

Chile Action Bulletin

on Political Prisoners and Human Rights

Published by Non-Intervention in Chile



Oct-Nov '78

Junta's New Coverup

Political Prisoners Charged with Common Crimes

"Our struggle now . . . is that the dictatorship recognize us as political prisoners. . . the dictatorship can be pressured from the outside to expel us and this can happen in a relatively short period of time. To do this you should begin to publicize our situation and let people know that we are members of the resistance."

—letter from a political prisoner
accused of common crimes

In Chile today, opponents of the military dictatorship run a great risk of being arrested a common criminals for any act of resistance. Presently, the popular resistance movement is struggling against the dictatorship on many different levels. It is organizing workers to fight for better wages and working conditions when strikes have been declared illegal. It is

setting up community workshops and soup kitchens when the right to assemble is denied. And it is printing clandestine publications to counter the government-controlled press and media. In short, opposition in any form to the dictatorship is illegal and mere suspicion of anti-junta sentiments is grounds for arrest.

A person who takes food or money from a supermarket to help support people who must live clandestinely is charged with robbery. The motive for the action is totally ignored. In many cases, however, the authorities simply arrest suspected opponents of the junta and fabricate charges and evidence later. Some prisoners have even been charged with crimes which occurred after their arrest.

Once arrested, however, their treatment as "common criminals" ends. All of these prisoners have been interrogated under torture about their political activities and are held incommunicado for varying lengths of time. Many prisoners are forced to sign blank pages which are then filled in with alleged "confessions." Some prisoners have been tried twice for the same offense. One prisoner, for example, was tried for subversion in a Military Court and for assault in a Civil Court.

The majority of these political prisoners are without legal defense, a situation which allows the military to hold people for long periods without charges and to prolong trials for a year or more. In the Santiago Public Jail alone, more than 65% of the political prisoners are without legal defense. This situation is aggravated by the government's pressure and intimidation of lawyers who have taken on some of the cases. In addition, internationally recognized agencies in Chile that have given legal assistance and support to political prisoners and their families, have not yet acknowledged these detainees as political prisoners.

Since they are viewed as common criminals, these political prisoners are not eligible to have their sentences commuted for exile. Nor were any included in the April amnesty, which affected only those political prisoners already serving sentences.

To improve its image at home and abroad and to create the appearance of political stability, the dictatorship must cover up its political arrests. It first did this by making people "disappear," but
continued on page 3.



Santiago Penitentiary: Many of these prisoners have been released. Among those still imprisoned who are pictured here is Juan Amigo, whose case is described in this Bulletin.

Resistance in Action

RELATIVES FIGHT FOR PRISONERS

Support the Campaign!

What happens to a Chilean family when one of its members is arrested? In most cases it means economic hardship, psychological damage to children, and a life of uncertainty and fear. This is the situation of thousands of families in Chile today.

These relatives of political prisoners have not passively accepted this situation. Instead, they have joined together to pressure the military government to release their relatives, to provide legal and material assistance to the prisoners, and to help each other deal with the economic hardships they face.

The **Group of Relatives of Disappeared Prisoners** and the **Group of Relatives of Political Prisoners** need our support in their struggle to make the dictatorship account for the 2,500 disappeared prisoners and to win the release of the remaining political prisoners, most of whom have been accused of common crimes.



The relatives have established a day care center for children of political prisoners. They also provide prisoners materials to make handicrafts, and help set up neighborhood workshops so relatives can earn a living.



The relatives have risked imprisonment by publicly confronting the dictatorship. Three relatives (above) travelled to Europe and the U.S. to build support for disappeared prisoners and were harassed upon their return. The relatives' first public demonstration was held in Mar. 1977 (below). Since then they have carried out three hunger strikes and several other demonstrations.



What You Can Do

MONEY IS NEEDED:

- \$200 a month would support a person to work fulltime attending to the social welfare needs of the prisoners and their families.
- \$400 a month would pay for a lawyer to do basic legal work to defend political prisoners accused of common crimes.
- \$10 a week supports a child at the day care center for a week.

MATERIALS ARE NEEDED:

- **CLOTHING**, especially for children
- **TOYS** and **SCHOOL SUPPLIES** for children
- **BLANKETS** and **SHOES**

ADOPT A PRISONER:

- Help keep pressure strong for the release of political prisoners by working on an individual prisoner's case.

Please contribute today! NICH has established a special fund to support the Groups. Checks should be made payable to NICH, earmarked for "groups of relatives."

To contribute materials, or for further details on adopting a prisoner, contact your nearest NICH chapter.

Prisoners Charged...

public outcry both inside Chile and internationally has forced a significant decrease in the use of this brutal tactic. Now, political opponents are more likely to be murdered outright in alleged confrontations or charged with common crimes.

To the extent the dictatorship can continue to cover up its political arrests, it can silence its opposition with total impunity. As part of the international solidarity movement, we must expose this tactic and work for the recognition and release of all political prisoners in Chile.

This Month's Cases

Ricardo Alarcon Alarcon and **Juan Esteban Amigo Latorre** were arrested by the DINA on August 18, 1976 and charged with political activity, possession of subversive documents, and establishing an underground political structure. They were forced to sign about 20 blank pages under threat of death. Two other persons arrested with them have disappeared.

The case has dragged on, and the two men are now charged with assault. However, when an application for release on bail was made, it was refused, alleging that the men were "dangerous extremists."

Alarcon and Amigo—and countless others—face long prison terms if not recognized as political prisoners. We ask you to write to the Vicariate of Solidarity, a church organization which aids political prisoners, urging them to acknowledge these detainees as political prisoners and to work on their behalf. A sample letter will be found on page 4.

Relatives Protest

On August 30, Pinochet announced that any persons missing for three years would be considered legally dead. 100 women, mostly relatives of disappeared political prisoners, responded by holding a silent demonstration in Santiago to protest the new law. They were arrested, held for several hours, and then released. The law is yet another effort by the dictatorship to close the cases of over 2500 disappeared political prisoners.

Nicaragua

The Struggle Escalates

After 42 years of dictatorial control by the Somoza family, the struggle in Nicaragua reached a critical point on Aug. 22 when members of the Sandinista National Liberation Front took over the National Palace. The Sandinistas, who have led the anti-Somoza struggle for the past 16 years, demanded the release of 83 political prisoners in exchange for the safety of some 50 legislators who were held hostage.

Faced with an escalating movement against him and popular support for the Sandinista action, Somoza released 59 political prisoners. The others are presumed to have been killed by the National Guard. The Sandinistas, the freed prisoners, and the hostages left Nicaragua by plane to the cheers of thousands who lined the road to show their support. Among the prisoners released was **Tomas Borge**, whose case appeared in the April '78 issue of this Bulletin.

Somoza: Rule by Force

It is not hard to see why most Nicaraguans have had enough of Somoza. The first Gen. Somoza became president in 1936 by forcing all other candidates to withdraw. He then ordered the murder of popular leader, Cesar Sandino, and exterminated Sandino's peasant army. Somoza had been head of the National Guard, which the U.S. had established after the Marines ended their first occupation of the country. It became the main repressive force used to enforce Somoza's policies and wipe out his opposition.

While half of Nicaragua's population earns under \$90 a year and unemployment stands at 36%, the Somoza family has accumulated \$500 million in assets and receives half the country's Gross National Product.

U.S. companies and banks, which provide the bulk of foreign investment, have found Nicaragua's cheap and plentiful labor force a good source of profits, and the U.S. government has been bent on keeping control of Nicaragua since it views it as an alternate site for a canal and of strategic importance in controlling Central America and the Caribbean.

3,000 Disappeared Prisoners

Discontent has been especially strong on the question of political prisoners. The Nicaraguan Permanent Committee on Human Rights believes that 3,000 political prisoners have disappeared after being arrested by the Guard. A case in point is the **Tijerino family**—Francisco, Esmeralda, and their four children—all of whom were taken away by the Guard on Dec. 7, 1976. Although a National Guard mechanic testified to seeing Francisco twice in jail, the government refuses to acknowledge the detention.

In the midst of demonstrations demanding an accounting of disappeared prisoners and calls from various sectors for Somoza's resignation, Pres. Carter praised the General for the "improvement" in the human rights situation in Nicaragua.

Given the U.S. government's longstanding support of the Somoza regime, it is unclear to what extent the U.S. will try to keep him in power. Pres. Carter must be pressured to speak out against the continuing violations of human rights in Nicaragua. We must make it clear to Pres. Carter and other elected officials that the U.S. can best demonstrate its respect for human rights by not interfering with the Nicaraguan people's struggle to establish a government which represents the will of the majority.



Demonstration in Nicaragua demanding freedom of disappeared prisoners.

SAMPLE LETTERS

Presb. Cristian Precht
Vicaria de la Solidaridad
Casilla 30-D
Santiago, Chile

I am particularly concerned about the fate of Ricardo Alarcon Alarcon and Juan Esteban Amigo Latorre who were arrested in August 1976 and tried in the San Miguel 4th Court (Case No. 16,157) as common criminals rather than as the political prisoners they are.

I believe the junta's tactic of classifying political prisoners as common criminals is a serious violation of human rights. I urge the Vicariate to immediately recognize these people as political prisoners and to assist them to gain their freedom, as it has done for so many other political prisoners.

Pres. Jimmy Carter
White House
Washington, D.C.

I am appalled to know that you personally praised the Nicaraguan government for improving human rights at a time when its citizens were demanding an accounting of 3000 political prisoners who have disappeared. I am particularly concerned about Francisco Tijerino who was arrested with his wife and four children Dec. 7, 1976. The government denies the arrest despite testimony from a National Guard employee who saw Mr. Tijerino in jail on two occasions.

Recent events in Nicaragua show that the majority of people there want an end to the Somoza family's repressive rule. The U.S. can best show its concern for the human rights of the Nicaraguan people by pressuring the regime to release all political prisoners and by respecting the right of Nicaraguans to establish a government which represents the will of the majority.

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I will write letters for prisoners.
Please send Bulletin. | <input type="checkbox"/> Please place my name on your mailing list. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to adopt a prisoner.
Please contact me. | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like more information on Chile
and on NICH. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is a contribution. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is \$3 for a Chile Newsletter sub. |

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

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NICH also publishes a quarterly newspaper containing news and analysis of the current situation in Chile and Latin America, the Chile Newsletter. Subscriptions are \$3/yr.

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Feb.-Mar. 1979

Letelier-Moffitt Trial Will the Real Criminals Be Extradited?

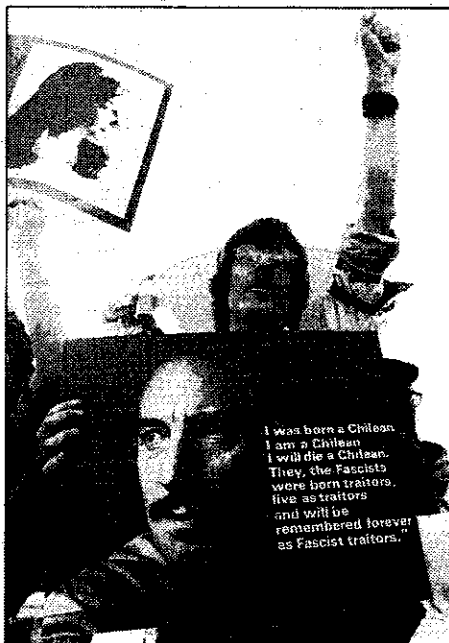
Three Cuban exiles began trial January 9 for their involvement in the assassinations of former Chilean diplomat Orlando Letelier and his North American colleague. Letelier, ambassador of the Allende government to the U.S., and Ronni Karpen Moffitt were killed in September, 1976 when Letelier's car was blown up in Washington, D.C.

In his opening statement at the trial, the defense lawyer said he would present evidence proving that Letelier was murdered on the orders of the Central Intelligence Agency. He told the jury that it was "a horrible and monstrous thought that the CIA was responsible for a murder on the streets of Washington, D.C., but that will be proved."

In all, nine men have been indicted by the U.S. Justice Department after a protracted investigation—five Cuban exiles,



Car in which Letelier and Moffitt were killed.



People carry photos of Letelier and Moffitt at funeral procession.

three of whom are now standing trial, three Chileans, and a North American. Two of the Cubans remain at large; the Chileans—members of DINA, Chile's secret police—have not been extradited; and the North American—Michael Townley, also a DINA member—has pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy and is now the key prosecution witness.

Letelier, a major leader of the Chileans now living in exile, was influential in bringing international pressure to bear on the Pinochet regime. In the summer of 1976, he persuaded Holland to withdraw a promised \$63 million in credits to the junta. Pinochet responded by stripping him of his Chilean citizenship in early September. A few weeks later, he was assassinated.

The current trial raises important questions about the assassinations—why are only the "hit men" standing trial? Who is ultimately responsible for the Letelier and

Moffitt murders? Will they ever be brought to justice?

The investigation of Letelier's murder took over a year and a half to get off the ground and indictments were not handed down until August 1978, almost two years after the assassination. The U.S. government seemed reluctant to pursue a course that would lead to an implication of the Chilean government. Less than three weeks after the assassinations, Newsweek reported that "the CIA has concluded that the Chilean secret police were not involved in the death of Orlando Letelier."

The U.S. media focused not on the Chilean government's possible involvement but on details of Letelier's personal life and rumors that he was an agent for the Cuban government. The N.Y. Times even suggested that he was killed by Chilean left "extremists" in order to "disrupt U.S. relations with the military junta."

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Immediate Action Needed

Junta Hunts Down Political Opponents

Despite the military dictatorship's claim that no people have been arrested for political reasons since the end of the state of siege, ten people active in the resistance struggle were arrested in December and January.

Seven members of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) were arrested by the secret police on or around Dec. 10. According to the pro-junta daily, *El Mercurio*, they allegedly confessed to one of a number of recent bombings. In early January, three other MIR members were picked up and charged with possession of explosives and political literature.

The arrests are not over. Claiming that they are common criminals, the authori-

ties are now searching for two more MIR members, Gaston Munoz and Gloria Elgueta. Munoz, a student leader before the coup, has already spent two years in the junta's jails where he led hunger strikes and other protests by prisoners. Elgueta was arrested in mid-December and later released. Their lives are considered in danger.

These recent arrests correspond to the dictatorship's practice of arresting its political opponents under the guise of fighting crime. The increased number of arrests may indicate an escalation of political repression in Chile. On p. 4 appears a sample letter to the Vicariate of Solidarity urging them to defend those arrested and to assist Munoz and Elgueta in leaving the country.

Trial...

As the investigation dragged on, more and more pressure, both national and international, was put on the U.S. government to carry out a full investigation. However, the special investigators, Carter Cornick of the FBI and Eugene Propper of the Justice Department were repeatedly thwarted in their efforts to follow leads. When the *Washington Post* reported that a former CIA agent was suspected of having provided the detonator for the bomb, intelligence information stopped coming to Propper and Cornick was replaced on the case by someone from the FBI security force. These decisions were reversed only after Propper personally complained to the U.S. Attorney General.

In early 1978, Propper went to Chile to question two suspects. As a result of much U.S. pressure, Pinochet turned over one suspect, DINA agent Michael Townley, a U.S. citizen who had lived in Chile for many years. Townley had previously worked with the right-wing terrorist group, *Patria y Libertad*, which was formed following Allende's election and funded by the CIA. Immediately after the coup, he began working for the DINA.

After being returned to the U.S., Townley agreed to cooperate in return for a lesser charge. Townley then testified that he and another DINA agent (now indicted) were selected by the DINA head, Manuel Contreras, to carry out the assassination with the help of a New Jersey-based group of Cuban exile terrorists. Townley's wife, also a DINA agent, testified that the assassination mission was authorized by President Pinochet himself.

A report of the Transnational Institute, of the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies, quoted a U.S. government official involved in the investigation as saying: "Pinochet is responsible. There is no way he could not have known of the murders. . . . He knew. He approved. He authorized. Pinochet was commander in chief, the only man to whom Contreras had to answer. . . ."

Largely because of Townley's testimony, the indictments, in addition to the Cubans, include Contreras himself and two other DINA officials still in Chile. Although the U.S. requested their extradition last September, the Chilean government has consistently refused to send them to the U.S. to stand trial. The Chief Justice of the Chilean Supreme Court recently announced that he will not even
(continued on p. 3)

Disappeared Prisoners

Mutilated Bodies Found in Mine

In early December, at least 26 bodies were discovered in an abandoned mine outside of Santiago. The corpses, which had apparently been there for over two years, showed signs of torture, mutilation and bullet wounds. It is believed that they are the remains of some of the many political prisoners who have disappeared since the 1973 coup.

Relatives of the disappeared prisoners, eager to receive any news about the whereabouts of their loved ones, requested to be present at the identification process. Their requests were denied and the bodies were whisked off for secret identification at Chile's Forensic Institute. No positive identifications have yet been made.

The news of the mass grave came from a special commission of the Catholic Church. The information was obtained in confession given to a priest by an ex-DINA agent who reportedly then left the country. Shortly after the announcements, demands poured in from inside and outside Chile for a thorough investigation by an international organization.

The Group of Relatives of the Disappeared issued a statement regarding the findings: "If the bodies are those of our missing relatives, it is proof of what the junta has been hiding for so long. . . . We have only been asking for the truth, always with hope, but never ruling out the possibility of genocide. We must demand a serious investigation to determine the identities of those found."



Demons-trators in front of the Chilean Consulate in N.Y.C. following the discovery of the bodies.

Argentina

U.S. Obstructs Prisoners' Release

Three years after the military coup the human rights situation is more serious than it has ever been in Argentine history. Last June, Amnesty International reported that "more than 15,000 have disappeared, thousands have been held as political prisoners and many, many more have died." This number grows higher with the continuing repression.

Unlike the Chilean military, the Argentine military overthrew a constitutional government without firing a single shot. One of their objectives was to diffuse international opinion and prevent any showing of solidarity with the Argentine people. They planned everything very carefully; the repression began on the day of the coup with kidnappings, assassinations and arrests. It was silent but effective, and the military spoke only of winning national peace and unity.

Despite their efforts to hide the real situation, by the end of 1976 the news of the serious human rights violations had attracted world-wide attention. As a result of overwhelming evidence about human rights violations, the U.S. Congress decided to cut off all military aid to the Videla regime. More recently, the U.S. Attorney General, responding to pressure from numerous humanitarian organizations, approved a parole visa program for Latin American refugees, giving special attention to Argentina.

Since this program began, only five Argentinians have been allowed to enter



Relatives of missing political prisoners shouting "Help us" to Secretary of State Vance during his visit to Argentina.

the U.S. The State Department reported that the biggest barrier has been the lack of cooperation by the Argentine government. Additionally, the families of the political prisoners have accused the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires of not putting enough pressure on the Argentine authorities.

The American Embassy in Buenos Aires has compiled about 300 applications, all of which have received the necessary approval from U.S. Embassy officials. However, Argentine authorities

are refusing to cooperate with the necessary next steps, such as interviews with the U.S. Consulate and procedures for obtaining travel expenses.

Families of political prisoners have pointed out that in spite of the support the program has received in Washington, the U.S. Ambassador in Argentina has done little to make it work. Last October, in response to a reporter's question, Ambassador Raul Castro said, "Frankly, the issue of human rights does not interest me at all. What does interest me is that I arrived in this country almost a year ago and was received with open arms, I eat good food with good wine, I have gained weight, I speak the language, and you have me here in your country." These statements, which appeared in the Buenos Aires paper *La Prensa*, not only show Castro's lack of interest in human rights, but also his backing of the Argentine Junta.

The political prisoners who are eligible to leave the country on the parole visa program are still in jail, waiting for a change in Ambassador Castro's attitude. Such a change would force the Argentine authorities to allow the needed interviews to be completed.

By putting pressure on the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires, the solidarity movement can help insure that the parole visa program meets its goals and help obtain the release of Argentine prisoners. A sample letter appears on p. 4.

trial . . .

consider the matter until the trial now going on in the U.S. is completed.

While the U.S. worked to obtain Townley's extradition, it now seems willing to let the matter rest there and settle on convicting only the hit men. Although the

Chilean press itself has referred to the Letelier assassination as "Pinochet's Watergate", it appears that the U.S. does not want to make it so. The investigation seems to have been used initially to pressure Pinochet into making gestures of social reform in Chile. However, it does not appear that the U.S. is ready to point the finger directly at Pinochet and risk his downfall. Consequently, those ultimately responsible for the assassinations may never be brought to justice.

While the trial is going on, it is important that the U.S. solidarity movement urge the Justice Department to insist the three DINA agents now in Chile be extradited to stand trial in the U.S. In this way, we can help insure that the truth of the Chilean government's involvement will be revealed. A sample letter appears on p. 4.



Letelier's arrest the day of the coup, September 11, 1973.

SAMPLE LETTERS

Eugene Propper
Justice Department
Washington, D.C.

While the current trial on the Letelier-Moffitt assassinations is a partial step in prosecuting this crime, the case cannot be closed until those responsible are brought to trial in a U.S. court. I demand that strong action be taken to enforce the extradition of General Contreras, Colonel Espinoza, and Capt. Fernandez from Chile to stand trial for these murders.

Presb. Cristian Precht
Vicaria de la Solidaridad
Casilla 30-D
Santiago, Chile

I urge you to take action to secure the release of political opponents of the junta who are being held as common criminals, among them Margarita Le Blanc, Guillermo Le Blanc, Luis Jara, Monerva Sepulveda, Carlos Gonzalez, Ricardo Serey, Pedro Torres, Juan Galaz, and Edelmira Brossard.

I am also concerned about the safety of Gaston Munoz and Gloria Elgueta, who are now being sought by security forces, and urge you to take all possible steps to assist them in leaving Chile.

Amb. Raul Castro
U.S. Embassy
Buenos Aires, Argentina

I am outraged by your evident lack of concern about human rights. You should spend less time worrying about your personal well-being and more time trying to implement the parole visa program for Argentine prisoners. You have a responsibility to the people of the U.S. to improve the situation of human rights, not to ignore it.

- I will write letters for prisoners.
Please send Bulletin.
- I would like to adopt a prisoner.
Please contact me.

- Please place my name on your mailing list.
- I would like more information on Chile and on NICH.
- Enclosed is a contribution.
- Enclosed is \$3 for a Chile Newsletter sub.

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Mar-Apr '80

Literacy Crusade Nicaragua's Second Liberation War

On March 24 Nicaragua will begin its "Second Liberation War." An army of 140,000 volunteers is now in training, organized in the same Fronts and Brigades used during the guerrilla war. This new army, like the first, will be composed primarily of young people—sixth graders through university students. But it will not be fighting the National Guard with guns. It will use books, pencils, paper and long hours of hard work against the enemy—illiteracy.

Nationwide Illiteracy Over 50%

A nationwide census conducted last November revealed that 50-55% of all Nicaraguans over 10 years of age are illiterate. The highest percentages of illiteracy are found in the countryside where 70% of the population lives. In some areas it affects over 90% of the inhabitants. While the extent of illiteracy in urban areas is lower, it is still a major problem. For example, in the third largest city the illiteracy rate among youths 10-14 years of age was 43%—the age group which usually has the highest literacy rate.

All told, between 700,000 and one million people will be taught to read and write—almost half of Nicaragua's entire population! Calling the Literacy Crusade the "Second Liberation War" is not a catchy phrase. Only an all-out offensive could hope to defeat such a formidable enemy.

The extent of illiteracy in Nicaragua is more than an expression of economic underdevelopment. The Somoza dictatorship certainly could have found money to build schools and pay teachers if it had wanted to. But for the Somozas, ignorance was a method of oppression. A population unconscious of the causes of its oppression was a more easily controlled and exploited one.

Crusade's Objectives

Nicaragua's Literacy Crusade has two main objectives. One, of course, is to assure that every Nicaraguan can read and write and do basic arithmetical computations. Raising the basic educational level of the entire population is essential to increasing the country's productive capacity and for setting the

basis for continued education and training programs.

But the Literacy Crusade is more than that. A recent article in a publication of the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) explains: "Literacy does not only mean learning to recognize and write symbols that mean something; it is an apprenticeship in life in the sense that the literate person learns his intrinsic value as a person, as an historical subject, as an actor of an important social role, as an individual with rights to demand and with duties and obligations to fulfill. The literacy crusade is the fundamental support upon which all other social aspects of our country will rest, once the revolution is consolidated. For this reason, the literacy crusade will be the first great accomplishment of the Sandinist revolution."

Mass Mobilization

Under the slogan "It is the duty of every literate person to teach; it is the right of every illiterate person to be literate," the entire country is being mobilized for the campaign, with all the

(continued on next page)



A brigade of literacy workers arrives in the town of Jiloa, after a march in preparation for the Literacy Crusade



mass organizations participating. The Sandinist Defense Committees are administering the campaign locally. The trade unions are organizing teachers, as well as those of its members who need classes. The Association of Rural Workers is setting up classes in the countryside, and the Sandinist Youth group and National Women's Organization are organizing volunteer teachers.

Regular schools will be closed during the four-month campaign, which coincides with the dry season in the countryside when harvests are already completed. Most of the literacy workers will be young people from the cities who will live with peasant families, carry out daily work with them, and conduct literacy classes in the evening. In this way the gap between city and countryside will begin to be bridged, with tens of thousands of city people experiencing the rigors of rural life and understanding the sector which is the economic backbone of Nicaragua.

The campaign will bring the benefits of the revolution to the countryside, use texts which will provide a political awareness of what has happened in Nicaragua and an understanding of the revolutionary process. It is expected that many of the illiterates whose political consciousness and independence have been developed by becoming literate will be organized into the mass organizations, which are seen as the essential defenders of the revolutionary process.

The response to the call for teachers has been tremendous. In addition to classes to prepare them to teach, volunteers are conducting long hikes and other exercises to prepare themselves physically. The response among the campesinos has also been enthusiastic. During the November census, many census takers reported that people came running after them wanting to sign up

for classes and worried that they might not be included.

FSLN Calls for Support

The overwhelming response of the Nicaraguan people to the Crusade and its high level of organization attest to the changes and accomplishments which have occurred since the defeat of Somoza and the National Guard last July 19. The Literacy Crusade is of fundamental importance to consolidating the revolution and moving it forward.

But the country still faces enormous immediate problems—an unemployment rate of almost 50%, a severe lack of medical supplies, insufficient amounts of food, and loss of a substantial part of the coffee and cotton harvests which would have earned much needed foreign exchange. International aid and solidarity, while alleviating some of these pressures, have not arrived at the level which Nicaragua needs.

The Sandinist National Liberation Front has called upon the solidarity movement in the U.S. to support the Literacy Crusade. Its estimated cost is \$20 million. The results of the Crusade cannot, of course, be measured in dollars. A literate, aware, conscious people is seen as the way to freedom to defending the revolution, and to deepening it.

NICH and other organizations which form the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People are conducting a massive fundraising drive to support the Literacy Crusade. We urge you to join us, by sending a contribution today, and by participating in other ways which are described on this page.

Support Literacy Crusade

Contribute today! Contributions for the Literacy Crusade will be sent to Nicaragua via a national account, called "HAND" (Humanitarian Aid for Nicaraguan Democracy), under the auspices of the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People. Checks should be made payable to "HAND" and sent to NICH. Contributions to "HAND" are tax-deductible.

Sell Nicaragua Literacy Bonds.

Ask your friends and colleagues to contribute by selling Bonds (\$1, \$5, \$10), which have been prepared by the N.Y. Coalition for a Free Nicaragua. To receive bonds, write to the Coalition at GPO 1915, New York, NY 10001.

Get involved in ongoing Nicaragua solidarity work. NICH chapters and affiliate committees, together with other groups around the country, are involved in various activities to raise consciousness about and material support for the Nicaraguan revolutionary process. Films, slide shows, and written materials are available for use by student, trade union, community groups, etc. Contact your nearest NICH chapter or affiliate committee for information. A complete list of available resources and information on the Nicaraguan solidarity committee working in your area can be obtained from the National Network in

**EL
50%
NO SABEMOS
LEER**

*aprenderemos
con nuestro esfuerzo
y con tu ayuda*



NICARAGUA CONFIA EN TU SOLIDARIDAD

Nicaraguan poster: "50% cannot read. We will learn with our force and with your help. Nicaragua counts on your solidarity."

Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People,
1322 18th St. NW, Washington, DC
20036.

Grass Roots Action "Campaign for Freedom" Launched in Chile



A Santiago Committee for the Return of the Exiles at a commemoration at Lonquen for the disappeared murdered there.

Late in 1979, relatives of Chile's political prisoners and disappeared announced the initiation of a major campaign, the *Jornada por la Libertad*, ("Campaign for Freedom") with the support of a broad range of grassroots popular organizations. The *Jornada* is organized around four basic demands: an immediate amnesty for all political prisoners held by the regime; a full accounting of the fates of all disappeared prisoners; the unconditional right of all exiles to return to Chile; and the restoration of democratic rights.

This campaign, touching on the most basic human and democratic rights, repeatedly violated by the military junta, has the potential to unite broad sectors of the mass movement and the opposition to the dictatorship. While the families of prisoners and disappeared had initially sought a full amnesty by Christmas 1979, they have now vowed to continue their campaign through 1980. The campaign has already won the backing of a number of labor unions, committees of the unemployed (*bolsas de cesantes*), community groups and human rights activists in the Catholic Church.

Institutionalization Process

This campaign comes at a crucial time for Chile with the junta pushing ahead its plans to institutionalize the repressive regime, while the mass movement and resistance to the dictatorship is steadily growing, after several years of retreat.

In the past year, the junta has announced a number of Decree Laws which are part and parcel of the institutionalization process. Together with the July 1979 Labor Code, these Decrees constitute a concerted attack on the rights Chilean workers have won through decades of struggle. Seven

national labor confederations and hundreds of individual unions have been outlawed and their property confiscated; union leaders have been harassed and blacklisted and fraudulent elections held to replace them. The right to strike has been totally gutted, with strikes limited to the issue of salaries (excluding issues such as health and safety, maternity leave or social security), their duration limited to 60 days, and all support from other unions, public meetings or pickets outlawed. Striking workers may be fired without compensation and scabs freely hired and—to top it off—the government may prohibit any strike for reasons of national security.

New laws governing the educational and health care systems have drastically cut back social services and public employment. Their aim is to make the educational system "self-financing" (i.e., education for the wealthy) and to

dismantle the National Health Care System and turn most of its functions back over to the private sector.

Decree Law 2568 rolls back Chile's agrarian reform, which was initiated in the 1960s and deepened under Allende's Popular Unity government. This Decree has been widely condemned both inside and outside Chile for threatening the continued existence as a people of Chile's Mapuche Indians.

Regarding human rights, Pinochet, in a stroke of public relations genius, proclaimed a "general amnesty" in April 1978. People in Chile call it the "Generals' amnesty," since thus far it has been used to protect the police and military rather than their victims. The policemen responsible for the murder of workers whose bodies were found in the Lonquen mine received amnesty under this decree. The dictatorship has also decreed its "right" to prevent "dangerous" exiles from returning to Chile.

Most recently, the junta introduced a so-called "anti-terrorist" law, which assumes guilt until the accused can prove his innocence, and denies traditional rights of bail and speedy trial. It also establishes the principle of guilt by association for anyone in any way connected with the accused by friendship, family ties or common membership in any organization. This law also makes "informing"—collaboration with the secret police—an obligation of all citizens, and assigns arbitrary powers to repressive agencies, such as the CNI (ex-DINA), while applying extreme penalties for vaguely defined offenses: Like Pinochet's "amnesty," the "anti-



Chilean workers on strike at Goodyear last November. Workers marched in downtown Santiago in support in spite of the new Labor Plan forbidding such activity.

Campaign . . .

terrorist law" ignores the existence of institutionalized state terrorism against the people of Chile by the military dictatorship itself.

Finally, Pinochet and the military junta have proposed a new constitution for Chile which would ratify the above decrees and even more firmly implant an authoritarian, anti-democratic regime. Among other things, the proposed new constitution establishes a National Security Council with "extra-constitutional" powers in case of war, "internal disorder" or "emergency," severely limits citizens' rights, and proclaims that "any act . . . aimed at promoting doctrines . . . based on class struggle" is illegal.

Need for Popular Alternative

All these steps toward the institutionalization of a repressive, authoritarian regime (necessary to guarantee the new patterns of intensified economic exploitation the dictatorship has ushered in) pose an enormous threat to the rights of

the people of Chile. While rooted in the criminal and unconstitutional seizure of power through force by the military, this institutionalization seeks to create a facade of legal justification for the continuation of the regime's outrages. The demands of the current *Jornada*, while essentially defensive in character, suggest the outlines of a broad platform of struggle for human and democratic rights which, together with other actions by the mass movement and the popular resistance, may allow the gradual gathering of forces around an independent, popular alternative to the dictatorship.

We in the U.S. can add our voices to those of the many Chilean women and men who are organizing in support of this campaign. We urge you to write to General Pinochet, and to the U.S. government, supporting the *Jornada's* demands, and to ask others to do the same. A sample letter, which is also suitable as a petition, is shown on p. 4.

SAMPLE LETTERS

Gen. Augusto Pinochet
Edificio Diego Portales
Santiago, Chile

In light of continuing violations of human and democratic rights by your regime, I/we demand an immediate amnesty for all political prisoners, a full accounting of the fates of the disappeared, the unconditional right of return for all exiles, and the restoration of all democratic rights in Chile.

Pres. Jimmy Carter
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

In light of continuing violations of human and democratic rights by the military regime in Chile, I/we urge that the U.S. government demand an amnesty for Chile's political prisoners, a full and complete accounting of the fates of the disappeared, respect for the unconditional right of all Chileans to return to their country, and the restoration of all democratic rights in Chile.

Chile Action Bulletin

The *Chile Action Bulletin* is published bi-monthly by Non-Intervention in Chile (NICH). NICH is an anti-imperialist organization in solidarity with the struggles of the peoples of Chile and Latin America. Through the *Chile Action Bulletin* we provide information on the popular struggle in Chile and other Latin American countries and suggest ways in which individuals in this country can show solidarity.

Membership in NICH is open to individuals who are in agreement with our political perspective and committed to building solidarity with the struggles of people in Latin America. For more information, please write our National Office.

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Western Massachusetts Chile/
Latin America Solidarity Committee
P.O. Box 571
Amherst, MA 01002

Chile Resistance Support Committee
P.O. Box 14248
Minneapolis, MN 55424

- Please send me the *Chile Action Bulletin* regularly. Enclosed is \$_____ to help cover costs.
- I would like more information on Chile and NICH.
- Enclosed is a contribution of \$_____.
- I would like to become a member of NICH. Please send information..

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____