in the aid bill now in a House-Senate conference. The House rejected a similar proposal.

The three House members denied charges by the Chilean government that they were "discourteous" because they failed to keep appointments. Moffett said the charge was a "smoke-screen," made because the military junta anticipated that the three would be critical of its rule. Moffett said they did miss an appointment with the Minister of Interior because they were told of it too late to cancel other appointments.

The congressmen said they met with junta leaders plus former public officials and members of the armed services now in jail. They concluded:

"During our stay, it became increasingly clear that the junta, with all the sincerity and conviction imaginable, rules nonetheless by terror. We found a silent and pervasive fear in all segments of Chilean society, the oldest of Latin American democracies. The junta

is now directing and increasing the wrath of its intelligence and torture apparatus against former members of the Christian Democratic Party, a party based in the Catholic church, a party without any history of violence or revolution."