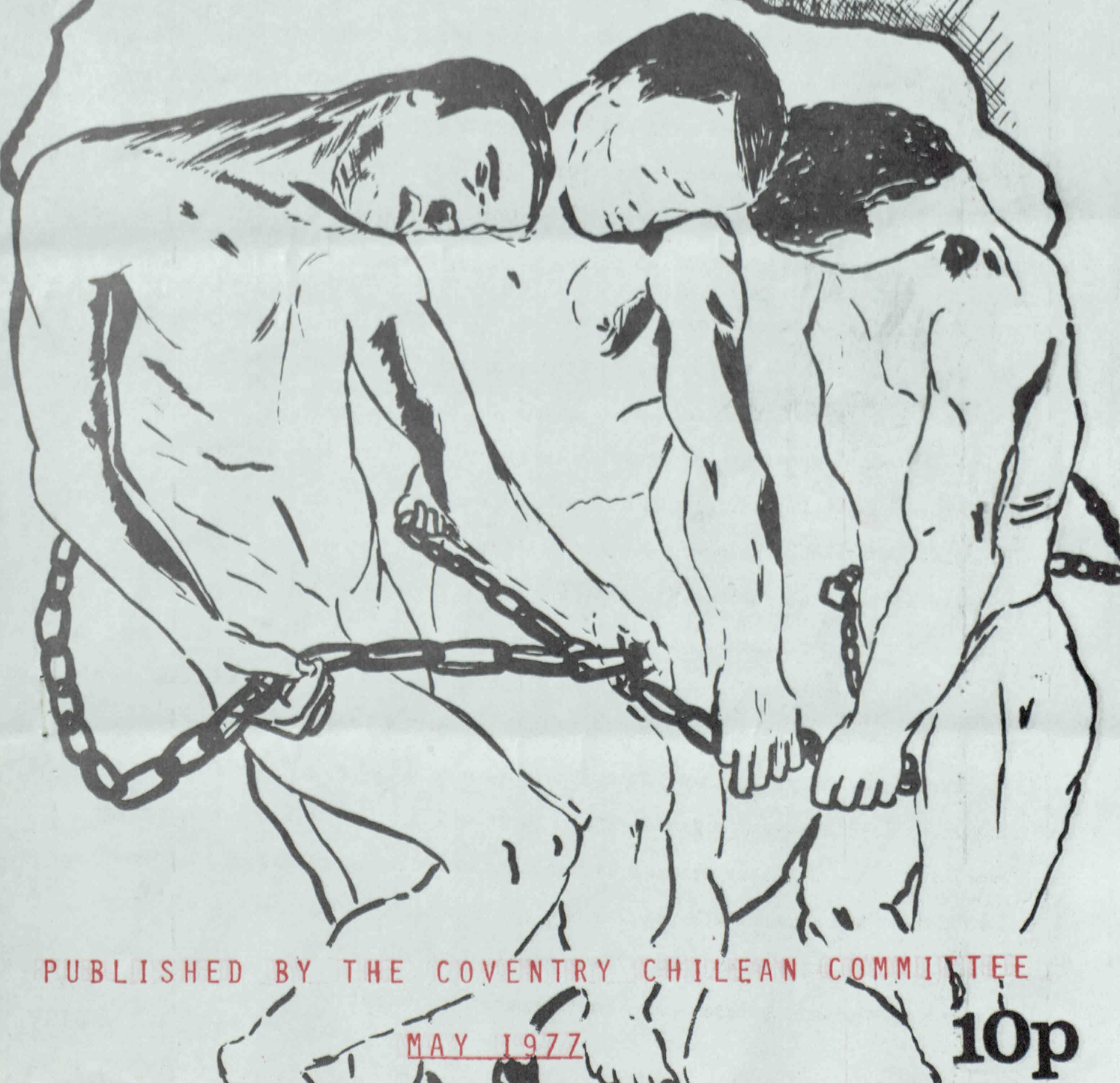


RESISTANCE AND SOLIDARITY



PUBLISHED BY THE COVENTRY CHILEAN COMMITTEE

MAY 1977

10p

INTRODUCTION & EDITORIAL

Chile is a small country situated in the Southern cone of South America and with a population of 10 million people. Its name was familiar to the average Briton in the 1920's because of its great production of saltpetre which fell into the hands of British monopolists during that period. Later it was known for its copper industry, copper being a commodity which was bought and sold on the London metal market. But British attention really turned towards Chile as a result of the events surrounding and following the bloody coup of September 11th 1973, carried out by the Chilean Armed Forces acting on behalf of international and Chilean capital, and in flagrant opposition to the wishes of the Chilean working class and people.

The coup, which aroused great indignation throughout the civilised world, might appear to have been an exceptional occurrence in the world we are living in today. But in fact this is not so, for the very good reason that the events of September 1973 have to be seen within the context both of the international political situation and of the liberation struggles of different peoples throughout the world who are attempting to free themselves from the deadly grip of national capitalism (the bourgeoisie) and international capitalism (imperialism). The advances made by those involved in these struggles provoked the wrath of those whose interests are affected, and they find they have no alternative but to turn to the Armed Forces as their permanent defenders in their attempts to impose regimes of brute force and terror on the long-suffering people. Their sole aim is to score a strategic victory in their battle against the working class, against all revolutionary forces and against all peoples who are fighting to free themselves. Restoring a system which today finds itself in a state of permanent crisis is one of the last tactics they can desperately resort to.

Within this panorama we find that not only does a military dictatorship exist in Chile but that 80% of all Latin American countries are suffering the same fate; victims of North American imperialism, still licking its wounds after shattering defeats in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and, more recently, Mozambique and Angola.

Given this situation there are thousands of Chileans who, as well as those who have been murdered, imprisoned, tortured or exploited, have had to leave their country and seek refuge abroad as political exiles. And just as the Chilean people continue their heroic fight in our homeland to resist the dictatorship, we who find ourselves living in exile must accept our responsibilities and aid our compatriots with all the means at our disposal. We have to denounce the military dictatorship for what it is and, at the same time, call on the international working class and all social sectors to do all they can to boycott, isolate and eventually overthrow the dictators who have killed, raped, tortured and starved millions of our fellows on the South American continent.

We Chilean refugees in Coventry must take it upon ourselves to carry out this job. For this reason we have decided to publish this regular magazine which we hope will provide us with a means of keeping in touch with all of you. What we finally achieve will depend very much on the effort that you, our readers and supporters (in fact the British people as a whole) make in supporting us.

The Repression in Chile

On the 11th September 1973 a bloody military coup overthrew the democratically elected government of President Allende of Chile. The junta that seized power embarked immediately on a program of repression that shocked the world: persecution of government supporters, mass arrests, detention, torture, summary trials and executions.

The junta's repressive measures do not stem solely from their weak position politically, however, but also from the ideology which lies behind their whole system of government. This ideology of national security is also the basis of the present military regimes in Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia and Argentina. It justifies and calls for the elimination of all those who are in opposition to the regime since they constitute subversive elements which endanger national security. According to the junta the whole world is at war but the war is not a war of nation against nation but of Western Christian civilisation against Marxism.

It should be noted that the word 'Marxist' in this context is applied to anyone who does not agree with the junta's extreme form of nationalism and fascist doctrines.

At the time of the coup, thousands of people are known to have been killed in Chile, being shot in their homes, in the streets, or by prison guards, or tortured to death in the concentration camps; thousands more were arrested and imprisoned in places that their families knew about but there were many people too who completely disappeared. The responsibility for the disappearance of political prisoners lies mainly with D.I.N.A. (National Directorate of Intelligence), the military regime's secret police; it recruits its members from different branches of the armed forces and civilian organisations such as 'Patria y Libertad' (Fatherland and Freedom - a fascist para military organisation which operated against Allende). It was

created in January 1974 by a special decree and from then the repression became more selectively carried out. During the period between February 1974 and October 1975, over 600 people were reported, with reliable information and witnesses, to have disappeared after their arrest. In all these cases, the authorities refused to admit that they had ever been detained, though in some instances the denial of the detention came after previous statements about the prisoner's whereabouts.

In 1976 the military junta's tactics for repression changed. Secret prisoners came to be the norm rather than the exception. At this time 3% of all prisoners arrested disappeared; this proportion had increased by August of that year to 57%.

The D.I.N.A.s methods here become increasingly sophisticated over this three year period of its existence. D.I.N.A.s agents here carried out arrests in plain clothes and took their victims away in cars with no registration numbers so that it has been impossible to identify them. Most of the arrests carried out before 1976, however, were witnessed by friends or relatives of the prisoner who could then give account of the arrest taking place. Now, since January 1976, an increasing number of people are being detained when they are alone, so there is no evidence at all of any arrest having been carried out. Most of the detentions carried out by the D.I.N.A. are during the hours of the nightly curfew. Usually a group of unidentified people arrive with a display of force. They search the house, causing considerable destruction and stealing anything they fancy; another tactic the D.I.N.A. uses for carrying out arrests is to go up to a person in the street and take his arm as if he were their friend, threatening him with death if he makes any sign. Sometimes too, they arrest people publicly on buses, accusing them of being pick-pockets and drag them off in front of everybody. Mostly everybody who is taken prisoner is tortured, whether they are young or old, man, woman or child. The prisoners are stripped naked, blindfolded and often chained by the hands and feet; they are then subjected to electric currents applied to all parts of the body, beatings, burnings, hanging, near asphyxiation and to psychological pressure such as witnessing the

torture or rape of members of their families.

The D.I.N.A. is answerable only to Pinochet himself; not even the supreme court can control its actions. It thus supplants all the different powers of the state since it acts as a supreme tribunal of justice in the country, with the right to determine the life and death of all whom its members detain. It does indeed act as an intelligence service to collect information but it is used too as an instrument to terrorize the population outside the armed forces and also within them.

At the head of the D.I.N.A. under Pinochet is Colonel Manuel Contreras Sepulveda; under Contreras is the naval (capitan) Captain Rolando Garcia le Blanc and the third man is the airforce Colonel Samuel Mujica Verdugo. Lower down the hierarchy are a series of middle commanders; particularly notorious for their bestial cruelty are Colonel Marcelo Moren Brito, the director of the Villa Grimaldi torture house, and Miguel Marchenko Kraffnoff in charge of most of the operative units of the Villa Grimaldi.

The D.I.N.A.s activities are not restricted to Chile alone. It acts in close cooperation with the Argentine, Uruguayan, Brazilian, Paraguayan and Bolivian secret police and has agents in all the countries to which Chilean refugees have fled.

The organisation responsible for coordinating all the activities of the D.I.N.A. abroad is known as C.A.L. It operates from Argentina and is thought still to be under the direction of Colonel Luis Raminer, who was formerly military attache in the Chilean embassy in Argentina. It was he, together with Captain Fco. Ferrer, who was almost certainly responsible for the assassination in October 1974 of the ex-commander in chief of the army, who had remained loyal to Allende, General Carlos Prats Gonzalez.

During the first wave of arrests after the coup, one by one people began to arrive at the Committee for Peace to report the case of their husband, wife, son, daughter, brother or sister who had been arrested but who was not being held in any known place of detention.

It was only in the Committee for Peace that news was given of missing people seen in secret centres by prisoners who had later been sent to public camps, and it was in the Committee that each family became aware that their case was not the only case but one of many hundreds, and they began to organise in what they call "Agrupacion de los Familiares de los Detenidos y Desaparecidos", (Organization of the Relatives of Disappeared Prisoners).

We would like to let you know the text of an open letter to the junta in our country and to the world public opinion to raise consciousness about what is going on in our country and what you or your union can do in order to support this relatives organization of disappeared prisoners.

"The disappeared prisoners' is the name we give to members of our families who have been taken from our homes in front of our eyes, or in their work places, colleges and universities, with eye-witnesses or strong proof of their detention. The people who detained them were members of the military intelligence services. They are being held in secret and all our efforts such as writs of habeas corpus, affidavits of kidnapping, and letter and interviews with governments officials, have been flung back in our faces with the following answer: "This person has never been detained ": there are variations such as: "He has left the country: He has gone into hiding: He has been kidnapped by a band of extremists", and so forth.

These replies can be explained by the fact that those who make the arrests are agents of the national intelligence agency (D.I.N.A.) and that this organisation has so much autonomy that it overrides the technical and legal institutions, who can only say "if the prisoners are in the hands of the D.I.N.A., we can do nothing".

We call on all men and women of good will to make themselves aware of this sinister development. What has happened to Edwin Van Yurick and his wife Barbara, whose detentions were acknowledged to the British Embassy in Chile and who have still not been seen since July 1974? What has happened to the

architect Ida Vera whose detention in her own home was accompanied by rifle shots in November 1974 and widely publicized by the media at that time?

What has become of Maria Ramirez and her son-in-law Juan McLeod, detained when they went to visit Maria Antonieta, Juan's wife, in 3 alamos detention camp on 30th November 1974?

What happened to Manuel Carreño, a 56 year old shopkeeper, and his son Ivan, only 15, after their detention in front of their family on 12th August 1974? And the many more like them?

"Our questions have always been answered in the same way:" Your relations have not been detained; what has happened is that their friends have faked a kidnapping and have taken them off to some unknown place, possibly to Argentina".

They stick to this story even when, as in some cases the prisoners were ill treated in front of their own families.

Because of all this, we relatives of the disappeared prisoners in Chile, mothers, wives, children, brothers and sisters, call on world public opinion, on governments, on the media, on the churches, on groups of workers, professionals, artists and intellectuals: we call on all who are capable of thought and feeling to join our cry and take whatever measures are possible so that the Military Junta returns our relatives to us".

- SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF CHILE -

On the 11th. of September 1973 a bloody military coup, led by Pinochet and the military Junta, opened up a period of dictatorship, repression, and the greatest misery in the whole history of Chile and Latin America. The constitutionally elected president of the Republic was assassinated, and a whole wave of repression was let loose on the left-wing political parties, on the workers, and on all those who opposed the regime; a state of siege was imposed; the Constitution was cast aside; Parliament was dissolved; radio, newspapers, and means of communication were destroyed and then taken over; Trade Union rights were trampled on; the CUT (TUC) was dissolved; the right to hold a meeting and to organise was suppressed; massive sackings took place; any kind of election was forbidden; all political parties were banned; the most inhumane and cruel repression was let loose; murders, kidnappings, rapes, tortures and imprisonment of men, women and children were institutionalized the world got to know of this and the campaign of solidarity with the Chilean people got under way....

- THE GORILLA JUNTA TRIES TO HIDE ITS CRIMES -

It is almost four years since the dictatorship came to power, and its only means of existence is the terror of repression; unemployment and poverty reign in the towns and the country; infant mortality and malnutrition reach incredible levels; repression is institutionalised and legalised, better organised and more selective, and affects every political and social, civilian and military sector of society.

As each day goes by the thousands that have disappeared because they have been murdered by the DINA grows. The concentration camps are closed, but the political prisoners fill up the prisons as they are called "habitual delinquents with political tendencies". Hundreds are denied exile, but the reasons are never explained. In its daily struggle for survival, and in its resistance to tyranny, the Chilean people cries out for Bread, Work, Justice and Freedom!

THE WORKING CLASS AND THE PEOPLE OF CHILE NEED

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

There are many ways that the working class and the people of Coventry can demonstrate their solidarity with the Chilean people - strengthening the diplomatic struggle against the dictatorship, carrying out a boycott and international isolation of the Junta. Today we think that in addition to these there are four fundamental tasks:

- 1.** The fostering of political prisoners who have disappeared must be taken up in a concrete manner. Today there are more than 2,500 who have disappeared and who have to be accounted for by Pinochet and the Junta. We have their names and information about them, and it is now a matter for organisations to concern themselves in particular with specific cases.

a) Demand a statement about the disappeared person by writing to;

Augusto Pinochet Ugarte
Gustavo Leight Guzman
Jose Toribio Merimo
General Mendoza

All these are members of the
"Junta de Gobierno" and can be
contacted at,
Edificio Diego Portales,
Santiago, Chile.

Jorge Alessandri Rodriguez - President of the Council of State.
(Edificio Diego Portales)

Renato Domilano Bonafarte - Minister of Justice, Ministry of
Justice, Santiago, Chile.

b) Get in contact with the relatives of those that have disappeared with the aim of knowing the proceedings, getting information, and finding out ways of helping them financially.

c) Get in contact with the "Association of relatives of the disappeared", with the aim of giving it political help to get it legalised.

d) Get in contact with associations of the relatives of those who have disappeared - such associations also exist here in England. In this way more information can be obtained about those that we seek.

e) Get in contact with the Trade Union to which the disappeared political prisoner belonged.

2. Fostering of those refused exile by the Junta.

There are thousands of political prisoners who have been condemned by military tribunals and the Junta refuses to grant them the right of exile, by rejecting their petitions for their prison sentences to be commuted to exile.

a) Foster the comrade and get in contact with him/her in the jail where he/she is.

b) In the event that the prisoner opts for a visa to England, the British government must be pressurized to grant it.

c) Pressurize the Chilean authorities to grant the right of exile. In addition to writing to the members of the Junta you can also write to; Ricardo Martins - Presidente Comisiones Decreto 504, Ministerio de Justicia, Santiago, Chile.

d) Offer moral and economic aid to the prisoner and his family.

3. Foster political prisoners who have been categorised by the Junta as "common delinquents with political tendencies".

These are political prisoners who, after being imprisoned and tortured by the DINA, are put at the disposition of the ordinary courts and accused of being common delinquents but with political tendencies. Thus the Junta can deny to the world that it has political prisoners, the judges can declare they cannot act in these cases, and the military tribunals don't pass judgement. The prisoners are therefore packed into cells without legal aid of any kind.

a) Foster those in this situation and get in contact with them in the jails where they are and also with their families, with the aim of providing them with direct aid.

b) Write to; Vicaría de la solidaridad, Vicario Cristian Precht Banados, demanding that the comrade be recognised as a political prisoner and requesting legal assistance and all possible aid that this organisation can give to political prisoners and their families.

- F.A.S.I.C. write to the coordinator Claudio Gonzalez Urbina, asking the same that you requested from the Vicaría.
- Roberto Kosak, chief of C.I.M.E. in Chile, requesting that he does all possible to get visas for the prisoner.
- Minister of Justice, requesting recognition as a political prisoner and immediate freedom.

4. Abroad the exiles are organising themselves to aid the Chilean people, and therefore they need political and material aid from all social and political sections of the world.

Coventry must declare its solidarity in the struggle with Chile!

In Coventry all the Chileans who have been forced into exile are organised in the "Coventry Chilean Refugee Committee" whose objectives are to denounce the Chilean situation, develop the campaign of solidarity and help in the struggle of the Chilean people against the dictatorship. In this we work with the English Chile Solidarity Committee. We invite and request that all sections of society give all aid possible to these organisations through which all aid for the Chilean working class and people in its struggle against the dictatorship will be channeled.

Coventry Chilean Committee.
108 Cecily Road,
Cheylesmore,
Coventry.

PRINTED AT THE RESOURCE CENTRE, COMMUNITY WORK CENTRE, COX STREET, COVENTRY, TEL: 56149

1. Educ S/C
2. ~~Doc's app~~
3. Rodney
4. ~~Res to resource~~