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Outlook of the Officers: Military Thought in Chile, 1960-1990

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

John Richard Bawden

June 2009

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. James P. Brennan, Chairperson

Dr. David Pion-Berlin

Dr. Juliette Levy

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The Dissertation of John Richard Bawden is approved:

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curiosities. I have been the recipient of their unconditional love and support my entire life. Thanks mom and dad.

All translations from Spanish into English are mine unless otherwise noted. Naturally, any mistakes in this dissertation are my own and I bear full responsibility for them.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Outlook of the Officers: Military Thought in Chile, 1960-1990

by

John Richard Bawden

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, June 2009
Dr. James P. Brennan, Chairperson

This dissertation examines the ideas, values, and intellectual formation of officers in the Chilean armed forces during the second half of the twentieth century, charting change and continuity in the outlook of men who played a central role in their nation's history. It seeks to characterize the full complexity of military thought in the postwar era, identifying the lens through which officers saw the world, their role in society, and relationship to and place in Chilean history.

The first half of the dissertation examines the nature of US military influence in Chile, military attitudes towards civilian society, and changes in military discourse after the Cuban Revolution. During the sixties officers reached a number of important conclusions about modern warfare and the world system by studying conflicts in the Third World.

With respect to the Popular Unity coalition (1970-1973) the armed forces' professionalism and apolitical tendencies proved a substantial barrier to political involvement although circumstances eventually led to a consensus that Salvador Allende's government was an existential threat to the nation and the armed forces had a patriotic duty to overthrow it.

The second half of the dissertation examines the incipient ideology of Chile's military government, its internal policy disputes, and the perspective of soldiers who, after 1974, faced military threats from Peru and Argentina and deep international isolation as a result of human rights violations. This situation fostered a siege mentality and had multiple unintended consequences. For one, the US arms embargo (1975) spurred the development of Chile's domestic arms industry and reduced Washington's political leverage in Chile.

In 1983, nationwide protests seemed to augur a quick transition to civilian rule. However, the armed forces agreed that any exit from power had to be 'honorable' and consistent with their distinction as an undefeated military. Officers also drew from Chile's conservative tradition and their own intellectual culture to argue that they had a historical mandate to reorganize society after 1973 and to exercise a formal, tutelary role in the polity after 1990.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	iv
Abstract of Dissertation.....	viii
Table of Contents.....	x
List of Figures.....	xi
Abbreviations.....	xii
Introduction.....	1

Part One

Chapter I: The History and Historical Imagination of the Chilean Armed Forces.....	18
Chapter II: New Anxieties, Deepening Frustrations, 1960-1969.....	87
Chapter III: Interested Observers: the Chilean military in world context, 1960-1970.....	129
Chapter IV: Opportunity or Threat?: Salvador Allende and the Chilean military, 1970-1973.....	173

Part Two

Chapter V: Consensus, Ambiguity, Conflict: early regime ideology, 1973-1976.....	239
Chapter VI: Crises and Consolidation, 1977-1981.....	306
Chapter VII: Circling the Wagons: the survival of the Pinochet regime, 1982-1986.....	355
Chapter VIII: The Transition to Protected Democracy, 1987-1990.....	394
Epilogue.....	421
Bibliography.....	427

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1, Chilean soldiers swears allegiance to the flag, 1920.....	39
Figure 1.2, The Chilean Air Force bombards the naval fleet at Coquimbo, 1931.....	56
Figure 2.1, Publications by Augusto Pinochet Ugarte.....	105
Figure 2.2, ‘The Era of the Pacific’	113
Figure 4.1, Chilean air force bombards the presidential palace.....	227
Figure 5.1, Allende aiming an AK-47 at his home in Santiago.....	248
Figure 5.2, Seized arms on public display following the coup.....	249
Figure 5.3, Socialist bloc stamps of Luis Corvalán and Salvador Allende.....	279
Figure 6.1, Propaganda for the 1978 National Consultation.....	326
Figure 6.2, Pinochet’s tour to promote the 1980 Constitution.....	349
Figure 8.1, Propaganda for the 1988 YES campaign, part one.....	401
Figure 8.2, Propaganda for the 1988 YES campaign, part two.....	402
Figure 8.3, Pinochet hands the presidential sash to Patricio Aylwin Azócar.....	417

ABREVIATIONS

AHJG	Actas de las Sesiones de la Honorable Junta de Gobierno Minutes of the military government's legislative body
ANEPE	Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos National Academy of Political and Strategic Studies
CDP	Chile Declassification Project Extensive collection of declassified documents from various United States agencies (State, CIA, DOD, NSC, FBI). http://foia.state.gov/SearchColls/CollsSearch.asp
CNI	Central Nacional de Informaciones National Information Center
CODELCO	Corporación Nacional del Cobre de Chile National Copper Corporation of Chile
CORFO	Corporación de Fomento de la Producción de Chile Production Development Corporation
DINA	Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional National Intelligence Directorate
ENAER	Empresa Nacional de Aeronáutica de Chile National Aeronautics Company of Chile
FACH	Fuerza Aérea de Chile Chilean Air Force
FAMAE	Fábricas y Maestranzas del Ejército de Chile Factories and Workshops of the Army
FMRP	Frente Manuel Rodríguez Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front
FOCH	Federación Obrera de Chile Workers Federation of Chile
FRAP	Frente de Acción Popular Front for Popular Action
MAPU	Movimiento Acción Popular Unitaria Popular Unitary Action Movement
MIR	Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria Revolutionary Left Movement
PAM	Pacto de Ayuda Militar Mutual Defense Assistance Act
PCCh	Partido Comunista de Chile Communist Party of Chile
PDC	Partido Demócrata Cristiano de Chile Christian Democratic Party of Chile
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSD	National Security Doctrine
OAS	Organization of American States

ODEPLAN	Oficina de Planificación Nacional Office of National Planning
TIAR	Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Recíproca Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance
UNITAS	Joint naval exercises involving several countries in North, South and Central America
UP	Unidad Popular Popular Unity

INTRODUCTION

The image of General Augusto Pinochet wearing dark sunglasses, arms crossed, in the months following the coup that deposed Salvador Allende typifies one impression of the Chilean armed forces as anti-communist soldiers whose actions terrorized one sector of society and benefited another. This study aims to move beyond that one-dimensional impression to a fuller appreciation of the armed forces' foundational ideas, institutional memories, and unifying narratives.

Often, the military appears in the existing body of scholarship as a single man - Augusto Pinochet - or as a handful of leaders in the army, navy, and air force. Yet, Pinochet could not govern without the support of the military and he had that support for a reason, not least of all because he spoke the cultural language of his colleagues and shared with them a set of values, experiences, and traditions. A shared outlook explains, in part, why Pinochet continued to receive military support during periods of national crisis.

Over the past ten years, English-speaking historians of Chile have studied the experiences of workers, peasants, women, indigenous people, and middle class reformers in the twentieth century, exploring a range of themes such as youth culture, gender, memory, nationalism, and popular resistance to dictatorship.¹ In this body of scholarship,

¹ Alison J. Bruey, "Organizing Community: Defying Dictatorship in Working Class Santiago de Chile, 1973-1983", (PhD diss., Yale University, 2007). Steve J. Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds: memory struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). Florencia E. Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood: the Mapuche community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean state, 1906-2001*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005). Peter Winn, editor, *Victims of the Chilean Miracle* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). Heidi Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict: the politics of gender, sexuality, and*

the Chilean military has been an important political actor, but hardly a subject of cultural interest or fine grain historical analysis.² A good deal of what has been written about the Chilean military in the second half of the twentieth century is general or comparative in scope.³ This study aims to redress that lacuna.

BACKGROUND

In the nineteenth century Latin America's army and navy officers came from aristocratic backgrounds and functioned, in large part, as political extensions of their countries' elite landowning families. With the onset of industrialization that dynamic changed; officers began to specialize in branches of modern military science at professional academies where they advanced in rank according to impersonal rules rather than political connections. Increasingly, officers came from the middle sectors of society rather than the traditional oligarchies. Moreover, many officers began to see their institutions as embodiments of the nation-state with a special role ensuring peaceful and

labor in the Chilean agrarian reform, 1950-1973 (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). Margaret Power, *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende, 1964-1973* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002). Patrick Barr-Melej, *Reforming Chile: cultural politics, nationalism, and the rise of the middle class* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). Thomas Miller Klubock, *Contested Communities: class, gender, and politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1951* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998). In Chile, the most influential historical monographs of late have had a similar focus on popular subjects. See Gabriel Salazar Vergara, *Labradores, Peones y Proletarios: formación y crisis de la sociedad popular chilena del siglo XIX* (Santiago: LOM, 2000). Rafael Sagredo and Cristián Gazmuri, editors, *Historia de la Vida Privada en Chile*, Vols. I-III (Santiago: Taurus-Aguilar, 2005-2008).

² There are several exceptions in Spanish. See Verónica Valdivia Ortiz de Zárte, *El Golpe Después del Golpe: Leigh v. Pinochet Chile 1960-1980* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2003). Jorge A. Magasich, *Los Que Dijeron "NO": historia del movimiento de los marinos antigolpistas de 1973* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2008).

³ Frederick M. Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History: essays on civil-military relations, 1810-1973* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976). Alain Rouquié, *The Military and the State in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). Brian Loveman, *For la Patria: politics and the armed forces in Latin America* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1999).

orderly national development. Departing from this conviction, officers might feel a primordial loyalty to the nation (as they defined it) or to their own institution rather than elected civilian governments.

The first generation of scholars to write about South American militaries in the second half of the twentieth century underscored the changing social origin of its officers. No longer an exclusive guardian of elite interests, John J. Johnson thought these officers might play a role implementing progressive structural reforms in their societies. After all, many soldiers wished to promote industrial development and rectify the deep economic inequalities of their societies. Johnson also predicted military involvement in politics would likely diminish as professional development proceeded.⁴ Edwin Lieuwen was less optimistic. He thought officers might be prone to enter politics in order to satisfy institutional desires for modern military equipment in resource-scarce societies.⁵

The rise of military governments in Brazil (1964), Argentina (1966), Peru (1968), Uruguay (1973) and Chile (1973) raised a number of questions. South America had a long history of military men entering politics, but the new military regimes expressed an institutional outlook rather than the ideas of a single man. Juntas promised to remain in power until their long-range political and economic goals had been achieved. What ideology underpinned this widespread phenomenon? Was it an outgrowth of professional development or the lack thereof? What forces motivated military regimes to undertake

⁴ See John J. Johnson, *The Military and Society in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).

⁵ See Edwin Lieuwen, *Arms and Politics in Latin America* (New York: Praeger, 1960).

grim campaigns of violence against the left? Did military coups express middle class fears about the specter of left wing revolution? Was the Pentagon responsible for the rise of these military regimes?

Guillermo O'Donnell, an influential political scientist, interpreted these 'bureaucratic authoritarian' governments as instruments of transnational capitalism whose role in the world system was to discipline labor movements, defeat left wing subversion, and empower technocrats to make possible the flow of transnational capital to Latin America.⁶ In other words, officers represented the interests of global capitalism, backed up by the Pentagon.

Another group of scholars insisted that social forces alone could not explain everything about military behavior. In the twentieth century South American militaries had become increasingly autonomous political actors, cultivating their own doctrines and perceptions rather than responding exclusively to any one social class.⁷ My study follows in this tradition of scholarship, taking seriously the capacity of ideas, values, and traditions to influence military actions.

PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS

The collective memory and historical imagination of the Chilean armed forces provided one framework through which to understand the meaning and purpose of military rule from 1973 to 1990. It also contributed to institutional cohesion during

⁶ See Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: studies in South American politics* (Berkeley: University of California, 1973).

⁷ See Frederick M. Nunn, "A Latin American State Within the State: the politics of the Chilean Army, 1924-1927," *The Americas*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (1970). By the same author, *Yesterday's Soldiers: European military professionalism in South America, 1890-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

periods of crisis. For example, the junta resolved to avoid the anti-military civilian backlash and political instability that had occurred after General Carlos Ibáñez's abrupt departure from power in 1931. Similarly, the military's perception of itself as undefeated in war shaped the regime's demand for an honorable exit from power. Officers refused to 'surrender unconditionally' to their civilian opponents.

After the Second World War, South American countries entered into a defensive alliance with the United States. As a result, the United States provided military hardware to its allies under the condition that US planes, ships, and tanks be used for hemispheric defense. Furthermore, thousands of South American soldiers received professional training at war colleges across the United States from the fifties to the seventies. This fact is a major point of controversy in the historiography.

This study contends that US military influence in Chile was indeed important, but it did not enter an institutional vacuum.⁸ Chilean soldiers had a point of view rooted in their own national traditions, history, and place in the world as an underdeveloped state. Additionally, militaries in Brazil, Argentina, Peru and Chile are poorly compared to those in Central America or the Caribbean. The first group had sophisticated training facilities, consolidated anti-communism sentiments, and professional services long before American influence. By contrast, Caribbean and Central American militaries belonged to a group of less developed countries where the United States exercised a preponderant

⁸ One influential hypothesis put forward by several Chilean political scientists was that the Chilean armed forces lacked an official doctrine regarding their place in society from 1932 to 1973 and as a result of this 'orfandad ideológica' the Pentagon stepped in and filled the ideological vacuum with its own National Security Doctrine. See Augusto Varas, *Los Militares en el Poder: Régimen y Gobierno Militar en Chile 1973-1986* (Santiago: FLASCO, 1987).

influence by the late nineteenth century. In the historiography, there is a clear tendency to exaggerate the power of the United States in Southern Cone and presume a rather facile notion of the United States as an imperial master with an unlimited ability to achieve its objectives. US military influence does not explain everything about the ideology of South American soldiers in the sixties and seventies.⁹

Chilean officers responded to events around the globe as citizens of an underdeveloped state in the southern hemisphere. For example, the Chilean military sent observers to the Arab-Israeli (1967, 1973) and Indo-Pakistani conflicts (1965, 1971) to extract insights about the conditions facing semi-industrial states. These wars, fought by underdeveloped states with limited conventional forces, underlined the importance of strategic intelligence, decisive action at the outbreak of conflict, and the role of superior training and will. Officers also concluded that smaller nations could expect few benefits from international arbiters such as the United Nations. This perspective should caution any assumption that the United States exercised a preponderant influence over Chile's war academies.¹⁰

At the outset of Salvador Allende's socialist government, Chilean soldiers were not waiting in the wings to unleash a campaign of terror and violence on the left.

⁹ See Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: the rise of disaster capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007). Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the rise of the new imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006). Lesley Gill, *The School of the Americas: military training and political violence in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

¹⁰ It is well known that the intellectual foundation for Brazil's military assumption of power in 1964 was homegrown in that nation's Superior War College. See Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion," in *Armies and Politics in Latin America*, edited by Abraham F. Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch, (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1986), 134-150.

Officers had misgivings about the Popular Unity coalition and its relationship to international communism, but it was unclear what a Marxist government operating inside of a liberal democracy would do. Would the coalition dramatically amplify class contradictions, or mostly carry out structural reforms that increased the state's sovereignty over strategic resources, a long held geopolitical goal of the entire armed forces? On this last point, a sizable portion of the armed forces considered aspects of Allende's agenda highly desirable.

By 1972 a consensus began to develop that it was necessary to overthrow Allende and assume control of the state. What circumstances and specific events led to this consensus? How did officers change their initial perception of the Popular Unity coalition from a *potentially* dangerous government to a direct threat to the nation's historical and cultural identity? My dissertation restores a measure of contingency to the period from 1970 to 1973 by examining the coexistence of ideas that favored and did not favor military involvement in politics. On the one hand, the idea that Chile's soldiers were guardians of the nation with the obligation to intervene in politics if dire circumstances threatened the nation's historical character antedated the 1973 coup, as did elements of a national security doctrine that legitimized a role for the military in the repression of internal enemies. However, these ideas were attenuated by the strength of constitutionalism, economic nationalism, and the idea of Chilean exceptionalism, all of which proved a substantial barrier to intervention.

One important part of the military's twentieth century intellectual culture was the idea that nation-states experienced periodic cycles of decay and renewal. Pinochet

believed the 1973 coup resembled the last military intervention in 1924, when officers had implemented far-reaching reforms at a historical turning point. This history strengthened a notion that Chilean soldiers had the periodic responsibility to eliminate exhausted political economies or correct the behavior of irresponsible civilians. By the late eighties, this narrative had matured into a coherent structure that provided one important buttress for the continuity and durability of Pinochet's authoritarian government. Drawing on Chile's conservative tradition and preexisting currents in military thought, this discourse put the armed forces at the very center of the nation's development, from colonial times to the present.

The economic restructuring that took place under Augusto Pinochet constitutes another point of controversy in the historiography. The University of Chicago trained economists who led this transformation are sometimes characterized as agents of an American conspiracy to impose economic liberalism across the Americas rather than South Americans who rejected the prevailing economic orthodoxy in their own country in favor of an entirely different economic philosophy. Milton Friedman - the guru of monetarism, free markets, and deregulation - is sometimes held up as the man who single-handedly convinced Augusto Pinochet that it was necessary to implement an economic shock plan during a forty-five minute meeting he had with the dictator in 1975.¹¹ These interpretations cast Chileans as mere agents or victims of American imperialism and completely ignore the complicated internal process that led to capitalist

¹¹ Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 98-99.

restructuring. This dissertation works against the above tendency by identifying values and ideas in military culture that favored market reforms and those that that did not.

The transition from state capitalism to free market economics was a process that generated controversy in the military. Navy officers wanted to maintain subsidies for the merchant marine. Professors at the army academy of war thought it was dangerous to privatize strategic utilities such as telecommunications. The air force high command, with two exceptions, condemned the entire neoliberal project. Although we know a good deal about the civilian technocrats who advised Pinochet, we know less about the economic orientations of the military prior to the coup. Mapping these orientations in pre-coup intellectual culture provides an insight into military politics during the first five years of military rule and sheds light on the armed forces' eventual conversion to neoliberalism.

After 1974, Chile's relationship with the United States turned very sour. The American Congress slapped the Pinochet regime with an arms embargo as a result of human rights violations (the Kennedy Amendment) and this arms embargo had multiple consequences. It exposed Chile's over reliance on one arms supplier and seriously jeopardized Chile's national security from 1974 to 1978 when conflict with Peru and Argentina was a distinct possibility. It also compelled officers to rethink assumptions about the international arms market and improve the country's arms industry.

In the seventies and eighties, Chile was an international pariah, but international isolation did not weaken the regime. More than anything it led to a siege mentality inside the armed forces and reinforced a conviction that Chile could only rely on itself for

economic development and national security. These perceptions also magnified the military's push to lessen all forms of external dependence whether economic, technological, or intellectual. All three services expanded the manufacture of weapons and achieved a new level of material self-sufficiency. During the dictatorship, the era of American influence came to a definitive conclusion.

In the long run, the Pinochet dictatorship was not weakened by arms embargos or UN resolutions. Rather, international isolation fostered a certain unity of purpose and institutional agreement that Chile was the victim of a psychological attack originating in communist states or their allies living in Western liberal democracies. As such, this pressure confirmed the 'communist threat'.

A close examination of Chile's diplomatic history should caution any perception that the United States 'created' the Pinochet regime. On the contrary, Washington *failed* to achieve many of its policy goals from 1970 to 1990. The CIA did not prevent Allende from reaching power in 1970 and proved incapable of decisively influencing events from 1970 to 1973. American legislators punished the Pinochet regime for human rights violations in 1975 with a comprehensive arms embargo, but the regime circumvented that punitive measure. In 1988, the Reagan Administration claimed a share of credit for Pinochet's departure from power, but evidence shows that Washington played a limited role in that political outcome.

When compared to military government in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay, the Pinochet regime stands out as fairly exceptional. It set its own timetable for a transition to democracy and left power from a position of strength with the economy

growing and institutional unity in tact. To explain Chile's divergent political trajectory political scientists have drawn attention to the concentration of power in Pinochet's hands and the Chilean military's traditions of discipline and apoliticism that muted inter-service conflicts and internal power struggles.¹² This dissertation draws attention to several historical factors, often overlooked, that contributed to the remarkable strength and durability of the Pinochet regime. For example, ongoing international isolation, military threats from Peru and Argentina, and serious domestic protests pulled the armed forces together and fostered cohesion.

SOURCE MATERIALS

Army, navy, and air force journals constitute the principal source base for this study because of their regular publication and widespread internal consumption.¹³ As the chief outlet for officers to write and reflect about a wide array of issues related to their profession, defense journals reveal political orientations, core values, beliefs and assumptions shared by officers in all three branches. Articles written about political initiatives like Alliance for Progress, international conflict, or the spread of military regimes in the Western Hemisphere reveal how officers were embedded in various contexts, national and international, and how they reacted to a changing world. Journals

¹² See Karen L. Remmer, "Nepatrimonialism: the politics of military rule in Chile, 1973-1987," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1989).

¹³ From 1950 to 1990, I surveyed *El Memorial del Ejército de Chile* (bimonthly), *Revista de la Marina* (bimonthly), and the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* (quarterly). After 1973, several new publications emerged including *Armas y Servicios*, a journal for army NCOs and subaltern officers, *Minerva*, an air force journal dedicated to professional matters, *Revista Chilena de Geopolítica* and *Seguridad Nacional*, which subsequently changed its name to *Política y Geoestrategia*. I have not chosen to analyze the professional journal of the Carabineros de Chile because its content was more focused on social services, obituaries, death, and institutional issues unrelated to international contexts, development, geopolitics, etc.

shaped the boundaries of acceptable military thought and defined the parameters of one important discursive field.

A 1906 editorial in the army's *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, described the defense journal's purpose to keep the institution current with respect to modern 'military science, through an organ of publication in which the officer can air issues of common interest.'¹⁴ On the occasion of the *Revista de la Marina*'s 86th anniversary, general staff editors remarked:

The creation of this magazine arose from an evident need. On the one hand it was necessary to have an organ to diffuse modern nautical techniques that evolve over time as a result of scientific evolution; on the other hand, the navy needed a publication that channeled the intellectual concerns of its members.¹⁵

Edited by the general staff of each military service, articles reflect what was being taught at their respective war academies and what Chilean soldiers brought home from training missions in United States, Italy, Britain or as observers of conflicts in far off places like Pakistan, Israel or Vietnam. The editorial staff reserved the right to publish contributions they thought were fit for publication while filtering out any content they thought was unfit for dissemination. In this respect, the journals are not good sources for specific details about internal tensions, personal rivalries, inter-service and intra-service conflict, although those dynamics can be inferred. To offset these limitations, I have drawn on newspapers, print interviews, and the minutes of secret legislative sessions of the junta after 1973. Also significant has been the recent publication of memoirs by key

¹⁴ Taken from Alejandro San Francisco and Angel Soto, *Un Siglo De Pensamiento Militar en Chile: El Memorial Del Ejército, 1906-2006* (Santiago: Ediciones Centro de Estudios Bicentenario, 2006), 12.

¹⁵ "Editorial," *Revista de la Marina* No. 683 (1971).

participants in the military government, which has added to our understanding of the personalities and internal politics of the era.¹⁶

In each issue of these journals, a forewarning indicated that the concepts or ideas expressed by authors in no way represented the official doctrine of the general staff of the army, navy, or air force. Authors were exclusively responsible for the content of their contribution. As such, defense journals provided a forum for the military's most capable minds to reflect on Chilean history, national problems and professional matters. To encourage contributions, army, navy, and air force general staffs provided awards of money to articles deemed outstanding.

Military journals expressed the ideas of a relatively small group of individuals, but certainly not an insignificant one. Contributors were mostly majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels followed by a significant number of retired officers. Many published articles came from officers studying at their respective institution's academy of war where officers had the time to formulate analyses of international relations, contemporary wars, history and problems related to national development.

For the Chilean armed forces academic achievement was one path to career advancement. The army's official history observes that seniority was one path to advancement, but academic excellence helped an official's career and won him the

¹⁶ Patricia Arancibia Clavel, and Francisco Palart Páez. *Sergio de Castro: el arquitecto del modelo económico chileno* (Santiago: Editorial Biblioteca Americana, 2007). Patricia Arancibia Clavel, and Francisco Balart Paez, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert* (Santiago: Editorial Biblioteca Americana, 2006). Patricia Arancibia Clavel, *Conversando con Roberto Kelly V.: recuerdos de una vida* (Santiago: Editorial Biblioteca Americana, 2005). Patricia Arancibia Clavel, and Isabel de la Maza Cave, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio* (Santiago: La Tercera-Mondadori, 2003).

respect of his peers.¹⁷ Each of the commanders in chief of the armed forces in 1973 - Augusto Pinochet, José Toribio Merino, and Gustavo Leigh - had all published several articles in their respective defense journals prior to reaching the top of their professions.

THEORY AND DEFINITIONS

Political scientists analyze military governments from three basic frameworks.¹⁸ First, how do officers derive maximum benefits from political action or inaction (rational calculation)? Second, what institutional rules, patterns, and traditions affect military politics (institutional analysis)? Third, what ideas, beliefs, and attitudes influence political behavior (cultural analysis)? With respect to this final 'subjectivist' approach, David Pion-Berlin writes:

For subjectivists, military views matter. Whether these views are held by the entire institution or by a few, their content must be unveiled...If soldiers come to believe a premise, whether it is self-serving or not, their behavior is more likely to be influenced by it.¹⁹

A principal contention of this study is that the historical imagination, myths and unifying narratives of Chile's military influenced political outcomes. The notion of Chile having an exceptional democracy encouraged military leaders to stay out of politics in 1970. Similarly, the notion of being undefeated in war shaped the military's view of their political opponents in the eighties. Even though words and rhetoric can mask underlying political or economic motives, this type of cultural analysis provides great insight into the history of the Pinochet regime.

¹⁷ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, Vol. 8, (Santiago: Estado Mayor General del Ejército, 1983), 35.

¹⁸ Consult the introduction in David Pion-Berlin, editor, *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: new analytical perspectives* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 25

This study also draws from the discipline of intellectual history as it relates to the expression, preservation, and change of ideas over time. Stefan Collini defines intellectual history as the search for ‘ideas, thoughts, arguments, beliefs, assumptions, attitudes and preoccupations that together made up the intellectual or reflective life of previous societies.’²⁰ David Hollinger describes intellectual history as the study of ‘communities of discourse’ in historical time as these communities pursue complex answers to their most pressing questions.²¹ Intellectual historians, remarks Laurence Veysey, assume that ideas are historical agents, not subsumed by material or psychological forces lying beyond them.²² In other words, ideas have a life of their own and a causal importance even if it can be difficult to measure the precise casual importance of those ideas.

Traditionally, intellectual history has meant the exegesis of master works by ‘high thinkers’ like Isaac Newton, Martin Luther or John Locke. In the American context, this would mean people like Simón Bolívar, Thomas Jefferson, or Henry David Thoreau. Since Chile’s armed forces contain no single intellectual who stands above the rest, officers will be studied as members of a discursive community whose minds interacted – a social phenomenon – and reflected values, beliefs, perceptions, and ideas. Officers did not agree on everything, but a shared vocation provoked similar questions and united officers in a single discursive field.

²⁰ Juliet Gardiner, editor, *What Is History Today?* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International, 1988), 105.

²¹ John Higham and Paul K. Conkin, editors, *New Directions in American Intellectual History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 42-63.

²² *Ibid.* 3-26.

I concur with Quentin Skinner's assertion that intellectual history ought to illuminate how ideas are used in a particular era. Thus, intellectual historians engage, not only in textual analysis, the text all by itself, but also try to understand what an author was refuting, denying, or affirming at the time he or she wrote the text.²³ In this respect, Skinner's approach insists that the text should be understood as an act with performative force intended to persuade an audience of something at a particular moment in history. If we accept these premises, the author's intended audience and the discursive context become important. Thus, the intellectual life of the Chilean armed forces cannot be separated from the nation's political and economic life.

In recent decades, critical theory has argued that it is presumptuous for scholars to assume they can know an author's intention with any certainty let alone how a text might have been interpreted at a particular moment in historical time.²⁴ The postmodern critique contains a measure of truth but it does not mean historians should abandon all attempts to be objective, only that they ought to be aware of various issues surrounding reception, intention, and interpretation.

²³ Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory*, Vol. 8 (1969): 3-53.

²⁴ Martin Jay, *Force Fields: between intellectual history and cultural critique* (London: Routledge, 1993), 158-166.

Part One

CHAPTER I

The History and Historical Imagination of the Chilean Armed Forces

The attitude toward the past is the central element of any ideology.¹

Yuri Afanasyev

When Pedro de Valdivia left the relative safety of Peru in 1540 to conquer the forbidding lands south of the Inca Empire, his expedition promised hardship. Five years earlier, Diego de Almagro had assembled five hundred Spanish soldiers and several thousand Indian allies to begin the conquest of Chile, but from beginning to end, Almagro's campaign was a disaster. Thousands died of exposure crossing the Andes and when his expedition reached Chile's temperate heartland, it became apparent that the country had few prospects for profitable conquest: little gold and hostile Indians. Returning to Peru, Almagro told everyone the land should be 'shunned like the plague'.²

Undaunted by Almagro's warnings, Valdivia marched into Chile's central valley and defeated a native army on the site he was to build Santiago de la Nueva Extremadura. In a letter to Charles V, Valdivia wrote that, 'this land is such that there is none better in the world for living in and settling, this I say because it is very flat, very healthy and very pleasant.'³ The Mediterranean climate may have been pleasant, but conquest of Chile

¹ "Russia's Past: the rewriting of history," *The Economist*, November 8, 2007.

² Consult Diego Barros Arana, *Historia General de Chile, Historia General de Chile* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universitaria: Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana, 1999), vol. I, chapters 3-11.

³ Pedro de Valdivia, *Cartas de Pedro de Valdivia que Tratan del Descubrimiento y Conquista de Chile* (Santiago: Fondo Histórico y Bibliográfico José Toribio Medina, 1953), 42.

was not. In 1541 native warriors burned Santiago to the ground and destroyed the ship Valdivia had ordered to be built for the purpose of establishing contact with Peru. Over the next two years, the colony's settlers lived a frightened impoverished existence, nervously guarding their crops and livestock from the constant threat of attack by indigenous warriors. A contingent of Valdivia's men wanted to abandon the harsh territory, but Chile's conqueror resolved to stay and complete the conquest. He sent a lieutenant overland to acquire supplies and recruit more soldiers in Peru.

Over the next five years Santiago's defenses were consolidated, but once Valdivia marched south his soldiers met fierce resistance from Indians they called Araucanians (alternatively Mapuches) who learned to neutralize European advantages by attacking the bearded invaders on rugged terrain, at night, in the rain, and by pushing Spaniards off their horses with lances. A celebrated Mapuche chief named Lautaro quickly perfected the tactic of separating his men into dispersed units that would successively push forward and fall back to exhaust Spanish cavalry and diminished its maneuverability. Moreover, Araucanians formed a loose confederation of tribes without a central state and absolute monarch, which meant Valdivia could not defeat a single chief and place himself atop a set of preexisting imperial structures as Hernán Cortes and Francisco Pizarro had done in Mexico and Peru. No matter how many Mapuche chiefs the Spanish captured, resistance continued.⁴

⁴ *Historia del Ejército de Chile* (Santiago: Estado Mayor General del Ejército, 1980) vol. I, 25-30. Spanish soldier Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga participated in the conquest of southern Chile. In his epic poem *La Araucana*, he celebrated the martial skills of Mapuche warriors and marveled at the simple fact that they lacked conceptual categories to comprehend monarchy. Famously, Ercilla wrote 'Por rey jamás regido'.

In 1553, Lautaro routed Valdivia's army at the Battle of Tucapel and took the conquistador prisoner. According to one legend, Indians chiefs poured molten gold down his throat. In another account, which may be true, Indian chiefs roasted and consumed Valdivia's limbs in full view of the conquistador before eating his heart and fashioning his cranium into a pitcher for drinking the local alcoholic beverage Chicha.

Over the next four decades Araucanian patriots systematically destroyed every European settlement south of Concepción - the southernmost extent of Spanish dominion - and Concepción itself was subject to raids, harassment, and the persistent threat of destruction. In this remote fringe of the empire, the king's soldiers had few prospects to become wealthy *encomenderos* and every prospect to die grisly deaths at the hands of bellicose Indians.⁵ On the Iberian Peninsula soldiers were known to say 'I'd rather be sent to the galleys than go to Chile'.

Recognizing that successful conquest was at least temporarily impossible, the Spanish military governor Alonso de Ribera convinced Phillip III to send a permanent garrison to maintain a frontier with Indians who had proven themselves the equals of any European soldier. At the height of the Spain's global power, the Crown was forced to recognize the independence and the sovereignty of the Mapuche people. Only with the advent of industrial technology in the 1880s would the Chilean state finally acquire dominion over Araucanía. According to the Chilean army, this violent frontier shaped the colonial state and forged the nation's character.

⁵ In return for military service, the Spanish Crown granted conquistadors the right to exact labor and tribute from native people living on tracts of land called *encomiendas*.

This chapter examines Chile's historical development in the colonial and republican eras, highlighting the military's use of the past to explain and define itself in the twentieth century. Officers extracted a set of models from the nation's early republican history and devoted special attention to a select group of national figures considered men of intuitive genius, misunderstood in their time, but posthumously recognized as visionary statesmen.

In the late nineteenth century, the Chile's armed forces began a process of professional transformation that changed their structure, composition, and attitudes towards state and society. These changes underpinned the military's intervention in politics from 1924 to 1932. It is essential to understand this period in order to understand the generation of officers who reached maturity in the nineteen sixties and seventies.

One important aspect of the period from 1945 to 1959 was the rapid rise of American military influence in South America. However, it is important to underline that as important as American influence was, it never overwhelmed national traditions or made Chilean soldiers into pawns of the Pentagon.

THE COLONIAL CRUCIBLE

Tough Indians, violent earthquakes, and geographic isolation were part and parcel of the colonial experience in Chile. Settlers had to deal with the persistent threats of natural catastrophes, marauding pirates, and indigenous armies. According to one interpretation, these factors combined with the colony's general poverty produced a

Creole elite more sober and moderate in its habits than elsewhere in the Americas.⁶ According to the army's institutional history, Chile's *mestizaje* – the mixing of Indians and Europeans – was fundamentally different from other parts of the Spanish America because it took place in the context of war and acute geographic isolation. In this interpretation, freedom loving Araucanians and hardy Spanish soldiers engaged in a dynamic struggle for space that did not result in indigenous submission to and cultural isolation from Europeans, but an entirely new people.⁷

The army's institutional history describes the army as the nation's fullest expression of itself, and a living link to the country's Araucanian patriots and Spanish conquistadors. It also puts warfare at the heart of colonial development, suggesting that the southern frontier and by extension the entire country, was a nexus of practically uninterrupted conflict from the Conquest until 1808. In truth, a stable aristocratic society emerged in the central valley, marked by very rooted social hierarchies.⁸ Similarly, the Araucanian frontier was not always embroiled in violent skirmishes; there were regular intervals of calm that allowed Indians and colonists to engage in mutually beneficial commercial and cultural exchange.⁹

⁶ A succinct outline of these ideas can be found in *Armas y Servicios*. See Editorial, 'Imperativo Histórico del 11 de Septiembre,' *Armas y Servicios* No. 3, (1975).

⁷ For a first hand account of the Araucanian frontier see Catalina de Erauso, *Lieutenant Nun: memoir of a Basque transvestite in the new world*, trans. Michele Stepto and Gabriel Stepto (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 18-25.

⁸ Arnold J. Bauer, *Chilean Rural Society from the Spanish conquest to 1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975). Bauer sees the Chilean countryside as particularly marked by the degree of social tranquility in comparison to other parts of Latin America.

⁹ Sergio Villalobos, *Historia del Pueblo Chileno*, (Santiago: Instituto Chileno de Estudios Humanísticos, 2000).

Francisco Antonio Encina's twenty-volume national history, completed in 1952, offered a 'blood and soil' view of Chile's historical development where the country's Basque-Castilian bloodlines and particular *mestizaje* determined the nation's trajectory, its vices and virtues.¹⁰ Encina's racial determinism had an influence on the army's official history, which offered the following assessment of the colonial period:

Not only did two races blend together, but also the Chilean soldier, heir to the formidable military capabilities of the Araucanian warrior and Spanish soldier, was born. It is, therefore, not a stretch to say that the Army of Chile had its origins during the Spanish Conquest rather than Independence. [Furthermore] the nation's military spirit is not an exclusive virtue of the armed forces; all Chileans carry this potent inheritance from our ancestors.¹¹

Interestingly, navy authors argue that Chile's particular ethnic composition had the lamentable effect of turning its people away from the sea. Captain Carlos De Giorgis explains:

Generations of Chileans have ignored our maritime reality, perhaps due to the unconscious inheritance of our Spanish and Araucanian ancestors. Inherited terrestrial traditions have predominated over maritime ones ever since Spain, in the centuries prior to the discovery of the America, fought and conquered Moorish armies by land.¹²

Such sweeping arguments about the formation of the Chilean character might seem a bit dubious, but Chile's geographic isolation, material poverty, and southern frontier did indeed shape the country's historical development. The frontier required the Chilean state to direct multiple, overlapping activities related to defense. In the central valley

¹⁰ Francisco Antonio Encina, *Historia de Chile desde la Prehistoria hasta 1891* (Santiago: Editorial Nascimento, 1940-1952), vols. 1-20. See also Charles C. Griffin, "Francisco Encina and Revisionism in Chilean History," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (1957).

¹¹ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. I, 211.

¹² Captain Carlos De Giorgis B., "Chile, la Geopolítica y el Mar," *Revista de la Marina* No. 732 (1979).

European settlers and native peoples blended, relatively quickly into a homogenous aristocratic society. These conditions, argues historian Mario Góngora, defined the Chilean state as matrix of the nationality unlike Peru and Mexico where ‘large indigenous cultures prefigured the viceroyalties and the republics.’¹³ Góngora points out that Peru and Mexico’s Indians tended to remain clustered in autonomous villages where they paid taxes to the King and received occasional visits from itinerant priests, but on the whole lived in isolation from European society. By contrast, Chile’s Indians were either fully independent or fully subjugated and assimilated.

Góngora also draws attention to the fact that every generation of Chileans experienced wartime victories after the struggle for independence, beginning with the war with the Peru/Bolivia Confederation (1836-1839), a new war with Spain (1864-1866), and the War of the Pacific (1879-1883). This succession of nineteenth century victories, Góngora argues, did more than simply increase the state’s national territory; they gave birth to a confident nationality imbued with patriotic sentiments. Although the illiterate masses may not have shared in this confidence, the legacy of military victory from the nineteenth century definitely endowed political elites and military officers with a sense of their nation’s superior institutions and martial prowess. Moreover, the military’s role in territorial expansion contributed to an important idea. Gregory Weeks writes,

A widespread consensus exists within the military about the foundation of the Chilean army. It was established in 1603, when King Phillip III of Spain decided that a permanent force was needed to quell native uprisings, although the precise

¹³ Mario Góngora, *Ensayo Histórico Sobre la Noción de Estado en Chile en los Siglos XIX y XX* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 2003), 71. The importance Góngora assigns to the Chilean frontier calls to mind Frederick Jackson Turner’s famous thesis about North American development.

date is not the key issue. More important is the army's assertion that the institution either predates or coincides with Chilean independence; in other words, the army is so closely tied to the creation of the nation that the two can hardly be distinguished...By asserting that its roots are sunk so deep in the national soil, the army has claimed a permanent and prominent position in national politics and so views itself not as a spectator but as an actor on the historical stage.¹⁴

When Augusto Pinochet received the title Captain General of the Republic it was an obvious reference to Chile's early military governors called captain generals who enjoyed broad powers to found cities, distribute land, and organize the economy among other duties. The title also compared Pinochet to Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile's great patriot of independence who had held the same title in the years immediately after independence from Spain. Pinochet, it well known, believed his sixteen-year presidency and role modifying states structures was entirely consistent with other military governors in the nation's past.¹⁵

O'HIGGINS AND THE PORTALIAN PARADIGM

Two personalities dominate the nation's first steps as a fledgling republic: Bernardo O'Higgins and Diego Portales. Military journals devoted enormous attention to these two personalities; O'Higgins as the man who consolidated Chile's independence and Portales as the *éminence grise* who founded a stable political order that distinguished Chile from other Spanish American republics. In the military imagination, both men

¹⁴ Gregory Weeks, *The Military and Politics in Post-authoritarian Chile* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 25. See also *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. I, 211. Carlos Molina Johnson, *Chile: Los Militares y la Política* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1989). Eduardo Aldunate Herman, *El Ejército de Chile, 1603-1970: actor y o espectador en la vida nacional* (Santiago: Comandancia en Jefe del Ejército, Dept. Comunicacional, 1993).

¹⁵ General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, "Participación del Ejército en la Organización y Desarrollo del Estado de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 436 (1990).

were visionary statesmen who guided their ungrateful countrymen through moments of peril and left behind strategic visions of the future. O'Higgins who believed in the cause of pan-Americanism urged a collective approach to regional security while Portales died a fervent nationalist who believed Chile had to maintain a 'balance of power' with its neighbors. Contributing to their symbolic power, both men were tragic figures; O'Higgins was forced into exile and Portales fell victim to political assassination.

Born in Chillán, Bernardo O'Higgins was the illegitimate son of Ambrosio O'Higgins, an Irish bureaucrat who eventually became viceroy of Peru. Although Don Ambrosio had little contact with his son in the final decades of the Spanish Empire he provided for his education in England where Bernardo acquired liberal convictions and exposure to the Enlightenment. This period of study imbued the future liberator of Chile with a firm belief in progress and man's perfectibility.¹⁶ Before returning to America, O'Higgins also met Argentine Creole José de San Martín in Cádiz Spain, where the pair cemented an important and lasting friendship.

Chilean independence is long and complicated story. For this study, it is sufficient to highlight that Chilean patriots declared independence from Spain in 1810, several years later they were forced to flee across the Andes after suffering a major defeat by royalist forces. Down but certainly not out, José de San Martín and Bernardo O'Higgins mustered a patriot army in Mendoza Argentina, crossed into Chile and decisively defeated Spanish forces outside of Santiago at the Battle of Chacabuco in 1817. Following this important victory, O'Higgins became supreme director of the

¹⁶ See Jay Kinsbruner, *Bernardo O'Higgins*, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968).

republic, saddled with the task of defeating royalist forces in the south and funding a naval expedition to Peru. San Martín turned his attention, exclusively to the liberation of Peru.

Both the army and navy claim O'Higgins as a patron saint. In 1817, he established the *Escuela Militar* to train army officials and the following year he hired foreign officers from diverse parts of Europe to develop Chile's first naval squadron. This navy, led by Scotsman Lord Thomas Cochrane, defeated royalist holdouts in southern Chile and then moved north to deliver a final blow to the Spanish Empire in Peru.¹⁷

Military thinkers celebrate O'Higgins as master strategist who understood the importance of sea power for control over the Straits of Magellan as one key to ensuring Latin America's security from any future Spanish threats.¹⁸ The navy was fond of recalling O'Higgins' plans for his country's development as a maritime power that would dominate South Pacific commerce and control Atlantic Patagonia, a fact repeatedly lamented by twentieth century geopolitical theorists convinced that Argentina's control of Atlantic Patagonia was the result of short sighted nineteenth century statesmen. From the military point of view, O'Higgins was a tragic figure whose compatriots had failed to appreciate his intuitive genius.

In domestic affairs, O'Higgins never managed to reconcile his own progressive vision of republican development with the realities of a country emerging from three

¹⁷ Rodrigo Fuenzalida Bade, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario* (Santiago: Talleres Empresa Periodística "Aquí Esta", 1978), vol. I, 104-245.

¹⁸ Donald E. Worcester, *Sea Power and Chilean Independence*, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962).

hundred years of colonialism. A committed liberal, O'Higgins invited foreign merchants to set up trading houses in Valparaíso and then scandalized elite society by granting a Protestant graveyard to non-Catholic merchants. Although practical by nature, O'Higgins also had an idealistic belief that laws and constitutions could wipe away colonial structures without incurring the wrath of the traditional landowning aristocracy that disapproved of his intention to separate Church and state, educate the *mestizo* masses, and abolish *mayorazgos*, the hereditary entails of land passed from father to first-born son.

Although no petty tyrant, O'Higgins came to believe the republic required order, stability, and enlightened policies to purge a lingering aristocratic mentality. To achieve these objectives O'Higgins felt a legal authoritarian system was the best model until the country's citizens were mature enough for liberal democracy.¹⁹ The last straw came in 1822 when O'Higgins wrote an authoritarian constitution that would have allowed him remain in power for years to come. This constitution convinced many that he was attempting to construct a legal dictatorship and shortly thereafter General Ramon Freire called for revolt.²⁰ Rather than plunge the nation into civil war O'Higgins voluntarily left the country for Peru in 1823 and died in Lima in 1842. For military officers, O'Higgins was the self-sacrificing patriot and visionary leader unjustly scorned by his own people

¹⁹ Kinsbruner, *Bernardo O'Higgins*, 234-235.

²⁰ Simon Collier, *Ideas and Politics of Chilean Independence 1808-1833* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 257-258.

who failed to recognize his genius. One group of retired naval officers described him simply as ‘sublime victim of neglect and ingratitude.’²¹

After 1973, military authors compared O’Higgins’ task of creating a new institutional structure for a society emerging from war and Hispanic colonialism to their own mission in the years after Salvador Allende’s socialist experiment. Like O’Higgins, they had inherited a society ravaged by social conflict and economic disorder and like O’Higgins they had a historical mandate to reconstruct the nation’s political, economic, and administrative foundation. In 1984 - a year of intense social protests against the military government - Rear Admiral Eri Solís wrote,

In the enormous task of reconstruction is useful and beneficial to examine the history of Chile and be inspired by the example of its great statesmen who with intuition and political acumen interpreted the national soul and the potential of the country and propelled the nation to fully develop its latent energies so that the republic achieved – at the end of last century – a distinguished position in the world community.²²

The army’s institutional history, written between 1980 and 1986, described O’Higgins as the man who faced the titanic task of organizing a naval expedition to defeat the Spanish in Peru while building republican institutions in a society emerging from centuries of colonialism.²³ The comparison to their institutional project after 1973 was always implicit. Like O’Higgins, who faced the hostility of external powers and his own shortsighted citizens, they were implementing difficult, but necessary reforms in a society wedded to an exhausted political economy.

²¹ “Escuela Naval – Caleuchano,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 617 (1960).

²² Rear Admiral Eri Solís Oyarzún, “O’Higgins y el Mar,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 758 (1984).

²³ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. III.

From 1823 to 1829, Chile suffered a period of chronic political instability. Politicians wrote three liberal Constitutions, but each failed to generate sufficient political consensus. The fact that a group of army generals kept assuming the presidency reflected the country's basic problem: creating a viable republican government with a source of legitimate authority the King of Spain had once provided. What formula could provide a strong base of executive authority to reconcile provincial interests, deal with military uprisings, and end the incessant conservative/liberal disputes?

At roughly the same time Bernardo O'Higgins departed for Peru, a Chilean businessman named Diego Portales who had been running a commercial business in Lima returned to his homeland now embroiled in political turmoil. Portales shared none of O'Higgins' high-minded idealism; he had little faith in his country's immediate ability to build a liberal democracy, which he thought 'an absurdity in countries like [Spanish America], full of vices and where the citizens lack all virtue, as is necessary in order to establish a true Republic.'²⁴

By the end of the decade, a succession of coups and counter coups - always involving military officers - generated the consensus that Chile needed order.²⁵ Portales belonged to a political faction called the *pelucones* (literally big-wigs), composed of businessmen and landowners and in 1829, he and his allies from Concepción took control

²⁴ Jay Kinsbruner, *Diego Portales: interpretative essays on the man and his times* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), 5.

²⁵ Frederick Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History: Essays on Civil-Military Relations, 1810-1973* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976), 27. The army's general history considers this era as a period of healthy civic agitation when leaders experimented to find the proper political model.

of the central government after defeating liberal general Ramon Freire at the Battle of Lircay. Immediately afterward Portales began implementing his vision for the republic.

To pacify the bandit-plagued countryside and subordinate soldiers to civilian authority, Portales established a civic militia of 25,000 men. Unlike O'Higgins whose liberal ideas offended the elite's religious sensibility, Portales specifically designated a social role for the Church, but insured it was firmly subject to civilian authority. Hardly a religious man, Portales said to Mariano Engaña, who authored much of the 1833 Constitution, 'You believe in god, I believe in priests', by which he meant Roman Catholicism was a basic pillar of shared legitimacy in Spanish America and could be used to reestablish order. In all things, Portales was practical. He wrote to his business partner that the new republic ought to have:

a strong centralizing government whose men are true models of virtue and patriotism, and who can thus set the citizens on a path to order and virtue. When they have made themselves moral, the government will come to be completely liberal, free and full of ideals where all citizens take part.²⁶

Although he did not establish a constitution based on universal ideals, Portales did set an admirable example of honesty and self-sacrifice while fulfilling his duties as a minister of state. Furthermore, he demanded the same scrupulous conduct from his peers.

Portales' vision of an authoritarian, highly centralized, impersonal state was codified in 1833 and thanks to this settlement, the country embarked on a sustained period of post independence progress while Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina suffered under

²⁶ Wikisource, 'Carta de Diego Portales a José M. Cea' March, 1822.

militarism and the rule of reckless *caudillos*.²⁷ Other factors contributed to Chile's quick achievement of political stability including a weak Church and the absence of powerful provincial interests. Simon Collier writes,

Chile in 1810 was socially and geographically compact and this must help to account for the brevity of political disorder and the speedy transition to orderly government. It might almost be said that no other Latin American country possessed the advantages of geographical compactness and social homogeneity in the same measure as Chile.²⁸

Military authors would agree that geography contributed to Chile's post independence stability but they also emphasized the exceptional leadership of early statesmen like Portales who offered an enduring model of nationalism, pragmatism, and realism, which spared the nation from decades of disorder. Furthermore, it was Portales who declared war on the Peru/Bolivia Confederation (1836-1839) at a time when few recognized its threat for Chile's national security. Although Portales' declaration of war on the Peru/Bolivia Confederation unleashed political forces that led to his assassination in 1837, his death ultimately strengthened support for the war, the political system he founded, and insured his place as a patriotic martyr for admirers.²⁹

Diego Portales remains a controversial character in Chilean history. Francisco Encina describes Portales as the man who established a successful and enduring model of

²⁷ Group Commander Francisco Acevedo Serrano, "El Advenimiento de Don Diego Portales," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 107 (1968).

²⁸ Collier, *Ideas and Politics of Chilean Independence 1808-1833*, 7.

²⁹ Andrés de Santa Cruz temporarily united Peru and Bolivia into a political confederation designed to recreate the former Incan Empire. This expansive project threatened Chile's commercial and strategic interests in the south Pacific, prompting Portales to declare war – he was defense minister at the time – even though his countrymen largely misunderstood the decision. In 1839 the Chilean army decisively defeated the Peru/Bolivia Confederation at the Battle of Yungay in northwest Peru.

government based on the principle of impersonal authority and inflexible respect for law.³⁰ One brigadier general remarked that Portales left behind the example of an intuitive statesman who eschewed formal ideology and ‘foreign theories’ in favor of practical solutions to specific problems.³¹ The army’s institutional history writes that Portales did not represent the aristocracy, but rather the needs and aspirations of the collective. For instance, he created civic militias to discipline the army and prevent political deliberation.³²

Historian Jocelyn Holt-Letelier identifies two dominant portrayals of Diego Portales; first, the reactionary who represents authoritarian continuity between colonialism and republicanism and second, the visionary genius who put the country on track for progress. For Holt-Letelier, both conceptions are limited. Instead he sees Portales as a dictator who provided a solution to the problem of authority in the post-independence period and a businessman who viewed the state as a tool for securing order for his own social class, not for establishing a legal framework of high ideals for all Chileans. He represented a historical conjuncture, not a historical project.³³

Bernardo O’Higgins and Diego Portales embody two strains of thought in military intellectual culture. O’Higgins felt pan-American unity was the correct path to prosperity

³⁰ Francisco A. Encina, *Portales: introducción a la historia de la época de Diego Portales (1830-1891)* (Santiago: Editorial Nascimento, 1964).

³¹ Brigadier General Hernán Bejares González, “Portales y Su Proyección Histórica,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 390 (1976).

³² *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. III, 140-141, 159.

³³ Alfredo Jocelyn-Holt Letelier, *El Peso de la Noche: nuestra frágil fortaleza histórica* (Santiago: Planeta, 1999), 132.

and collective security while Diego Portales focused his activities toward the creation of a strong, independent state pursuing its national interest. Howard Pittman writes ‘If O’Higgins was the father of Americanism in Chile, Diego Portales seems to be the intellectual progenitor of Chilean nationalism.’³⁴ As we will see, military thinkers vacillated between interest in pan-American projects like economic integration (O’Higgins) and the absolute conviction that Chilean security was best served by nationalism and autarky (Portales).

THE WAR OF THE PACIFIC AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The period between 1840 and 1870 has traditionally been regarded as a time of commercial expansion and steady democratic development in Chile; political parties created ideological platforms, steamships appeared in the ports, and railroads emerged in the countryside.³⁵ Chile’s elite – exceptionally cohesive and flexible by Latin American standards - learned to share power among itself in orderly fashion and proved open to new social groups such as wealthy British merchants in Valparaíso, now the South Pacific’s principal port. At the same time, the aristocratic nature of Chilean society changed little. On the estates of the central valley, one still found paternalistic *hacendados* who ruled over ‘their’ semi-permanent tenants called *inquilinos*.³⁶

³⁴ Howard Taylor Pittman, “*Geopolitics in the ABC Countries: a comparison*” (PhD diss., American University, 1981), 1055.

³⁵ Simon Collier and William F. Sater, *A History of Chile, 1808-2002* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 2004), 71-124.

³⁶ Bauer, *Chilean Rural Society from the Conquest to 1930*.

Although the middle decades of the nineteenth century could not be accurately described as a perfect portrait of political stability, the mere fact that Chile's presidents completed their terms office and handed power to elected successors generated the idea that the nation was special. Simon Collier and William F. Sater observe:

The notion of Chile as a *república modelo*, “model republic”, an example to her turbulent neighbors, became increasingly widespread in educated circles. The use of this catchphrase was sufficiently common for it to be denounced in 1861 as ‘a mania...a pretty quixotic pretension.’ Quixotic or not, it was certainly a pretension. The backward Spanish colony had become a proud little nation.³⁷

Although the masses were marginalized from political power in the middle of the century, they played a decisive role in nation's territorial expansion as draftees and willing soldiers in the War of the Pacific (1879-1883).

The Atacama Desert, a coastal area north of Chile's central valley was thinly populated and strategically unimportant until vast quantities of nitrates were discovered in the 1840s. By the 1860s, Spain, the United States, and Britain had become interested in the economic and strategic value of the region while Bolivia and Chile attempted to define their fuzzy border in a previously ignored desert. Control of these vast nitrate reserves was at stake when Chile, Peru, and Bolivia went to war.

The War of the Pacific (1879-1883) was South America's most consequential conflict in the nineteenth century. As a result of the war, Chile gained possession of the Atacama Desert and cut off Bolivia's access to the Pacific Ocean.³⁸ Revenue from nitrate

³⁷ Collier and Sater, *A History of Chile, 1808-2002*, 103.

³⁸ In 1874 a treaty between Chile and Bolivia established their border at the 24th parallel and required Chilean companies operating in the 23rd parallel to pay full taxes to Bolivia at a fixed rate for 25 years. When Bolivian president Hilarion Daza unilaterally raised the tariff the on Chilean companies operating in

mining – the war’s great prize - sustained several decades of export led growth for Chile and fostered an incipient industrialization. The war also forced Chile to abandon its claim to territories in the South Atlantic in order to keep Argentina from forming an alliance with Peru and Bolivia. Chile was now surrounded by potential adversaries on every border, which generated the preoccupation of a simultaneous attack from the combined forces of Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru.

The War of the Pacific was a bloody affair. It consumed tens of thousands of soldiers and involved modern technology including ironclad steamships, land mines, and breech loading rifles. It required the Chilean army to occupy Lima and then fight an exhausting guerilla war in the Peruvian countryside from 1881 to 1883.³⁹ From this war emerged two great heroes in military lore: navy Captain Arturo Prat and *el roto chileno*, a term that can derisively refer to a person of low socio-economic station.

Sea power proved decisive in the War of Pacific because land invasion could only begin after Chile captured the heavily armed ironclad Huáscar, the backbone of Peru’s navy. In a major engagement between the two navies, Arturo Prat won acclaim by choosing to board the armored Huáscar rather than surrender his own vessel, the corvette Esmeralda. This heroic gesture inspired his men to follow him on board and face certain death by volleys of Peruvian gunfire. To understand the naval tradition in Chile, one has

Antofagasta, a city located above the 24th parallel but dominated by Chilean capital and citizens, he had foolishly violated the 1874 accord. Santiago responded by occupying the port. Peru was drawn into this border dispute because of a secret military alliance with Bolivia. After achieving control of the seas, Chilea’s army took Iquique, Arica and then Lima in January of 1881.

³⁹ The most comprehensive account of the conflict remains Gonzalo Bulnes, *Guerra del Pacífico* (Santiago: Editorial del Pacífico, 1955-1958). In English consult William F. Sater, *Chile and the War of the Pacific* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986). By the same author, *Andean Tragedy: fighting the War of the Pacific, 1879-1884* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

to appreciate this episode in its history. Prat's death on May 21, 1879 is a patriotic holiday - *Día de las Glorias de la Marina* – and his memory, embodied in the slogan *morir o vencer* (death or victory), continues to symbolize selfless patriotic sacrifice.⁴⁰

The second great symbol of the war is the *roto chileno*, Chile's common soldier from the nation's agricultural masses who supposedly enlisted out of patriotic conviction only to endure continual hardships and receive nothing in return for his service to the nation. The reason why Chilean soldiers triumphed over larger contingents of Peruvian and Bolivian troops has been subject to different explanations ranging from a stronger sense of national sentiment to racial superiority. In truth, the best explanation is probably that ordinary Chileans entered the war with rudimentary military training in the civic militias established by Diego Portales. Moreover, the sense of hierarchy and social discipline, so ingrained in Chilean culture is likely to have played an important role in their battlefield triumphs.

In military lore the *roto chileno* is celebrated as a disciplined, long suffering figure whose Araucanian heritage and patriotic sentiments won Chile's wars. Officers celebrate the *roto chileno* as a true expression of the nation juxtaposed against its cosmopolitan elites prone to petty politicking and attachment to foreign goods and ideologies.⁴¹ In the words of General Mario López Tobar, Chilean officers and the

⁴⁰ "Editorial: el ejemplo de Prat," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 640 (1964). "Editorial: proyección histórica del 21 de Mayo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 646 (1965). See also William F. Sater, *The Heroic Image in Chile: Arturo Prat, secular saint* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

⁴¹ On the *roto chileno* see Guillermo Izquierdo Araya, "Reflexiones Históricas Sobre la Guerra del Pacífico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 731 (1979). "Editorial: el fin de una jornada," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 413 (1983).

nation's lower class citizens - *el pueblo-pueblo* - constitute the heart of the nation because they represent the only two groups truly willing to die for the fatherland.⁴² The *roto chileno* and Arturo Prat symbolize what Chile's officers wished the nation was: selfless patriots executing the orders of other selfless patriots in pursuit of national glory.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER PROFESSIONALIZATION

Chile's victory in the War of the Pacific was, in good part, a result of Peru and Bolivia's political disorder rather than the skill or superiority of Chile's military officers. Many had received commands based on political connections rather than merit and on several occasions, officers had commanded their men to take enemy positions by frontal assault rather than consider tactical maneuvers that could have saved lives. Moreover, Santiago's statesmen discovered just how unprepared the nation was to supply a large army for several years.⁴³

Chile had defeated its adversaries, but wartime deficiencies combined with the fear of a revanchist Peru, compelled president Domingo Santa María to contract Emil Körner and other Prussian trainers to modernize the Chilean army in 1885. This decision had historically significant consequences. Prior to Prussianization, the Chilean army was organized according to the Napoleonic model and romantic notions of heroic infantrymen charging adversaries head on with a fixed bayonet. Under Körner, war ceased to be the romantic enterprise of aristocrats, but rather a professional discipline based on rational

⁴² Mario López Tobar, *El 11 en la Mira de un Hawker Hunter: las operaciones y blancos aéreos de septiembre de 1973* (Santiago: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999).

⁴³ Consult William F. Sater, "Reflections on the War of the Pacific," *Bicentenario: Revista de Historia de Chile y América*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2005).

planning and mathematic precision. Most symbolic of the paradigm shift was Körner's establishment of the Academy of War in 1886, where officers studied military history, cartography, engineering, chemistry, languages, geopolitical theory, and the works of theorists like Carl von Clausewitz.⁴⁴ By 1900, goose-stepping Chilean soldiers who wore Prussian uniforms and the spiked helmets – *Pickelhauben* - of Wilhelmine Germany made quite an impression on foreign observers.

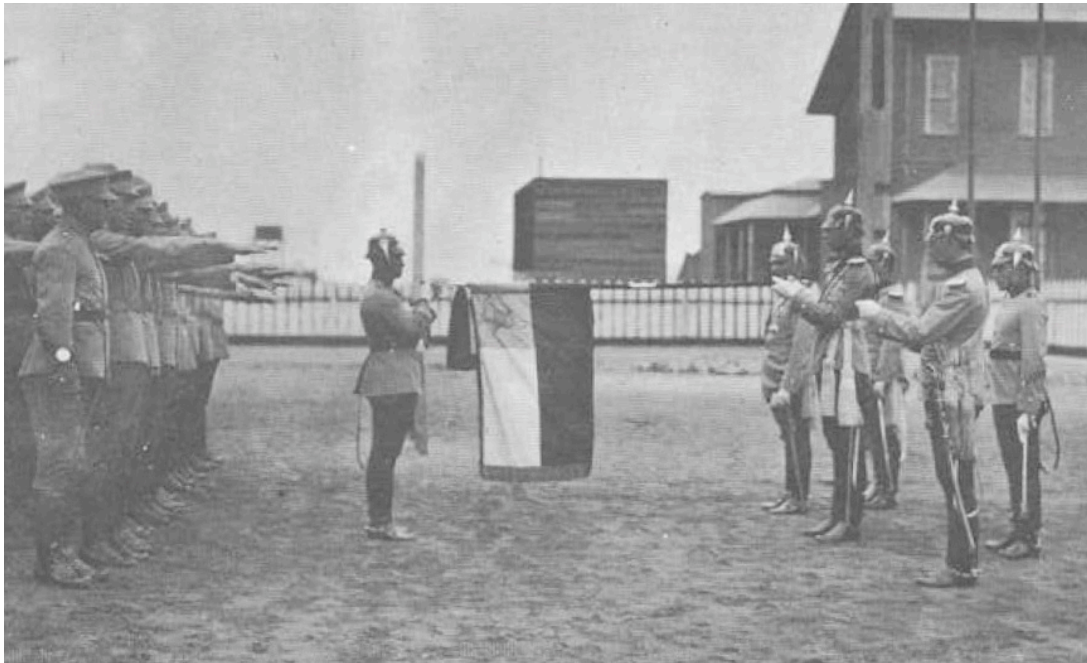


Figure 1.1, Army soldiers swear allegiance to the flag, Granaderos Regiment, 1920.⁴⁵

What were the consequences of professionalization? For one, it created a path to social mobility for Chile's growing middle sectors. Sons of German, French, English, and Croatian immigrants could enter the army or navy without political connections and advance as a result of talent. Upper class Chileans ceased to dominate the armed forces.

⁴⁴ Consult Alejandro San Francisco, editor, *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006: ciento veinte años de historia* (Santiago: Centro de Estudios Bicentenario, 2006).

⁴⁵ With the permission from the Chilean Army. *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. VIII, 334.

During this process, officers became more separate from civilian society, often developing strong collective loyalties to the army or navy as institutions.

Frederick Nunn argues that European trainers in Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Peru did not simply reorganize national armies according to European models; they inculcated a mistrust of civilian leaders and taught that the nation's politics and economy ought to be organized according to a military ethos of hierarchy, discipline, and patriotism. Thus, the process of professionalization implanted two key ideas: soldiers are more patriotic than civilians and they constitute a separate social caste – priests of the fatherland – who bear the sacred duty to ensure their countries escaped underdevelopment. This is not to say Nunn believed South American militaries had no ideas or traditions of their own, but that European trainers had decisively contributed to an ideological basis for political deliberation by teaching that officers had the right and obligation to occasionally assume control of the political system if they believed the nation's permanent interests threatened.⁴⁶

William Sater and Holger Herwig dispute the whole idea of 'prussianization'. Firstly, they point out that Emil Körner got rich selling German made uniforms, rifles and canons to the Chilean state. Financial interest, they argue, is the principal reason Körner insisted on obligatory military service. Secondly, Chilean soldiers might have resembled Prussians in appearance, but the Chilean army was hardly a microcosm of the real McCoy. In 1920, the Chilean army failed to mobilize when it appeared that Peruvian

⁴⁶ Frederick M. Nunn, *Yesterday's Soldiers: European military professionalism in South America, 1890-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983). By the same author, "Emil Korner and the Prussianization of the Chilean Army: origins, process and consequences, 1885-1920," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (1970).

troops were massing at the northern frontier in 1920. This failure called into question the idea that Chilean soldiers were the ‘Prussians of South America’.⁴⁷

This view of a ‘grand illusion’ is strongly disputed by Enrique Brahm García who says that Körner may have become rich negotiating arms deals for German enterprises, but that this fact does not preclude his real commitment to making Chile’s army into force capable of protecting the national territory in the context of unresolved border questions with Peru and Argentina. Had ‘his’ remodeled army failed, it would have been a deep humiliation.⁴⁸ Furthermore, Brahm insists that Prussian influence left a much more enduring imprint, not simply in terms of martial music, marches, or uniforms, but in the substantive qualities of respect for hierarchy, strict discipline, and devotion to theoretical study.⁴⁹ On the last point, it is important to note that the army began to publish new defense journals under German tutelage for the purpose of cultivating a scientific and professional approach to warfare. One embodiment of the new scientific spirit was Jorge Boonen Rivera who wrote a comprehensive analysis of the national territory and went on to become the army’s inspector general from 1910 to 1921.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ William F. Sater and Holger Herwig, *The Grand Illusion: the Prussianization of the Chilean Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

⁴⁸ See Enrique Brahm García, *Preparados Para la Guerra: pensamiento militar chileno bajo influencia alemana 1885-1930* (Santiago: Ediciones Universidad Católica de Chile, 2003). See also Enrique Brahm García, “La impronta prusiana de la Academia de Guerra del Ejército,” in *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, edited by Alejandro San Francisco.

⁴⁹ In the sixties, Chilean army officers were still translating articles from *Bundeswehr* (Federal Armed Forces) and *Wehr Wissenschaftliche Rundschau* (Scientific Defense Perspective). Furthermore, German geopolitical theorists like Karl Haushofer remained ubiquitous on the pages of defense journals throughout the twentieth century.

⁵⁰ J. Boonen Rivera, *Ensayo sobre la geografía militar de Chile* (Santiago: Imprenta Cervantes, 1902).

Whether a cosmetic reconfiguration or substantive change, Chile's army was impressive enough for governments in Colombia, El Salvador, and Ecuador to contract Chilean officers to modernize their armed forces. In this enterprise, two future presidents of the republic participated in foreign military missions. From 1903 to 1909, General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo trained soldiers in El Salvador while General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte taught geopolitics at the Ecuadorian academy of war from 1956 to 1959.⁵¹

SOUTH PACIFIC PREEMINENCE

Following the War of the Pacific, Chile was the South Pacific's undisputed naval power, making possible the annexation of Easter Island in 1888 and establishment of a coaling station to facilitate trade with Oceania and East Asia. During this period the navy, like the army, experienced a rapid process of modernization. The state ordered new warships from England and sold outdated vessels to other South American nations or the Empire of Japan.⁵² The *Revista de la Marina* first published in 1885 represented a landmark development as the first continuous publication designed to promote study and reflection within the institution. Toward the objective of territorial integration, the navy constructed lighthouses and coastal defenses, especially in the far south where such infrastructure was essential to facilitating passage through the Straits of Magellan.⁵³

⁵¹ Roberto Arancibia Clavel, *La Influencia del Ejército Chileno en América Latina 1900-1950* (Santiago: Centro de Estudios e Investigaciones Militares, 2002). Similarly, the Chilean navy enjoyed such prestige that the Republic of Colombia contracted Chilean officers to organize its *Escuela Naval* in 1907.

⁵² For the navy's postwar transformation see Fuenzalida, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, vol. IV.

⁵³ Ibid. 1063-1066.

Unlike the army, which transitioned from a French model to a Prussian one, the Chilean navy maintained and strengthened its ties to Britain, which reached back to the days when Bernardo O'Higgins had contracted Lord Thomas Cochrane to command the first naval squadron in 1818. In 1911, British officers organized the Naval Academy of War in Valparaíso and periodically returned under contract as technical advisors.⁵⁴

At the time of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), Chile's navy was among the ten largest in the world and according to historian Mario Barrios Van Buren, in 1902, it was fifth among all nations in size.⁵⁵ At the apogee of Chilean naval power, the nation's merchant marine - finally recovered from Spain's bombardment of Valparaíso in 1866 - established new trade routes to South Asia, the Philippines, and Australia.⁵⁶ The future looked bright in 1900, but Chile's naval preeminence proved ephemeral. Driven by meteoric economic growth Argentina increased the size of its navy from 1880 to 1910 while Chile's economy failed to achieve equivalent growth or attract large numbers of immigrants. By the thirties, stagnation characterized the navy and merchant marine.⁵⁷

From 1960 to 1990 naval officers spoke nostalgically of the late nineteenth century as a time when Chile could have, but did not, consolidate a position on the world

⁵⁴ Ibid. 1325-1326.

⁵⁵ Mario Barrios Van Buren, *Historia Diplomática de Chile*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Ariel, 1970), 51.

⁵⁶ The Spanish fleet bombarded Valparaíso on March 31, 1866. The Chilean navy was not in port, but the bombardment crippled the merchant marine and city infrastructure.

⁵⁷ See Arnold J. Bauer, "Industry and the Missing Bourgeoisie: consumption and development in Chile, 1850-1950," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* Vol. 70, No. 2 (1990).

stage as a great trading nation with a powerful merchant marine capable of projecting ‘our nationality, our culture, and in general our spiritual and material progress towards the international community.’⁵⁸ Officers frequently recalled the brief moment at the turn of the century when Chilean pesos had dominated several trade routes in Oceania. What had gone wrong? In large part, the blame for this ‘missed opportunity’ was squarely placed on the shoulders of ‘myopic national leaders’ who had failed to implement the right policies.⁵⁹

Lamenting the *mentalidad de agricultores* or unnatural attachment to the land, naval officers blamed politicians and citizens at large for subverting the maritime vision of men like O’Higgins and Portales who Corvette Captain Pedro Romero described as ‘privileged intellects of our race’ who demonstrated ‘intuitive appreciation of Chile’s need for dominion over the Sea.’⁶⁰ The nation’s elite, rather than investing in maritime industries, invested in land. The masses, as a result, remained on farms rather than migrating to Chile’s numerous coastal cities. Navy authors insisted that the country possessed all the natural characteristics to be a great maritime power, ‘the only thing we need to do is awaken the nation’s consciousness to the importance of the sea and reconstruct our floating empire of the Pacific.’⁶¹ From 1960 to 1973, a repeatedly trope

⁵⁸ Rear Admiral Jacobo Neumann Etienne, “Discurso Inaugural: pronunciado por el Jefe del Estado Mayor General de la Armada,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 622 (1961).

⁵⁹ Jorsec, “Presencia de Chile en los Mares de Oriente,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 674 (1970). Caperol, “El Mar Como Fundamentao de Nuestro Desarrollo,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 679 (1970).

⁶⁰ Corvette Captain Pedro Romero Julio, “El Dominio del Mar,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 652 (1966).

⁶¹ Major Gustavo Díaz Feliu, “Influencia del Mar en el Desarrollo de Chile,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 616 (1960).

was ‘el porvenir de Chile está en el mar’ – Chile’s future is in the sea.⁶² All three branches of the armed forces expressed frustration with civilians for failing to understand national security issues, but the navy’s frustration was always tinged by a lingering memory of past maritime power and the desire to recapture it.

THE CIVIL WAR AND PARLIAMENTARY REPUBLIC

At the same time the army and navy were undergoing a process of modernization, the Portalian model of centralized executive authority broke down when congressional elites revolted against president José Manuel Balmaceda. The principal cause of the Civil War (1891) was the revenue from the northern nitrate mines, which had enriched the state’s coffers and generated a conflict over the distribution of political power in a highly centralized state with a powerful executive. Congressional elites wanted to lessen presidential privileges and assert greater control over budget allocation and executive appointments. This agenda contradicted the foundation of the presidential system established by Diego Portales.

Frederick Nunn argues that the Körner reforms had divided the army into three distinct groups by 1890: young, progressive junior officers who wished to deepen the Prussian reforms, senior officers who had little interest in Körner, and those officers who owed their positions to the war or because of political connections to the national oligarchy. In other words, age, class, and ideas had started to divide officers. Instead of

⁶² “Editorial: El Porvenir de Chile Está en el Mar,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 668 (1969). For the army, the two decades after the War of the Pacific were not a ‘golden era’ but rather marked by painful memories of the Civil War of 1891, which divided their institution.

a united institution acting as an extension of the state and aristocracy, the army was divided. By contrast internal cohesion remained strong in the navy.⁶³

Army officers who remained loyal to their commander in chief were mostly aristocratic traditionalists who disliked the Prussian reforms. Meanwhile, the navy's leadership made an alliance with Congress that effectively determined the outcome of the war because navy ships could occupy northern ports and secure the nation's nitrate revenues. Once Körner decided to side with Congress he was given command of forces that decisively defeated Balmaceda's supporters. Here, it is important to highlight that the Congressional victory effectively cleared the way for Körner to implement his reforms and increase the size of the standing army.⁶⁴ Subsequent historians have interpreted Körner's alliance with Congress as an act of self-interest. Dependency theorists have viewed the Civil War as a major victory for the anti-national oligarchy that sold the country out to foreign interests and cemented Chile's future underdevelopment.⁶⁵

The era that followed Balmaceda's suicide in 1891 has been dubbed the 'Parliamentary Republic' because Chile's legislature completely enfeebled executive authority; Congress could remove the president's cabinet members, control ministerial appointments, and set budgets. During this period from 1891 to 1925 Congress was

⁶³ Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 74-79.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 78-79.

⁶⁵ Harold Blakemore, "The Chilean Revolution of 1891 and its Historiography," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (1977). See also Michael Monteón, *Chile in the Nitrate Era: the evolution of economic dependence, 1880-1930* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982). Dependency theorists saw the Civil War as a conflict between a nationalist president who wanted to assert national control over the mines and bring new social groups into the political system while Congress, representing aristocratic elites, defeated Balmaceda and erected an oligarchic system that responded to their interests alone. This interpretation has lost strength with the decline in prestige of the dependency school.

composed of shifting, fractious coalitions characterized by political stalemates. Despite the liberal freedoms available to all citizens, historians have tended to judge the congressional elites as decadent and irresponsible, focused on luxury consumption, and indifferent or unresponsive to the needs of their countrymen.⁶⁶

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Chile's social makeup was changing. The nitrate boom created an urban proletariat in the mining zones of the country while a steady stream of rural peons moved to the cities where they lived in appalling social conditions. Infant mortality rates in Chilean cities for this era, paint a shocking picture of urban squalor. From 1897 to 1925, the infant mortality rate in the city of Valparaíso ranged from 207 to 367 infant deaths per 1,000 live births!⁶⁷

During this period of incipient industrialization, elites began using the army to crush a labor strikes in urban centers. The most infamous example took place in Iquique in 1907 when several hundred workers and their families were mowed down by army machine gun fire. Hardly pleased with their new role repressing the nation's exploited proletariat, many officers began to believe that only government social legislation could prevent the working class from turning to radical politics.⁶⁸ After 1917, the Bolshevik Revolution seemed to validate the feasibility of radical politics as an avenue for workers

⁶⁶ Historical judgment of the Parliamentary Republic has been overwhelmingly negative due to the fact that governing elites did nothing to address the changing social relations of the era. Military thinkers regard the Parliamentary Republic with little more than contempt.

⁶⁷ Ronn Pineo and James A. Baer, editors, *Cities of Hope: people, protests, and progress in urbanizing Latin America, 1870-1930* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1998), 200.

⁶⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Edmundo Gonzalez Salinas (R), "Repuesta al Desafío del Norte Grande," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 322 (1964).

to solve their problems. During this time, the *Federación Obrera de Chile*, founded in 1909, drifted from a socialist orientation to Moscow aligned communism under the leadership of Luis Emilio Recabarren.⁶⁹

Even though industrialization had altered the social structure in what was once an overwhelmingly rural society, national elites remained steadfastly committed to economic liberalism, refusing to regulate the relationship between labor and capital or to impose taxes on the wealthy for public education and social welfare. Influenced by Oswald Spengler who feared western decadence, Alberto Edwards wrote an extremely influential essay in 1928 that had a profound impact on the armed forces and conservative thought in Chile. For Edwards, the Parliamentary Republic was morally bankrupt and unresponsive to social realities, straying far from the proven Portalian tradition of a strong centralized state. To save the nation, thought Edwards, strong executive authority had to be restored.⁷⁰

MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS (1924-1932)

By 1920, the army was increasingly composed of officers drawn from society's middle sectors, and these lieutenants, captains, and majors were not a social extension of the aristocracy; they resented the national elite's petty politicking and unresponsiveness to the legitimate needs of the urban working class and middle sector of urban professionals. Captain Alberto Muñoz Figueroa's 1914 monograph *El problema de*

⁶⁹ For a Marxist perspective on this era see Julio César Jobet, *Recabarren, los orígenes del movimiento obrero y del socialismo chileno* (Santiago: Prensa Latinoamericana, 1955).

⁷⁰ See Alberto Edwards Vives, *La Fronda Aristocrática, Historia Política de Chile* (Santiago: Editorial del Pacífico, 1952). Renato Cristi and Carlos Ruiz, *El Pensamiento Conservador en Chile: seis ensayos* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1992).

nuestra educación militar condemned Chile's political system for cultivating incompetence and laziness among senior officers who owed their promotions or desirable assignments to political connections rather than merit. Additionally, he argued that civilian leaders ought to put officers in charge of educating the masses because the lower classes would make poor soldiers in a system that condemned them to poverty.⁷¹ Clearly, civil-military relations were changing.

Obligatory military service, introduced as part of Emil Körner's reforms, was meant to prepare the nation for full mobilization, and in the view of influential officers like Jorge Boonen Rivera to inculcate patriotic values in the masses.⁷² Furthermore, conscription brought junior officers into close contact with the nation's poorest citizens, which generated an awareness of social problems and led some officers to the conviction that only social justice would prevent the masses from turning to communism. This basic reality is fundamental to an appreciation of Colonel Juan Domingo Perón who recognized the social power of Argentina's emerging working class and their unjust exclusion from the political system. Similarly, many of Chile's junior officers had studied in Germany where they developed a positive view of Bismarck's autocratic welfare state that combined hierarchy with social justice.⁷³ By contrast, Chile's politicians refused to enact any progressive social legislation.

⁷¹ Taken from Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 119-120.

⁷² Jorge Boonen Rivera, *Participación del Ejército en el Desarrollo y Progreso del País* (Santiago: Imprenta El Globo, 1917).

⁷³ Frederick M. Nunn, *Chilean Politics 1920-1931: The Honorable Mission of the Armed Forces* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970).

These tensions came to a head in 1924 when 54 junior officers appeared in Congress to demand the passage of social legislation. Later, the same group petitioned the nation's legislature to increase military salaries, reform the employment code, income tax laws, and Constitution.⁷⁴ Due to the fact these junior officers were decidedly middle class, rather than the elite, some scholars have interpreted their actions as an expression of the middle class and its interests. Yet, Frederick Nunn convincingly demonstrates that by 1924 the army had become a semi-autonomous social group with its own constellation of ideas about its role in society as protectors of the nation's permanent interests. Thus, if they believed the long-term interests or very survival of the nation was at stake, they would not remain neutral. This point of view, Nunn argues, underpinned the motivations of military officers in 1924 and 1925.⁷⁵

The army's official history described these young officers and their movement as an expression of *vox populi*, a legitimate defiance of an illegitimate government.⁷⁶ Without going through the exact details of this complicated and sometimes confusing process, it is best to highlight several key aspects and outcomes of the military's intervention in politics from 1924 to 1932.⁷⁷ First, Major Carlos Ibáñez del Campo

⁷⁴ Frederick M. Nunn, "Military Rule in Chile: The Revolutions of September 5, 1924 and January 23, 1925," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (1967).

⁷⁵ In the 1950s and 1960s, modernization theorists believed that Latin America's middle sectors would lead reform movements and create social democracies. This conviction seemed supported, in some respects, by the progressive actions of Chile's officers in 1925. See John J. Johnson, *Continuity and Change in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).

⁷⁶ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. VIII, 242.

emerged as leader of a movement that secured the passage of social legislation for workers and the promulgation of a new Constitution in 1925 that restored presidential authority. Through tactful maneuvering, Ibáñez eventually became president in 1927; once in office, he proceeded to expand the social and economic role of the state.

Carlos Ibáñez is somewhat of an enigmatic figure whose life is best judged by action rather than word. As president he outlawed the Communist Party of Chile (PCCh), exiled political opponents, and censored the press. In economic matters, Ibáñez tried to promote growth through public sector spending and subsidies to the mining sector. He demanded worker allegiance to government controlled unions and believed the state ought to be supreme arbiter in all labor disputes.⁷⁸ His first administration established the framework of Chile's welfare state, which another military man – Augusto Pinochet – partially undid some four and a half decades later, much to the consternation of officers who remained committed to the *Ibanista* political economy of order, political repression, public spending, and economic nationalism.⁷⁹

CREATION OF THE CARABINEROS AND AIR FORCE

In 1927, president Ibáñez created a unified police force, the Carabineros de Chile. Originally conceived as a buttress for his own administration, the Carabineros quickly

⁷⁷ See “Arturo Alessandri y los golpes militares, 1920-1925,” and “La dictadura de Ibáñez, 1925-1931,” in Gonzalo Vial Correa, *Historia de Chile, 1891-1973* (Santiago: Editorial Santillana del Pacífico, 1981), vol. III and vol. IV.

⁷⁸ Jorge Rojas Flores, *La Dictadura de Ibáñez y los Sindicatos (1927-1931)* (Santiago: Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana, 1993).

⁷⁹ See Verónica Valdivia Ortiz de Zárata, *El Golpe Después del Golpe: Leigh v. Pinochet Chile 1960-1980* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2003). Valdivia argues that the disagreement over economic policy between Gustavo Leigh, head of the air force, and Augusto Pinochet, head of the army, had to do with the continuing strength of Ibáñez's model.

developed a deserved reputation for unequaled honesty and professionalism in Latin America.⁸⁰ Three years later, Ibáñez issued supreme decree number 1.167, which amalgamated army and navy aircraft into an independent air force - *Fuerza Aérea Nacional*, which was also given the task of developing the national airline *Línea Aérea Nacional*. Thirty years later, editorials in the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* on the occasion of the institution's anniversary repeated the a narrative that successive civilian administrations had failed to understand just how important airpower was for national development and national security until Carlos Ibáñez.⁸¹

Air force officers trace the foundation of their service to the Körner reforms of the late nineteenth century and those members of the army and navy who embraced a spirit of scientific and technical progress.⁸² In this respect, the Chilean Air Force saw itself as a uniquely modern institution composed of national pioneers on the vanguard of worldwide technological developments. Air force officers highlight, with pride, that Chile was one of the first nations, chronologically speaking, to establish an air force as an independent branch of the armed forces in 1930. Despite Chile's distance from centers of aeronautical innovation, the creation of the *Fuerza Aérea de Chile* (FACH) put

Chile among the first countries in the world to comprehend the real magnitude and specific characteristics of this new weapon that called for its own independent

⁸⁰ See H.E. Bicheno, "Las Fuerzas Armadas en el Sistema Político de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 367 (1972). Bicheno argues that Ibáñez initially created the new police force to be his shock troops, but also wanted to relieve the army of its former role provisioning public order so it could be apolitical and completely devoted to professional labors.

⁸¹ Commander in Chief Gustavo Leigh Guzmán, "Celebración 21 de Marzo de 1974," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 130 (1974).

⁸² *Historia de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile* (Santiago: Instituto Geográfico Militar, 1999), vol. I.

organization and specialized administration to prevent dispersion of means and efforts.⁸³

The air force was formed by pilots from the army and navy so it can claim lineage to both services, but unlike the former two services, which retain deep historical traditions rooted in colonial times or the early republic, the air force has been more defined by its connection to modern technology and role establishing links between Chile's central valley and far flung provinces. Indeed, air power made it possible for Chileans to overcome some of the formidable geographic barriers that separate the country. The institution's early development is remembered as a time when daring pioneers carried out flights across the Andes to Argentina and Brazil, south to Punta Arenas, west to Easter Island, and even further south to Antarctica.⁸⁴ This participation in territorial integration represents a point of institutional pride as many air force pilots lost their lives establishing air routes across the southern territories.⁸⁵

Prior to World War I, nearly all of Chile's pilots traveled to France for flight instruction. During the thirties, Chile's government purchased aircraft from Germany and Italy, while adopting the German uniforms and other cosmetic accoutrements. After

⁸³ Commander in Chief Máximo Errázuriz Ward, "Día de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 106 (1968).

⁸⁴ Rodolfo Martínez Ugarte, *Historia de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile: 1913-1963* (Santiago: Fuerza Aérea de Chile, 1965), vol. I.

⁸⁵ Well into the sixties, many issues of the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* contained obituaries of pilots lost on missions in the far south where climatic conditions and the lack of infrastructure made air traffic perilous.

World War II, the United States supplied a significant quantity of materiel, aircraft, and more critically, technical training.⁸⁶

MUTINY AND REVOLT: RADICAL POLITICS IN ACTION

When the Great Depression finally reached Chile's export driven economy in 1931, the effects were dramatic. Little demand for nitrate and copper generated a mass of desperate unemployed workers from Chile's mining centers and a volatile set of social circumstances that Ibáñez's dictatorial regime could not control. The situation was so dire, in fact, that the League of Nations declared Chile to be the nation most severely affected by the global crisis.⁸⁷ As a direct result of the global crisis, Ibáñez went into exile July 26, 1931, but his association with the armed forces caused them to be immediate targets of a particularly nasty civilian backlash once the dictator left power.

Carlos Prats writes:

The aggressiveness of the uncontrolled masses was directed first against the Carabineros, the defenders of the law and order who had only been fulfilling their duties. Later, and with greater cruelty, the civilian reaction began against the Army, especially towards officers and even young cadets who were beat up by gangs of well to do youths and spit on by society ladies only for wearing their uniforms in public.⁸⁸

Yet the *annus horribilis* was far from over. Shortly after Ibáñez left the country, interim president Manuel Trucco unveiled an austerity package that decreed public servants take a 30 percent pay cut on top of a 10 percent reduction from the previous year. In the

⁸⁶ *Historia de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile*, vol. II, 2001.

⁸⁷ Collier and Sater, *A History of Chile, 1808-2002*, 223.

⁸⁸ Carlos Prats González, *Memorias: testimonio de un soldado* (Santiago: Pehuén, 1985), 60.

context of high inflation and widespread hardship, this news aggravated simmering discontent.

On the evening of August 31, a group of lower deck sub-officials on the *Almirante Latorre* battleship in the port of Coquimbo, mutinied, imprisoned the ship's high command, and demanded a repeal of the pay cut.⁸⁹ Initially, the rebellion involved 14 ships and 2,750 crewmen but by September 2, the southern fleet in Talcahuano decided to join the mutiny and began steaming north with 15 ships and another 1,700 sailors. The next day one navy communications school and one air force base declared themselves in revolt.

Particularly alarming for the government was the fact that the rebellion gained momentum while rebel leaders issued a new set of demands with social content such as land reform and tax increases on Chile's wealthiest citizens. After negotiating with the rebels, the Trucco government demanded an unconditional surrender on September 4. In response, rebel leaders called on the FOCH, Communist Party, and all other sympathizers to join their social revolution and turn against the government. The next day, president Trucco ordered the air force to bombard the fleet in Coquimbo while army units recaptured the naval base in Talcahuano and pacified other outposts of rebellion. Although the air force did not sink any battleships, the blast of their bombs, combined with the news of defeat from Talcahuano and the departure of two ships from the revolutionary fleet demoralized the sailors who capitulated on September 7.

⁸⁹ Consult Germán Bravo Valdivieso, *La sublevación de la escuadra y el período revolucionario 1924-1932*, Ediciones Altazor, Viña del Mar, 2000

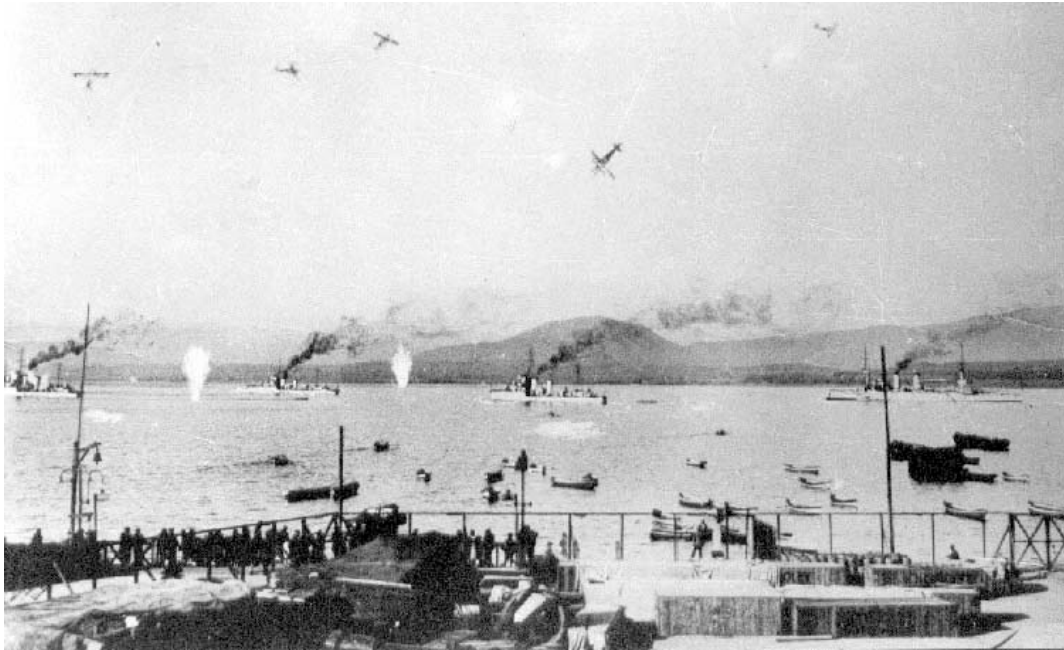


Figure 1.2, The Chilean Air Force bombards the naval fleet at Coquimbo, Sep. 5, 1931.⁹⁰

Although unsuccessful, the *sublevación de la escuadra* illustrated the capacity of several thousand sailors and sub-officials to engage in massive insubordination and acquire sympathy or active support among elements in the air force, employees of naval facilities, and workers in Santiago and Valparaíso. This crisis had witnessed the chain of command breakdown and the real threat of a wider division within the armed forces that required army and air force units to put down a large contingent of revolting sailors.

The naval mutiny of 1931 is controversial because its origins are unclear. Was it principally the result of ‘bread and butter’ issues or an expression of a new political consciousness? Were external actors responsible for generating indiscipline among the susceptible rank and file? Two civilian accountants, temporarily contracted by the navy, played leading roles in the mutiny, which has led some observers to assume that they

⁹⁰ 1931 press photo. Source unknown.

exploited the discontent of less educated seamen and then steered the rebellion towards social revolution, perhaps because they had a clandestine affiliation with the PCCh. Army and navy institutional histories describe the revolt as the work of Ibáñez's enemies who had formed a revolutionary committee in Paris and then sent a commission to Great Britain to manipulate the social discontent of Chilean sailors on board the battleship *Almirante Latorre*, which was stationed in Davenport England for repairs several months prior to the rebellion. Since Davenport was known as a hotbed of communist activity it has been suggested that some of the Chilean navy's crewmen might have been politically transformed during their stay in Europe.⁹¹ For Patricio Manns, the naval revolt was a popular revolution that expressed class contradictions, but did not mature because the rebels failed to successfully incorporate the Chilean working class.⁹²

In December, another set of shocking events unfolded in Copiapó and Vallenar, both cities in Chile's mining north hard hit by the Great Depression. On December 25, a band of approximately thirty men launched a surprise assault on the Esmeralda Battalion army barracks in Copiapó. The time and place of the attack appeared premeditated because the outpost was lightly guarded and the city was preparing for Christmas festivities. According to initial reports, a group of communists and members of the FOCH attempted to seize the barracks around two o'clock in the morning, at which point a fierce firefight broke out. Eventually, Carabineros arrived to reinforce the soldiers and the attackers fled for the local hills amid gunshots and generalized disorder. In the course

⁹¹ Fuenzalida, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, vol. IV, 1174-1175. *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. XIII, 308. See also William F. Sater, "The Abortive Kronstadt: the Chilean naval mutiny of 1931," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (1980).

⁹² Patricio Manns, *La Revolución de la Escuadra* (Santiago: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso, 1972).

of the firefight, seven assailants, one sergeant, two soldiers, and two women were killed; five soldiers were also seriously wounded.⁹³

Events in Vallenar were even more tragic. When word reached the city of the attack on the Esmeralda Battalion, rumors of a communist revolution spread through the tense city. After gunshots went off at three o'clock in the afternoon, Carabineros began pursuing known communists who took refuge behind the walls of the Communist Party headquarters. From this spot, the police demanded everyone inside surrender to the authorities prompting a firefight to break out that killed two Carabineros. Sadly, the standoff had a more gruesome conclusion when the Carabineros dynamited the building and dragged off several suspects for summary execution, a punishment deemed fair sanction by the local newspaper.⁹⁴

In Santiago, communist senator Manuel Hidalgo denied the accusation that leaders in Santiago had planned the 'events in Atacama'. He called it a spontaneous uprising to protest the social conditions of the immiserated north. Marmaduke Grove Vallejo denied the existence of a communist plot and attributed the attack to the north's serious economic problems. In Copiapó and Vallenar, local newspapers insisted that Santiago's politicians did not understand the revolutionary nature of the events. Copiapó's *El Amigo del País* explained that 'the assault on a barracks is not the effect of hunger but revolutionary preaching'.⁹⁵ Reflecting this sentiment, Valparaíso's

⁹³ *El Amigo del País*, December 25, 1931.

⁹⁴ *El Trabajo*, December 27, 29, 1931.

⁹⁵ *El Amigo del País*, January 6, 1932.

conservative newspaper *El Mercurio* opined, ‘Subversive movements that undermine the Republic’s democracy through terror are not legitimate political ideologies. The naval rebellion in Coquimbo and assault on the Esmeralda battalion in Copiapó are objective lessons that prove this point.’⁹⁶

It can be difficult to sort out the facts of the Esmeralda barracks assault or know the exact motivations of the actors involved in this murky episode. According to investigators, communist leaders had designated Vallenar the nation’s principal Soviet from which to direct a nationwide revolution involving all other major cities in the country. In this subversive plan, Vallenar’s Hotel Bernabé had been slated for conversion to public housing for communist comrades and commercial establishments were to be seized for the supply of a red army. Reportedly, the vast conspiracy was revealed to a prison guard in Copiapó by communists trying to enlist his help on the day of the attack to liberate prisoners and absorb them into the revolutionary movement.⁹⁷

In Vallenar, the local newspaper reprinted a document investigators reportedly discovered in the home of communist leader Aníbal Cuadra Santander detailing plans to concentrate recruitment activities near military bases where conscripts and lower ranking officials could lead a red army of workers and peasants.⁹⁸ Especially frightening about this document was the emphasis on an *antimilitarista* campaign directed at conscript

⁹⁶ *El Mercurio*, December 27, 1931.

⁹⁷ *El Amigo del País*, December 30, 1931. According to this report, Vallenar was slated as capital of the revolution because it was located in the middle of Chile’s mining zone, inland, safe from naval attacks, and positioned strategically between Antofagasta, Coquimbo, and Copiapó.

⁹⁸ *El Trabajo*, January 5, 1932.

soldiers, sailors, workers, peasants, and the identification of armories across the north for appropriation on the day of insurrection.

Did this vast conspiracy exist? Even if communists leaders drew up such plans, it is fanciful to think such a revolution had any chance to succeed. Nonetheless, we can conclude that the massive navy rebellion and deliberate assault on an armory in 1931 seriously disturbed the military leadership. Much later these events would be understood as deliberate actions. The army's official history writes, 'the power vacuum produced in the wake of General Ibáñez's resignation led the Communist Party to believe the moment had arrived to make use of armed violence, a fact made apparent during the naval rebellion and tumult in Copiapó and Vallenar.'⁹⁹

1932 was another tumultuous year in Chile. In June, air force commander in chief Marmaduke Grove Vallejo ousted president Juan Esteban Montero to proclaim the short-lived Socialist Republic of Chile. What socialism meant to Chileans in 1932 was still rather undefined, apart from welfare for ordinary citizens and government control over the economy, but eleven days later Grove was exiled to Easter Island and a new government was formed by his erstwhile ally Carlos Dávila.¹⁰⁰ After 100 days, Dávila handed power to General Bartolomé Blanche who was named provisional president until elections could be held. Determined to keep the armed forces out of politics, civilians leaders proceeded to organize militias, not altogether unlike those established by Diego

⁹⁹ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. VIII, 311.

¹⁰⁰ For this confusing period of political change, see Paul W. Drake, *Socialism and Populism in Chile, 1932-1952*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978).

Portales, to check on the political ambitions of military leaders and officers had to accept this humiliating fact.¹⁰¹ Civil-military relations had reached an all time low.

THE LEGACY OF INTERVENTION

The period from 1924 to 1932 retains an intensely complicated legacy. After 1932, civilian supremacy was established as well as a new civil-military relationship built on the tacit agreement that officers would stay out of politics and defense ministers would not formulate military doctrines or interfere with their profession.¹⁰² In other words, the prevailing principle was one of military autonomy and isolation from civilians. Subsequent scholars have argued that this marked the beginning of a widening cultural-ideological rift between civilians and officers who shared few points of contact and knew little about each other.¹⁰³

Another ambiguity of the period is the overlapping institutional memories of the period from 1924 to 1932. On the one hand, military officers had directly contributed to reconfiguring the nation's political and economic foundations. It was officers who demanded a new constitution and put an end to the effete parliamentary republic. During Carlos Ibáñez's government from 1927 to 1931, he had enacted progressive labor codes and set the example of state intervention in the economy and economic nationalism.

¹⁰¹ See Verónica Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate, *La Milicia Republicana: los civiles en armas, 1932-1936* (Santiago: Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana, 1992).

¹⁰² The process by which civilian re-established their authority over military actors has much to do with the appointment of General Oscar Novoa Fuentes as commander in chief of the army in 1934. He successfully purged rebellious elements and tolerated civilian militias (1932-1936).

¹⁰³ Weeks, *The Military and Politics in Post-authoritarian Chile*, 32. See also Augusto Varas, *Los Militares en el Poder: Régimen y Gobierno Militar en Chile 1973-1986* (Santiago: FLASCO, 1987).

From one perspective, the military had patriotically entered politics to reform a decadent system civilians were incapable of fixing themselves. For many officers, from 1924 to 1925 the armed forces had carried out a legitimate, honorable mission, to repair a diseased polity.

However, the Ibáñez dictatorship had the distinct effect of poisoning institutional morale because the dictator purged officers who did not support him and put officers in the distasteful position of repressing his political enemies. For many, the period was marked by unpleasant memories of the army's institutional politicization and the civilian population's backlash against the army for perceived corruption and tyranny.¹⁰⁴ The navy certainly retained a memory of the rebellion in 1931 as well as the belief that civilians had tried to use soldiers for their own political purposes and deliberately tried to infect young and naïve sailors with revolutionary ideas.¹⁰⁵ Carlos Tromben used the following words to describe Admiral José Toribio Merino Castro (navy commander in chief from 1973 to 1990):

The political activities and the ideology of the Admiral should be understood in the context of the years of his youth and naval training. Like the rest of the officers in his era, he witnessed the Armed Forces' difficulties stemming from the collapse of General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo's first government and the revolt of Chilean sailors in the navy. Both events occurred the year he entered the Naval Academy [1931], but they would continue to loom over the entire era of that generation as well the development of European fascism and its confrontation with liberal democracy during the Second World War.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ See Prats, *Memorias*. Tobías Barros Ortiz, *Recogiendo los pasos: testigo militar y político del siglo XX* (Santiago: Planeta, 1988).

¹⁰⁵ Rodrigo Fuenzalida concludes that the accountants, contracted by the navy, had set out to infect the rank and file and undermine discipline. *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, vol. IV, 1173-1181. The idea that civilians initiated contacts with military officers to get their support for political misadventures had roots in each armed service. See *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. VIII, 306.

MASS POLITICS AND THE WELFARE STATE

During the Great Depression Chile's national leaders built an economic model based on high tariffs, protection for domestic industry, price controls, and low taxes on business and upper income groups. From 1932 to 1938, domestic manufacturing generated significant urban employment accompanied by and a burgeoning welfare state. The growth of cities created opportunities for a middle sector of salaried professionals, who, along with the working class, enjoyed the protection of unions, labor courts, and political parties that competed for their votes in a multi-party system. At the same time, Chile's industrial and social development was highly uneven. Artificially fixed food prices benefited urban consumers but they eliminated incentives for landowners to modernize agriculture, a situation that created macroeconomic imbalances. Stagnant agricultural productivity caused inflationary pressures, which eroded worker incomes. Meanwhile, rural laborers remained entirely excluded from the opportunities of Chile's cities.

After 1932, Chileans developed a highly competitive political system based on a broad spectrum of political parties that represented different social groups. Like many West European democracies, coalition building was necessary for electoral success and in 1938 Chile became the only nation outside of Europe to elect a Popular Front coalition of socialists, communists, and radicals.¹⁰⁷ Led by the Radical Party, this coalition promoted

¹⁰⁶ Carlos Tromben Corbalán, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, vol. V, 1569.

¹⁰⁷ Consult Drake, *Socialism and Populism in Chile*. See also Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises: political cultures and the state in Chile, 1920-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

public education and established a governmental agency to promote industrialization. Chile was unique in the continent. It had a government where Communist Party members held government posts.

In 1931, Ramón Cañas Montalva - future commander in chief of the army - reflected on *The Rebellion of the Masses*, José Ortega y Gasset's new book, which examined the decline of European aristocracies and rapid arrival of mass politics. According to Ortega y Gasset, Europe's old elites had lost a legitimate claim to rule because they lacked any elevated excellence and, precisely because of that fact, Europe's masses had justly rebelled against decadent aristocrats who had no legitimate right to govern. Yet, European masses were no better prepared to govern themselves; they remained vulgar, ordinary, and easily moved by demagogues. For Cañas, the only way Chile's soldiers could avoid vulgar massification was to cultivate spiritual and rational qualities that elevated their institutions above a mass society increasingly prone to embrace materialist ideologies devoid of spiritual and patriotic values.¹⁰⁸

The Cañas article is illustrative of a persistent military incertitude about the age of mass politics in that urbanization and mass literacy had created new bases of social power. The working class and middle sectors could vote, form unions, and potentially dominate the political life of the nation. This reality had its positive points, but mass politics made demagoguery possible and empowered unscrupulous politicians seeking to exclude all other citizens from power.

¹⁰⁸ Major R. Cañas Montalva, "Crisis de Tradiciones 'rebelión de las masas'," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, November (1931).

In Europe Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler – two ordinary men – had reached power on the strength of their mass movements. To do so they had organized shock troops – the black and brown shirts – to intimidate their opponents and make possible a seizure of power. Never too far from trends in Europe, Chile had its own Nazi and Communist Parties, both of which rejected the idea of power sharing inside of an ideologically plural system. They proved more than willing to employ violence in pursuit of total power. Although aspects of fascism - nationalism, corporatism and authoritarianism - appealed to military sensibilities, mass movements, whether communist or fascist, generated insecurities because they depended on, and empowered ordinary people while simultaneously ignoring or showing little regard for traditional bases of authority such as the Roman Catholic Church or the armed forces.

Writing in 1985, but just as relevant fifty years earlier, the army's general history, identified a culture of violence among anarchists, fascists, and communists who utilized direct action tactics to achieve their political goals.

For these groups, political activity represents a battlefield to destroy all opposed groups. Part of this 'culture of violence' is the burning or destruction of offices and unions, the kidnapping or elimination of leaders, political assault on universities and seizure of public services, industrial companies, or banks. Anarchists invented these tactics that were perfected by communists and imitated by fascist and semi-fascist parties.¹⁰⁹

From the thirties to the end of the century, a persistent incertitude about mass democracy existed among military thinkers. On the one hand, it could be an effective vehicle for social groups to find legitimate expression of their political interests. On the other hand, it could empower irresponsible leaders who lacked a sense of order and patriotism.

¹⁰⁹ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. IX, 24.

THE POSTWAR TRANSFORMATION

Frederick Nunn observes that Chilean officers largely refrained from criticizing civilian management of state and society in their professional journals during the thirties and forties, focusing instead on institutional issues like retirement, salary, promotion or professional issues related to wartime mobilization and obligatory military service. Unlike soldiers in Peru or Brazil, they did not espouse a strident nationalism that criticized civilian leaders.¹¹⁰ To be sure, civil-military relations were not perfectly harmonious. Anti-communist officers, influenced by European fascism and authoritarian models of government, expressed political ambitions at different times, but none had sufficient support in society or among their peers.¹¹¹

The civilian backlash of the thirties had put the armed forces on the defensive and from military barracks many articles expressed concern that Chile's youth would grow up without an appropriate awareness of nation's military history and heroes. Alejandro San Francisco and Angel Soto write that officers felt 'the need to valorize the military profession in a context of loss of prestige that accompanied the military at the end of the twenties and beginnings of the thirties.'¹¹²

To the overwhelming delight of Chile's military establishment, president Pedro Aguirre Cerda initiated *La Campaña de Chilenidad* in 1941 to encourage patriotism through public education. He mandated instruction about national heroes and military

¹¹⁰ Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 261-264.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 242-244.

¹¹² Alejandro San Francisco and Angel Soto, *Un Siglo De Pensamiento Militar en Chile: El Memorial el Ejército, 1906-2006* (Santiago: Ediciones Centro de Estudios Bicentenario, 2006), 63.

history, the national anthem was to be sung in school, and he involved the armed forces more extensively in national holidays, parades, and other civic events.¹¹³ *La Campaña de Chilenidad* expressed the politics of a new nationalism imbued with Creole symbols and propagated by Chile's reformist middle sectors.¹¹⁴ Aguirre's campaign was celebrated in defense journals, not least of all because it held a special place for the armed forces as an important national institution.¹¹⁵

In addition to promoting patriotism, Aguirre declared an enormous slice of Antarctica Chilean territory, an act British officials regarded as opportunistic since the royal navy, which already had several Antarctic bases, was embroiled in a major confrontation with Germany. Yet, there was sustained political will behind Aguirre's 1940 declaration and a new geographic awareness among leading Chilean intellectuals.¹¹⁶ Six years later president Gabriel González Videla sought diplomatic recognition of the Chilean claim while dispatching expeditions to establish bases on the continent and personally visiting the territory with his family to inaugurate a naval base there.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Aguirre's decrees can be found in *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. IX, Annex I, 321-327.

¹¹⁴ This middle class project located the nation's heart and soul in Chile's countryside rather than among its cosmopolitan liberal elite. See Patrick Barr-Melej, *Reforming Chile: cultural politics, nationalism, and the rise of the middle class* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

¹¹⁵ For an informative look at the national construction of military service in Brazil as honorable see Peter M. Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood: army, honor, race, and nation in Brazil, 1864-1945* (Durham: Duke Press, 2001).

¹¹⁶ Benjamín Subercaseaux, *Chile o Una Loca Geografía* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1973). Oscar Pinochet de la Barra, *Territorio Chileno Antártico* (Santiago: Imprenta Universitaria, 1944).

¹¹⁷ Gabriel González Videla, *Memorias* (Santiago: Editorial Gabriela Mistral, 1975), vol. II, 777-831. In a similar illustration of postwar nationalism, González declared a two hundred mile economic zone of exclusion along Chile's coast and adjacent territories in 1947. The purpose of this diplomatic proclamation

González also proclaimed a two hundred mile zone of economic exclusion along Chile's coast and adjacent territories for the purpose of preempting external powers from claiming any right to drill, fish, or in any way exploit the wealth that lay underneath Chile's vast coast. Needless to say, all three branches of the armed forces relished in the process of extending Chile's frontier into Antarctica and establishing bases there to facilitate scientific research and permanent contact.

The military's involvement in Chile's Antarctic claim marked a turning point in strategic thought. In 1948, General Ramón Cañas Montalva published an influential essay titled 'Geopolitical reflections on the present and future of America and Chile' which argued that the world's center of gravity was shifting from the North Atlantic to the Pacific and in this coming age of the Pacific Chile would have geostrategic responsibilities for hemispheric defense because it controlled aerial and maritime routes over the South-Antarctic zone.¹¹⁸

General Cañas also expressed two major ideas. First, he envisioned Chile as a South Pacific power within a federation of Latin American states. Second, he worried about weak national integration in the northern and southern territories that could permit Argentine expansion in Chilean territory. In 1949, Cañas proposed the creation of a pan-American 'Confederation of the Pacific' composed of Andean republics (Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia) to arrest Argentine influence.¹¹⁹ He also urged the

was to preempt external powers from claiming any right to drill, fish, or in any way exploit the wealth that lay underneath Chile's vast coast.

¹¹⁸ General Ramón Cañas Montalva, "Reflexiones Geopolíticas Sobre el Presente y el Futuro de America y de Chile," *Revista Geográfica de Chile "Terra Australis"*, No. 1 (1948).

construction of longitudinal communication routes to dampen the attraction of the international roads across the Andes and prevent Argentine economic influence in Chile's southern and northern territories.¹²⁰ As we will see in chapter III the issue of regional economic integration was an important subject in military journals. It articulated a pan-American nationalism that was both defensive vis à vis Argentina and strategically rooted in the idea of Chile as a South Pacific power.

WORLD WAR II

The German blitzkrieg that overran Poland and France in 1939 and 1940 impressed Chilean army officers. They censured France's political leaders for failing to mobilize the population and French military commanders for failing to coordinate defensive and offensive doctrines in the face of German attack. A unifying theme among these analyses was the conviction that Germany's military successes had to do with peacetime preparations. In the words of Captain Raúl Aldunate,

The German nation, working and sacrificing tenaciously for twenty years as a whole, showed during its initial campaign with Poland just what can be achieved through intelligent peacetime preparations and unshakeable faith in victory.¹²¹

World War II, even more than the first, illustrated the nature of 'total war' and the interconnection of a nation's internal, diplomatic, and economic fronts. In these massive conflagrations ordinary citizens were vital instruments of production and targets of

¹¹⁹ General Ramón Cañas Montalva, "Estructuración Geográfica de América. Agrupación o Confederación del Pacífico," *Revista Geográfica de Chile "Terra Australis"*, No. 2 (1949).

¹²⁰ Pittman, "Geopolitics in the ABC Countries: a comparison", 1190-1205.

¹²¹ Captain Raúl Aldunate "La Guerra Relámpago en Alemania," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 169 (1940).

attacks whether psychological, economic, or military thereby collapsing the division between soldier and civilian¹²²

Chilean army praise for the *Wehrmacht* remained focused on military action rather than Nazi ideology, but there was an implicit admiration for the Nazi Party's ability to direct national energy and mobilize the population in support of its policies. Essays and editorials lavished praise on the German war machine, the speedy German rearmament, and the thunderous efficiency of the *Wehrmacht*. Army officers were strongly impressed by the unity of the German home front, its sense of common purpose, and the state's role promoting awareness of national objectives. This perception reflected the repeated calls on civilian leaders to cultivate a consciousness of national objectives.¹²³ Writing in 1940, Colonel Guillermo Aldana identified liberal democracy as weak in the face of crisis and the primary cause of France's humiliating defeat.¹²⁴ To remedy the vulnerabilities of liberal democracy, Aldana emphasized the role of compulsory military service as means to instill civic values and prepare citizens for national service.

World War II changed the Western Hemisphere rapidly. Brazil declared war on the Axis in 1942 and sent 25,000 troops to fight alongside the Americans in Italy. Chile never declared war on Germany, but it sold the United States copper and nitrates at lowered prices and granted Washington permission to station a handful of marines in

¹²² Augusto Varas, Felipe Agüero, and Fernando Bustamante, *Chile, Democracia, Fuerzas Armadas*, (Santiago: FLASCO, 1980), 104-105.

¹²³ San Francisco and Soto, *Un Siglo De Pensamiento Militar en Chile*, 60-70.

¹²⁴ Editors, "El Ejército, Escuela de Civilismo e Instrucción de Equilibrio Social," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 170 (1940).

northern Chile to protect northern ports from possible Axis bombardment. From 1944 to 1945, a young naval officer named José Toribio Merino spent one year on board the USS Raleigh; a formative experience given the prevailing wartime conditions.¹²⁵ In 1942, the inter-American Defense Council was established. Rather quickly American military influence reached every corner of the hemisphere by the way of arms, personnel training, civilian aid, and sales credits.

With Nazi Germany and militarist Japan defeated, the United States and Soviet Union emerged as uncontested superpowers with opposed strategic goals and interests in the context of unraveling colonial empires across Asia and Africa. As a result of this postwar reality, every military in the western hemisphere entered into a new inter-American security framework shaped by Cold War politics and dominated by the United States. Yet, it is important to observe that this was a *new* political reality in South America. American hegemony had been established in the Caribbean Basin and Central America long before 1945, but Chile or Argentina's principal political, military, and economic connections, prior to the war, were in Western Europe. In this new political context, Chile's soldiers accepted the United States' position of leadership and felt Chile's geographic position and mineral resources were strategically significant for the free world in the event of global conflict.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Admiral Merino discusses his experiences on the USS Raleigh in "Miscelánea: Entrevista al Comandante en Jefe de la Armada de Chile," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 778 (1987).

¹²⁶ See Lieutenant Colonel Ramón Salinas F., "La Posición Estratégica de Chile en la Defensa del Continente," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 219 (1947). From 1945 to 1955 defense journals were filled with transcriptions and translations of articles written by European and American soldiers about their experiences in World War II and the attendant changes in military technology and defense strategy.

THE COLD WAR COMES TO CHILE

From 1938 to 1952, Radical Party presidents governed the country by making tactical alliances with parties on the left and right.¹²⁷ Pedro Aguirre Cerda and Gabriel González Videla secured the presidency in 1938 and 1946 by promising a share of ministerial posts to Chile's large, well-organized Communist Party in exchange for their electoral support. During Gabriel González's government, communist leaders demanded more cabinet posts than González was willing to allocate and communists holding ministerial posts actively encouraged industrial workers to strike and rural laborers to unionize, creating a climate of political instability. This mobilization of popular groups also violated a tacit agreement among national leaders that rural labor should be repressed in order to keep food prices artificially low and satisfy traditional landholders. In April 1947, González expelled all communists from his government, but this did not stop a wave of industrial strikes across the nation's mining zones.¹²⁸ This situation reached a boiling point on October 21, when more than two thousand coal miners refused to leave the Schwager coal mine in the working class town of Lota.

González responded by calling on the army and navy to break the strike and requesting coal shipments from Harry Truman to meet national energy needs while he pacified the country. The difficult task of clearing the Schwager mine was given to army Lieutenant Eleodoro Nuemann whose path was dynamited by the miners before he and a

¹²⁷ The centrist Radical Party was Chile's political broker from 1938 to 1952, leading the push for state led industrial development. Traditionally anticlerical, the Radicals emphasized secular public education and oversaw the public sector expansion so characteristic of Chile's political economy. The party also used state employment as a tool for political patronage.

¹²⁸ See González Videla, *Memorias*, vol. I.

company of fifty men were able to convince a seemingly intransigent group of miners to abandon the mine and accept government arbitration of their labor dispute.¹²⁹ President González insisted that the strike was not a social conflict but a political one; the Communist Party was trying to topple his government by inciting industrial workers to strike and then to refuse all wage increases the government might offer.¹³⁰ González also said Chilean Communists were on orders from Moscow to paralyze domestic coal production, seize power, and ally with the Soviet Union. Whether there was any truth at all in this allegation, Cold War politics had very dramatically arrived in Chile.

After the episode at Lota, president González declared a state of emergency and broke diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia accused of directing a conspiracy to paralyze Chile's energy sector so workers could take over the mining zones - the country's economic lifeline - and hold the country ransom.¹³¹ Coal miners were told foreign agents had deceived them. In 1948 González passed the 'Law for Permanent Defense of Democracy' banning communists from the political system. In the words of Brian Loveman, this law reflected 'the integral relationship between the Cold War, American foreign policy, and Chilean domestic development'.¹³² On the one hand, Washington wanted González to maintain labor discipline and safeguard American

¹²⁹ Ibid. 670-675.

¹³⁰ *El Sur*, October 16, 1947.

¹³¹ *El Sur*, October 22-23, 1947.

¹³² Brian Loveman, *Legacy of Hispanic Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 217. See also Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough, editors, *Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944-1948* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

property. On the other hand, Chilean landowners wanted the suppression of rural labor, which the PCCh had begun to organize.

One notable precedent of the period was the president's decision to incorporate military officers into his cabinet during the crisis, subsequently praising their involvement suppressing the 'communist agitators' who fomented disorder and industrial paralysis. At mass ceremonies honoring the action of the army and navy officers in Talcahuano, Coronel, and Chillán the president described the armed forces as a bulwark against subversion and a repository of patriotism.¹³³ At a banquet attended by the president Vice Admiral Alfredo Hoffmann declared that divine providence had assured the armed forces' success crushing a seditious plot to destroy the republic.¹³⁴

These tumultuous years had a significant impact on a generation of young officers who would come to national prominence in the seventies. In 1948 Congress approved the Law for Permanent Defense of Democracy, which completely banned the Communist Party. President González also sent the army to prevent railroad strikers from sabotaging rail lines and Fernando Matthei, future commander in chief of the air force, recalls that air force pilots received orders to patrol rail lines with loaded machine guns and to fire warning shots if they saw anything suspicious.¹³⁵ Clearly, the nation's domestic politics were changing.

¹³³ "Crónica," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 221 (1947).

¹³⁴ *El Sur*, November 4, 1947.

¹³⁵ Patricia Arancibia Clavel and Isabel de la Maza Cave, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio* (Santiago: La Tercera Mondadori, 2003), 67.

During this period, a young army captain named Augusto Pinochet Ugarte was given control of a communist detention center in northern Chile. Commenting much later on his experiences in Iquique, Pinochet said he had seen how communists manipulated tensions arising from food shortages to garner political support and generate worker militancy.¹³⁶ General Julio Canessa said of 1947 ‘I realized, in practical terms, that the adversary was not always outside of the country.’¹³⁷

NORTH AMERICAN INFLUENCE

The postwar inter-American system was based on three major initiatives. First, the Treaty of Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance (1947) committed all American states to collective defense in the event of an extra-continental attack. Second, the Organization of American States, founded in 1948, was designed to contain communism and provide a forum for American states to settle regional conflicts. It also enshrined the principle of non-intervention and juridical equality among member states (although this principle would be repeatedly violated by the United States). Third, the United States began providing military assistance to republics in the hemisphere, in part, because it had an enormous surplus of navy, army, and air force hardware after rapidly demobilizing its armed forces after 1945. Thus, it gave away or sold at below market prices arms to

¹³⁶ Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, *El Día Decisivo 11 de Setiembre de 1973* (Santiago: Editorial Andres Bello, 1980), 72-77. In 1948, Pinochet was given the job of transporting five hundred detained communists to the coastal village Pisagua. As the camp’s commanding officer, he was confronted by a group of left wing congressmen that included Salvador Allende. Pinochet’s account of this encounter can be found in *El Día Decisivo*, 21-29. For a critique of Pinochet’s version see Mary Helen Spooner, *Soldiers in a Narrow Land: the Pinochet regime in Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 21-22.

¹³⁷ Patricia Arancibia Clavel and Francisco Balart Paez, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert* (Santiago: Editorial Biblioteca Americana, 2006), 46.

friendly states in the hemisphere.¹³⁸ But the inter-American system in the fifties was also cemented by Washington's tremendous prestige after defeating Japan and Germany.

In 1952, the Chilean Senate approved the *Pacto de Ayuda Militar*, which made possible the transfer of North American arms, technology and training to Chile. A group of left wing politicians opposed the pact's ratification, saying that it violated Chile's national sovereignty and was likely to solidify political dependence on the will of the United States. Responding to this charge, Army Commander Rafael Fernandez Reyes pointed out that a refusal of North American arms would forfeit a major opportunity to train with sophisticated weapons.¹³⁹ General Guillermo Barrios Tirado, then serving as Defense Minister, said 'It is important to consider that every country accepting US military aid will receive a fixed amount of it at no cost whatsoever. Given the present availability of resources, it would take Chile a long time to acquire these weapons by itself.'¹⁴⁰ This is the nature of hegemony. Washington had the power to set the terms that every state in the western hemisphere had to respond to.

American influence flowed out of a specific set of international circumstances and the basic reality that Chile lacked the financial resources to acquire modern arms on the international market. For a small state with limited industrial infrastructure, these arms

¹³⁸ Consult John Child, *Unequal Alliance: the inter-American military system, 1938-1979* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980).

¹³⁹ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, 84-85.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 83.

represented a major opportunity, but they also cemented a new, political, even ideological connection to the United States that remains, to this day, a focal point of controversy.¹⁴¹

Among the countries receiving US military aid, only Uruguay received more than Chile in proportionally terms and this privileged position created a preference for, and familiarity with, American weapons and methods.¹⁴² Joaquín Fernandois suggests that the Chilean fear of encirclement by Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia generated a strategic attachment to the United States and notes that Chile's high command made clear their preference for American arms even after army commander Carlos Prats received generous offers of Soviet tanks on favorable terms during his visit to Moscow in 1973.¹⁴³ One a purely cosmetic level the Chilean navy decided to adopt the kaki uniforms of American officers before returning to the traditional blue in the seventies.¹⁴⁴

The conditional nature of US aid meant that the United States Congress could terminate assistance depending on the internal policies of any recipient nation or repossess American ships, tanks and airplanes if the recipient nation waged war against a country the United States had an alliance with. Other strings were attached. For

¹⁴¹ Chile's president had voluntarily contracted German officers to modernize the army in the nineteenth century. American military influence arose out of an entire different set of circumstances.

¹⁴² Brian Loveman, *For la Patria: politics and the armed forces in Latin America* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1999), 152.

¹⁴³ Joaquín Fernandois Huerta, *Chile y el Mundo, 1970-1973: la política exterior del gobierno de la Unidad Popular y el sistema internacional* (Santiago: Ediciones Universidad Católica, 1985), 89-93.

¹⁴⁴ Carlos Tromben Corbalán, *Ingeniería Naval, una Especialidad Centenaria* (Valparaíso: Imprenta de la Armada, 1989), 307.

instance, the Chilean navy had to promise to carry out any upgrades of the two destroyers and two submarines it received at US shipyards rather than at home or elsewhere.¹⁴⁵

Despite these obvious drawbacks, US military aid allowed officers to train with hardware their national state could not afford. Moreover, Alberto González Martín observes that *refusing* American aid would have constituted a threat to Chile's national security if Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina - all states with designs to reclaim part of, or expand into, Chilean territory – ratified the treaty and received technical training Chilean soldiers did not.¹⁴⁶ He concludes that US military aid created material dependence, but it did not deprive Chile of national traditions or prevent officers from adapting American methods to Chilean realities.

Above all, officers agreed that the principal benefit of US military assistance was the transfer of technical know-how. The air force was particularly grateful for access to US technology and the trainers who improved Chile's system of flight instruction.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, USAF training missions were vital for the institution's modernization. One *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* editorial remarked,

A great deal of what the air force has accomplished in recent years is due to the technical assistance and equipment received through the Mutual Aid Pact subscribed to by the governments of Chile and the United States. Thanks to the assistance of specialists from North America who have trained Chilean officers

¹⁴⁵ Vice Admiral Ismael Huerta likened the *Pacto de Ayuda Militar* to a businessman who loans a vehicle to a partner for common benefit but if he finds out the vehicle has been used for non-sanctioned business, he will take it away. Ismael Huerta Díaz, *Volvería a Ser Marino* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1988), 318.

¹⁴⁶ Alberto González Martín, *La Última Influencia: efectos de la ayuda militar norteamericana en el Ejército de Chile después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial* (Santiago: Instituto Geográfico Militar, 2006).

¹⁴⁷ Reprinted from *la Nación* "Justa Aspiración de Fuerza Aérea de Chile," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 65 (1957). Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 41.

inside or outside of the national territory, the entire air force's efficiency has been elevated, making it an instrument of great value for national defense.¹⁴⁸

Further, the American air force represented a yardstick for Chilean officers to evaluate their relationship to the navy and army (the FACH regularly published USAF's share of the defense budget relative to the army and navy), serving to reinforce their conviction that they ought to receive a greater proportion of state resources.¹⁴⁹ Throughout the fifties defense journals covered departure ceremonies for members of US military missions with photographs and expressions of gratitude.¹⁵⁰

From 1945 to 1975, roughly 2,000 army and nearly 400 navy officers received postgraduate training in the United States. From what we see in defense journals, travel to the United States was a very positive experience.¹⁵¹ One officer, then Major Sergio Arellano Stark, published a series of travelogues about his tour of US military installations in 1958, which was unusual because he did not come to the United States with a specific training objective apart from his capacity as observer and reporter.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 72 (1959).

¹⁴⁹ USAF sometimes received as much as forty percent of all defense spending.

¹⁵⁰ "La Fuerza Aérea de Chile Condecora a Dos Amigos Norteamericanos," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 75 (1959). In this ceremony a flight trainer and meteorologist were given the titles 'Honorary Pilot of the Air Force of Chile' and 'Member *Honoris Causa* of the Air Force of Chile'.

¹⁵¹ See Appendix 4, Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, vol. V, 1636. González, *La Última Influencia*, 86. See also "El Colegio de Guerra del Ejército de EE.UU.," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 278 (1957). "Instrucción a las Tropas de Ingenieros en el Ejército Norteamericano," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 281 (1958). "Misión Militar de Chile en EE.UU. Oficiales chilenos en Fort Gulick," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 291 (1958). The two officers I spoke with who trained in the United States conveyed a positive impression of the United States. Interviews with Navy Captain Carlos Tromben Corvalán 4-11-07 and General Roberto Arancibia Clavel 5-7-07.

¹⁵² Major Sergio Arellano Stark, "Experiencias de un Viaje a EE.UU. de N.A.," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 287, 288, 289 (1958).

During his time in the United States Arellano toured Fort Belvoir, Fort Knox, Fort Leavenworth, and Fort Sill where Arellano reported, with awe, on the technological achievements of the American army and its specialized war colleges where thousands of domestic and foreign soldiers studied modern military science. On military bases, each foreign officer was assigned an American counterpart to answer questions and play the role of ‘padrino’. Additionally, a whole infrastructure existed to ease the transition for ‘allied students’ in the United States including courses in American culture and the English language. In this atmosphere Arellano was struck by the array of foreign soldiers studying at US war colleges, which included fellow Latin Americans, Turks, Ethiopians, and West Europeans. From his travelogue, one can see that Arellano clearly felt a sense of belonging to a global community. Indeed, the name given to foreign soldiers at US war colleges was ‘oficiales aliados’ or ‘alumnos aliados’ indicating their membership in a larger collective community opposed to the forces of international communism in a bipolar world.¹⁵³

At the end of the tour, Arellano was deeply impressed by the size and diversity of the country, the warm hospitality of his hosts, and the friendly and energetic spirit of the people from *el gran país del norte*. The United States was also one great center of scientific achievement. Navy and air force officers admired the unending ability of America’s universities to advance the fields of aeronautics, meteorology, and

¹⁵³ Benedict Anderson’s famous study of nationalism introduced the idea of ‘pilgrimage’, where persons of any group meet each other at an administrative center and discover their common interests and objectives, creating deep horizontal bonds that form the basis of an imagined community. One might see Arellano’s visit to the United States a pilgrimage to the great anti-communist capital. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991).

oceanography. This situation also highlighted Chile's relative backwardness.¹⁵⁴ There was nothing, it seemed, this large democracy could not accomplish.

Military scholarships to the United States also carried the distinct possibility of financial gain because officers who secured lengthy stays could expect salaries paid in American dollars. Fernando Matthei, future air force commander in chief, remarked 'Economically speaking, my stay in the United States helped me a great deal. As I told you, I sold the car that I purchased there and was able to build a house near the air force hospital [when I returned].'¹⁵⁵

What did Matthei learned during his two year stay at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama? Matthei said his education was designed to develop critical thinking skills. He recalled studying Mao Zedong's theory of guerrilla war, but rejects any notion of indoctrination, saying 'It would be completely mistaken to say that they indoctrinated us against Marxism there.'¹⁵⁶ For Matthei, focused exposure to anti-communist thinkers like Robert Strausz-Hupé went in tandem to exposure to American democracy and the American university system. General Roberto Arancibia said the United States represented a model of military professionalism inside of a consolidated anticommunist democracy.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ See Hellmuth Sievers C., "Operación Oceanográfica 'Marchile I' Antecedentes y Organización," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 616 (1960)

¹⁵⁵ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 132. Army General Julio Canessa Robert had the same experience after his training mission in Italy. Arancibia and Palart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 60.

¹⁵⁶ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 127.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with General Roberto Arancibia Clavel 7-5-07.

It should also be noted that Chilean officers did not fail to observe social problems in the United States. Fernando Matthei recounts the humiliation of two Ethiopian pilots denied entry to a nightclub in Montgomery Alabama because of their race. Indignant, both pilots wondered to Matthei why they had been invited to the United States if they were going to be treated as second-class citizens.¹⁵⁸ General Arancibia witnessed racially motivated boxing matches between black and white soldiers in army barracks. Sergio Arellano, although awed by the size and grandeur of Washington DC and New York City, compared Kansas City's outlying slums to Santiago's notorious *poblaciones callampas*.¹⁵⁹

What did South American soldiers bring home from training missions in the United States? Did US war colleges create, as some scholars suggest, an army of anti-communist soldiers determined to purge the continent of left wing ideology in the seventies? Such facile conclusions are cautioned by a number of factors. First, the United States did not have a systematized ideology to offer South American students apart from a bipolar conception of the world and general suspicion of the left. In the case of Brazil, Alfred Stepan has shown that the intellectual origins for the military coup against João Goulart in 1964 were homegrown in that nation's Superior War College during the fifties.¹⁶⁰ Long before the Cuban Revolution Brazilian officers developed a

¹⁵⁸ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 128-129.

¹⁵⁹ Major Sergio Arellano Stark, "Experiencias de un Viaje a EE.UU. de N.A.," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 287 (1958).

national security doctrine that legitimized military participation in politics, ostensibly to ensure a stable process of national development and prevent politicians deemed irresponsible or dangerous from taking control of the state and mobilizing the masses.

Second, the vast majority of South American came to the United States for specialty training in fields like naval engineering, tank maneuvers, radar systems, radio communications, and anti-aircraft defenses.¹⁶¹ Of 378 Chilean navy officers who studied in the United States from 1945 to 1975, 88 percent received a strictly technical education.¹⁶² Chilean officers who studied counterinsurgency or psychological warfare at Fort Bragg in North Carolina would have contemplated the nature of irregular warfare, but there is no evidence to show that South American officers learned torture techniques or received encouragement to seize power from civilian leaders.¹⁶³

THE END OF AN ERA

Carlos Ibáñez del Campo won Chile's presidential election with 47 percent of the vote in 1952. Running on vague campaign pledges to end corruption, low politicking, and to restore order, discipline, and patriotism to government, Ibáñez appealed to voters as a man of action who accomplished a great deal during his first presidency. The second Ibáñez presidency was a disappointment; the aging politician failed to form an effective

¹⁶⁰ Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion," in *Armies and Politics in Latin America*, edited by Abraham F. Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch, (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1986), 134-150.

¹⁶¹ Interview with General Roberto Arancibia Clavel 7-5-07.

¹⁶² Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, 1456.

¹⁶³ The picture is different for Central America in the seventies and eighties.

governing coalition or resolve the pressing problem of inflation, but his presidency provides window into the state of civil-military relations.¹⁶⁴

In 1955, president Ibáñez had tea with a group of 58 active and retired army officers calling themselves *Línea Recta* (Straight Line). This group proposed retiring all officers who would not swear an oath to him and then establishing an *Ibáñista* dictatorship to restore 'social discipline' and solve the nation's problems. *Plan Línea Recta* had all the elements of Juan Perón's *justicialismo* in Argentina - social justice, economic nationalism, authoritarianism, state controlled unions - all that was lacking was the single unifying figure.

Ibáñez did not commit to *Línea Recta*. Eventually he broke all contacts with the group and judging his vacillations, it appears Ibáñez was mostly testing the waters to see what type of political support he had within the armed forces. When he discovered that most officers would not take an oath of loyalty to him, he abandoned the project, knowing full well that meeting the specific demands of *Línea Recta* officers would upset and politicize the rest of the army.¹⁶⁵ Future army commanders in chief René Schneider and Carlos Prats were old enough to remember Ibáñez's politicization of the armed forces from 1927 to 1931 and its poisonous effects on institutional unity. Moreover, during a

¹⁶⁴ Comparatively understudied in the historiography, Ibáñez has been a tough figure to pin down because he eschewed fixed ideology. At different times, Ibáñez was called a corporatist, fascist, and Peronist. Donald Bray interpreted Ibáñez as the Chilean equivalent of Juan Perón but without the mass following. For that interpretation see Donald W. Bray, "Peronism in Chile," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (1967).

¹⁶⁵ Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 244-249. When the national discovered that *Línea Recta* officers had met with Ibáñez, the scandal resulted in a court martial and several dismissals. See also H.E. Bicheno, "Las Fuerzas Armadas en el Sistema Político de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 367 (1972).

spate of worker-student riots in 1957, military officials could have probably justified an intervention to restore order but they chose otherwise.¹⁶⁶ The ‘Straight Line’ scandal revealed the existence of political thought in the army. Clearly some officers were willing to violate their constitutional pledge to stay out of politics. Yet, the refusal of most officers to enter politics could be read as a sign of deepening constitutionalist sentiment.

In 1958 - the year Carlos Ibáñez left power - a mob of Venezuelans in Caracas stoned vice president Richard Nixon’s motorcade while he was on a ‘good will mission’. This event, symbolized growing inter-American tensions as a result of diplomatic neglect, rising nationalism, and US violations of the non-intervention principle established by the OAS charter. Editors from the Chilean magazine *Zig-Zag* praised Nixon for his courage during the ordeal but remarked that he was an unlucky symbol of a nation perceived to be an oblivious, arrogant, self-interested exploiter of Latin American markets and primary materials. *Zig-Zag*’s editors urged Nixon to return to Washington with the message that if living standards remained abysmal for the poor majority, the appeal of communist revolution would not diminish.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ For an account of the riots that took place in 1957 consult Donald W. Bray, “Chilean Politics During the Second Ibáñez Government, 1952-1958” (PhD diss., UCLA, 1961), 128-138. Gregory Weeks concludes that the military did not internalize the principle of civilian supremacy after it was forced out of politics in 1932. See Weeks, *The Military and Politics in Post-authoritarian Chile*, 38. Augusto Varas and Felipe Agüero see the basic problem as one of civil-military segregation and the lack of an official and hegemonic doctrine concerning the military’s relationship to civilians. *El Proyecto Militar*, FLASCO, 1984. Yet, there is evidence to support an opposite view and that a majority of officers considered intervention in civilian politics highly undesirable.

¹⁶⁷ “Editorial: Anti-Yankis” *Zig-Zag*, No. 2771, 1958.

In 1958, few observers could have predicted that Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement in the Sierra Maestra Mountains would force dictator Fulgencio Batista to flee the country. Arguably the most consequential event since Latin America's independence, the Cuban Revolution generated widespread sympathy across the continent, but that sympathy dried up among military officers when Raúl Castro and Che Guevara began executing Batista's army officers in summary 'revolutionary' trials. Facing a possible US invasion of the island Castro turned to the Soviet Union for protection.

The Cuban Revolution unleashed powerful forces across Latin America. It provided the Left with a new model of political change and appeared to validate the feasibility of overthrowing an existing order by force of arms. It generated impatience with the slow pace of development and convinced a generation of youths that revolution was the only viable solution to Latin America's problems. For South American soldiers, guerrilla warfare ceased to be an abstract topic in their defense journals. As insurgencies popped up across the hemisphere counterinsurgency ceased to be an abstract topic in the region's academies of war.

CHAPTER II

New Anxieties, Deepening Frustrations: 1960-1969

Geopolitics views the state as a living organism engaged in a constant struggle for survival.¹

Augusto Pinochet Ugarte

By the late fifties a vast gulf separated those states with limited conventional forces and those with nuclear submarines and inter-continental ballistic missiles. The widening technological disparity even led some Latin American statesmen to question the basic necessity of conventional weapons.² In 1958 Gonzalo J. Facio, Costa Rica's ambassador to the OAS, proposed a general Latin American disarmament reasoning that the US nuclear umbrella had rendered conventional arms irrelevant and made the entire western hemisphere safe from an extra-continental attack. Thus, Latin American governments ought to focus exclusively on social development. Why not construct more hospitals, schools, and houses instead of devoting a fifth of state resources to defense?

The reaction to Facio's proposal was mixed. Warmly received in some political circles, 'Plan Facio' generated strong denunciations from Latin American marxists and nationalists who accused Washington of a conspiracy to demilitarize the hemisphere so it

¹ Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, *Geopolítica: diferentes etapas para el estudio geopolítico de los estados* (Santiago: Instituto Geográfico Militar, 1968), 21.

² In postwar decades, scientific discovery proceeded at a dizzying pace. Oceanographers mapped the ocean's depths, satellites could predict weather systems, and medical advances extended the average human life span. Everywhere, it seemed the frontiers of human knowledge were being broken down, but Latin Americans, generally speaking, did not participate in this surge of discovery; the centers of the scientific advancement were almost exclusively in the developed West and Soviet Union.

could impose its own imperial agenda. The year of Facio's proposal, editors at the *Memorial del Ejército de Chile* expressed disquiet, writing that some of their countrymen appeared to believe that the nation's armed forces were:

antiquated, anachronistic and inefficient given the rapid progress of nuclear arms and rocket projectiles [which] has predipsosed them to listen favorably to well intentioned and idealist men who, parting from the mistaken conclusion that conventional arms have no use, have proposed disarmament as a viable and economic solution [to the problem of underdevelopment] in this part of America.³

Officers agreed that international law and defensive alliances would certainly fail to resolve every inter-American dispute. To think that every American state would honor its international agreements in good faith was the height of naivety. Moreover, if Chile disarmed, it would not be able to rapidly mobilize and rearm in the event of a security crisis. Disarmament was simply too dangerous; it could not ensure the security of smaller countries from larger ones. One officer summarized, 'the undeniable economic benefits of disarmament are insufficient to compensate American countries for the dangers they would face by adopting such a measure.'⁴

During the sixties, Chilean officers worried about a civilian population uniformed and ignorant of security issues, but the principal source of professional frustration had to do with low pay and insufficient resources for training and modernization. This context is essential for any understanding the Popular Unity government (1970-1973) because Salvador Allende built his relationship to the armed forces on a sound appreciation of their institutional frustrations from the previous decade.

³ "Editorial: Inquietud Profesional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 284 (1958).

⁴ Squadron Commander Nicanor Díaz Estrada, "El Problema del Desarme Latinoamericano," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 74 (1959).

This chapter examines military attitudes towards civil society, values shared by officers in the army, navy, and air force and the intellectual formation of officers like Augusto Pinochet and José Toribio Merino. Both men studied geopolitics, which is an important academic discipline at Chile's war academies. This training had a significant impact on their outlook and approach to policy formation in the seventies, a fact that illuminates many of the junta's long-term goals.

THE CIVIL-MILITARY DISCONNECT

'The entire population should be aware in the most complete and accurate way possible what the armed forces are, what they represent, what professional role they carry out, and how they participate in the struggle to achieve progressive social, cultural, and economic development for this nation.'⁵ When Rear Admiral Jacobo Neumann made this statement in 1961, he thought the government ought to do more to educate the population about the function of the armed forces. Lieutenant Colonel Hernán Hiriart wrote: 'It is no wonder misunderstandings are common between officers and the public due to the highly technical nature of the military profession and the masses' ignorance of that profession and its strategic delineations.'⁶ The military outlook, many officers might say, was intrinsically grounded in long term considerations of strategic interest while the civilian perspective was grounded in more immediate, particular concerns.

In 1959 Air Force Lieutenant General Benjamin Rattenbach explained that the Chilean people's temporal distance from war in the twentieth century had created a false

⁵ Rear Admiral Jacobo Neumann Etienne, "Discurso Inaugural: pronunciado por el Jefe del Estado Mayor General de la Armada," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 622 (1961).

⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Hernán Hiriart Laval, "La Política Militar y la Opinión Pública," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 319 (1964).

sense of security because most civilians saw no direct benefit from defense spending and doubted the possibility of a future conflict. For many, ‘the military profession appears superfluous, even parasitic when compared to activities of the general population...only a handful of enlightened and responsible statesmen do appreciate the fact that the [armed forces] represent a form of life insurance or security barrier for the nation.’⁷

Rattenbach’s comment about ‘enlightened statesmen’ is somewhat ironic in light of the fact that Chile’s defense budgets declined precipitously over the next decade. From twenty five percent of all public spending in 1958 to just thirteen percent in 1968.⁸ Presidents José Pedro Alessandri (1958-1964) and Eduardo Frei Montalva’s (1964-1970) justified these cuts for two major reasons. First, Chile had begun receiving American arms through the Military Assistance Program. Second, the possibility of an extra-conventional attack was practically nil once the Soviet Union and United States developed inter-continental ballistic missiles. Diplomacy, thought Eduardo Frei, would suffice to solve problems with Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina. He conceived of the military’s role as executing rescue operations and carrying out civic action programs rather than maintaining a strong military deterrent.

During the Frei administration Major Juan Barrientos wrote that Chile’s ‘essentially pacifist philosophy’ had created an exaggerated faith in the power of international law to resolve international disputes. Meanwhile the nation’s inadequate economic development had obliged the state to devote more resources to social welfare to

⁷ Lieutenant General Benjamin Rattenbach, “Nuestra Profesión Militar,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 72 (1959).

⁸ I averaged the estimated defense spending as a proportion of GDP from three different studies that appear in Varas, *Los Militares en el Poder*, 15.

the detriment of defense spending. Naturally, Barrientos believed this was a dangerous trend. Civilians needed to appreciate the importance of national security issues, not just economic and social ones.⁹ He and others believed years of peace had inclined civilians to put their faith in defense alliances or equate security with external defense.

The notion that civilians simply did not understand national security was an ongoing theme in military discourse. Air force commander Nicanor Díaz Estrada wrote ‘a major difficulty for democracies is educating the population to understand national security as an integrated problem that cannot be defined solely in terms of weapons, armed forces and military measures.’¹⁰ Chile’s national security, explained Díaz, was tied to a myriad of factors such as industrial strength, population size, political alliances, psychological makeup, conventional forces, and economic health. Thus, national leaders bore the sacred responsibility to vigil over these dynamics since average citizens lacked any real appreciation of how they affected security.

National security was a fluid, integrated concept, in the sense that a neighboring country’s economic or demographic expansion automatically altered Chile’s national security environment. If Peru or Argentina strengthened their industrial capacity or experienced significant population growth, they would be able to produce more arms and mobilize a larger population for war. Like most thinkers in the fifties, Díaz presumed that

⁹ Major Juan Barrientos Vidaurre, “La Ciencia Política y La Seguridad Nacional,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 337 (1967).

¹⁰ Squadron Commander Nicanor Díaz Estrada, “El Problema del Desarme Latinoamericano,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* No. 73 (1959).

future wars would essentially be industrial insurance tests. As such, it was imperative to for smaller states to possess an adequate conventional deterrents.

On the subject of societal consensus Díaz remarked that liberal democracies had the added difficulty of dealing with fifth columnists who deliberately undermined consensus and openly called for the overthrow of the existing state. The most pronounced manifestation of this threat was the Communist Party ‘instructed and trained to disorganize, confuse, and weaken the population.’¹¹

Díaz’s essay articulates several important themes in military thought. First, the power and security of states are constantly in flux, rising and falling in relation to the growth or expansion of other states. Second, the general public’s inability to understand national security from an integrated perspective increased the responsibility of elected leaders to understand far reaching security issues. Third, democracies face a number of security vulnerabilities due to their openness and respect for civil liberties.

PUBLIC OPINION AND MILITARY SCIENCE

At home and abroad, Chilean officers studied ‘public relations’ alongside international law, military intelligence, logistics, geography, and military history. As a military discipline, public relations or psychological operations deals with mass media as an instrument to influence domestic opinion and the opinion of one’s adversary.¹² One army officers defined psychological warfare as ‘the spiritual and intellectual struggle for the minds of men that takes place before, during and after a contest to debilitate the

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Army Academy of War curriculum can be found in *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, 132.

enemy's will to resist and demoralize his forces.'¹³ Just as the Nazi propaganda machine had worked to undermine French and Norwegian cohesion in 1940, the United States had undertaken massive efforts to undermine German morale and diffuse a pro-American perspective among its allies in Latin America and elsewhere. The inherent difficulty of this science was that groups and nations had different responses to psychological manipulation.¹⁴

Officers did not trust mass opinion. They viewed it as fickle and easily swayed by demagogues. At the same time, no one could ignore the vital role it played in modern warfare. Political authorities had to acquire popular support during wartime. Army Major Ernesto Hald observed that one major difference between Italy's failed invasion of Ethiopia in 1896 and Italy's successful conquest nearly forty years later was Mussolini's effective use of the media to frame the conquest as the holy crusade of heroic soldiers to vindicate national honor and bring civilization to a barbarous people.¹⁵ In the Chilean context, Hald emphasized the role political authorities played esteeming the armed forces in peacetime and their vital role directing propaganda during crises 'even to the point of defending a difficult or illegitimate cause'.¹⁶ Mobilizing public opinion was no different from mobilizing human or material resources.

¹³ Major Fernando Olea Guldemont, "Guerra Psicológica," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 309 (1962).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Major Ernesto Hald Herrera, "La Movilización y sus Responsables," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 331 (1966).

¹⁶ Ibid.

Major Hald did not delve into the ethics of managing public opinion, he simply observed that censorship, repression, and propaganda could determine military outcomes. If the internal front was divided, how could the state expect to achieve military objectives? One navy lieutenant observed that authoritarian regimes enjoyed one very distinct advantages over their adversaries in the free world because they could manipulate public opinion without the fear of a critical press or parliamentary reproach.¹⁷ These two officers drew attention to the fact that public opinion mattered in modern warfare; it could determine the nation's ability to achieve common objectives. What remained ambiguous was the formula to reconcile liberal democracy and national security.

In 1959, air force commander Gustavo Leigh Guzmán distinguished between two type of public opinion: the 'external public' of every group in a given society and the 'internal public' of a specific community or institution. Leigh argued that it was virtually impossible to foster spiritual and doctrinal unity among the 'external public' given its extreme heterogeneity. However, it was feasible to satisfy needs, shape opinions, and achieve doctrinal unity among an 'internal public'.¹⁸ After September 11, 1973, General Leigh would carry out an energetic purge of the air force to guarantee the doctrinal unity of this particular 'internal public'.¹⁹

¹⁷ Sub-Lieutenant Fernando Nicolas V. "Valoración de Potenciales," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 678 (1970).

¹⁸ Group Commander Gustavo Leigh Guzmán, "Relaciones Públicas," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 74 (1959).

¹⁹ See Fernando Villagrán, *Disparen a la Bandada: una crónica secreta de la FACH* (Santiago: Planeta, 2002).

In 1961 Lieutenant Colonel Augusto Pinochet Ugarte wrote a decidedly unremarkable article about sabotage and counter-sabotage, concluding simply that sabotage was one weapon to undermine the morale, economy, and military organization of an enemy, while counter-sabotage did just the opposite. Both were neutral aspects of military science.²⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Fernández, a 1960 graduate of Fort Bragg's Special Forces school in North Carolina, outlined the connection between Nazi propaganda and French sociologist Gustave Le Bon, whose insights into crowd psychology provided a more technical basis for the control and manipulation of popular sentiments through mass propaganda and public spectacle.²¹ No one could deny the usefulness of managing public opinion to achieve strategic objectives. Nazi propagandists had mastered techniques to direct and manage popular energy for the achievement of larger political objectives, but such techniques worked in half-truths, exaggeration, and emotional manipulation.

These studies contained inherent ambiguities. If propaganda had a role to play fostering societal cohesion and mobilizing popular energy, it was unclear to what extent free societies could restrict the civil liberties of individuals or groups deemed subversive. Were the masses a herd to be controlled and manipulated? These questions symbolize the tense relationship between modern military science and mass society. Chilean officers believed the masses were vulnerable to 'psychological warfare' and generally

²⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, "Sabotaje y Contrsabotaje en la Guerra," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 303 (1961).

²¹ Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Fernández Pérez, "La Propaganda en el III Reich," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 337 (1967). See also Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: a study of the popular mind* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1952).

ignorant of national security issues. These views contributed to the acceptance of a national security doctrine that used censorship and repression to exclude ‘internal enemies’ from waging psychological war on the civilian population.

In 1964 the US Army began funding ‘Project Camelot’, an investigation into the causes of violent political upheaval and what steps a government might take to prevent its own overthrow. The idea was to create a social science model to assess the potential for internal war in countries across the Third World and Chile was selected to be the test case. When the US army contracted American sociologists to begin this research, their project objective was leaked to the academic community and it generated controversy. Would this research be used to assist corrupt and reactionary governments stay in power? When the Chilean press discovered the aims of ‘Project Camelot’ the Frei administration and Chilean Congress lodged formal complaints with the US embassy. Robert McNamara cancelled the project in 1965.²²

The reaction of several Chilean officers is interesting. Although ‘Project Camelot’ was a flagrant instance of US meddling in the affairs of a sovereign state, officers expressed enthusiasm for the idea of scientifically measuring the attitudes of key social actors - students, workers, officers – which would allow the government to understand, with scientific precision, the nation’s internal front, its morale, cohesion, and political divisions. Such research could give the state a clear idea of how to educate the masses, shape their opinions, and rectify internal divisions. Major Juan Barrientos thought that Project Camelot was a useful application of social science theory to a

²² Irving Louis Horowitz, *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: studies in the relationship between social science and practical politics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1967).

military problem. In his mind, this was the exact type of social science research the Chilean state ought to conduct on itself.²³

GRADUALISM, MODERATION, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

A generally held sentiment among officers was that poverty and social injustice empowered revolutionary ideologies. Thus, it was incumbent on national leaders to chart long term plans to achieve social and economic justice. This was a strategic imperative, if governments failed to moderate class conflict the state would be less capable of mobilizing the home front. However, they did not view social and economic justice as something that could be achieved suddenly, it would naturally be an incremental process.

An outstanding example of this strain in military thought is Colonel Enrique Lackington Montti's economics paper titled 'Income Distribution and Social Moderation', which created a model to predict political and social instability as a function of income inequality.²⁴ Lackington's thesis was fairly simple: after a certain threshold of income inequality, the likelihood of civil war, political strife, social instability rises dramatically. Given this threat, every society had a security imperative to moderate excessive concentrations of wealth. Lackington's essay not only won the army General Staff's award for originality and excellence, it also exhibited a widely held conviction in the armed forces that economic inequality bred instability and made Marxism more

²³ Major Juan Barrientos Vidaurre, "La Ciencia Política y La Seguridad Nacional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 337 (1967).

²⁴ Colonel Enrique Lackington M., "Distribución del Ingreso y Moderación Social," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 325 (1965).

attractive. At the same time, Lackington was no socialist; he affirmed the importance of individual initiative and the role of markets to reward innovation.

Like Colonel Lackington, many officers saw income redistribution as a legitimate strategy to ensure social peace. In his memoirs Carlos Prats estimates that eighty percent of all army officers had a center-left political orientation at the start of the seventies.²⁵ Indeed, the Chilean Left was a diverse landscape. Officers variously identified with the Radical, Christian Democratic, and Socialist Parties. Aversion to the Communist Party dated back to the beginning of the century and was reinforced by memories of political turmoil after the Ibáñez dictatorship and during the González administration (1946-1952) when communists had briefly controlled the labor ministry. In 1970 the Socialist Party had become more radical than the PCCh, but communists were irreversibly tainted by their internationalism and orthodox acceptance of class conflict, or what officers called the ‘inorganic division of society’.

AGENTS OF INTEGRATION, INSTRUMENTS OF INSTRUCTION

The start of the 1950s marked the beginning of a change in civil-military relations; civilian authorities began to designate non-military roles for Chilean officers. During the second Ibáñez administration (1952-1958), conscript soldiers were put to work on roads, bridges, and irrigation projects as a part of the *Servicio Militar del Trabajo*.²⁶ Presidents appointed officers to serve in state industries devoted to shipbuilding, the fabrication of aircraft, or the commission on frontier delineation. Eduardo Frei put army officers in

²⁵ Prats, *Memorias*, 141.

²⁶ “El Servicio Militar del Trabajo y la Fuerza Aérea,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 76 (1960).

charge of the Commission on Nuclear Energy, while Salvador Allende actually brought several officers into his cabinet. Allende's intention was to assure internal order, but like other chief executives he had increased their legitimate sphere of non-military activity in the state apparatus.²⁷

As we have seen, officers felt attacked by economists who considered the military a drain on state resources that could otherwise be devoted to education or collective welfare. Officers insisted that they took in illiterate, malnourished conscripts and churned out literate, disciplined citizens ready for productive service to the nation. Thus, military service made invisible contributions to the economy that could not be calculated with statistic measures. For example, military service generated valuable knowledge about the national territory and prepared uneducated conscripts for useful service in technical trades. More intangibly, military service instilled spiritual values like civic spirit, patriotism, duty, and honor.²⁸ A repeated contention among officers was that rural conscripts finished military service with a new sense of connection to a national whole.²⁹

All three services played a role developing the Aisén province, cut off from mainland Chile by lakes, channels, fjords, and icefields. An air force editorial observed that a large number of soldiers fulfilled their military service in Aisén province where they acquired knowledge of the fatherland's geography and technical skills that could be

²⁷ Varas, *Los Militares en el Poder*, 20. Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 268-278.

²⁸ Colonel Rene González Rojas (R), "Contribución Económica de las FF.AA.," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 315 (1963). Major Enrique Yavar Martin, "Reseña de la Educación en el Ejército de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 344 (1968).

²⁹ This is the argument made by Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: the modernization of rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).

put to use in the civilian economy.³⁰ Similarly, navy ships, light helicopters, and transport biplanes explored the Antarctic and supplied isolated cities that would otherwise be exposed and vulnerable.³¹

In May of 1960, the twentieth century's most powerful earthquake rocked Chile's southern provinces. With its epicenter in Valdivia, the earthquake caused tsunamis and flooded some of Chile's most rugged territories, stranding thousands of citizens in remote isolated regions. In this catastrophe, the armed forces rescued citizens from affected areas and supplied survivors with medicine and temporary shelter. In defense journals, the three services emphasized their integrative function connecting southern territories, inaccessible by road, to the central heartland, especially during winter months.³²

In 1965, retired air force colonel Rene González Rojas published *The Armed Forces' Contribution to Economic Development*, in which he argued that civilian authorities ought to expand the size and function of the armed forces. Each of the service journals reprinted various chapters of González's book, which expressed his foundational premise that the armed forces had in the past, and should in the future, play an integral role in the nation's development.³³ Its mission, according to the constitution, was to maintain internal and external order and remain loyal to civilian authorities. But the role

³⁰ "Editorial", *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 93 (1964).

³¹ "Editorial: Aviación Naval," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 639 (1964).

³² "La Tragedia al Sur," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 616, (1960). "Editorial: Labor Cumplida," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 83 (1961).

³³ The argument here is that the armed forces had participated in state development from the Spanish conquest to American independence, and more recently, in the writing of the 1925 Constitution.

was much more than that. During natural catastrophes the military acted as a normalizer and rescuer. In its ongoing role as *agente educador* the military carried on a permanent dialogue with the nation's population fulfilling obligatory military service. The military contributed to democratic development by overseeing clean elections – a point of international prestige among Latin American nations - and spread essential spiritual values, which might lack material value but contributed to the solidarity and unity of the Chilean people in the common labor of development.³⁴ In short, it was the most national of institutions, inseparable from the nation's values, interests, and goals.

González remarked that Chile's historical tradition justified a state initiative to 'restructure the armed forces and adapt them towards the goal of achieving full development and a matching standard of living.'³⁵ González insisted that the old Prussian concept of maintaining armed forces exclusively for war was anachronistic because the Second World War had completely eliminated the distinction between combatants and non-combatants. During that war, civilians were mobilized for civil defense and national production, often finding themselves exposed to greater risks than those on the front.³⁶ Pointing to the worker-soldier model in China, or the Egyptian, Israeli, and Swiss militaries that used soldiers in non-military development projects, González said, 'the great human masses, solidly organized and disciplined can constitute a labor force of the

³⁴ Aviation Colonel Rene González Rojas (R), "Misión de la FF.AA.," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 100 (1966).

³⁵ Colonel René González Rojas (R), "Contribución Económica de las FF.AA.," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 315 (1963).

³⁶ On the blurred distinct between civilians and soldiers in modern warfare see Sub-Lieutenant Fernando Nicolas V., "Valoración de Potenciales," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 678 (1970).

first order in the hands of a modern state or one of recent creation, in order to coordinate economic development.’³⁷

González concluded that the rise of military regimes across South America had caused Chilean politicians to back away from expanding the role of the armed forces because they feared it might constitute a dangerous precedent, but from his perspective, Chilean presidents needed to think creatively about the potential for a great civil-military project, with civilians and soldiers jointly formulating development plans together.³⁸

The Armed Forces’ Contribution to Economic Development expresses two major themes in Chilean military thought. First, the conviction that a weak economy translated into a weak military and restive popular classes who would be attracted to radical ideologies. To remedy a weak economy, González advocated a Keynesian strategy of conscripting more citizens into the army, navy, and air force. He reasoned that such an action would not only boost consumption, production, and employment, but also have a salutary effect on the national economy. Pointing to Israel or Switzerland as models, González wanted the government to require every citizen to fulfill military service or civic duties of some sort.

Second, González criticized the tendency of economists to overlook the armed forces’ role teaching soldiers technical skills that transferred to the civilian economy once they left military service. In his mind, military service created a phalanx of Chileans ready for productive work in industrial, agricultural, and mining activities, while also

³⁷ Colonel René González Rojas (R), “Contribución Económica de las FF.AA.,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 315 (1963).

³⁸ Ibid.

forming disciplined patriots imbued with the nation's highest spiritual values. González was not alone in his beliefs that civilian and military officials ought to collaborate formulating global plans for national development.³⁹

GEOPOLITICAL THOUGHT

On September 11, 1924, a Chilean military junta declared its intention of abolishing Chile's 'gangrenous political system' and forty nine years later, air force commander Gustavo Leigh promised to 'eradicate the Marxist cancer' from the fatherland. Likewise, Augusto Pinochet talked about sanitizing the nation's unhealthy political habits. Far from being a mere coincidence, the use of medical imagery by Chilean officers is related to a set of geopolitical principles that view the state as an organic entity.

Broadly speaking, geopolitics attempts to understand the spatial relations between regions, states, and continents by analyzing political, economic, and geographical factors. In Chile, the two most important members of Chile's military government from 1973 to 1990 (army commander Augusto Pinochet Ugarte and navy commander José Toribio Merino Castro) taught geopolitics at their respective war academies. Without question, geopolitical precepts influenced their political and strategic perspective.

Geopolitical ideas in Chile have a direct lineage to Germany, where theorists developed the idea of the state as a living organism engaged in constant struggle for

³⁹ See Corvette Captain Jorge R. Morales Álvarez, "Influencia de la Marina Militar en el Desarrollo de la República," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 623 (1961). Colonel Florian A. Holm, "Planificación de la Investigación y Desarrollo," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 97 (1965). Squadron Commander Guillermo Gómez A., "Movilización, Seguridad, Economía de Seguridad," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 108 (1968).

survival. German theorists defined the discipline's objective to uncover immutable laws that governed the growth and decline of states.⁴⁰ Karl Haushofer (1869-1946), the last of the great German geopoliticians, codified the ideas of Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) and Rudolf Kjellen (1864-1922) into concrete doctrines like *lebensraum* (vital living space for a growing state) and tariff protectionism to foster economic autarky, objectives that eventually became Nazi doctrine. For Haushofer, growing territorial borders was a sign of a healthy, expanding state.

After World War II, Chilean officers repeatedly rejected the notion that expanding national borders was a sign of health. Colonel Humberto Medina, for instance, explained that geopolitical analysis was a neutral academic discipline. It did not imply racial or geographic determinism; it was neither inherently good or bad, but rather a tool to understand the interaction between human beings inside a state. As 'possibilists', Chilean thinkers rejected the Nazi School's emphasis on racial and geographic determinism. They believed a nation could overcome environmental challenges, but they retained the decidedly German concept of an organic state subject to stages of growth, decline, even death.⁴¹

After 1951, the army's academy of war decided to teach geopolitics as a separate discipline rather than one aspect of military geography alongside logistical intelligence, international law, public relations, military history, and statistics. One notable specialist

⁴⁰ See Eberardo Backheuser, "Leyes Geopolíticas de la Evolución de los Estados," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 263 (1954). See also Genaro Arriagada Herrera, *El Pensamiento Político de los Militares (estudios sobre Chile, Argentina, Brasil y Uruguay)* (Santiago: CISEC, 1981), 110-127.

⁴¹ Lieutenant Colonel Humberto Medina Parker, "Sangre y Suelo de Chile – Su Geopolítica en Acción," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 222 (1948).

and professor of geopolitics at the academy of war from 1964 to 1967 was Augusto Pinochet Ugarte whose *Síntesis Geográfica de Chile* (1963) became standard reading in Chile's war colleges.⁴² In his second book *Geopolítica* (1968) Pinochet described geopolitics as the scientific management of the state drawing from a multitude of academic disciplines – geology, history, economics, political science, anthropology, geography, etc. - to provide:

a scientific and reasoned explanation of the relentless earthly activity of these super-beings [states] that are born, develop, and die in a cycle that reveals appetites of all sorts and a great instinct for preservation.⁴³

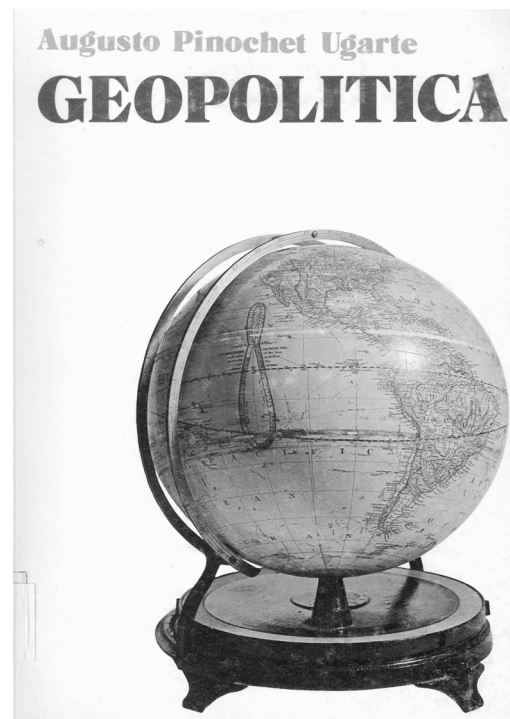
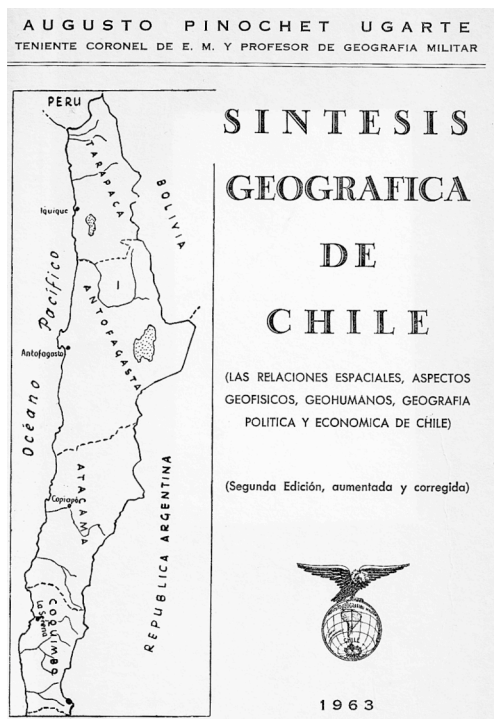


Figure 2.1, Publications by Augusto Pinochet Ugarte.

⁴² *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, 137-142.

⁴³ Pinochet, *Geopolítica*, 66-7.

Pinochet believed states periodically fell into stages of decadence. Thus geopolitical analysis aimed to identify state weaknesses and suggest how to reorder social, political, and economic structures to renew a growth cycle and augment 'national power'. National leaders, for their part, had to know as much as possible about the state's strengths and vulnerabilities in order to formulate judicious policies to rectify those weaknesses. Julio Von Chrismar, another professor of geopolitics, warned that internal conflicts tended to be the source of a state's decline more often than external causes.⁴⁴ This is one context to put the military view of Marxist ideology as inorganically dividing the social whole.

In 1961 three army academy of war professors composed an article about geopolitics that described the state as a living organism whose mountains, rivers and deserts represented the skeleton, human population the flesh, industrial/technical capacity the muscles, diplomacy the brain, and national character the soul.⁴⁵ Using the same body metaphor, Chile's central valley represented the heart, Santiago represented the brain where administrative decisions flowed across the body, and frontier zones represented the state's extremities, which required extra care and protection. Transportation routes represented the state's dorsinal spine facilitating exchange and communication, or put another way, they were the nation's arterial system delivering oxygenated blood to the entire body. These 'geohuman' factors then formed a single supraindividual organism. Geopolitical analysis, wrote the authors, offered statesmen a tool to diagnose the health

⁴⁴ Arriagada, *Pensamiento Político de los Militares*, 138.

⁴⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Ramón Valdés Martínez, Major Hector Bravo Muñoz, and Major Rolando Garay Cifuentes, "La Geografía y el Poder Nacional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 300 (1961).

of the state organism, to identify vulnerable parts of the state, to anticipate internal and external threats, and to prescribe global policies to redress any problems.

One ‘law’ of geopolitics is that geography influences political development. For example, Chile’s cultural homogeneity and geographically compact central valley led to a speedy process of political consolidation after independence. National leaders could efficiently govern and administrate their territory from a center. However, after conquering the Atacama desert and establishing sovereignty over the far south, Chile’s national territory posed formidable geographic obstacles to organic unity. In the USA coastal connections, rivers, canals, and lakes had favored transportation and political unification along the Atlantic seaboard.⁴⁶ Chile’s arid northern deserts and wind swept southern regions were insulated from the heartland, sparsely populated, and vulnerable to attack by Peru and Argentina. Thus statesmen had to pay close attention to spatial segregation. If human populations declined in contested frontier zones, those regions became more vulnerable to attack or assimilation by another state. In the case of Chile, transportation networks were vital to connect the nation’s peripheral territories to its administrative center.⁴⁷ In this respect, a modern telecommunications network and transportation infrastructure were essential to integrate the nation’s peripheral regions into a national whole.

Air force and navy officers often highlighted the role their services played connecting the southern territories to the central valley and looked to a future where a

⁴⁶ Group Commander Humberto Magliocchetti B., “Importancia Geopolítica de las Vías de Comunicaciones Aéreas en el Pacífico Sur,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 79 (1960).

⁴⁷ Op. Cit. “La Geografía y el Poder Nacional”.

system of seaports and air traffic would permit Chile's southern territories to find international markets abroad and dynamize business with the central valley. Air power, one editorial observed, was the best way to overcome geographic barriers in the nation's most isolated regions where citizens lacked surface roads.⁴⁸

In 1965, Army Major Julio Robert Canessa published a series of articles about *información estratégica*, which he defined as any type of knowledge with strategic value. This knowledge could be derived from modern academic disciplines such as geography, sociology and economics as well as intelligence acquired from covert operations. Major Canessa emphasized that every nation's had a strategic imperative to acquire precise information about its own topography, industrial capacity, communication lines, political divisions, and social conflicts in addition to the same information about potential adversaries.⁴⁹

In one article Canessa focused on Chile's telecommunication network as a strategically vital social instrument because it allowed scientists and businessmen to speak with each other from region to region. In a geographically unusual country like Chile, such interconnection was essential for innovation and commerce. In this sense, trains, automobiles, phone lines, and roadways had a geopolitical significance apart from their manifest symbolism of societal affluence; they promoted the organic health of the state by opening up avenues of communication in the most remote parts of the nation's 2,800 miles of territory north to south.

⁴⁸ "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 72 (1959).

⁴⁹ Major Julio Canessa Robert, "Introducción al Estudio de la Información Estratégica," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 326 (1965).

A 1957 study of Chile's 42 principal cities revealed a total of 93,000 installed telephones and 57,700 pending requests for installation. Meanwhile the infrastructure for long distance service, especially between the far south and center, was either entirely lacking or deficient.⁵⁰ From a military perspective, these deficiencies went far beyond a lack of consumer goods or symptom of underdevelopment, they constituted a defense problem because televisions and telephones represented new possibilities to integrate citizens into the body politic. Looking ahead to the neo-liberal reforms after 1975, officers may have disliked the social cost of free market reforms, but few disliked the greater availability of cars, radios, telephones, and televisions. Apart from symbolizing modernization, these consumer goods had strategic value for the body politic because they sped up the exchange of information and ideas. Long distance telephone service and satellite technology instantaneously connected Punta Arenas, Chiloe, Easter Island, and Santiago.⁵¹

NATIONAL CHARACTER, AUTARKY, AND THE STATE

Officers understood national security as an integrated matter shaped by each state's technology, industrialization, international alliances, and internal makeup. As students of the state security, geopoliticians naturally focused on a nation's ability to rapidly mobilize its people and productive forces towards a common objective. In 1962 Colonel Carlos Prats wrote a lengthy treatise about a hypothetical military campaign in which he emphasized the state's role bringing the economy to its maximum potential

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Lieutenant Colonel J. Guido Soto Boggiano, "Las Telecomunicaciones Nacionales," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 348 (1969).

immediately before, during, and after a national emergency. To achieve maximum output from all available resources, politics had to harmonize with strategic objectives.⁵²

Prats, like most of his colleagues, viewed autarky and national control over strategic resources as geopolitical goals that would allow the state to mobilize and direct all productive forces towards a single military objective.⁵³ World War I and II had demonstrated that surviving a long war depended, in good measure, on a nation's industrial capacity. In such a test of industrial strength, Chile's prospects were not good compared to Argentina and Peru, both countries with larger economies and populations. Thus, Chile would have to rely on superior leadership and a more effective mobilization, where the state would rationalize all industry and mobilize all material, intellectual, and human resources. In peacetime, the objective was to improve the nation's productive capacity and social development.⁵⁴ From this perspective, the country's human capital – military leaders, technicians, engineers, scientists – played an extremely important role in state security. As this human capital improved, state security enjoyed a commensurate increase.⁵⁵

⁵² Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Prats, "La Conducción Estratégica de una Campaña en un Teatro de Operaciones," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 306, No. 307 (1962).

⁵³ Prats viewed Allende's nationalizations as part of a geopolitical process that improved national security because the state was acquiring control over its most strategic resources.

⁵⁴ Squadron Commander Guillermo Gómez A., "Movilización, Seguridad, Economía de Seguridad," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 108 (1968). Major Florencio Zambrano Roman, "La Base General Nacional y la Base General de las Fuerzas Armadas," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 332 (1966).

⁵⁵ Corvette Captain Rubén Scheihing Navarro, "Prolegemónos Sobre Seguridad Nacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 671 (1969).

Although population and industrial capacity had been decisive factors in the two World Wars, Israel's Six Day War in 1967 showed that 'David could slay Goliath' so long as David possessed superior leadership, strategy, political will, and a motivated population. Intangibles like national character and morale mattered. Leaders had to be capable of directing popular energy and the masses had to be willing to have their energies channelled towards national objectives. For a small nation like Chile, intangible qualities like national character and superior military leadership could save the nation from material determinism.

When Napoleon's highly motivated citizen army swept across Europe at the start of the nineteenth century, warfare was irreversibly transformed. Henceforth, military science could not afford to ignore the relationship between the masses and a nation's ability to make war and defend itself. If national governments did not secure domestic peace and prosperity for the masses, these citizens might not defend the nation as loyal citizen soldiers. This reality, argues Genaro Arriagada, explains part of the reason South American militaries began to demand 'acceptable' civilian governments in the twentieth century that would maintain social discipline and promote economic growth.⁵⁶

Army geopoliticians highlighted that national idiosyncracies influenced a country's response to historical circumstances. For example, Russian tenacity influenced the Soviet Union's resolve to resist Nazi aggression and on various occasions, officers remarked that tenacity, stoicism, and discipline constituted specific national traits which

⁵⁶ Arriagada, *El Pensamiento Político de los Militares*, 71-83. Prussian theorist Carl Von Clausewitz's experiences in the Napoleonic wars convinced him that the state had to acquire the loyalty of its inhabitants to defend the national territory from external enemies. This task might entail democratization, social reform, and social justice so the state's citizens would be more willing and ready to defend the state from its enemies.

contributed to Chile's victory over Peru and Bolivia in the War of the Pacific.⁵⁷ Morale, like national character, constituted another factor of geopolitical analysis. Army officers wrote: 'the morale of any given people will break at a determined point. The breaking point is different for different peoples and under different conditions.'⁵⁸ In 1940 the French had lost the will to resist the Nazis while the British resolved to fight on after Dunkirk.

A MARITIME ORIENTATION

The maritime aspect of Chilean geopolitics is unsurprising in light of the nation's geographic configuration and its natural interest to prevent Argentina from acquiring a Pacific outlet, but it went beyond that.⁵⁹ Navy editorials repeatedly insisted on the necessity of reorienting the economy towards fishing, ship building, and other maritime industries through subsidies and incentives. Navy officials considered a growing merchant marine a sign of organic health and they were not alone. All three branches recognized that Chile's physical reality demanded particular interest in the the Magallan Straits, Antarctica, and South Pacific. Through the forties and fifties, army geopoliticians like General Ramón Cañas concurred that neglect of Chile's maritime vocation invited external powers to challenge Chile's privileged position in the South Pacific.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ British common sense, French individualism, German efficiency, American pragmatism, Russian tenacity were cited as examples of national idiosyncracies. In Chile, alcoholism, indifference, and a propensity to gamble have been identified as negative national characteristics.

⁵⁸ Op. cit. "La Geografía y el Poder Nacional".

⁵⁹ Major Gustavo Díaz Feliu, "Influencia del Mar en el Desarrollo de Chile," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 616 (1960).

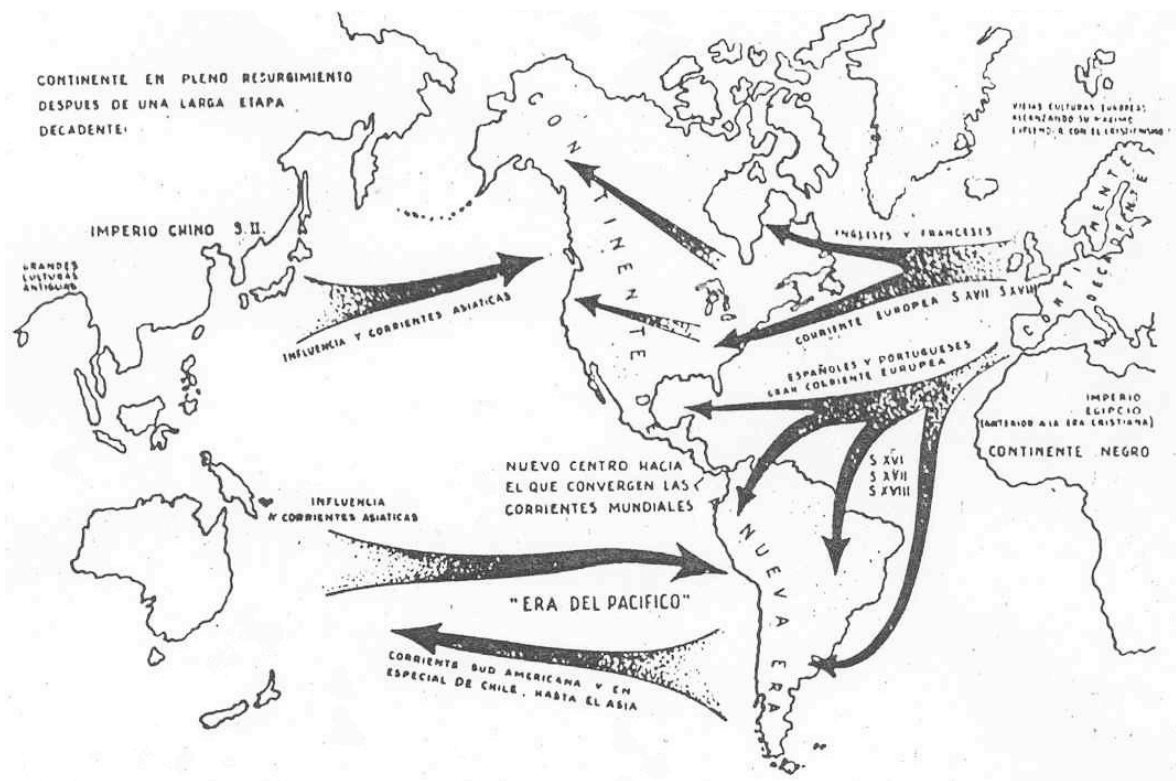


Figure 2.2, 'The Era of the Pacific'⁶¹

Another side of this maritime orientation was an emphasis on the coming 'Pacific Century' that would reverse Chile's traditional reliance on North Atlantic markets. Figure 2.2 illustrates the often expressed view that the world's center of gravity was shifting from the North Atlantic towards the Pacific. In the image, text over East Asia reads 'Continent in Full Resurgence After a Long Period of Decline', text lengthwise along the Western Hemisphere reads 'Continent of the New Era', text over Western Europe reads 'Declining Continent', and the text below Central America's littoral reads 'New Center Towards Which World Currents Converge'.

⁶⁰ John Child, "Geopolitical Thinking in Latin America," *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1979), 103.

⁶¹ Taken, with permission, from the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 80 (1961).

In this 'Era of the Pacific' Chilean producers would have the opportunity to provide agricultural products to markets in the northern hemisphere while enjoying a commercially and geopolitically privileged position in the South Pacific among other key Pacific powers like the Soviet Union, United States, Japan, and China.⁶² Chile had forty Pacific ports and Easter Island to facilitate penetration into East Asia, all realities to support the logic of developing a powerful merchant marine and national development plan favoring maritime industries.⁶³ With the advent of the Andean Pact in the late sixties, it seemed that Chile was being handed the opportunity to fulfill Karl Haushofer's prediction that Chile would dominate the South Pacific.⁶⁴ The only thing lacking was a president like Bernardo O'Higgins, Diego Portales, or José Manuel Balmaceda who understood this maritime destiny.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT CHILEAN GEOPOLITICS

Defense journals repeated the idea that geopolitics was a scientific discipline drawing from other disciplines - geography, history, economics, anthropology, geology – to make objective claims. Geopoliticians claimed a scientific basis to support their goals whether administrative reform, maritime development, or strong repression of Marxism.

⁶² Edmundo González Salinas, "Mirando el Mapa de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 301 (1961). Lieutenant Colonel Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, "Significado Militar de la Relaciones Espaciales," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 317 (1964).

⁶³ Frigate Captain Arturo Troncoso Daroch, "Geopolítica del Pacífico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 624 (1961). Frigate Captain Arturo Troncoso Daroch, "Geopolítica del Pacífico: consideraciones geopolíticas sobre el océano pacífico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 624, No. 625 (1961). Ship Captain Alberto Andrade Taraba (R), "Somos Un País Marítimo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 635 (1963). "Editorial: El Porvenir de Chile Está en el Mar," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 668 (1969).

⁶⁴ Rear Admiral Ismael Huerta Díaz, "La Próxima Conferencia de Pacífico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 673 (1969). Frigate Captain Pedro Homero Julio, "Chile Frente al Pacífico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 677 (1970).

Michel Foucault has correctly observed that modern Western societies root much of their assumptions about truth in scientific knowledge rather than religious authority. As a consequence, truth requires a legitimating scientific discourse. In Foucault's words, 'there can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth, which operates through and on the basis of this association.'⁶⁵ For the Chilean armed forces, geopolitics and history constituted two legitimating discourses. Geopolitical knowledge identified a nation's 'permanent objective interests'. Historical knowledge legitimated the military's right to participate in state development and to defend those 'objective interests'.

After 1973, the military junta initiated two projects with geopolitical underpinnings. First, the reorganization of the national territory into new administrative units and second, the construction of an extensive road system in the isolated Aisén province. Conceived as initiatives to facilitate human settlement and economic development in the nation's underpopulated regions, both projects aimed to found self-sustaining bases of wealth in remote areas and reverse the disproportionate growth of urban areas in the central valley. From a geopolitical lens, it was necessary to vitalize parts of the body politic feared to have entered into a dangerous period of decline relative to the central valley heartland.⁶⁶ In this respect, Chilean geopolitics aimed to understand

⁶⁵ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*, edited by Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 93.

⁶⁶ Op. Cit. "La Geografía y el Poder Nacional". Op. Cit. "Significado Militar de la Relaciones Espaciales". For a sense of continuity from the sixties into the dictatorship see Ship Captain Carlos Vial Castro (R), "Chile República Federal," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 649 (1965). Comisión Nacional de la Reforma Administrativa, *Chile Hacia un Nuevo Destino: su reforma administrativa integral y el proceso de regionalización* (Santiago: República de Chile, 1976).

broad social patterns and totalities, the *longue durée*, not the fleeting *histoire événementielle* of individuals with names.⁶⁷ Further, only the state could reverse a process of decline. The ethical implication of this orientation is significant: the state has a primordial right to allocate human and material resources to achieve long term goals.

In the words of one army major, ‘for the state there are only objectives and everything that serves to achieve its objectives, is appropriate and legitimate, granting total validity to the expression that the end justify the means.’⁶⁸ This type of perspective, so removed from individuals with faces, granted the state every right to neutralize internal threats and engage in social engineering to secure its survival. It could even justify state terror in the name of state security.⁶⁹ General Julio Canessa Robert recalls that the Pentagon stressed the importance of internal security after the Cuban Revolution but he underlines that the idea of an organic state facing external or internal threats long antedated this emphasis. He says:

National security is an integral activity of the State. As such it is permanent and has no family name [meaning no doctrinal origin in one country or another]. As military personnel we are taught from day one that, like any living organism, the survival of the nation is never definitively assured at any point in time. Threats, dangers and obstructions hinder its normal development. Sovereign nations appear and disappear with alarming regularity.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean in the Age of Philip II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

⁶⁸ Major Juan G. Hutt Guenther, “El Estado y el Servicio de Informaciones. Su Influencia en la Conducción Política del Estado,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 331 (1966).

⁶⁹ For a critique of the post-Enlightenment quest for totality, centralization, homogeneity, and social engineering see James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: how certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

⁷⁰ Arancibia and Balart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 77.

MILITARY VALUES

Scholars have described militaries as a ‘total institutions’ in the sense that soldiers work, rest, and relax inside of an organization that operates according to a different set of rhythms than civil society.⁷¹ Discipline, honor, realism and sacrifice are just some of the values that militaries cultivate and which reinforce a sense of difference from civilian society. In 1942, Rear Admiral Juan Agustín Rodríguez gave a permanent order that ‘members of the armed forces should be true apostles of military virtue to the people.’⁷² That idea changed little over the next five decades.

‘What for the civil order is something exceptional, is for the soldier something habitual; to speak of military activity is to speak of hierarchy and of obligations.’⁷³ Respect for the verticality of command or *El deber de cumplir* (the duty to carry out orders) constitutes an important military value that distinguishes soldiers from civilians. It prizes mastery over personal feelings and the conscious subordination of the individual to a higher set of values.⁷⁴ Discipline and hierarchy does not ‘reduce men to the level of automatons; on the contrary it can raise them to a higher plane by unifying the action of all towards the pursuit of a noble end.’⁷⁵ A soldier’s subordination to his superior officer

⁷¹ Edwin Lieuwen, *Arms and Politics in Latin America* (New York: Praeger, 1960). John J. Johnson, *The Military and Society in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).

⁷² “Patria, Bandera, Fuerzas Armadas, Armada y Disciplina,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 713 (1976).

⁷³ Rolando Melo Silva, “El Cumplimiento Del Deber Militar,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 317 (1964).

⁷⁴ Major Jorge Court Moock, “Libertad y Disciplina,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 325 (1965). Major Sergio Fernández Rojas, “El Hombre y la Institución Ejército,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 308 (1962).

was understood to be rooted in the spiritual value of self sacrifice towards a higher end.⁷⁶

Rear Admiral Gustavo Carvallo remarked,

Discipline is the real basis of true democracy. Obedience to laws by upright citizens is one basic expression of that discipline....a civilized man must submit himself, willingly or reluctantly to the social rules of community in which he lives, which range from the clothing fashions to the laws of the Republic.⁷⁷

Carvallo and his peers emphasized the role of social discipline for civilization. It allowed human beings to achieve great things and to provide for collective defense.⁷⁸

Officers often defined themselves in opposition to idealists who espoused utopian dreams about world peace or the possibility of creating a socialist society. Emphasizing the inevitability of human conflict, Major Luis Valenzuela summed up corporate thought when he wrote:

World history shows us that the phenomenon we call “war” has been repeated in a systematic and regular basis throughout the history of mankind despite unanimous animosity to it and the multiple efforts of diplomacy [to stop it] the world over.⁷⁹

Military criticism of the Alliance for Progress had to do in good part with the perception that the American initiative was based in idealism rather than a sober analysis of existing circumstances and the short term feasibility of the proposed reforms. This value orientation partially explains the contempt some officers felt for politicians who they

⁷⁵ Rear Admiral Gustavo Carvallo G. (R), “Reflexiones sobre la Disciplina,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 632 (1963).

⁷⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Ossandón Sanchez, “Las Relaciones Humanas,” *Memorial del Ejército del Chile*, No. 331 (1966).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Editors, “Patria, Bandera, Fuerzas Armadas, Armada y Disciplina,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 713 (1976).

⁷⁹ Major Luis Valenzuela Reyes, “Misión de las Fuerzas Armadas y su Participación en el Desarrollo Normal de Nuestra Vida Democrática,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 284 (1958).

believed made unrealistic promises without asking for the necessary sacrifices. Utopian visions of the future upset military realism while calls for a sudden rupture with tradition upset the military's respect for the past. Similarly, military institutions train officers to engage in cost/benefit analysis. What costs will a decision incur? Are the sacrifices worth the potential gains?

With respect to social relations, officers repeatedly affirmed the right of workers and social communities to secure their collective interests. In this respect, there was a general criticism of laissez faire capitalism because it ignored man's higher aspirations for justice and collective security.⁸⁰ Officers wrote a good deal about man's spiritual yearning for integration into a larger community cemented by patriotism and public service. If individuals tended to be naturally selfish, a sense of responsibility to one's community could sublimate that baser instinct.

Leadership or the ability of leaders to earn the respect of their subordinates through a personal example of self sacrifice, hard work, and intelligence was another frequent topic in defense journals.⁸¹ By setting this example, military leaders could expect their subordinates to fulfill orders with vigor and purpose. Lieutenant Colonel Luis Valenzuela wrote 'The gift of command - *don de mando* - is the art of imposing one's will on others, getting subordinates to act with efficiency, resolution, initiative and

⁸⁰ See Major Fenando Fernández Pérez, "Relaciones Humanas," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 310 (1962).

⁸¹ Major Claudio López Silva, "Autoridad Formal y Liderato," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 353 (1970).

a broad spirit of cooperation towards achieving a common goal.’⁸² While charismatic politicians might win a large crowds with rhetoric, it was an officer’s discipline and virtue with which he won the respect of his subordinates.⁸³

During the late sixties, military officers in Latin America, the United States, and Europe were equally disturbed by what they perceived as declining respect for traditional authority. It seemed to many officers that liberal attitudes to sex and drugs undermined societal discipline and threatened the health of the nation.⁸⁴ For example, Admiral Carvallo identified the entire Western Hemisphere as a region under attack by agents of communism who targeted susceptible institutions in civil society, such as universities and unions, and sought to undermine the discipline of the police and military. Fortunately, wrote Carvallo, the armed forces, ‘well-organized, methodically instructed, and with a solid discipline are a guarantee for the nation.’⁸⁵ Chile’s soldiers viewed themselves as the embodiment of national values and guardians of the nation’s democratic institutions.⁸⁶

Another value evident in Chile’s defense journals was a deep respect for the past. Officers valorized historical figures like Pedro de Valdivia, Bernardo O’Higgins, and Diego Portales as well as the importance of symbolic anniversaries like the Battle of

⁸² Lieutenant Colonel Luis Valenzuela Reyes, “Doctrina de Mando,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 308 (1962).

⁸³ Diego Portales was often remembered for his civic virtue, his honesty and self-sacrificing labor as government minister, and his expectation that others would follow his example.

⁸⁴ Rear Admiral Donald Mac Intyre G., “Lo Que Generalmente Se Olvida,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 695 (1973). See also Colonel Samuel H. Hays US Army (R), “La Creciente Crisis del Mando,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 355 (1970).

⁸⁵ Op. Cit. “Reflexiones sobre la Disciplina”.

⁸⁶ Op. Cit. “Doctrina de Mando”.

Iquique (May 21st 1879) or the founding of the air force as an independent branch of the armed forces (March 21st, 1930). Historical names and dates constituted a deep bridge between the past and present that connected soldiers to a larger imagined community.⁸⁷ After September 11, 1973, it became culturally imperative to situate ideas and actions within national traditions and respected historical figures.

DESIRE FOR CONSULTATION

In 1960, the Alessandri Administration created the National Telecommunications Commission, which included eight members of the armed forces and was charged with the task of proposing a *política nacional de telecomunicaciones* to improve telegraph and telephone service across the country. This was the type of civil-military collaboration that many officers felt was appropriate and since telecommunications had a connection to national security and any modern military has telecommunication specialists. Officers wanted to work with civilians on plans for development in areas of national policy where they could contribute a strategic perspective or insight derived from their appreciation of the national territory's geography and inhabitants.

The navy, for example, made repeated calls for civilian leaders to formulate a *política marítima* or global plan for maritime development to strengthen every sector of the economy related to maritime activities (fishing, shipbuilding, transport, oceanographic research). More generally, navy thinkers wanted civilian leaders to

⁸⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

actively prepare for emerging opportunities in the Pacific. Every year, a high ranking official from the navy outlined these maritime goals in the *Revista de la Marina*.⁸⁸

This desire for consultation on matters of development considered intimately connected to national security should be placed into another context. Unlike the United States or Western Europe where universities were accustomed to training civilians for government jobs in strategic affairs and defense related issues, Chilean universities offered no such degrees apart from international law. In other words, the military was an island of defense specialists who lacked civilian counterparts with equivalent training. Genaro Arriagada has cited this shortcoming in the civil-military relationship because civilians simply could not speak the language of soldiers.⁸⁹ As we will see, the military took steps to train more civilians in matters related to national security and public administration during the dictatorship.⁹⁰

MATERIAL IMPOVERISHMENT AND DEMORALIZATION

From 1964 to 1970, the Christian Democrat Party cut Chile's defense budget and deprived the military of resources for training and modernization. Eduardo Frei simply did not believe war was a real possibility in the Southern Cone. He thought pan-American fraternity would suffice to resolve local conflicts. Of this decision, Carlos Prats writes that the Christian Democratic Party committed 'a grave and historic error' by undervaluing the armed forces because their actions exacerbated thirty-five years of

⁸⁸ Rear Admiral Jacobo Neumann Etienne, "Discurso Inaugural: pronunciado por el Jefe del Estado Mayor General de la Armada," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 622 (1961).

⁸⁹ Arriagada, *El Pensamiento Político de los Militares*, 31.

⁹⁰ I refer here to the ANEPE (Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos)

accumulated professional frustration and strained civil-military relations.⁹¹ Moreover, their actions compromised the country's readiness to fight a conventional war. This fact was reprehensible in military circles.

In the sixties, Chilean naval leaders clamored for aircraft designed to locate and destroy enemy submarines. Air force leaders wanted a fleet of modern fighter jets, pointing out that Chile, unlike the USA, had no nuclear submarines capable of firing inter-regional missiles. In the event of a conflict, pilots wanted the ability to penetrate enemy territory and destroy bridges, air strips, and other lines of communication.⁹² The watershed moment related to these issues occurred on May 5, 1967 when Peru's government purchased twelve Mirage 5 jets from France, ignoring Washington's strident protests and warnings of dire consequences for US/Peru relations. Lima's decision had broader consequences. It ended Washington's hegemonic position as arms supplier to the hemisphere and made Peru the first Latin American nation (excluding Cuba) to possess supersonic combat aircraft.⁹³ The immediate effect of the purchase was to initiate an arms build up across South America. That year, Frei authorized the FACH to purchase British Hawker Hunter jets.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Prats, *Memorias*, 103.

⁹² "Editorial: La Defensa Antisubmarina," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 625 (1961). "Sí, Es Necesaria Una Defensa Aérea," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 82 (1961).

⁹³ Le Roy, François. "Mirages over the Andes: Peru, France, the United States, and Military Jet Procurement in the 1960s." *Pacific Historical Review* 71, No. 2 (2002): 269–300.

⁹⁴ The United States actually placed restrictions on the export of technologically sophisticated weapons to less developed nations. This had the effect of turning South American states to European suppliers.

Furthermore, Chile's two potential adversaries – Argentina and Peru - came under military rule in 1966 and 1968, making outstanding frontier disputes a more likely source of future conflict. This political reality preoccupied soldiers who knew that outdated weapons would be insufficient deterrents if they had to confront militaries with superior technological capabilities.

In 1965, American sociologist Roy Allen Hansen concluded that Chile's military profession was in decline. Other professions attracted the nation's best talent and the prestige of military service had diminished.⁹⁵ As one might guess, this situation had a negative effect on civil-military relations. Officers saw themselves as guardians of Chile's venerated democracy, but civilians underfunded their institutions.

As some of the nation's worst paid professionals officers moonlighted as taxi cab drivers to afford decent apartments or send their children to private schools. Eviscerated defense budgets meant that military commanders lacked the ammunition and petrol to run proper training exercises; conscript soldiers wore blue municipal overalls instead of proper uniforms.⁹⁶ This situation was not just demoralizing, it reinforced a preexisting sense of separation, even moral superiority, towards society's more comfortable professions. Would doctors, lawyers, and politicians accept such low pay *and* willingly die for their country?⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Roy Allen Hansen, *Military Culture and Organizational Decline: a study of the Chilean army* (PhD diss. UCLA, 1967).

⁹⁶ All military memoirs refer to the reality of material impoverishment. Consult Carlos Prats, *Memorias*, 93-106. *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, 165-166. "La Asociación de Ahorro y Préstamo "Diego Portales" y el Problema Habitacional de las FF.AA.," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 346 (1968).

EL TACNAZO

By the late sixties, civil-military relations had become very strained indeed. In 1968 eighty army officers at the academy of war resigned in protest of their notoriously low salaries. The next year a US intelligence estimate reported that Chile's encirclement by military regimes and the possibility of a Marxist coming to power in 1970 had led to a heightened awareness of politics; some field level officers were even said to be plotting against civilian leaders. Nonetheless, it concluded that the preponderant concerns of the Chilean armed forces remained 'low pay, poor training, inadequate equipment'.⁹⁸

On October 21, 1969 Brigadier General Roberto Viaux, commander of the first army division in Antofagasta, wrote a letter to president Eduardo Frei expressing what he said was the shared opinion of colonels, majors, and captains under his command. In this letter, Viaux accused Frei and his predecessor of withholding the resources for military modernization and keeping salaries of military officials low when compared to other professions. Viaux's letter also had a political component. He said the armed forces should be involved with decision-making at the national level.⁹⁹

When army commander in chief Sergio Castillo received the letter he relieved Viaux of his command in Antofagasta and recalled him to the capital, but on the morning of October 21 Viaux declared Santiago's Tacna Regiment in revolt against the

⁹⁷ For a sharp critique of civilians see Mario López Tobar, *El 11 en la Mira de un Hawker Hunter: las operaciones y blancos aéreos de septiembre de 1973* (Santiago: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999), 32-33.

⁹⁸ CDP, Dept. of State 'Military Unrest Serious, But Frei Administration Should Survive', Memo from George C. Denny to the Secretary, 10-03-1969. The report discusses General Viaux and his relationship to the armed forces.

⁹⁹ A transcript of Viaux's letter appears in Florencia Varas, *Conversaciones Con Viaux* (Santiago: Talleres Impresiones Eire, 1972).

government. Dubbed *el tacnazo*, observers speculated that General Viaux was testing the waters to see if he had sufficient political support for a coup against Frei, but when it did not materialize Viaux quickly proclaimed the revolt a ‘movement’ to call attention to the plight of Chile’s impoverished military. The next day Viaux called off the rebellion and accepted retirement from military service, but only after receiving a number of government concessions including the defense minister’s resignation, a significant pay increase for all officers, and a much larger defense budget for 1970.

The *Tacnazo* insurrection was significant for multiple reasons. First, it was successful. Soldiers got pay increases and civilian leaders promised to increase defense spending. Did it mark a fundamental change in the civil-military relations?¹⁰⁰ Undoubtedly, the uprising scandalized civilian leaders, so unaccustomed to military defiance of civilian authority. Second, there was widespread sympathy for Viaux’s demands in the barracks even though military leaders ultimately managed to maintain internal discipline.¹⁰¹ Third, Viaux’s demands expressed a current in military thought about the desire for participation in the formulation of social, political, and economic policy considered integral to national security.

Finally, it should be noted that Salvador Allende’s Socialist Party considered the demands of Viaux’s movement legitimate. As we will see in chapter four, Allende

¹⁰⁰ CDP, Dept. of State, ‘Chile: Causes of Army Discontent Seem Likely to Persist’, Intelligence Summary from Ray S. Cline to the Secretary, 11-04-1969.

¹⁰¹ In his memoir Fernando Matthei says that Chile’s air force was less aggrieved than the army because president Frei had authorized air force commander in chief Máximo Errázuriz Ward to purchase 21 Hawker Hunter jets from Great Britain in 1967, which constituted the first independent acquisition of aircraft since 1937. Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 134-138.

understood the armed forces' desire for institutional modernization and desire to be consulted by civilian leaders on matters related to national development. In this sense, the Alessandri and Frei administrations' neglect of the armed forces in the sixties gave Allende the opportunity to redress their grievances in the seventies. Indeed, Allende hoped to win the active support of the armed forces by demonstrating his commitment to their plans for institutional modernization.

CONCLUSIONS

From the thirties to the end of the fifties, Chilean democracy responded to the interests of organized workers, middle class professionals, and national elites. Poor, politically inarticulate peasants and urban slum dwellers remained outside of the system. In the sixties, that began to change. As Chile's electorate widened fierce political competition developed for the loyalty of previously excluded voters. Yet, the Chilean state did not have the resources to incorporate ever greater numbers of citizens into the welfare state. Put another way, political modernization had outstripped economic modernization. In 1970 Salvador Allende proposed a bold solution: abandon capitalism altogether in favor of state socialism.¹⁰²

The expansion of mass politics unsettled an institution that viewed mass politics as unpredictable and potentially dangerous. On the one hand, popular energy could be channeled to achieve big national objectives. On the other hand, irresponsible demagogues could channel that same energy. What was there to stop a reckless politician from undermining societal consensus or generating unrealistic expectations for immediate

¹⁰² For this interpretation see Patricio Meller, *The Unidad Popular and the Pinochet Dictatorship: a political economy analysis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 62.

social change? Chilean officers saw progress as something to be achieved incrementally by charting realistic, long-term objectives. Promises of rapid social development or radical rupture with the past smacked of demagoguery and misguided idealism. In this respect, military ideas about change and progress were essentially conservative.¹⁰³

Notwithstanding the strained state of civil-military relations few officers wished to eliminate Chile's multiparty democracy in 1970. The armed forces' international reputation for professionalism and apoliticalism remained a powerful source of institutional pride that reinforced a commitment to maintaining Chile's 'exceptional democracy'.

Officers conceived of their profession as fundamentally different from all others because it adhered to a different set of rules and values. In this respect, a social divide did exist between professional soldiers and civilians. At the same time it is also true that soldiers desired more civil-military contact. Chilean officers lamented the fact that civilians knew so little about defense issues and lacked the training to speak with them about matters related to national security. Officers wanted to collaborate with civilians at universities and private institutions to investigate matters pertaining to aviation or oceanography. They wanted to establish a civil-military dialogue about economic theory, international law, and defense. In short, soldiers desired more contact and cooperation with civilians, not less.

¹⁰³ For a useful discussion of 'ideological implication' or one's attitude towards change as a factor shaping historical outlook consult Hayden White, *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

Chapter III

Interested Observers: the Chilean military in world context, 1960-1970

The best way to acquire knowledge about warfare is through direct experience, which in the Chilean case has not occurred since the Civil War of 1891; this has made it necessary to study and analyze armed conflicts with transcendent consequences that have occurred in the international arena.¹

Walter Dörner Andrade

In March of 1961, John F. Kennedy announced his plan to provide financial resources and technical assistance to Latin American countries working toward the goals of economic integration, democratic development, and land reform. Cuba's socialist revolution would lose appeal, he thought, if prosperous social democracies replaced corrupt oligarchies and authoritarian military regimes. Kennedy's ten-year plan, called the Alliance for Progress, assumed that with the right structural reforms and government policy any underdeveloped country could begin a linear, inexorable path towards the type of development Europe and the United States had achieved.² At the same time, the Kennedy administration provided resources to train and equip Latin America's security forces to defeat homegrown insurgencies trying to replicate the success of Fidel Castro's guerilla army in the Cuban Sierra Maestra.³

¹ *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, 124.

² For the historiography of modernization theory, dependency theory, and poststructuralist critiques of developmentalism see Barbara Weinstein, "Developing Inequality," *The American Historical Review* Vol. 118, No. 2 (2008).

³ See Tony Smith, "The Alliance for Progress: The 1960s," in Abraham Lowenthal F., *Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

Shortly after Kennedy announced his plan, a group of active and retired Chilean army officers gathered at the academy of war to discuss the *Alianza para el Progreso*. Collectively they affirmed that Washington had correctly diagnosed the basic problem facing Latin American governments: poverty and slow economic growth generated political turmoil. Yet, they felt Kennedy's program did not appreciate the precarious nature of maintaining social equilibrium while simultaneously implementing structural reforms to meet the expectations of Latin America's impoverished masses.⁴ For these officers, American leaders had once again assumed their way of life and historical trajectory could be replicated anywhere else in the world even if Latin American countries lacked the human capital and technological sophistication to establish industrial democracies in the span of a decade. Without realistic goals, they said Kennedy's initiative would only engender social frustration and empower reckless demagogues.

This chapter examines military thought covering a range of subjects in the sixties such as guerilla warfare, the Cold War, the Alliance for Progress, pan-American economic integration, and significantly, military conflicts across the Third World. During this period the concept of psychological warfare, which imagined society as one enormous front to be secured from internal and external enemies, became a widespread concept while the term 'subversion' emerged as the umbrella concept for anything that might serve international Marxism. By the end of the sixties key elements of national

Stephan G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy confronts community revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999). For a review of US counterinsurgency strategy consult 'The United States and Latin American Military Politics' in *The Politics of Antipolitics*, edited by Brian Loveman & Thomas Davies Jr. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 145-169.

⁴ "Divulgación en la Academia de Guerra," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 302 (1961).

security doctrine had entered military discourse although they had not coalesced into a coherent, hegemonic set of ideas.

From the Arab-Israeli and Indo-Pakistani wars, Chilean officers concluded that small states could expect little assistance or timely intervention from the United Nations and that preemptive military action could prevent the escalation of a regional conflict into a prolonged war of attrition. I argue that these observations, among others, informed the military's strategy when it deposed Salvador Allende on September 11, 1973. Far from ghettoized institutions with no interest in civilian politics or world affairs, Chilean officers were attuned to international events and changing ideas about modern warfare.

THE ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

In the immediate postwar decade, the United States put a low priority on inter-American relations, remaining content to consider the region a destination for American capital and manufactured goods rather than a valued strategic partner. For the army's war academy, Washington's history of periodic policy shifts towards the hemisphere was particularly irksome. In the wake of the Cuban Revolution, American planners had suddenly proposed a 'one size fits all' continental project without regard for the hemisphere's highly divergent internal conditions, levels of democratic development, and distinct historical trajectories. The problem was that what might work in one country or region, might not work in another. What might be a successful formula for Brazil's Southeast might be entirely inappropriate for Brazil's Northeast.⁵

⁵ Ibid.

According to the academy of war, Washington failed to understand the troubles of developing countries because its own fortunate process of republican development. For example, the United States' lakes, rivers, and coastal ports had facilitated political and territorial integration while its principal immigrant groups had arrived from Europe with the culture and technical skills to create a modern industrial economy and democratic state. These factors combined such that 'North America was born free of the chain that has meant underdevelopment for other nations. Possibly, this historical position is what has determined a mentality so far from the Latin American situation and its problems.'⁶ Thirty years later, Admiral José Merino mirrored these sentiments when he remarked that because the United States had swept aside its own native peoples during westward expansion it tended to misunderstand the indigenous character of Latin America, which he believed posed a major obstacle to the hemisphere's social and economic development.⁷

The Alliance for Progress, in Merino's eyes, was one of Washington's many failed attempts to export the 'American way of life' across the hemisphere without appreciating the complicated nature of underdevelopment. For example, Chile's ambitious land reform, largely underwritten with Alliance funds, had assumed that illiterate peasants could become productive landholders if given the chance. From a

⁶ Ibid. On the legacy of Spanish colonialism consult Steve J. Stern, "Latin America's Colonial History: invitation to an agenda." *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1985). See also Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff, "Factor Endowments, Institutions, and Differential Paths of Growth Among New World Economies" in Stephen Haber, editor, *How Latin America Fell Behind* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

⁷ José Toribio Merino Castro, *Bitácora de un Almirante* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1998) 53.

North American perspective, willing peasants and political will could overcome any obstacles, but Chilean officers insisted that such optimism overlooked the concomitant social development and technical training peasants required before they could assume the responsibility of managing their own farms. Army officers did not object to the goal of creating a class of independent farmers, their concern was for the apparent incomprehension of how much credit, capital, technology, and social development was necessary for an agrarian reform to be successful in the span of a decade. Long-term success would require the state to provide credit and training to small holders and to help them find markets and commercialize their products.⁸ Given the army's close contact with the rural population, we might take these remarks as a reflection of a generally low view of the peasantry, and its capacity for self-improvement. At the same time, these remarks represent a rather astute prediction of the difficulties successive governments would face trying to carry out substantive agrarian reform.

Perhaps to the surprise of many officers, Chile was the largest recipient of Alliance for Progress funds from 1960 to 1970 and Eduardo Frei Montalva's government actually expropriated 3,408,788 hectares of land for redistribution, constituting a major display of political will against a powerful landed elite.⁹ In 1964, the army's General Staff praised the direction of the agrarian reform but also retained its previous conviction that an equitable distribution of land by itself was insufficient to improve the

⁸ Sub-Lieutenant Emilio Gonzalez Uriarte, "La Alianza Para el Progreso," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 311 (1963).

⁹ See Heidi Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict: the politics of gender, sexuality, and labor in the Chilean agrarian reform, 1950-1973* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). See also Brian Loveman, *Struggle in the Countryside* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976).

countryside's social conditions. For the land reform to work, recipients required 'wider horizons as businessmen of their own land' and greater incentives to 'face the multitude of problems related to farm management.'¹⁰

Air force commander Eduardo Sepúlveda observed that Latin America's politically articulate citizens tended to view the Alliance for Progress as direct aid from Washington rather than a long-term partnership, which required political sacrifices and difficult reform programs. The root of this problem, thought Sepúlveda, was Latin America's 'near absolute dependence on government for initiative and direction'.¹¹ To change the perception of the Alliance from 'hand out' to inter-American partnership Sepúlveda advocated a major public relations campaign to explain the logic behind goals like pan-American economic integration.¹² Sepúlveda, like so many of his colleagues, thought the government needed to prepare the public for incremental progress rather than rapid results, to preach sacrifice rather than easy outcomes.

Broadly speaking, Chilean officers who wrote about the ambitious goals of the *Alianza para el Progreso* believed the transition from underdevelopment to mature social democracy required decades of political sacrifices and concomitant social and technical development. Meanwhile, inflammatory critiques of the business sector or landholding elites played into the hands of demagogues advocating Cuban style socialism.¹³ There

¹⁰ "La Reforma Agraria Chilena," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 317 (1964).

¹¹ Group Commander Eduardo Sepúlveda M. (R), "Las Relaciones Públicas y las Relaciones Internacionales," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 88 (1963).

¹² Ibid.

were doubts about the political will behind Kennedy's initiative. After all, Washington had shown little interest in Latin American development before the Cuban Revolution. Was it realistic to think the Americans would remain engaged?

THE UNITED STATES OF LATIN AMERICA

During the sixties, economists, statesmen, and planners concurred that Latin America had to establish a common market if it ever hoped to compete with the industrialized world. This conviction underpinned the creation of the Latin American Free Trade Association in 1960, which aspired to lay the groundwork for an enormous common market that would join the region's relatively small domestic markets into a single economy. This common market promised to foster economic specialization, efficient economies of scale and facilitate capital accumulation. It also held the promise of an interdependence that would lessen the possibility of armed conflict between member states and overcome the defensive nationalism that compelled underdeveloped states to protect their tiny domestic markets. Army General Roberto Viaux declared that an Ibero-American Confederation would allow Latin Americans to speak with a single voice to the great powers and resolve their shared problem of poverty and underdevelopment. Viaux said simply, 'if there was a great, continental Ibero-American nation, things would change.'¹⁴ Others shared Viaux's idealism, reckoning that Ibero-American unification would present Chile with opportunities to project its influence across the continent as a model of progressive reform, political tolerance, and democratic

¹³ Major Pedro Barbosa López, "La Reforma Agraria y el Crecimiento Demográfico de América Latina," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 322 (1964).

¹⁴ Florencia Varas, *Conversaciones Con Viaux* (Santiago: Talleres Impresiones Eire, 1972), 48-49.

stability.¹⁵ For some, the progression from tribe to nation to super nation seemed a historically inevitable process.

Yet, integration required political sacrifices. Member states would have to harmonize their internal and external tariff policies as well as coordinate public investment to favor countries with comparative advantages. This last reality generated fears that any common market would quickly be dominated by states like Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina with larger populations and higher levels of industrialization. Economic integration also tested military realism because it depended on intangible factors like good will and mutual confidence among different states. Nonetheless, the idea of a Latin American trading bloc with global clout captured the imagination of military leaders who saw its potential to assert Latin America's collective interests and to create a powerful counterweight to northern hemisphere economic hegemony.¹⁶

In 1969, the governments of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia actually committed themselves to creating a common market. Called the Andean Pact, this trading bloc combined five medium-sized economies so that no single country would enjoy overwhelming advantages of size and population and created a central organ to coordinate economic policy and capital allocation. The Andean Pact elicited particular interest among navy officers who saw its potential to invigorate trade along Chile's

¹⁵ Jorge Mendoza Bahamonde, "La Política Internacional del Actual Gobierno de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 339 (1967).

¹⁶ See Horación H. Godoy, "La Integración de América Latina y el Proceso del Poder Mundial," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 348, (1969). Felipe Herrera Lane, "América Latina en 1970," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 363 (1971). Frigate Captain Hernán Ferrer Fouga, "El Pacto Andino y el Poderío Marítimo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 685 (1971).

Pacific littoral as well as foment commerce with East Asia.¹⁷ Historian Claudio Véliz argued that the Andean Pact built on Latin America's tradition of political, economic, even religious centralism, evident in Latin America's process of industrialization, which had been directed by the state rather than national bourgeoisies.¹⁸ Ultimately, this supra-national project ended when Chile's military junta embraced a political economy that put it at odds with other countries in the Andean Pact.¹⁹

LATIN AMERICA AND THE COLD WAR

During the fifties, Brazilian officer Golbery Do Couto e Silva wrote that South America's role in a bipolar world was 'participation in the defense of occidental civilization' and 'collaboration with the underdeveloped world here and abroad.'²⁰ For Do Couto, South America might lack the military capacity to defend western interests in Europe or Africa, but it was duty bound to support its allies in the Cold War and prepare to defend western civilization at home. Interestingly, despite his affirmation of South America's cultural and political connection to the West, he was extremely pessimistic about the future. In geopolitical treatises, Do Couto saw Christian humanism losing ground to materialist Bolshevism in an epic struggle for world domination. In his view,

¹⁷ Captain Pedro Howard Fuenzalida, "La Integración Económica: una meta para el desarrollo," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 344 (1968). Jorset, "El Desafío del Pacífico: el puente entre continentes," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 677 (1970).

¹⁸ Claudio Véliz, "Cambio y Continuidad: el pacto andino en la historia contemporánea," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 361 (1971). See also Claudio Véliz, *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

¹⁹ See Rafael Vargas-Hidalgo, "The Crisis of the Andean Pact: lessons for integration among developing countries," *The Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 17, No. 3 (1979).

²⁰ Golbery do Couto e Silva, *Geopolítica do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Olympio, 1967), 142.

communism was on the march in Nasser's Middle East, Sukarno's Indonesia, and most of Africa's newly independent states. Meanwhile, he feared the West had exhausted its will to arrest the spread of 'eastern despotism' across Asia and the Middle East.²¹ Do Couto's colleagues in Chile may not have shared his gloomy outlook for the future but most would have concurred that western civilization was not the exclusive property of the United States or Europe and that Latin America was committed, by culture and history, to defend western civilization regardless of what happened in the North Atlantic. In the East/West conflict, non-alignment was simply impossible.²² These are some of the ideas that fueled the Cold War in South America.

Arturo Troncoso Daroch, a Chilean naval officer reflected Do Couto's sentiments when he spoke at Rhode Island's Naval War College in 1961 to present his argument that Latin America possessed strategic value for the free world and that Europe and the United States needed to recognize their cultural, political and economic interdependence with Latin America.²³ Like many of his colleagues, Troncoso believed South America would have strategic importance in the event of global conflict. Firstly, because Latin America was a source of strategic materials and secondly, because South American navies could protect maritime traffic through the Magellan Strait if the Panama Canal

²¹ Ibid. 192-195.

²² Salvador de Madariaga, "El Otoño del Neutralismo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 632 (1963). Enrique Martínez Coda, "Los Problemas de América Latina," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 96 (1965).

²³ Frigate Captain Arturo Troncoso Daroch "América Latina y Su Importancia Para el Bloque Occidental," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 621 (1961).

were destroyed.²⁴ To cement a new strategic partnership, Troncoso thought Europe and the United States should make more investment capital available to Latin America and help stabilize global commodities prices. Such actions, he said, would dampen the nationalist claim, so often absorbed by communist movements, that Europe and the United States were nothing more than imperialist exploiters. He even suggested that Latin American navies ought to carry out joint naval maneuvers with NATO forces.

As we know, Captain Troncoso's vision of a broad western alliance elicited scant interest in Brussels or Washington. The Pentagon never viewed Latin America as strategic asset in the event of a war with the Soviet Union or China; its principal fear was that revolutionary movements inside of Latin America would come to power and form alliances with the Soviet bloc. One side of US policy was the training and equipping of police forces in the Third World to maintain internal security and resist 'outside aggression'. US Defense Secretary Robert McNamara also said on many occasions that American security was tied to whether or not Third World nations achieved social and economic development. If they did not, Moscow and Beijing offered alternative solutions.²⁵

Although excluded from NATO, Latin American officers met with their US and Canadian counterparts at periodic inter-American defense councils to discuss collective

²⁴ General Ramón Cañas Montalva, "Reflexiones Geopolíticas Sobre el Presente y el Futuro de America y de Chile," *Revista Geográfica de Chile "Terra Australis"*, No. 1 (1948). Frigate Captain Sergio Baquedano Alvarez, "El Continente Antártico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 650 (1966).

²⁵ Robert S. McNamara, "Seguridad y Desarrollo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 655 (1966). Robert Strausz-Hupé's influential *Geopolitics: the struggle for space and power*, published in 1942, foresaw a world where American security depended directly on other states across the globe and the formation of strategic blocs. McNamara's ideas about global security have a clear lineage to Strausz-Hupé.

security and by the middle of the sixties, a rift had emerged at these meetings. Carlos Prats writes one contingent of officers led by the United States saw communist aggression as the only real threat to hemispheric security while another contingent of officers viewed any form of imperialist aggression – ideological or economic – as a threat to the continent’s security and development.²⁶ From the second standpoint, communism was not ‘the sole adversary’. Security threats might include the exploitation of Latin America’s natural resources by foreign powers.

Prats writes that Chilean commanders largely identified with the second position although not as vehemently as Peruvian generals who would openly call the United States the cause of their country’s underdevelopment. These feelings found full expression when Peruvian General Juan Velasco Alvarado came to power in 1968. Velasco expelled American military advisors and Peace Corps volunteers, nationalized American business interests and began to purchase large quantities of arms from the Soviet Union.

Although Chilean defense journals did not manifest bitter resentment towards the United States in the sixties – this was typical after 1974 – military memoirs all include expressions of irritation toward perceived North American paternalism.²⁷ Fernando Matthei recalls that the United States government restricted the sale of supersonic F-16 jets to Chile because it deemed the nation’s military too ‘immature’ for such a purchase.

²⁶ Prats, *Memorias*, 99.

²⁷ Defense journals used glowing language to describe the visits of important American officials to Chile or instances when a Chilean commander in chief attended a major inter-American defense conference in the United States, revealing a felt pride in a connection to the American military and to the larger project of continental defense. See “Editorial: Reunión Interamericana de Comandantes en Jefe de Fuerzas Aéreas,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 89 (1963). “Editorial: El Viaje del Comandante en Jefe de la Armada a los Estados Unidos,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 634 (1963).

This attitude – among other factors - prompted a turn towards European arms suppliers and a push for more intellectual and material independence from the Americans.²⁸ Officers also disliked the fact that Congress was reducing conventional military aid to Latin America in favor of internal security training despite the fact that other regions in the world deemed geopolitically vital to US interests continued to receive substantial military aid. Prats remarks that this post Cuban Revolution posture provoked ‘a generally negative reaction in the Latin-American military environment’.²⁹

Most South American soldiers considered themselves citizens of the free world committed to the defense of western civilization. They studied at American war colleges and appreciated those opportunities to advance their professional training. Yet, it was glaringly apparent by the end of the sixties that United States did not consider Latin America a strategic asset in the event of world war. These factors, combined with economic nationalism, contributed to the idea that the world was not only divided along an ideological east/west axis, but also along a north/south axis of developed industrial states conspiring against the development of commodity exporting states in the southern hemisphere.

EXTERNAL THEATRES OF STUDY

One tendency in modern Latin American history is to interpret the postwar training of South American soldiers at war colleges in the United States as formalizing

²⁸ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 121.

²⁹ Prats, *Memorias*, 100.

their subservience to Washington, rather than to their own elected officials.³⁰ In particular, critics point to the fact that a number of Latin American dictators and notorious torturers graduated from the School of the Americas (Fort Gullick) in the Canal Zone, where it is assumed, they learned anti-democratic practices and even torture techniques from American trainers. It is true that thousands of Chilean officers studied in the United States, including Fort Gullick, but US training did not constitute a singular source of ideas about military strategy. Chilean officers drew conclusions about modern warfare by studying conflicts around the world.

Walter Dörner, a retired army colonel points out that the Chilean army has not carried out a major military operation since 1891, which has made the analysis and study of worldwide conflicts a important activity. For example, by studying tank battles in North Africa during World War II or Israel's invasion of the Sinai Peninsula in 1967 army officers could imagine what might conceivably unfold in their own Atacama Desert.³¹

In the fifties, France found itself fighting tenacious guerilla insurgencies in Vietnam and Algeria to maintain a fast collapsing colonial empire. After the French army suffered a humiliating defeat by North Vietnamese forces at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, French officers pioneered aggressive tactics to defeat a new insurgency that broke out in

³⁰ See Greg Grandin, *The Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the rise of the new imperialism*, (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006). Lesley Gill, *The School of the Americas: military training and political violence in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

³¹ *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, 124.

Algeria the same year. Colonel Roger Trinquier, who led military operations in Vietnam and Algeria, defined revolutionary warfare or subversive warfare as the:

interlocking system of actions – political, economic, psychological, military – that aims at the overthrow of the established authority in a country and its replacement by another regime. To achieve this end, the aggressor tries to exploit internal tensions of the country attacked – ideological, social, religious, economic – any conflict liable to have a profound influence on the population to be conquered.³²

Trinquier's treatise on irregular warfare, published in 1961, argued that civilians rather than soldiers were the principal actors of revolutionary war and as a result, enemy combatants and civilians had to be treated differently than in past wars.

Lambasting the traditional mindset of the French army, Trinquier called for the physical relocation of civilians who supported revolutionary fighters and believed 'psychological operations' were necessary to condition a civilian population to viscerally reject insurgent ideology. More controversially, Trinquier argued that terrorism was not criminal if guerilla fighters used it to achieve political objectives, but it made the use of torture legitimate in order to extract information from captured insurgents.³³

The Algerian battlefield was also where one group of French officers came to see liberal democracy and ideological pluralism as dangerous in the context of a guerilla insurgency because politics and psychology mattered as much as, if not more than military strength. This conviction persuaded these officers that it was necessary to control sectors of civil society deemed vulnerable to ideological penetration –

³² Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: a French view of counterinsurgency* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 6.

³³ Ibid. 16-25.

universities, unions, the press – precisely because subversives would use these forums to win support for their popular revolution.³⁴

On the American continent, Colonel Golbery Do Couto e Silva was reaching the same conclusions at Brazil's Superior War College. Like many of his French counterparts, he considered the basic predicament of western democracy was that its respect for civil liberties empowered antinational fifth columnists. In other words, the very values that made the West worth defending constituted its Achilles heel. Do Couto also felt Latin America was extremely vulnerable to communist subversion because demagogues could exploit the region's poverty and political immaturity to mobilize revolutionary movements under the guise of democracy. Consequently, he believed in the restriction of democratic freedoms and preemptive measures to arrest the outbreak of revolution.³⁵ These ideas animated the Brazilian military's decision to remove president João Goulart in 1964 and its strategic goals over the next two decades, but Do Couto's influence extended beyond Brazil's borders. By the middle of the sixties, his concept of 'permanent national objectives' and 'national power' had entered the region's national security lexicon.³⁶

Chilean officers did not fail to notice that military regimes coming to power in Brazil, Argentina, and Peru (1964, 1966, 1968) justified their interventions on the

³⁴ See also Arriagada, *El Pensamiento Político de los Militares*, 196-203.

³⁵ Do Couto e Silva, *Geopolítica do Brasil*, 199-200, 221-254. See also Arriagada, *El Pensamiento Político de los Militares*, 162-168.

³⁶ I make this connection based on the appearance of concepts like 'poder nacional' and 'intereses nacionales permanentes' in *El Memorial del Ejército de Chile*.

grounds that civilian governments had been inefficient and incapable of repressing subversives who threatened the nation's progress. All governments linked social stability and economic development to national security while viewing civil society as a battleground where internal enemies tried to infiltrate and demoralize society.

Since Chile's armed forces had journal exchanges with their corresponding services in the Southern Cone, Chilean officers would have definitely had formal exposure to the national security doctrines of Brazil and Argentina, doctrines that conceived of civil society as a battleground and justified military involvement. At the same time, Chile's pluralist democracy reinforced the notion that Chile was different, a paragon of orderly government and military professionalism.

In 1961, French counterinsurgency theory reached the United States and Argentina when French veterans of Vietnam and Algeria lectured about their experiences at Fort Bragg in North Carolina and Argentina's Superior War Academy in Buenos Aires.³⁷ Henry Grand D'Esnon, who formed part of a French military mission to Argentina, stressed that insurgents had to obtain popular support prior to any armed confrontation because their efforts depended on the support and strategic information provided by the civilian population. To defeat subversives, armies required an unbreakable belief in the legitimacy of their cause, accurate sources of intelligence, and military officers endowed with the power to make quick decisions autonomously while in

³⁷ US counterinsurgency doctrine was based on American experiences in the Philippines, World War II, and Korea. It contained none of the integrated analysis of insurgencies one would find in the French or Brazilian schools. See "Guerra de Guerrillas," (excerpt of a manual edited by the Inter-American Defense Council's Department of Instruction) *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 301 (1961). See also FM 31-21, *Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations*, Department of the Army Field Manual, Sept. 1961.

the field.³⁸ Further, effective counter insurgency required three key actions: presence in the population, control of insurgent space, and destruction of the enemy's administrative apparatus. D'Esnon warned his colleagues that it was foolish to expect quick results in a guerrilla war.

In Brazil, a group of officers at the Superior War College examined the French experience and determined that the key to counterinsurgency was prevention. One such officer, Lieutenant Colonel Carlos de Meira Mattos, highlighted France's inability to defeat the Algerian insurgency in spite of fielding half a million soldiers. Meira Mattos emphasized that once a region became sympathetic to guerrillas, the state's control of the region and its ability to contain an insurgency became progressively more difficult, even impossible. This basic reality made it imperative to 'prevent the explosion of the movement or cause it to fail before it could begin.'³⁹

Meira Mattos concluded that security forces had to be prepared to neutralize subversive propaganda and rapidly repress insurgents before they could win a series of quick and easy victories. Meira Mattos' analysis was innovative because he emphasized anticipating 'subversion' rather than reacting to it, undertaking energetic repression at the outset of 'subversive acts' rather than relying on reactive repression. Like D'Esnon, the

³⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Henry Grand D'Esnon (France), "Guerra Subversiva," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 301 (1961).

³⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Carlos de Meira Mattos (Brazil), "La Guerra Insurreccional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 309 (1962). Like Do Couto e Silva, Meira Mattos viewed anti-colonial and national liberation movements from a rigid bipolar frame where the United States offered values, ideas, and assistance to participants and the Soviet Union offered revolutionary ideology. British officers returning from Kenya and Malaysia reached similar conclusions. See Captain T. Leaske (Great Britain), "The Problem of Cold War Operations" in *Readings in Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, (Fort Bragg: US Army Special Warfare School, 1961).

Brazilian officer stressed the formulation of measures to assure the neutrality or sympathy of the civilian population.

In the early sixties when these articles were reproduced the *Memorial del Ejército*, Chile was a paragon of political stability compared to its trans-Andean neighbors, but by the late sixties, things had changed. The formation of revolutionary organizations such as the MIR (Movimiento Izquierdista Revolucionaria) and MAPU (Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria) that were committed to a Marxist political agenda and the use of armed struggle as an instrument of political change made talk of internal enemies and armed insurrections decidedly less abstract.

SUBVERSION AND GUERRILLA WAR

In the wake of the Cuban Revolution, American military strategists prioritized readiness to fight conventional and irregular wars in any part of the world while continuing to maintain a strong nuclear deterrent. If Korea had demonstrated the importance of conventional arms in peripheral conflicts, it was Algeria, Vietnam, and Cuba that convinced the Pentagon to view low intensity guerilla warfare as the principal strategic threat to the Western hemisphere. As a result Congress began to steadily reduce the allocation of conventional arms to Latin American states and simultaneously increase aid for the training and maintenance of internal security police forces to deal with what was now loosely termed ‘subversion’.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ ‘Flexible Response’ doctrine replaced John Foster Dulles and Dwight Eisenhower’s ‘Massive Retaliation’ doctrine designed to deter the Soviet Union from using its superior conventional forces to dominate Western Europe.

In the forties and fifties, Chilean defense journals had treated guerrilla warfare as a nuisance of conventional armies, but certainly not their principal threat. In 1955 the army general staff published a manual by Colonel Manuel Montt Martínez about the strategic and political management of war and noticeably absent from the manual was any mention of guerrilla warfare.⁴¹ Like most theorists of warfare at the time, Montt presumed that future wars would require the state to mobilize every available human and material resource for a drawn out contest of national endurance. In such a war the state would direct production, restrict consumption, sustain morale, and eliminate any internal obstacles to wartime mobilization.

The success of the Cuban Revolution shifted military discourse toward a new focus on threats inside the nation itself rather than strictly preparing to fight a conventional war. It also introduced questions that transcended the nation-state paradigm.⁴² In 1962, Lieutenant Colonel Enrique Blanche considered the possibility of a loosely allied continental liberation movement waging guerrilla warfare across South America without clearly delimited borders.⁴³ With international revolutionaries like Ernesto “Che” Guevara talking about a pan-American struggle for national liberation this was conceptually possible. Enrique Martinez Coda reasoned that Latin America’s

⁴¹ Manuel Montt Martínez, *La Guerra: su conducción política y estratégica* (Santiago: Estado Mayor del Ejército, 1955). Montt’s book quickly became a standard text at the army’s academy of war.

⁴² For a comparative perspective consult Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America: a comparative study of insurgents since 1956* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). See also Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*, with an introduction and case studies by Brian Loveman and Thomas M. Davies Jr. (Wilmington: SR Books, 1997).

⁴³ Lieutenant Colonel Enrique Blanche Northcote, “La Guerra de Guerrillas,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 309, No. 310 (1962).

militaries, outfitted with worn conventional arms, were ill prepared to defeat guerrilla insurgencies trying to replicate the success of Fidel Castro's revolution. Perhaps the threat justified a central command for joint operations across the continent?⁴⁴

In 1963 Major Sergio Fernández Rojas published a series of essays about the strategy of 'subversives' that evinced a clear intellectual lineage to French ideas. Subversives, he wrote, aimed to draw the existing government into an armed confrontation and blame it for any resulting bloodshed. By provoking the existing authorities into a heavy handed response they could draw more people into the conflict and polarize society, making political neutrality impossible.⁴⁵ Escalation was one goal, another was to make the government, police, and military appear illegitimate, weak, and antagonistic to the interests of the general population. Insurgents would invariably attempt to recruit and infiltrate the armed forces since soldiers 'represented the organized force capable of opposing their plans'.⁴⁶ Given this type of threat, the military had to be ever vigilant of political infiltration.

Fernández stressed that counterinsurgency had a social and military component. On the one hand, improved public education, health care, and housing would help to stop the subversive 'germ' from taking root. Since subversive movements took form gradually and clandestinely it was best to prevent the outbreak of armed conflict. For example, if governments improved the population's well being, it would be easier to

⁴⁴ Enrique Martínez Coda, "Los Problemas de América Latina," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 96 (1965).

⁴⁵ Major Sergio Fernández Rojas, "Subversión, Propaganda y Rebelión," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 311 (1963).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

defeat the emotional slogans of subversive propaganda. Militarily, the basic conundrum of counterinsurgency was that guerrillas could cover vast expanses of territory and render the victories of a conventional army insufficient to completely defeat a tenacious insurgency supported by a segment of the civilian population. Defeating these fighters, wrote Fernández, required the government to ‘uproot, in slow, difficult, and methodical fashion the rebellion’s bases of support’ or deport, en mass, the inhabitants of a region sympathetic to the insurgent cause.⁴⁷

In 1967, Major Enrique Yavar remarked that governments in Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina had achieved varying degrees of success fighting guerrilla movements with police and military forces, but not one government had completely eliminated the problem due to the basic fact that guerrillas enjoyed greater mobility and decentralized command structures, which they used to neutralize the superior firepower of conventional armies. For Yavar, the solution to this problem was in the recruitment and training of imaginative sub-officials endowed with the freedom to operate independently of central command to pursue guerilla bands. Only then could dispersed guerrillas be destroyed.⁴⁸ In other words, a semi-autonomous police force with broad powers to seek and destroy the problem.

Guerrilla war did not affect Chile directly. By 1970 rural insurgencies plagued Colombia. Daring urban guerillas carried out bold operations in Uruguayan and

⁴⁷ Major Sergio Fernández Rojas, “Subversión, Propaganda, y Rebelión,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 312 (1963).

⁴⁸ Major Enrique Yavar Martín, “La Guerra Especial: Forma de Realización Estratégica: Instrucción y Adiestramiento de Fuerzas Especiales,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 337 (1967).

Argentine cities, but Chile seemed relatively immune to these problems. Nonetheless the topic of guerilla warfare raised a set of questions about a complicated subject and provided a set of concepts to interpret actions and strategies of individuals deemed 'subversive'.

Another shift in post-Cuban Revolution discourse was a new emphasis on psychological warfare, defined as the planned and coordinated use of music, images, and words to influence the opinions, attitudes, and behavior of a national population. This was a battle for the hearts and minds of human beings that unfolded at home, work, school, on the radio, in print, or any place where ideas and culture were disseminated.⁴⁹ If subversives achieved cultural hegemony among housewives, priests, university professors, journalists, union leaders, and other influential actors they would have the cultural power to win an armed struggle.⁵⁰ A civilian population convinced that the military was opposed to their interests would not help the nation's regular army defeat insurgents or defend the existing government from an armed assault. Conversely, a civilian population ideologically committed to the existing government would refuse to

⁴⁹ See Aviation Commander Luis Mason Bada (Spain), "Guerra Subversiva," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 81 (1961). Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Frade (Spain), "Qué es la Guerra Sicológica," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 663 (1968).

⁵⁰ Military authors were aware of, and frequently referred to, Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony. In the thirties, Gramsci theorized that socialist revolutions had failed in Western Europe because the capitalist state was simply too entrenched. He wrote that overthrowing the capitalist state required communists to change institutions that reproduced capitalist culture, especially the army, church, and university. If communists achieved cultural hegemony in these key institutions the middle and working classes would be able to conceive of a society different from a capitalist one. It is in this framework that military thinkers perceived 'liberation theology'.

supply an irregular army and represent a powerful moral and ideological barrier to subversion.⁵¹

As we have already seen, many officers viewed Marxists as opportunists who inveigled themselves into power by making tactical alliances with various political factions, by using xenophobia, nationalism, or legitimate demands for social justice to mobilize people around a popular revolution they could eventually hijack and steer towards communism. Yet, the shadowy communist threat never showed its true ideological face until total victory had been achieved and all opposition could be forcibly silenced.⁵² From this perspective, underdeveloped societies were especially vulnerable to psychological warfare because insurgents derived so much political traction from the persistence of inequality and social injustice.

The concept of psychological warfare imagined society as an all-encompassing battlefield where every citizen, social institution, and medium of communication constituted a vulnerable target of subversive infiltration. The view of civil society as a front to be secured from internal enemies would be used to justify repression, censorship, and the physical removal, either by exile, imprisonment or disappearance, individuals who exercised influence over important cultural spaces (union leaders, politicians, clergy, university professors, activists).

⁵¹ Lieutenant Colonel Agustín Toro Dávila, “Las Modernas Formas de la Guerra,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 346 (1968). Lieutenant Colonel Rafael Zavalla Carbo (Argentina), “El Frente Interno en la Estrategia General,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 348 (1969).

⁵² See Genaro Arriagada Herrera and Manuel Antonio Garretón, “América Latina a la Hora de la Seguridad Nacional” in *Las Fuerzas Armadas en la Sociedad Civil*, edited by María Angélica Pérez (Santiago: CISEC, 1978). Robert Strausz-Hupé (Austrian-American geopolitical thinker), “Las Nuevas Armas y la Estrategia Nacional,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 84 (1962).

VIETNAM

In 1968 Lieutenant Colonel Hernán Bejares wrote that the North American experience in Vietnam ‘is for us, an inexhaustible source of lessons about the ability of enemy combatants to overcome adverse conditions.’⁵³ Like Bejares, many officers highlighted the fact that in spite of America’s helicopters and high altitude bombers, the Viet Cong had demonstrated the ability of highly motivated soldiers with intimate knowledge of local terrain to survive confrontation with a numerically and technologically superior army. Technology, in other words, was taken off its pedestal as the principal determinant of military success. Living breathing human beings could overcome technology.⁵⁴

Chilean soldiers knew of the complications American officers were encountering in Vietnam. For example, an article by US Army Colonel David L. Evans transcribed in the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* reflected on the fact that any aggressive campaign of generalized repression targeting insurgent enemies in the countryside was likely to incur the wrath of innocent civilians and undermine long-term military objectives. Moreover, South Vietnam’s politicized military, which regularly overthrew governments in Saigon, generated instability that strengthened the Viet Cong’s ability to recruit popular support.

⁵³ Lieutenant Colonel Hernán Bejares G., “La Guerra de Vietnam,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 344 (1968). See also Major Juan José Mela Toro, “Antecedentes de la participación de EE.UU. de Norte America en Vietnam,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 348 (1969).

⁵⁴ Rear Admiral Julio Santibañez E. (R), “El Valor Individual en la Guerra Moderna,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 671 (1969).

One view of the war might stress the intimate relation between counterinsurgency, culture, and politics.⁵⁵

For Major Manuel Contreras Sepúlveda the basic problem of the Vietnam War was Marxist-Leninism, a pernicious ideology that had motivated Vietnamese guerillas to take up arms against their ‘brothers of blood and race’. The future chief of Pinochet’s secret police believed the United States was wasting its time with politically sensitive strategies and to win, American forces would have to completely uproot and destroy an adversary committed to bringing the entire country under communist tyranny.⁵⁶ *Línea dura* soldiers like Contreras had no patience for holistic theories of counterinsurgency sensitive to culture and political context, he rather narrowly interpreted South Vietnam as one frontier in the global ‘war of ideology’, where ground forces were fighting to arrest or expand ideology.⁵⁷

In the wake of the Tet Offensive, Major Contreras and fellow soldier Agustín Toro Dávila offered a more complete analysis of the conflict including their conviction that the United States needed to send its most ideologically committed special forces to confront Viet Cong guerillas in the South while simultaneously abandoning all efforts to ‘win the hearts and minds’ of the Vietnamese population. In their view, the war would be won by ‘killing guerillas, destroying their hideouts, and submitting the civilian

⁵⁵ Colonel David L. Evans III (USA), “Lecciones Derivadas de las Operaciones de Contrainsurgencia,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 100 (1966).

⁵⁶ Major Manuel Contreras Sepúlveda, “Estrategia en la Guerra de Vietnam,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 331 (1966).

⁵⁷ Sub-Lieutenant Fernando Nicolas V., “Reflexiones Sobre la Guerra Indochina,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 679 (1970).

population to the strictest of surveillance.’⁵⁸ For these hard line Chilean officers, counterinsurgency was a matter of ‘tooth and nail’ combat to hold territory and expel the enemy.

Contreras and Toro did not underestimate Hanoi’s resolve, recognizing that North Vietnam’s leadership had been fighting the French or Americans since 1945. They showed no signs of giving up or being intimidated by constant aerial bombardment. Emphasizing the ideological component of the war, they argued that the United States would have to invade North Vietnam or destroy all guerrillas in the South while accepting the prospect of battling village to village for decades to come.

From 1965 to 1973, the Arab-Israel and Indo-Pakistani wars generated serious interest at Chilean war academies not simply because the belligerents employed French, British, American and soviet arms, but because the wars replicated many conditions that the Chile’s armed forces would face if a conventional war were to break out in the Southern Cone. Soldiers who visited these theatres of conflict came to analyze the tactics and strategy of small semi-industrialized powers with limited material resources. For example, Colonel Pedro Ewing traveled to South Asia as a UN military observer during the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war to examine the ‘quality-quantity’ question that effects every underdeveloped army.⁵⁹ Was it best to acquire a limited number of high quality heavy

⁵⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Agustín Toro Dávila and Major Manuel Contreras Sepúlveda, “Panorama Político – Estratégico del Asia Sur-Oriental,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 344 (1968).

⁵⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Ewing Hodar, “Experiencias Artilleras de la Guerra Indo-Pakistana,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 348 (1968). Ewing concluded that resource limited armies ought to invest in larger caliber guns with fewer munitions rather than greater munitions for lower caliber guns.

artillery, or purchase more guns of inferior quality? This type of question is vitally important for small states with limited material resources.

These wars revealed a number of unexpected patterns such as brevity. India's victory over Pakistan in 1971 had lasted fourteen days while Israel's military campaign in 1967 had lasted just six. These facts appeared to reinforce the value of initiative in the struggle between smaller states without sufficient industrial infrastructure to support long wars of attrition. Another unexpected pattern was aerial combat, which had taken place at low altitudes and subsonic speeds that privileged maneuverability and acceleration. In short, these wars provided an interesting laboratory to analyze the strategy and tactics of underdeveloped militaries, the performance of different weapons systems, and the role of international actors like the UN Security Council.⁶⁰

MIDDLE EAST

In 1967 tiny Israel defeated a coalition of sixty million Arabs and fundamentally changed the Middle East's balance of power. Given the nightmarish possibility that Chile would have to fight simultaneous wars with Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, Israel's victory was both inspirational and educational. In fact, the Chilean army sent military observers to the Middle East on several occasions to study the Arab-Israeli Wars and Israel's methods of defending its difficult territory.⁶¹

⁶⁰ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. IX, 73. Consult Michael Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). For the 1965 War consult John Fricker, *Battle for Pakistan* (London: Ian Allan, 1979). Russell Brines, *The Indo-Pakistani Conflict* (London: Pall Mall, 1968). For the 1971 war, Indian General D.K. Palit, *The Lightning Campaign: the Indo-Pakistan War, 1971* (New Delhi, Thompson Press, 1972). J.R. Saigal, *Pakistan Splits: the birth of Bangladesh* (Delhi: Manas Publications, 2000).

Drawing from what Chilean officers wrote in their respective defense journals, it is clear that they concurred on several major points.⁶² First, after an extraordinarily efficient mobilization, Israel had employed preemptive air strikes to destroy Egypt's air force, communication networks, and defensive posts. After this action, it swiftly executed a series of rapid tank movements to capture the Sinai Peninsula. Officers pointed out that this stunning blitzkrieg had negated Egypt's ability to wage a war of attrition that would have allowed the more populous state to draw on its greater material and human resources. Moreover, the fact that underdeveloped nations lack the industrial infrastructure to manufacture jets, radar, and other sophisticated weapons systems forces them to rely on a finite supply of externally purchased arms, which cannot be easily replaced in wartime.⁶³ To avoid these supply problems and prevent a war of attrition, Israel had chosen to strike first and strike hard with rapid, devastating attacks. Such a strategy not only made sense from the standpoint of having limited resources but also carried the advantage of setting the tempo of the conflict and forcing one's adversary to react.

Second, Israel had chosen to attack a coalition of states in gestation before any effective resistance could be coordinated. While Gamal Nasser negotiated strategy with neighboring Jordan and Syria, Israel attacked. Moreover, Nasser had waited to see if the

⁶¹ *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, vol. IX, 67-68.

⁶² Lieutenant Colonel Agustín Toro Dávila, "El Conflicto Árabe-Israelí," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 339 (1967). Group Commander Fernando Matthei A., "La Guerra de los Seis Días," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 105 (1967). Brigadier General René Álvarez Marín (R), "Conflagración en el Medio Oriente," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 357 (1970).

⁶³ These wars French, British, American arms suppliers suspended the sale of spare parts or new weapons at the outbreak of hostilities.

great powers would intervene on his behalf, which had delayed the speed of his response to Israel's offensive.

Third, Chilean officers observed that the Soviet Union and United States had offered little assistance to the Arab Coalition or Israel respectively. Neither superpower was willing to risk being drawn into direct confrontation. This basic political reality strengthened the conviction that small states could not rely on the timely intervention of superpowers. Small states had to rely on their own strength and resist the temptation to base their confidence on defensive alliances. General Álvarez writes:

The [Six-Day War] provides an eloquent lesson about the uselessness of the United Nations and its Security Council. Unlike her enemies, Israel relied on military strength for her protection rather than superpowers or international organizations.⁶⁴

Fourth, the Six Day War highlighted the importance of peacetime preparation. Israel's military had collected vital pre-war intelligence and meticulously studied enemy positions, making possible their preemptive destruction of the Egyptian air force. Egypt's military was equipped with enough Soviet hardware to defeat Israel, but Gamal Nasser and his military chiefs had fallen prey to an overconfidence shrewdly exploited by their adversaries. In short, intensive peacetime preparations had lessened Israel's significant material disadvantages.

SOUTH ASIA

⁶⁴ Brigadier General Rene Álvarez Marín (R), "Análisis de la Situación Político – Militar en el Medio Oriente," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 362 (1971). This issue of the Memorial was entirely devoted to Álvarez's description and analysis of the Six Day War. It is also worth mentioning that he applied army commander in chief Bernardino Parada's 'supreme laws of war' to the conflict, drawing from his highly influential *Polemología Básica*.

India and Pakistan fought two wars in the space of six years, first in 1965 and again in 1971. In the first, Pakistan had avoided defeat and for this reason was regarded as the victor because it had survived the confrontation. For the Chilean armed forces, the 1965 contest offered an interesting test case for what might unfold in the Southern Cone because the principal jets of the Indian air force were Hawker Hunters, which Chile had recently ordered from Great Britain, while the mainstay of the Pakistani air force was the American built F-86 Sabre, owned in large numbers by Peru and Argentina. During the war's major air battles, Pakistani pilots successfully shot down a number of Hawker Hunter jets and successfully protected their fleet from bombardment, prompting Chilean air force officials to conclude that Pakistani pilots prevailed because of 'superior training, morale, and combat tactics.'⁶⁵ Moreover, in spite of tactical errors on both sides, Chilean authors felt Pakistan had succeeded because it had the necessary intelligence to deliver important blows to India's much larger military. Air force editors wrote, 'without a shadow of a doubt, Pakistani intelligence was the decisive factor in the contest.'⁶⁶ In short, the 1965 Indo-Pakistani War seemed to confirm what the Chilean military wanted to hear: a smaller country, with superior training and pre-war intelligence, could hold its own against a larger power with superior material resources.

Unlike the previous conflict, the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 was an unqualified victory for India, the larger nation avoiding costly intelligence lapses from the previous contest and more clearly defining its political objectives. In this war, India responded to

⁶⁵ "Ecos del Conflicto Indo-Pakistano de 1965," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 125 (1972).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Pakistan's offensive with quick decisive blows that forced Pakistan to surrender what would become Bangladesh.⁶⁷ Chilean officers drew a number of conclusions from the war. First, India's apolitical armed forces and stable political institutions appeared to validate democracy and military professionalism. Pakistan's military government had become politicized and distracted from professional matters, a charge that could also be leveled at Nasser's generals in Egypt. Air force editors wrote 'the debilitating politicization of the Pakistani armed forces led to self-delusions and an officer core that discounted the role of intelligence.'⁶⁸ Second, Chilean officers concluded that Pakistan's generals had underestimated their adversaries and fallen prey to foolish notions that Indian soldiers were not their equals. This was the same criticism leveled at Egypt's Gamal Nasser who paid an enormous price for underestimating Israel. Air commander Guillermo Gomez wrote 'India harbored no illusions with respect to its enemy.'⁶⁹ It had learned from past errors in dealings with China and Pakistan and had fastidiously set out to modernize its air force and improve aerial combat training.⁷⁰

Third, repeating earlier conclusions from the Arab-Israel Wars, army and air force officers emphasized that both India and Pakistan had discovered the limited capacity of 'international organizations to resolve political crises between member countries',

⁶⁷ "La Campaña Relámpago, La Guerra Indo-Pakistana 1971," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 369, No. 371 (1972).

⁶⁸ "India y Pakistán: El Otro Conflicto de Nuestros Días," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 125 (1972).

⁶⁹ Group Commander Guillermo Gómez Aguilar, "Enseñanzas de la Guerra Indo-Pakistana 1971," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 125 (1972).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

especially Pakistan, which had haphazardly looked to its traditional ally - the United States – for timely involvement in 1965 rather than relying on its own military capacity.⁷¹ In the same vein, the wars dramatically illustrated the material vulnerabilities of semi-industrial states with limited arsenals. In 1965, France, Britain, and the United States had immediately suspended the sale of spare parts or new weapons to India and Pakistan at the outbreak of hostilities forcing both countries to begin desperate efforts to find sources of materiel on international markets in the event of sustained conflict.

The Arab-Israel and Indo-Pakistani conflicts were significant because they defied the assumption that future conventional wars would mirror what had taken place between the world's premier industrialized states in the Second World War. Clearly, underdeveloped states in the Third World were different. They depended on external suppliers for their most sophisticated weapons and lacked the industrial base to support a long conflict. Given these constraints, the wars validated the strategy of preemptive military action to impose a quick victory. Chilean authors highlighted the professionalism of Israel and India's armed forces when compared to the more politicized Pakistani and Egyptian militaries and the inability of the United Nations to secure the peace. Finally, the conflicts demonstrated the continued vitality of the human element. Israel's victory affirmed the importance of qualitative factors such as morale and resolve.

INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

⁷¹ Op. Cit. "India y Pakistan: El Otro Conflicto de Nuestros Días".

Chilean journals took an understandable interest in the subject of military intelligence.⁷² In 1965 Major Julio Canessa described the bureaucratic structure of central intelligence agencies like the CIA and KGB as well as the process by which they collected and compartmentalized information from open and clandestine sources. Canessa described a desirable secret service agent as a person with ‘intelligence, extensive and varied skills, emotional stability and the ability to function under tension.’⁷³

Strategic intelligence had been pivotal for Israel’s triumph in 1967 and the twentieth century was filled with stories of intelligence coups that had changed the course of history. During the Second World War Soviet agent Richard Sorge had infiltrated the German embassy in Tokyo and discovered the date of Operation Barbarossa - Stalin ignored his warning – and then managed to determine that the Empire of Japan was not planning to attack Soviet forces along the Manchurian border in 1941, a fact that permitted Stalin to redirect his eastern divisions west to fight at Moscow and Stalingrad. Writing about this espionage triumph, Army Major Oscar René Lagos Forín drew attention to the fact that Sorge, whose father was German, relied on a circle of Japanese informants who received little or no pay at all from the Soviet Union. Lagos remarked,

a characteristic that greatly facilitated the activities of agents and occasional informants - to say nothing of nationalist traitors – was the communist doctrine, a

⁷² Major Guillermo Lopez Vargas, “La Información Estratégica,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 295 (1960). Captain Sergio Fernández Rojas, “Inteligencia de Telecomunicaciones,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 305 (1961). Captain Sergio E. López Rubio, “El Servicio de Informaciones Alemana en la Segunda Guerra Mundial,” *Memorial del Ejército del Chile*, No. 326 (1965).

⁷³ Major Julio Canessa Robert, “Introducción al Estudio de la Información Estratégica,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 327 (1965).

political, economic and social philosophy that stands above individuals and countries and extraordinarily favors the activity of spy networks.⁷⁴

The story of Richard Sorge illustrated two major points for Major Lagos. First, strategic intelligence played a decisive role in the Soviet Union's victory. Second, the internationalist component of Marxism motivated its adherents to betray their own ethnic groups. It goes without saying that this second point disturbed those who believed Marxism to be an inherently anti-national ideology.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

'Whether you like it or not, history is on our side. We will bury you'. When Nikita Khrushchev pronounced these famous words to Western diplomats in 1956 he was saying that the triumph of communism was historically inevitable because communist economies would outperform those in the West and provide a better standard of living for Soviet citizens. Although an unresolved issue in the fifties, by the middle of the sixties few European economists worried that state socialism would surpass the productive capacity of Western capitalism.⁷⁵ During this time, Western Europe experienced an unprecedented economic expansion characterized by full employment and rapidly rising standards of living.

From 1955 to 1965 the income gap between Latin America and the Western Europe widened dramatically. Europe's postwar economic cooperation and industrial development led to unprecedented prosperity and stable social democracies. This

⁷⁴ Major Oscar René Lagos Fortín, "Caso De Espionaje en el Lejano Oriente (Sorge)," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 348 (1969).

⁷⁵ Like their counterparts in the West, Chileans were very interested in the topic of Soviet scientific research, industrial production, and what advantages, if any, the Soviet system had over its Western rivals.

achievement also highlighted Latin America's economic and technological backwardness by comparison.⁷⁶ During the same period Japan became a major industrial power in East Asia and while Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong begin to escape their condition of industrial underdevelopment in the seventies by exporting nondurable goods at internationally competitive prices while investing in education. Unlike Latin America, these East Asian countries were narrowing the income gap with Europe. This reality forced experts in Latin American to take notice of the East Asian development strategy.⁷⁷

So what was Latin America doing wrong?

Raúl Prebisch, the eminent Argentine economist from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean recognized the limits of the hemisphere's prevailing import substitution industrialization paradigm. In 1963, he wrote:

Though it is certain that industry requires protection in the developing countries, often such protection has been exaggerated in Latin America, bringing with it restrictive or monopolistic practices that conspire against the most efficient use of capital and technology...among other important objectives, the Latin-American common market will gradually introduce this vital element of competition in the process of industrialization.⁷⁸

Apart from vague calls for Latin American to move beyond intellectual subordination to Europe and develop its own solutions to economic stagnation, Prebisch saw three concrete obstacles to the hemisphere's rapid growth. First, the lack of social mobility,

⁷⁶ See Frigate Captain Hernán Ferrer Fougá, "Análisis de los Fundamentos del Poderío Marítimo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 684 (1971). Frigate Captain Hernán Ferrer Fougá, "El Pacto Andino y el Poderío Marítimo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 685 (1971).

⁷⁷ Rear Admiral Ismael Huerta Díaz, "La Próxima Conferencia del Pacífico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 673 (1969). Carlos Valenzuela M. (Chile's ambassador to Mexico), "Proyección de Chile en el Pacífico y Ámbito Internacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 668 (1969).

⁷⁸ Dr. Raúl Prebisch, "La Crisis Estructural de América Latina," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 312 (1963).

second, the lack of entrepreneurial incentive, third the lack of competition among rent seeking firms. Prebisch believed these internal obstacles to capital accumulation restricted ‘men of initiative’ from generating wealth. Calling for a combination of initiative, competition, and planning, Prebisch believed it was necessary to ‘harmonize private activity with the demands of the public sector.’⁷⁹

Experts and economists from the UN Conference on Trade and Development urged Latin American states to increase international trade, which ineluctably raised the question of international competitiveness and economic specialization. For Chile to compete on global markets, let alone in the Andean Pact, it would have to specialize in sectors where it enjoyed a comparative advantage (mining, metallurgy, fishing, lumber, fruit). In 1970, there was a basic recognition that Chile’s protected domestic industry had to become more internationally competitive in order to generate self-sustaining growth. The old nationalist ideal of autarky, however desirable, was increasingly recognized as unattainable for a country with a small domestic market unable to create integrated economies of scale.⁸⁰

Chilean officers knew that Latin America was failing to keep up with the industrialized world and that only economic expansion could cushion the stress of demographic growth. However, the economic outlook of Chilean officers was firmly

⁷⁹ Dr. Raúl Prebisch, “Planificación, Desarrollo, y Democracia: América Latina Necesita Soluciones Propias,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 316 (1963). For an overview of the structuralist paradigm and its shortcomings see Victor Bulmer-Thomas, *The Economic History of Latin America since Independence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁸⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Raúl Videla Medina, “La UNCTAD,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 364 (1971).

within the orthodoxies of the decade. They believed, like most educated Latin Americans, that the state, rather than the private sector would have to provide the capital for a process of industrial expansion.

Developing the nation's industrial base remained a strategic goal since nations with sophisticated weapons had to possess the industrial and technical capacity to maintain them. Arms transfers from external powers required a baseline of industrial and technical capacity, a reality made visibly apparent when the Soviet Union supplied Egypt with enormous quantities of modern military hardware prior to the Suez Crisis (1956), but because Egypt lacked the industrial capacity to repair and maintain 120 Mig jets, this equipment could not be employed effectively and quickly turned into a major burden on the Egyptian economy.⁸¹ Naturally, the domestic manufacture of weapons ensured the nation could repair and maintain its own materials, while purchases of sophisticated weapons were good in the sense that they elevated the military's technical capacity.

In 1970, Corvette Captain Rubén Scheihing wrote that sustained development required political stability, technical innovation, education infrastructure, entrepreneurship, and capitalization through personal savings. He warned 'we should not fall into the mistaken belief that a country can achieve its economic independence solely by nationalizing its natural resources.'⁸² Scheihing wrote that social peace and national sovereignty rose in tandem with a healthy, expanding economy. A strong economy provided the resources for roads, telephone lines, housing, cars, televisions, radios,

⁸¹ "Problemas de Defensa Nacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 638 (1964).

⁸² Corvette Captain Rubén Scheihing N., "Hacia una Conceptualización de la Seguridad Nacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 679 (1970).

interconnection, commerce (social peace) as well as military modernization (national security). In 1971, it is fair to say that most Chilean officers had serious concerns about a Marxist president espousing an ideology of class conflict. However, many officers also looked to Allende's structural reforms as holding the distinct possibility of bolstering economic growth and economic independence.⁸³

In the sixties, the *Revista de la Marina* featured book reviews of classic works like John Maynard Keynes' *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, Frederick von Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* and Frederick Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* as well as books taking up the questions of structuralism, import-substitution industrialization, and monetarism.⁸⁴ This is not to suggest the navy was drifting towards *laissez faire* capitalism. On the contrary, navy officers felt the state needed to subsidize Chile's merchant marine and execute a national plan to strengthen maritime industries. Yet, the reviews demonstrate awareness of prevailing debates in the field of development economics such that it is fair to assume navy leaders already knew something about monetarism and critiques of Keynesian orthodoxies when they tapped neoliberal technocrats to advise the military government.

CONCLUSIONS

When the Chilean military overthrew Salvador Allende on September 11, 1973 the amount of force employed, especially at the outset, was profoundly shocking. Chile

⁸³ During the Allende years, the nationalization of Chilean banks sector and strategic industries was not a source of criticism. Rather it was the perceived lack of efficiency and labor discipline in the public sector.

⁸⁴ "Panorama Literario," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 636 (1963). "Panorama Literario," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 645 (1965). "Libros," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 646 (1965). "Libros," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 676 (1970).

was considered the most democratic country in the Latin America and its armed forces the most professional and apolitical. Yet, the armed forces took seriously the possibility of resistance from militants in Allende's political coalition and duly planned to convince all opponents that resistance would be futile. The bombardment of the presidential palace after Allende refused to surrender remains a searing image for Chileans and symbol of the junta's resolve to prevail in the political struggle.

As consummate professionals, Chile's soldiers hungered for knowledge about the tactics and strategies employed in theaters of conflict across the globe, which might have useful application in the Southern Cone and their study of internal war from the previous decade suggested that a rapid imposition of military rule characterized by shock and awe would preempt protracted resistance. If the Algerian insurgency or American experience in Vietnam had proved anything it was that once a guerilla movement laid down solid roots in the civilian population, it was extremely difficult to contain. Israel's preemptive air strikes during the Six Days War seemed an eloquent testament to the value of preemptive action.

Wars in Vietnam, the Middle East, and South Asia also seemed to prove that will, leadership, and ideological conviction could transcend material superiority. Insurgent armies in Vietnam and Algeria had been able to evade destruction, if not defeat powerful conventional armies and tiny Israel had routed a large Arab coalition bent on its destruction. These facts inspired and disturbed Chilean officers. On the one hand, a state sandwiched between better-equipped and potentially hostile neighbors could defeat its foes through sober peacetime preparations, superior leadership, and strategic

intelligence just as Israel and Pakistan had both avoided major defeats at the hands of larger states through rapid mobilization, initiative, and offensive coordination. On the other hand, the twentieth century illustrated how determined guerilla fighters could eliminate many of the advantages a conventional army enjoyed.

In 1969, Chile's military lacked a formalized 'national security doctrine', which legitimated military participation in the political system to repress dangerous internal elements and achieve economic growth. However, all of the concepts that eventually contributed to its formal articulation were present in the military's intellectual culture by the late sixties.⁸⁵ The geopolitical concept of the 'organic state' where the nation's health and security faced constant threats long antedated a national security doctrine emphasizing internal security. Moreover, many of these concepts - especially the idea of civil society as a vulnerable battleground where subversives targeted unions, universities, and churches - provided one basis from which to interpret unfolding circumstances from 1971 to 1973.

Wars in the Middle East and South Asia advertised the value of professionalism. In 1967 and 1971, the Israeli and Indian militaries had prevailed over adversaries that had become politicized and distracted from professional matters. Similarly, one only had to look across the Andes to observe the impact of internal politics on the cohesion and professionalism of Argentina's armed forces. Peripheral conflicts also demonstrated that small states engaged in local conflicts could expect little benefit from the United Nations or the timely intervention of superpowers. During military rule, officers routinely

⁸⁵ The same conclusion is reached by Varas, Agüero, and Bustamente, *Chile, Democracia, Fuerzas Armadas*, 122.

dismissed UN resolutions condemning Chile for human rights violations as the work of the Soviet Union and its allies. They viewed the United Nations as a body, which neither served the interests of small states, nor legitimately expressed world opinion. As such, they could more comfortably ignore its resolutions.

The establishment of a highly centralized secret police headed by Major Manuel Contreras in 1974 was justified as necessary measure to eliminate pockets of resistance to the regime and to create a climate of fear to preempt resistance. Long before the coup, military thought had recognized the importance of intelligence services in any type of war. Military intelligence had been decisive in the Arab-Israeli and Indo-Pakistani conflicts and perceptions of the Vietnam War as a war of ideology contributed to the view that ‘Marxist subversion’ was a continental threat, justifying Manuel Contreras’s plan for South American military governments to share intelligence and coordinate the capture and assassination of political enemies in member countries.⁸⁶

It is well established that French counterinsurgency theory influenced the Argentine military’s “Dirty War”, but as Paul H. Lewis points out, Argentine doctrines were not without an indigenous base of ideas and modifications.⁸⁷ Similarly, Liddel Hart’s theory of ‘indirect approximation’, and the Pentagon’s doctrine of ‘flexible response’ may have found fertile ground at war academies across the Southern Cone, but

⁸⁶ John Dinges, *The Condor Years: how Pinochet and his allies brought terror to three continents* (New York: New Press, 2004). It should be noted that the DINA was controversial. Some officers disagreed about the need for such a highly repressive organization and still others believed it was principally Pinochet’s instrument to consolidate his personal power. On this subject see Genaro Arriagada Herrera, *Pinochet: the politics of power* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1988).

⁸⁷ Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals: the “Dirty War” in Argentina* (New York: Praeger, 2002), 131-146.

that does not mean Brazilian, Chilean, or Argentine soldiers were intellectually subordinate to the United States.

It would be a mistake to conclude that Chilean soldiers were mere foot soldiers of Pentagon. Chilean officers looked at US foreign policy initiatives like the Alliance for Progress with a high degree of skepticism and by the sixties there was an emerging view of the northern hemisphere as an international bloc opposed, in many respects, to the interests of South American states.

The CIA's covert involvement in Chile's internal affairs from 1964 to 1973 has led many scholars to assume that the Pentagon provided the driving ideology for the 1973 coup in Chile and human rights violations that followed.⁸⁸ In truth, it is difficult to measure the transfer of ideas from the United States to the Chilean military because the United States did not have a coherent, systematized ideology to offer. US war colleges taught that wars of national liberation were tied to an ideology emanating from the Soviet Union or Maoist China, but the anti-communism of Chile's armed forces antedated American influence and Chilean officers did not need anyone to convince them they belonged to an imagined community committed to the defense of western civilization.

Chilean officers, like their colleagues elsewhere in South America, drew conclusions about the Cold War, United Nations, and modern warfare by studying conflicts in Algeria, Vietnam, the Middle East and South Asia. They also formed ideas about the world from their perspective as underdeveloped states on the periphery of the

⁸⁸ Augusto Varas argues that civilians failed to formulate an official doctrine regarding the military's place in society from 1932 to 1973 and this '*orfandad ideológica*' was ultimately filled by US National Security Doctrine. Varas, *Los Militares en el Poder: Régimen y Gobierno Militar en Chile 1973-1986*.

world system with different internal conditions and material capabilities than the industrial states in the developed core. This basic fact should caution any notion of a preponderant North American influence. This world history context is useful for any assessment of the of the national security states that emerged across South America in the nineteen seventies.

CHAPTER IV

Opportunity or Threat?: Salvador Allende and the Chilean military, 1970-1973

Chile is living a historically complex moment, product of a deep geopolitical process.¹

Carlos Prats González

Salvador Allende Gossens' victory in Chile's presidential election on September 4, 1970, immediately raised the question of his relationship to the armed forces. For a minority president attempting to bring about a radical transformation of Chile's state and society, he needed a subordinate, apolitical military that would guarantee his access to power and support his structural reforms.² From the outset, Allende's Popular Unity coalition made clear its desire to establish a mutually beneficial relationship between the government and armed forces in which the government would provide the army, navy, and air force with the resources for technical modernization and 'integrate the armed forces into social life and facilitate their contribution to the nation's economic development'.³ Indisputably, Allende possessed a sound appreciation of the military's grievances from the previous decade, especially their desire to begin a process of military modernization.

¹ *Ercilla*, September 27, 1972.

² *La vía Chilena hacia el Socialismo* contradicted the orthodox Marxism, which insists on the necessity of seizing the state from the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, Allende won the 1970 election with a plurality of the vote (36.2%), meaning he had to conduct his revolution inside of a liberal democracy without control of the legislature and judiciary and facing a hostile political opposition.

³ *Programa básico de gobierno de la Unidad Popular* (Santiago: Impresora Horizonte, 1970), 18.

As we have already seen, a consensus existed among Chile's officers that they were guardians of the state's permanent interests, its values, history and independence. However, they did not agree on what this idea meant in practice. Retired army general Roberto Viaux considered the Popular Unity a grave threat to Chile's historical-cultural identity that justified preemptive action to prevent its consummation. In his view, a soldier's oath to the Chilean nation superceded any pledge of loyalty to an elected leader because 'laws and constitutions are transitory...the fatherland is not'.⁴ If the nation's independent identity was threatened (as he defined the threat) intervention was legitimate.

Most officers did not share Viaux's willingness to defy the constitution in 1970. The high command had memories of the military's last involvement in politics (1924-1932), its poisonous effect on morale, and its consequences for professionalism. Before the 1970 presidential election army commander in chief René Schneider confirmed that his institution would oversee a fair election and guarantee access to power for the winner. The army, he declared, had no institutional objection to a Marxist government so long as it acted within constitutional bounds. Yet, an ambiguity remained. Did this position imply a role for the armed forces as arbiters to determine if a civilian president had run afoul of the law?

Another basic fact in 1970 was no one could predict what direction Allende would decide take his revolution. While officers had misgivings about the Popular Unity

⁴ Florencia Varas, *Conversaciones Con Viaux* (Santiago: Talleres Impresiones Eire, 1972), 125. Viaux's political vision resembled that of right wing nationalists who dreamed of a corporatist civil-military movement led by a caudillo in the model of Franco's Spain. These politics were not a mainstream orientation in the armed forces, but they existed. In 1970, a group of high-ranking officers including retired Vice Admiral Hugo Tirado Barros, ex-Director General of the Carabineros Miguel Huerta and Army General Camilo Venezuela met secretly with Viaux to discuss how they could prevent Allende from reaching power.

coalition and its relationship to international communism, it was unclear what a Marxist government operating inside of a liberal democracy would do. Would it dramatically amplify class contradictions or mostly carry out structural reforms that increased the state's sovereignty over strategic resources, a long held geopolitical goal shared by the entire armed forces?

The historiography for the Allende years is marked by a variety of approaches. Marxian scholarship has tended to attribute the institutional breakdown to the middle class and their supposed alliance with the 'forces of reaction'.⁵ A new trend among historians is to use oral testimonies, to examine indigenous resistance to, or support for the UP by workers, women, and peasants.⁶ These studies provide a valuable perspective on the social actors who participated in the period's widespread political mobilizations and reveal the complex and highly volatile political environment Allende faced and failed to control. The role of US imperialism as a cause of Allende's overthrow remains a strong, widely observable tendency in the historiography.⁷ Surprisingly though, scholars

⁵ For a classic Marxist interpretation consult Stefan De Vylder, *Allende's Chile: The Political Economy of the Rise and Fall of the Unidad Popular* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

⁶ For a perspective on the Allende years from the vantage point of textile workers who seized the factory where they worked see Peter Winn, *Weavers of Revolution: The Yarur Workers and Chile's Road to Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). For an analysis of right wing women and the agrarian reform of the Allende years consult Margaret Power, *Right Wing Women in Chile, 1964-1973* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002). Heidi Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict: the politics of gender, sexuality, and labor in the Chilean agrarian reform, 1950-1973* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

⁷ Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: a declassified dossier on atrocity and accountability* (New York: New Press, 2003). Patricia Verdugo, *Allende: Cómo la Casa Blanca Provocó su Muerte* (Santiago: Catalonia, 2003). Lois Hecht Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile: Democracy, Authoritarianism, and the Search for Development* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999).

have largely avoided the Chilean armed forces as a principal subject of study for the period from 1970 to 1973.⁸

One objective of this chapter is to restore a measure of contingency to the period from 1970 to 1973 by examining the coexistence of ideas that favored, and did not favor military involvement in politics. The idea that Chile's soldiers were guardians of the nation with the obligation to intervene in politics if dire circumstances threatened the nation's historical character antedated the 1973 coup, as did elements of a national security doctrine that legitimized a role for the military in the repression of internal enemies. However, these ideas were attenuated by the strength of constitutionalism, economic nationalism, and the idea of Chilean exceptionalism, all of which proved a substantial barrier to intervention.

Augusto Pinochet is, in many respects, the outstanding example of these overlapping ideas. Approached by senior air force, navy and army officials just days before the 1973 coup, Pinochet did not dare plot against Allende until informed by his colleagues that the coup was going to happen with or without him.⁹ In spite of anti-communist convictions, Pinochet's professional formation and constitutionalist orientation muted his willingness to engage in any form of political deliberation during a

⁸ The great exception here is journalist Robinson Rojas Sandford, *The Murder of Allende and the End of the Chilean Way to Socialism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976). Although a highly partisan journalist who could not substantiate his claims with evidence, Rojas focused on the institutional thought and internal politics of the armed forces.

⁹ Pinochet was belatedly informed of the plan to remove Allende, in part because he was well known to be a 'constitucionalista'. On the day of the coup, Allende initially refused to believe Pinochet was part of the junta, assuming he had been imprisoned by 'golpista' generals. See Mary Helen Spooner, *Soldiers in a Narrow Land: the Pinochet regime in Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 34-38.

period of intense social and political crisis. Similarly, the whole notion of Chile as a consolidated democracy where the military *did not* intervene in politics and where national institutions had the unique capacity to weather a radical government mingled with the idea that military action was legitimate under extraordinary circumstances.

Furthermore, a variety of political contexts *avored* an Allende government at its outset. In 1970 many observers believed the bipolarity of the early Cold War was giving way to a new multipolar framework that would not be dominated by the United States and Soviet Union. Thus, there would be new opportunities for small states like Chile to engage in political experimentation. The seventies represented the high point for Latin American continental nationalism, concretely expressed by the Andean Pact, which sought to establish a base of economic and political power independent of the United States. Allende's nationalization of copper and other strategic industries enjoyed overwhelming support in the armed forces and general population.

The position of the armed forces in 1970 could be described as anti-communist, but opposed to military intervention in civilian politics. Eventually, economic chaos and political confrontation convinced a majority of officers that the country was on the brink of a civil war and their decisive intervention was necessary. Military intervention was hardly a predictable outcome at the start of the Popular Unity government. National security doctrine, which justified a military role in politics, did not become hegemonic until the crisis conditions of 1972. These circumstances activated a latent doctrine that interpreted UP partisans as anti-national subversives trying to seize the state and impose communism on the rest of society.

ENTERING A NEW DECADE

On December 28, 1969 army, navy, and air force commanders delivered a report to Defense Minister Sergio Ossa Pretot, outlining their concerns about the potential for internal disorder before and during the 1970 presidential contest. This report predicted a victory for the left in 1970 and expressed concern that the armed forces' internal unity might be compromised if a Marxist was elected, especially since roughly ninety percent of all conscript soldiers were peasants or workers.¹⁰ As a preventative measure, they urged the government to change the army's socio-economic makeup to include ten percent of the upper class and forty percent from the middle sectors by the time of election, presumably by ending the exemptions for young men pursuing higher education.¹¹

As we have already seen, military leaders worried about declining institutional morale and professional frustration. They wanted to modernize their institutions and be consulted by government leaders on social, economic, and political matters. Making matters worse, army general Roberto Viaux's open defiance of civilian authority in October of 1969 – *el tacnazo* – had complicated the military's internal dynamics because Viaux and other retired officers were recruiting active officials to participate in their political machinations. General Carlos Prats remarked that the army suffered from political infiltration among army officials and army conscripts alike, which necessitated a

¹⁰ In his memoirs, José Toribio Merino Castro recalls the alarm of some officers when naval intelligence reported shouts of 'Viva Compañero Allende!' across military barracks the day of his election. This popular support for Salvador Allende reflected the class differences between officers and conscripts. See José Toribio Merino Castro, *Bitácora de un Almirante* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1998), 73-75.

¹¹ Prats, *Memorias*, 141-142.

serious examination of all military installations for critical points that could be exploited by seditious individuals in the event of a crisis.¹² In 1970, military leaders were anticipating politicization and thinking about measures to prevent it.¹³

There is also an important international context to consider. In 1969, military regimes in Peru and Argentina devoted 3.2 and 2.6 percent of GNP to defense while Chile, a less populous country, devoted 1.7 percent.¹⁴ Officers feared that Peru and Argentina would take advantage of Chile's growing military weakness to raise the question of unsettled frontier disputes. In early 1970, a report of Peruvian troops massing south of Arequipa caused alarm, as did two minor incidents occurred at the Argentine border. Chile's minister of foreign relations received assurances from his Peruvian and Argentine counterparts that all was well, but these events troubled a military leadership sensitive to their 'declining military potential relative to neighboring armies'.¹⁵

The possibility of a Marxist government reaching power in 1970 generated a set of deep anxieties. Would Allende's government radicalize large segments of the working class and intensify class conflict? Would Allende respect the rule of law and preserve the armed forces' exclusive monopoly over controlled violence or would he attempt to arm his followers? Would the Popular Unity attempt to make an alliance with lower-class

¹² Ibid. 156.

¹³ An idea that was expressed regularly in military journals was that military governments tended to neglect their professional duties. The South Vietnamese army was notoriously politicized, with consequences for effectiveness, while the Arab-Israeli Six Day War and 1971 Indo-Pakistani War resulted in victories for Israel and India, both democracies with more professional armed forces than their foes.

¹⁴ Alain Rouquié, *The Military and the State in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 148.

¹⁵ Prats, *Memorias*, 148.

sectors of the military, especially conscripts and non-commissioned officers? How would the United States and Soviet Union respond to an Allende government?

Amid these uncertainties, army commander in chief René Schneider clarified the armed forces' institutional position: they would support whichever candidate was elected.¹⁶ This 'constitutionalist' position held that political involvement necessarily harmed institutional unity and military professionalism.¹⁷ Furthermore, Chile's competitive democracy constituted a source of pride at a time when every one of Chile's neighbors except Uruguay had come under military rule. Chile appeared to be a bastion of democratic freedom in a sea of authoritarian military governments.

The fact that Eduardo Frei and top military leaders could not be convinced to subvert Chilean democracy was something that confounded American policymakers. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Ambassador Edward Korry thought Chileans were rather unceremoniously permitting their country fall in the hands of communists. On September 21, 1970 Korry's wrote to General George R. Mather, chief of the United States Southern Command, 'As you are aware, Chilean military have been playing [an] essentially passive role in the critical situation in which their country finds itself.'¹⁸ To get their attention, Korry proposed General Mather remind Chile's armed forces of their

¹⁶ *El Mercurio*, May 8, 1970.

¹⁷ Officers like Schneider and Prats retained formative memories from the army's political involvement from 1924-1931 and the politicization of the armed forces under General Ibáñez's dictatorship from 1927-1931. Officers also knew by observing military governments in Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru that politics harmed institutional unity and professionalism.

¹⁸ CDP, Dept. of State, 'Eyes Only Message I Have Just Sent to USCINCSO', Korry to Kissinger, 9-21-1970.

institutional connection to the Pentagon and the possibility that US assistance and foreign military sales could be terminated.¹⁹ At the same time, the Americans had to tread carefully. They were dealing with a proud military sensitive to external pressure.

It is also important to highlight that Salvador Allende was a different type of politician. He was not a populist like Juan Perón or Getulio Vargas, but a lifelong member of the Socialist Party. Nor was he Luis Corvalán Castillo, the serious, disciplined leader of Chile's Moscow aligned Communist Party. Salvador Allende came from a progressive upper middle class family in Valparaíso. He had studied medicine at the University of Chile, served as health minister during Pedro Aguirre's administration (1938-1941), and by the time of his election to the presidency, Allende was a known quantity. He had accrued a lengthy record of service as cabinet member, congressman, and senator. There was no basis to doubt his commitment to rule of law or his credentials as a democrat. Additionally, Allende possessed considerable political gifts including oratorical brilliance, natural charisma, and the ability to negotiate compromises among different political factions.²⁰

Allende's relationship to Marxist ideology was a concern. In speeches, he routinely divided the nation into 'the people' and 'the reactionaries'. Once he said 'I am not president of all Chileans' to indicate he was president of the Popular Unity and the social classes it represented. In another statement, widely cited by his detractors, Allende

¹⁹ CDP, Dept. of State, 'General Mather on my Proposal to Inform Chilean Military that We Are Suspending MAP Training Pending Review after October', Ambassador Korry to Under Secretary Johnson, 9-22-1970.

²⁰ There is no single outstanding biography of Salvador Allende. This constitutes a major lacuna in the historiography.

said: 'I accepted it [the Statute of Constitutional Guarantees] as a tactical necessity to assume power. At that moment the imperative was to take control of the government.'²¹

Was he committed to social democracy or revolutionary Marxism?

Yet, Salvador Allende was a man of distinctly bourgeois tastes, known for his fancy suits, love of fine wines, and womanizing. Given this aspect of his personality, would he really turn out to be a radical revolutionary? Many observers thought his metropolitan sophistication would mitigate against the more radical tendencies of his party, ideology, and coalition.²² Perhaps an Allende government would carry out structural reforms that fostered social and economic development and reduced underdevelopment?

Another factor that allayed fears of a Marxist in power was Chile's embedded notion of historical exceptionalism.²³ Political elites repeatedly spoke of Chile's unique internal conditions, explaining to foreign journalists that outsiders failed to understand

²¹ Regis Debray, *Conversations with Allende: socialism in Chile* (London: N.L.B., 1971), 119. Practically every apologist for the 1973 coup cites this remark as proof Allende never intended to abide by the Constitution.

²² Hugh Bicheno, a British author and former intelligence agent, conducted multiple interviews with Carabineros and mid-level army officers during the Allende years. He indicated that most of these officials believed Allende was a middle class reformer, not a revolutionary. Hugh Bicheno, e-mail message to author, November 30, 2007. Even the Chilean Communist Party was known to mock Allende for his decidedly bourgeois lifestyle.

²³ Chilean exceptionalism, part fact, part fiction, developed among educated elites in the nineteenth century, principally because Chile developed stable political institutions before all other Spanish American republics. Like the island nations of Britain and Japan that both nurture their own feelings of separation from nearby continents, Chilean elites have historically conceived of their country as an orderly 'island' surrounded by republics prone to cycles of political chaos. The reality of Chile's overall institutional stability has reinforced the idea that the country has a special destiny to provide a model for Chile's hot-blooded Latin cousins across the continent. Outsiders, especially the British in the 19th century and the Americans in the 20th century, have tended to reinforce the idea of Chilean exceptionalism. In the twentieth century, Eduardo Frei, Salvador Allende, and Augusto Pinochet all invoked Chile as model whether Frei's 'Revolution in Liberty', Allende's 'Chilean Path to Socialism' or Pinochet's 'Protected Democracy'.

the *realidad chilena* or *idiosincrasia nacional* that distinguished their country from other places.²⁴ Irrespective of the mythical aspects of Chilean exceptionalism, it nonetheless was a powerful discursive fixture in Chilean politics, helping to convince officers and politicians on the left and right that a Marxist president might not necessarily result in the breakdown of democracy or armed confrontation.

In 1970 no one had any idea what democratic socialism would look like because the Popular Unity was proposing something without precedent: a transition to state socialism within the bounds of constitutional democracy. As such it constituted a major test case for democratic socialism and raised a myriad of questions. Would Allende attempt to implement his coalition's goals gradually or attempt a rapid transition to socialism? Could he build socialism and remain a democrat? Would the constraints of liberal democracy require him to moderate his revolutionary aims? In sum, no one could predict what an Allende presidency would look like. After all, Chile's unique political system had successfully incorporated different ideological groups in the past and Chilean society had been moving progressively leftward. This aspect of historical contingency is often overlooked because Allende's government ended tragically in a violent military coup.

ALLENDE AND THE MILITARY

Given the fact that the UP's political platform declared capitalism the cause of societal violence and identified the United States an imperial power, it was not clear if

²⁴ For an invocation of this principle see the interview with Carlos Prats in *Ercilla*, November 1, 1972, 7. See also Regis Debray, *Conversations with Allende: socialism in Chile* (London: N.L.B., 1971). Steve J. Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 15, 25-32.

Chile would remain a member of the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty and the US Military Assistance Program after November 3, 1970. More specifically, would the Chile navy be permitted to conduct its annual joint maneuvers with the US navy in the South Pacific (UNITAS)?

Immediately after Allende's election Admiral Fernando Porta, the navy's commander in chief, asked for permission to meet informally with the president elect to inquire about Chile's international commitments.²⁵ On September 12, 1970 Admiral José Merino Castro and several other navy officials met with Allende and other members of his coalition for an informal chat at a Valparaíso café. Merino spoke of the navy's frustration with antiquated American arms and its desire for an active military official to be appointed defense sub-secretary. When the question of Chile's relationship to the United States and the inter-American system came up, Allende assured the navy that his government would not change its defensive commitments, expel US military advisors, or terminate American military assistance.²⁶

Merino also writes that Allende communicated to each branch of the armed forces outside of formal channels by way of retired army General Juan Forch that he would: 1) refrain from retiring officers arbitrarily 2) eradicate paramilitary forces in the country 3) continue the acquisition of new war material 4) improve corporate benefits for the military 5) operate inside bounds of constitutional legality and 6) respect the democratic,

²⁵ Merino, *Bitácora de un Almirante*, 101-102.

²⁶ Ibid. 78.

pluralist character of Chile's political system.²⁷ In other words, he promised to stay out of the military's institutional affairs, provide resources for modernization, and recognize their monopoly on controlled violence. Clearly, Salvador Allende understood the armed forces' grievances from the previous decade and their fears in the present.

In power, Allende repeatedly praised the armed forces for their patriotic service to the nation, reminding them of how their constitutionalist convictions had won the admiration of the world. He described Chile's soldiers as 'vertebral columns' of national sovereignty who contributed to civic education and national development. Allende insisted that Chile would not escape underdevelopment without the active participation of the armed forces. Speaking to the army in 1971, Allende spoke of 'the just respect peoples of the world profess for the Army of Chile, for its technical efficiency, for its democratic sentiments, for its attachment to the law and constitution.'²⁸

Allende's words deftly appealed to several military sensibilities. He flattered their sense of importance as guarantees of state's sovereignty, invoked their role in the discourse of Chilean exceptionalism, and used René Schneider's words about their cooperation in national development. In the words of Frederick Nunn, 'Allende saw the armed forces as a power group in society [and] he wanted the army, navy, air force, and Carabineros with him and involved in Chilean development.'²⁹ Yet, the crucial question

²⁷ Ibid. 102.

²⁸ "'Mensaje de S.E. el Presidente de la República', Dr. Salvador Allende Gossens," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 363 (1971).

²⁹ Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 271.

was whether he would be able to control and direct military involvement in national development.

SCHNEIDER ASSASSINATION

On October 22, 1970, a group of jittery extremists loyal to retired General Roberto Viaux surrounded René Schneider's automobile at a Santiago intersection and demanded the general surrender himself. The objective of these assassins, supplied with weapons and tear gas by the CIA, was to provoke the military to intervene and prevent the Chilean Congress from ratifying Allende's presidency on October 24, 1970. However, when Schneider refused to exit his car and then attempted to draw a sidearm, his assailants opened fire. Several days later the respected general died in an army hospital. Politically, this shocking assassination united the entire nation in horror and outrage. It effectively guaranteed the ratification of Allende's presidency and strengthened the armed forces cohesion and sense of duty to support the constitutionally elected president.³⁰

Schneider's death was a transcendent moment that temporarily unified all political factions in Chile. Representatives from all the major political parties – Communist, Radical, Christian Democratic, National – collectively affirmed that their democratic tradition would not be undermined by a small band of extremists. Schneider was described as a national martyr who symbolized faith in Chilean democracy. 'He gave his

³⁰ On the CIA's role in this drama see Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: a declassified dossier on atrocity and accountability*. New York: New Press, 2003), 1-35. CIA operatives recognized that Viaux and fellow retired general Camilo Valenzuela were unlikely to succeed, but they had already passed weapons and tear gas to extremists in these circles. After Schneider's assassination the CIA passed along hush money to Viaux and his subordinates to conceal American covert involvement.

life to conserve the unbreakable tradition of our nation's armed forces to defend our national sovereignty and remain loyal to the constitution, laws, and to the democratic regime' declared President Elect Salvador Allende.³¹

The Chilean armed forces experienced the Schneider assassination as a great trauma. The reaction was one of indignation that reckless civilians had murdered one of their own presuming that such an audacious act would induce them to violate the constitution.³² Alejandro San Francisco and Angel Soto write 'the death of Army General René Schneider was like a knife that penetrated, suddenly and unexpectedly, into the soul of the institution.'³³ The army considered itself guardian and protector of the nation's democracy. Why had its own people betrayed it?

Once internal investigations revealed that a retired army general had ordered civilian extremists to kidnap Schneider (he was subsequently tried and convicted of sedition) this created a new ambiguity. Civilians were not completely to blame for creating the violence that killed Schneider. From 1971 to 1973, General Carlos Prats regularly invoked Schneider's assassination as a symbol of the military's duty to uphold the constitution, but for some officers, the assassination was a symbol of everything wrong with the politics of civilian society.³⁴

³¹ "'Pagó con la Vida su Lealtad a la Constitución', Declaraciones del Presidente Electo," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 358 (1970).

³² "Editorial: Agravio a Chile," and "FF.AA. Leales al Cumplimiento de su Misión," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 358 (1970). "El General René Schneider Chereau," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 678 (1970).

³³ San Francisco and Soto, *Un Siglo De Pensamiento Militar en Chile*, 139.

³⁴ In 1974, Augusto Pinochet's secret police assassinated Carlos Prats. Like his predecessor, Prats was victim of political violence directed by a member of his own institution. One has to wonder if Prats would

INITIAL RECEPTION

Allende's arrival to La Moneda was accompanied by the same civil-military protocol that greeted Jorge Alessandri in 1958 and Eduardo Frei in 1964. Each branch solemnly pledged loyalty to the defense minister and chief executive as their legitimately constituted superiors.³⁵ General Staff editors of the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* went one step further by enthusiastically offering their institution's cooperation with the new government:

On November 3, a new constitutional government took power that will direct country's destiny for the next six years. The outstanding inclination advertised by S.E. Dn. Salvador Allende Gossens is the implementation of sweeping changes designed to solve problems that affect the great mass of citizens. The armed services, full of men conscious of their professional duties, will certainly not vacillate to offer their fullest energies to cooperate in the common good of the enormous tasks to be undertaken by the supreme government. *La Revista de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile*, from the modest platform of this editorial, respectfully greets the new authorities of the country and expresses its fervent hope that the new government meets the goals proposed for the good of the fatherland and for the entire national community.³⁶

The warm welcome should caution any assumption that most military leaders were waiting in the wings for the right moment to assume power. For more than a few officers, Allende represented the possibility of breaking old chains of economic dependence and building new forms of military participation towards the objective of national development. Nationalism could unite the armed forces and new government.

have been assassinated had it not been for the Schneider precedent. The Schneider assassination marks the beginning of a new era of political violence.

³⁵ *Revista de la Marina*, No. 679 (1970). *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 358 (1970).

³⁶ "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 117 (1970).

Officers disliked foreign domination of the national economy and disdained the persistence of backwards social and economic relations in the countryside.

Certainly, the Popular Unity's acceptance of a Marxist political economy separated it from the Chilean officer core, but nationalism could cut across political lines. When life long Communist Pablo Neruda won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1971, editorials in the army and air force journals joyously celebrated the achievement of Chile's renowned poet. Just two years later security forces ransacked his homes looking for 'subversive materials'.³⁷

Amid deep uncertainties surrounding the upcoming 1970 presidential election, editors at the *Memorial* decided to print a flattering homage to the army written by retired Vice Admiral Manuel Quintatana celebrating the army's role in the birth, development, and preservation of the fatherland. After chronicling military glories from independence to the War of the Pacific, Quintatana stressed that moral forces guided Chilean soldiers to defend the state's physical territory and protect the nation's 'spiritual goods'. He wrote:

Given that any oscillation in the political or social life of the nation will always face the gigantic dam that is the armed forces to prevent threats to life and peace of the community, many things can change without those changes representing a significant danger to the welfare or progress of the nation.³⁸

Quintatana's homage expresses an old idea: laws in Chile may change, governments will come and go, but the armed forces stand as a barrier to any political and physical catastrophe. There was nothing to fear from a Marxist government.

³⁷ "Homenaje a Pablo Neruda," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 120 (1971).

³⁸ Vice Admiral Manuel Quintatana Oyarzun (R), "Homenaje al Ejército," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 356 (1970).

CHILE AND LATIN AMERICA IN A WORLD CONTEXT

At the start of the seventies, a number of international relations experts concurred that the world was moving towards a multi-polar framework where smaller states would have greater freedom to engage in political and economic experimentation. The reasons for this belief had a foundation in the United States' retreat from Vietnam, German and Japanese challenges to North American industrial preeminence, a fractured Western Alliance in the wake of Gaullist France. Similarly, the Sino-Soviet split shattered old notions of a monolithic communist bloc. These developments seemed to augur new opportunities for small and medium nations to exercise greater diplomatic and political mobility in world less defined by bipolar structures.³⁹

In 1970, the essential question was not *if* Latin America's place in the world system was going to change but *how*. Chile's Foreign Relations Ministry saw three major possibilities: 1) a redefined alliance with the United States on more equal terms 2) a triangular relationship between Western Europe and the United States or 3) a leadership role among underdeveloped nations in the Third World. In this new world order, 'the oppositions between East and West, North and South that mark the current international system will give way to a new equilibrium and the establishment of new centers of power' that makes possible a wider dissemination of wealth and culture.⁴⁰

³⁹ Frigate Captain Hernán Ferrer Fougá, "Política – Económica – Guerra," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 689 (1972).

⁴⁰ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, "El Sistema Latinoamericano, la CECLA y el Nacionalismo Continental," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 355 (1970).

International relations expert Carlos Naudón de la Sota asked if it made any sense for Latin America to remain bound to an old inter-American structure when the Soviet Union and United States had decided to engage in a process of economic and political dialogue (*détente*).⁴¹ Reflecting a new continental nationalism built on dependency theory, Naudón asked what benefit Latin America derived from remaining bound to an inter-American structure built on irrelevant Cold War structures that merely bolstered American hegemony and allowed the northern hemisphere to preserve its position of strength in the world system?⁴²

From the perspective of professor Naudón the defining characteristic of the world after 1945 was the continued division between the northern and southern hemispheres, one defined by affluence and space age technology and the other by poverty and underdevelopment. Since the fifties Europe and the United States had benefited from rising prices for their manufactured goods while Latin America had suffered from insufficient industrial growth and declining prices for primary commodities.⁴³ In this

⁴¹ Dn. Carlos Naudón, "De Interés Nacional: Introducción al Curso 'América Latina en la Década del 70,'" *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 117 (1970). For more Chilean academics in this line of thought consult: Carlos Naudón de la Sotta, editor, *¿América '70: servidumbre o independencia en la presente década?* (Santiago: Universidad Católica de Chile, 1970).

⁴² For Naudón, the inter-American framework cemented under American leadership was the culmination of a process that began in the late 19th century as the United States progressively expanded into Latin America under the principle of open markets. In 1945 every Latin American country had declared communism a shared hemispheric threat and dutifully entered into the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty (1947). This internationalism could also be seen in the Organization of American States, United Nations, and other peacetime defensive alliances like the Warsaw Pact and NATO, it seemed that parochial nationalisms and non-alignment held little assurance of national security in the context of two irreconcilable blocs. *Détente* changed this equation.

⁴³ See Victor Bulmer-Thomas, *The Economic History of Latin America since Independence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

context, Naudón felt it was imperative for the developing world to press its common interests vis à vis the northern hemisphere, communist or capitalist.

Felipe Herrera, a political commentator and international relations expert who would become a fixture in military defense journals during the dictatorship, looked to the seventies with optimism. He felt that the failure of Kennedy's Alliance for Progress had convinced many of the region's leaders that the impetus for change had to come from within Latin America thereby contributing to the continent's intellectual emancipation from imported development models and the expectation of North American deliverance from poverty. In spite of the difficulties posed by revolutionary movements, underdevelopment, and demographic expansion, Herrera was positive about the future. He felt the region was poised to assume a confident identity in the world community and innovate its own creative solutions to pressing problems.⁴⁴

Officers and intellectuals also looked to pan-American economic integration as a pragmatic instrument to achieve national goals.⁴⁵ For historian Claudio Véliz, Chile's future security depended on the Andean Pact's penetration into East Asian markets and the commitment of Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Chile to diversify their economic relations while undertaking a common research and investment agenda.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Felipe Herrera Lane, "América Latina en 1970," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 363 (1971).

⁴⁵ Continental nationalism was based on the idea that Latin America had common values and culture as well as mutual interests that diverged from those of the northern hemisphere. In the sixties, statesmen like Eduardo Frei Montalva encouraged a Latin American commitment to economic integration and political unity that would provide a singular voice in world affairs, separate from Europe or the United States. See Eduardo Frei Montalva, *Eduardo Frei Montalva, 1911-1982: obras escogidas* (Santiago: Centro de Estudios Políticos Latinoamericanos Simón Bolívar, 1993).

⁴⁶ Claudio Véliz, "América Latina y el Pacífico," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 677 (1970).

Only a coordinated strategy could ensure the trading bloc took advantage of opportunities to establish stable commercial relations with East Asia's new industrial powers.⁴⁷ Frigate Captain Hernán Ferrer called the Andean Pact:

The most important demonstration of a growing continental nationalism that asserts a unique Latin American personality with its own thought, values and organizing paradigm, which works towards the shared goal of beginning a process of integral industrialization that will create the opportunity to escape underdevelopment.⁴⁸

Continental nationalism embodied in the Andean Pact was considered a vital instrument to break old dependencies on the northern hemisphere and assert Latin American interests.

Indeed, by the start of the Allende administration the rigid east/west logic of the early Cold War now mingled with a north/south logic that saw Latin America's interests fundamentally diverging from those in the northern hemisphere. For example, Chile, Peru, and several other Latin American states had begun to collectively push for the exclusive right to exercise sovereignty over their coasts up to two hundred miles.⁴⁹ At diplomatic forums, the Nixon Administration argued that national jurisdiction over coastal waters ought to extend a mere two hundred meters, which to Latin American nationalists was a nothing short of an insidious Yankee stratagem to claim and exploit the ocean floors of underdeveloped states that lacked the resources to do so themselves. The most extreme example of this new nationalism was Peru. Shortly after taking power in

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Frigate Captain Hernán Ferrer Fougá, "El Pacto Andino y el Poderío Marítimo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 685 (1971).

⁴⁹ Corvette Captain Rubén Scheihing, "Reunión Marítima en Lima," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 678 (1970).

1968, the Peruvian military decided to expel American Peace Corps volunteers, terminate US military assistance, nationalize American sugar and oil companies, and turn to the Soviet Union as principal arms supplier.⁵⁰ Peruvian military chiefs branded the United States a hostile imperial power trying to keep their country poor and weak.

Although this type of anti-Americanism was less widespread in the Chilean armed forces, many officers and geopolitical theorists looked to the Andean Pact as a concrete means to transform older Latin American nationalisms from their implicitly defensive nature to an offensive project that could reverse the widening gap between exporters of primary materials and exporters of high-tech industrial goods. From this Americanist paradigm, Chilean strength was inextricably tied to Latin American strength. Furthermore Latin American integration had an aura of historical inevitability, validated by the success of the United States and European Union. Although Chilean officers had not abandoned their suspicion of the Soviet bloc, it is nevertheless accurate to say that Cold War thinking was not nearly as rigid as it had once been. By 1970, some observers were pronouncing the Cold War over, having resulted in stalemate in Europe and the exhaustion of the superpowers and the end of their respective political and economic hegemony.

Putting the Popular Unity's political platform into this context, the nationalization of American mining companies was consistent with the military's goal of economic autarky. During the government's bitter negotiations with Kennecott Copper in 1972, ads

⁵⁰ See Liisa North, *The Peruvian Revolution and the officers in power, 1967-1976* (Montreal: Centre for Developing-Area Studies, 1981).

appearing in magazines and newspapers reminded readers that all Chileans – professionals, workers, peasants, and soldiers – supported the recent nationalization of the country’s principal resource. Even in late 1972 the country could agree on one thing!

Army and air force editorials described the nationalization of copper as a transcendent moment when the state finally took control of its most strategic resource.⁵¹ Generals like Alberto Bachelet and Sergio Poblete viewed the UP’s nationalization of the banking sector and transnational corporations as part of an emancipation process to end all vestiges of neocolonialism. Referring to the extension of Chilean sovereignty over strategic sectors of the economy Carlos Prats said ‘Chile is living a historically complex moment, product of a deep geopolitical process’.⁵² The geopolitical process he referred to had two major facets. First, the Chilean state was acquiring strategic control over national resources. Second, the government was strengthening the military’s ability to defend these new gains by increasingly the defense budget.

The 1972 May/June issue of the *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, featured an article by four army officers titled ‘Tradition and Innovation in Chile’s Foreign Policy’, which outlined the foreign policy precepts from Eduardo Frei’s administration that had continued into the Allende administration such as auto-determination, continental nationalism, sovereignty over natural resources, and the principle of non-intervention in

⁵¹ “Información del Cobre,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 123 (1972). “1972 y las Batallas del Cobre,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 125 (1972).

⁵² *Ercilla*, September 27, 1972, 8. One thesis about the civil-military relationship from 1970 to 1973 is that ‘constitutionalist’ leaders like René Schneider and Carlos Prats never had a real commitment to democracy. Instead they saw the UP as a vehicle to achieve institutional modernization. Although flawed, this interpretation is a Marxist attempt to understand the political economy of Allende’s relationship with the armed forces. See Rojas, *The Murder of Allende and the End of the Chilean Way to Socialism*.

the affairs of neighboring states. Yet, Salvador Allende's government broke with tradition by renewing diplomatic relations with Cuba and seeking commercial and technical relations with countries in the socialist bloc. With regard to the United States, the UP had declared its intention of maintaining good relations with the United States, while escaping a past 'orbit of political dependence.'⁵³

These army authors acknowledged Chile's past political and economic dependence on the United States and even suggested that multilateral relationships with the socialist bloc could stimulate competition among Western countries to increase commercial relations with and technical assistance to Chile. Yet, they had two principal fears. First, unnecessarily antagonizing the colossus to the north would be counterproductive. Second, if the government began to receive a preponderance of Soviet financial and technical assistance, 'Chile would become a springboard for Soviet expansion across Latin America.'⁵⁴ To avoid such a fate Chile had to consolidate an intermediate position seen and understood by all nations as completely non-aligned. These army officers saw something to gain from a new multilateral foreign policy, but they feared becoming a Soviet dependency. Fidel Castro's month long visit to Chile in 1971 would have done little to assuage that fear.⁵⁵

⁵³ Lieutenant Colonel Efraín Jaña G., Lieutenant Colonel Jorge Stolze C., Major Jaime Fuenzalida B., Captain Lander Uriarte B., "Tradición e Innovación en la Política Exterior de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 367 (1972).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ On Castro's visit to Chile see Salvador Allende Gossens, *Salvador Allende Reader: Chile's voice of democracy*, edited by James D. Cockcroft (New York: Ocean Press, 2000), 126-145. Castro not only offered advice and opinions on circumstances in Chile, but the interviews and speeches he gave with

MILITARY RULE: A WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON

In 1964, 1966, and 1968, Brazil, Argentina, and Peru's militaries seized power from civilians on the grounds that irresponsible politicians had heightened social tensions and failed to meet the basic needs of the dispossessed. Scholars described these new military governments as 'bureaucratic authoritarian' to describe their impersonal, technocratic character. Moreover, these governments in the Southern Cone did not simply represent the interests of landed elites or local oligarchs. To a degree, they had become autonomous social actors in their own right.⁵⁶ After taking power in 1968, Peruvian General Juan Velasco Alvarado insisted that his action was not a *golpe del estado* but a nationalist revolution to open a new chapter in Peru's history, secure its economic independence, and weaken the power of a selfish oligarchy. Similarly, Argentine General Juan Enrique Gugliamelli remarked that soldiers from developing countries had a vital perspective on integral development because their institutions had conscripts and officers from every region and social class. As a result, they had a uniquely national outlook that constituted a vanguard of revolutionary change.⁵⁷ Gugliamelli said 'it is obvious that as a part of the national community, the armed forces should not be limited to merely keeping internal order and repressing subversion'; if

Allende provide a sense of the intransigent rhetoric of the time. Castro along with Allende divided the Chilean population into 'the people' who supported the revolution and 'the reactionaries' who did not.

⁵⁶ Political scientist Guillermo O'Donnell coined the term 'bureaucratic authoritarianism'. See Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Bureaucratic Authoritarianism: Argentina, 1966-1973, in comparative perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). For an assessment of the military phenomenon see Brian Loveman and Thomas Davies Jr., editors, *The Politics of Antipolitics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978).

⁵⁷ Juan Enrique Gugliamelli (Argentina), "Las FFAA en América Latina (FF.AA. y Revolución Nacional)," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 375 (1973).

underdevelopment and disorder threatened national security, militaries had every right to enter politics to change the structure of society and resolve the problems of underdevelopment.⁵⁸

In 1970, Chilean Army Major Claudio López Silva's article 'The Armed Forces in the Third World' offered a hypothesis to explain the widespread existence of military governments across the developing world. Major López distinguished between the 'manifest' functions of the armed forces (maintaining internal order, providing disaster relief, external defense) and 'latent' functions (giving citizens a sense of belonging to a nation with traditions and spiritual values). As a consequence of these dynamics, militaries intervened in politics when they believed disintegrative forces and extremist inclinations threatened the nation. 'If militaries overthrow a civilian government it is often due to the fact that they subjectively believe the government lacks efficiency, which activates their 'latent' institutional functions as safeguard of patriotism and national tradition.'⁵⁹

Applying this hypothesis to Chile, López wrote that *el tacnazo* had no ideological foundation. Rather, it was a legitimate demand by Chilean officers for the resources they needed to carry out their 'manifest' function to protect the state they pledged to defend. López's model is indeed useful. In every memoir from the period, Chile's soldiers observe that Alessandri and Frei had reduced defense spending to such an extent that every service lacked the hardware and training to muster a credible military deterrent in

⁵⁸ Major Claudio López Silva, "Las Fuerzas Armadas en el Tercer Mundo," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 356 (1970).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

the event of regional conflict. Viaux's rebellion had had a political tone, but its perceived legitimacy among the troops was rooted in the fact that civilian leaders had made it impossible for soldiers to carry out their manifest function.

In this respect, Chile's military was not so exceptional when compared to others in the developing world. Many newly independent states in Africa and Asia lacked well-defined borders or sufficient national consciousness to sustain a national process of economic development. Moreover, officers in the developing world often had a unique appreciation of the nation's human and physical geography, its social conflicts and vulnerabilities and obstacles for integral development. Thus, it was no surprise that officers in these countries felt compelled by their 'patriotic' mission to remove civilian leaders who failed to accomplish national objectives. In the Middle East, López observed the common mission of armies in Turkey, Iraq, Egypt and Pakistan to produce cohesive, modern, secular states. Gamel Nasser, for instance, had led a military movement to overthrow Egypt's petty aristocracy and create a pan-Arab socialist movement.

In Chile, López urged greater civil-military cooperation. Civilian leaders, he felt, needed to provide the armed forces with a set of goals to achieve and clearly delimit their role to insure they did not acquire hegemonic pretensions. Like most of his colleagues, López considered the Chilean military's tradition of apolitical professionalism as source of strength and stability.

'The Armed Forces in the Third World' is interesting for a number of reasons. It demonstrates an awareness of how militaries elsewhere justified their interventions in civilian politics. It framed those interventions in a positive light and accused foreign

scholars of misunderstanding the reasons for military action. López thought scholars in Europe and the United States tended to offer mono-causal explanations for military behavior based on deterministic presuppositions about social class or American military aid and he reserved a particularly sharp censure for North American scholars who urged the US Senate to cut military aid to Latin America based on the grounds that the possibility of war in the Americas was remote and Latin American nations did not have security issues relevant to their sovereignty or require institutional modernization.⁶⁰ These attitudes exemplified North American paternalism. Sarcastically, López suggested the United States redirect a portion of the money it was spending on the Vietnam War to helping poor countries overcome the social, cultural, and economic problems that generated subversion and obliged the US to intervene in the affairs of sovereign states.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE *UNIDAD POPULAR*

On November 4, 1971, Allende addressed a large group of supporters at Santiago's national stadium to celebrate his government's achievements, especially the nationalization of Chile's steel, copper, coal, iron, and nitrate industries.⁶¹ But there were other reasons for optimism. In 1971, industrial production expanded 12.1 percent, GDP grew 8.6 percent, inflation fell from 34.9 percent to 22.1 percent, and unemployment stood at 3.8 percent.⁶² Everything seemed to be going according to plan.

⁶⁰ He is referring to Edwin Lieuwen's report to the Senate Subcommittee on American Republics, 1967.

⁶¹ Allende lauded the loyalty of the armed forces and harangued the treachery of 'reactionaries' and 'fascists'. *Salvador Allende Reader*, 117-118.

⁶² Collier and Sater, *A History of Chile*, 343.

Yet, the ‘good times’ proved illusory. The first year’s macroeconomic success had a shaky foundation. Allende’s economic minister Pedro Vuskovic had decreed wage hikes and used public spending to create jobs without overseeing a commensurate expansion of industrial capacity. He expected demand to spur production and government price controls to overcome macroeconomic disequilibrium, but by the middle of 1972 the populist strategy backfired. Allende was facing negative growth, hyperinflation, hoarding, rationing, and black markets.⁶³ To add to a list of growing problems, an October/November truck driver strike threatened to paralyze the entire economy and marked a turning point in the history of the Popular Unity government.

Allende, recognizing the danger of this situation, tapped army, navy, and air force commanders in chief to serve in his cabinet. This decision was meant to boost the UP’s credibility since military officers were generally regarded as impartial arbiters who could effectively negotiate with striking workers on behalf of the government.⁶⁴ Clearly, Allende hoped a civil-military cabinet would help to stabilize the country and Carlos Prats, appointed interior minister, did in fact negotiate a successful settlement with the truck drivers at the end of the year. Yet, Allende’s civil-military cabinet raised two crucial questions: at what point did military participation in government constitute

⁶³ Felipe Larraín and Patricio Meller, “The Socialist-Populist Chilean Experience: 1970-1973” in *The Macroeconomics of Populism in Latin America*, edited by Sebastian Edwards and Rudiger Dornbusch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). The UP’s economic strategy was based on the idea that the government had to deliver immediate benefits to the general population in order to broaden its political support among the middle class. If it could win over the middle sectors, the UP would have an electoral majority to consolidate its control over the economy and deepen other reforms.

⁶⁴ “Gabinete Cívico-Militar El Co-Gobierno,” *Ercilla*, November 8, 1972. Consult Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 272-279.

political deliberation and how would most officers feel about their institutional association with Popular Unity?⁶⁵

One group of officers considered participation in Allende's cabinet a favorable development for two important reasons. First, they were being asked to advise a civilian government at the highest levels, a fact that added prestige to their institutions. Second, Allende had kept his promise to increase in defense spending and facilitate institutional modernization programs, a happy fact after years of neglect by previous governments.

Another group of officers viewed the president's decision to involve the armed forces in his government as a taint on their institutions as a strategy to acquire military support for a Marxist government unable to govern on its own. Further, they feared association with him could poison internal morale or lead to political cooptation.⁶⁶ Although difficult to gage the exact strength of these two positions, the second was undoubtedly stronger than the first and ultimately overwhelmed it completely.

CIVILIAN PERCEPTIONS OF THE MILITARY

From 1970 to 1972, civilians could only speculate about the exact mood of the armed forces. In public statements, officers tended to be circumspect, reinforcing the impression of a serious, taciturn, and politically unsophisticated social body. Retired soldiers were free to pronounce on political matters, but their statements tended to support the idea of an apolitical institution focused exclusively on professional matters. Civilians knew anti-communist sentiment was strong in the armed forces and the Chilean

⁶⁵ Luis Humberto Parker raises this issue in *Ercilla*, November 15, 1972.

⁶⁶ Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 273.

navy had a well known reputation for political conservatism, but it was difficult to gauge a clear institutional position on the present crisis given the monastic life of soldiers and the basic fact that political deliberation and inter-service communications was strictly prohibited. What were these men actually thinking?

Right at the start of the transport strike and ensuing political crisis, an article about civil-military relations appeared in the *Memorial* that posited a simple thesis: during periods of crisis the left and right might praise or criticize the armed forces, but both sides viewed the military as a power base rather than an apolitical state organ and always tried to acquire military support for their own projects.⁶⁷ In November of 1972, *Ercilla* reflected on the unhappy position of the armed forces. Chile's far left called officers pro-imperialist capitalists while elements of the far right characterized them as robotic soldiers actively supporting a Marxist government. Some civilians predicted a military coup that would establish a developmentalist authoritarian government like the one in Peru.⁶⁸ Yet, military internal dynamics remained a subject of speculation. It was clear that officers disliked the current turmoil, but would they do something about it? If so, what would they do?⁶⁹

CONTEMPLATING INTERVENTION

⁶⁷ H.E. Bicheno, "Las Fuerzas Armadas en el Sistema Político de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 367 (1972). See also Verónica Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate, *Camino al Golpe: el nacionalismo chileno a la caza de las FFAA* (Santiago: La Universidad Católica Blas Cañas, 1996). Members of the far right hoped a military intervention would lead to the creation of a corporatist state and civil-military movement with a charismatic leader.

⁶⁸ *Ercilla*, November 1, 1972, 7.

⁶⁹ Many Christian Democrats predicted a quick, surgical military coup to restore order and exclude Marxists from the political system. This vision presumed a short military intervention.

The middle of 1972 was a turning point in Chilean military discourse as a result of heightened political tensions. Clearly, officers were wrestling with new issues. For example, *Memorial* editors decided to publish an article by Spanish Army Captain Prudencio García on the issue of political deliberation, in which he argued that national politics was not the exclusive property of civilians and to expect neutrality from military officials in every circumstance was to deny their very humanity.⁷⁰ While officers pledged loyalty to a state, they never ceased to be members of a nation with patriotic concerns for its future. Moreover, neutrality, at times, was simply impossible, French and Italian soldiers had to decide whether or not to defy state authorities in World War II, just as Spanish soldiers faced the same choice in 1936. Finally, he asked if it was desirable for the state's soldiers to be completely disinterested observers. García wrote:

For quite some time - inside and outside of our country – the notion of a completely apolitical soldier has gained acceptance. This idea derives from the belief that a soldier's mission - defense of the fatherland - constitutes his essential function and does not demand any political alignment from him. [However] in certain troubled situations, a soldier's loyalty to the fatherland can force him to face a momentous choice: to choose quickly and decisively between two opposed political positions. In those moments, the fatherland demands of him a personal decision but one made with the strictest sense of responsibility.⁷¹

Amid the turmoil of the truckers strike in August of 1972, retired Army General Alfredo Canales echoed Captain García when he explained that professional soldiers were obliged to stay out of sectarian politics and clumsy barracks uprisings, but in times of crisis, they had the right to 'judge the country's situation and present their judgment to the competent

⁷⁰ Captain Prudencio García Martínez de Murguía (Spain), "El Militar y la Política," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 367 (1972).

⁷¹ Ibid.

authorities.⁷² How would this work in practice? Canales suggested a single leader from the army could present the institution's consensus to national leaders. In May 1973 a group of retired admirals wrote to Raúl Montero Cornejo (navy commander in chief) with the same argument, insisting that the armed forces were not 'castrated organisms, incapable of judgment or reason' but that they had a right to 'take issue with the general thought of the government' on matter of internal and external security so long as they expressed these concerns to the national authorities 'through hierarchical channels'.⁷³

During the extremely tense months of late 1972, Carlos Prats, insisted that the solution to Chile's problems had to be found in legal, political channels, not military ones. His great fear was that a military intervention would provoke massive resistance from Allende's partisans and result in a violent cataclysm. He hoped that 1973's Congressional election in March would produce a political solution to the prevailing stalemate.⁷⁴ When Allende's opposition failed to win the two-thirds majority necessary for impeachment, the prevailing stalemate was only affirmed.⁷⁵

After the March congressional election, editors of the *Revista de la Marina* published two articles on the subject of military dissent, the first by an American air force

⁷² *Ercilla*, September 27, 1972, 8. Canales was retired from service due to allegations of coup plotting. He was known to have right wing sympathies, but also enjoyed great esteem inside of the army and his ouster was said to have undermined Prats authority.

⁷³ This document appears in Merino, *Bitácora de un Almirante*, 183-4. Among the most pressing concerns of this group the frontier tensions with Argentina and Bolivia at a time of internal crisis. They also worried that the UP's association with Cuba would harm Chile's relations to Brazil, an anti-communist military government. To strengthen the diplomatic front they urged strengthened relations with Brazil, Colombia, and Ecuador and the reestablishment of civilian discipline.

⁷⁴ *Ercilla*, November 29, 1972, 11-12.

⁷⁵ Popular Unity coalition: 44%, opposition parties: 56%

lieutenant colonel who examined the issue of internal dissent within the armed forces and the occasional obligation of officers to disagree with their superiors if they believed that the security of the nation was in jeopardy. He felt officers sometimes had a moral duty to criticize civilian leaders or criticize their superior officers. In support of this point he cited lower ranking German officers who viewed *Kristallnacht* as a barbaric pogrom, but nonetheless remained silent, unwilling to risk their careers or show civic courage by speaking up.⁷⁶ Military dissent is an inherently ambiguous subject. A surfeit of dissent can undermine the verticality of command and shatter internal discipline. Yet, a complete lack of dissent can imperil national security or lead to a humanitarian catastrophe.

The second article by Navy Ship Captain Ladislao D'Hainaut raised the same issue by pointing to the *Wehrmacht's* knowing toleration of Hitler's 'satanic convictions' and his deluded ideas about the German capability to achieve victory over the Soviet Union. D'Hainaut observed that most German army commanders preferred to view themselves as professional soldiers rather than citizens with higher obligations to the German nation even if they believed Hitler was a madman plunging the nation into certain ruin.⁷⁷ The question of military neutrality is a thorny issue. From 1972 to 1973 a major social and political crisis was unfolding in Chile that forced officers to struggle

⁷⁶ Lieutenant Colonel P.M. Flammer (USA), "La Crítica entre Los Militares," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 693 (1973).

⁷⁷ Ship Captain Ladislao D'Hainaut F., "Moral Naval Militar," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 693 (1973).

with their commitment to non-deliberation. At what point in the crisis would neutrality be impossible?

A soldier's conscientious defiance of legitimately constituted authority is fraught with ambiguity. Discipline and hierarchy constitute essential military values, but as the authors reflected, soldiers risked harm to the nation if they carried out immoral commands from civilian leaders. This dialogue was particularly relevant after March 1973 when it became clear that Allende's opposition lacked the votes to impeach him. If the political impasse led to armed confrontation, neutrality would be impossible. This discussion of military dissent is also significant in the sense that some officers committed crimes after 1973 and others refused to carry out orders they considered a violation of moral conscience.⁷⁸

HISTORY AS A GUIDEPOST

In 1972, news magazine *Ercilla* asked Carlos Prats if he thought a division of the army like the one that had taken place in 1891 was possible in such a polarized political climate. Prats quickly replied that the present era was too distinct for comparison to 1891, but his short answer masked an underlying anxiety about a painful event that had

⁷⁸ On this subject consult Jorge Escalante Hidalgo, *La Misión Era Matar: el juicio a la caravana Pinochet-Arellano* (Santiago: LOM, 2000). This book examines Chilean officers guilty of crimes during the infamous 'Caravan of Death' as well as those who refused to carry out orders during the first phase of military government. The operation, led by Brigadier General Sergio Arellano Stark, moved up the country in a Puma helicopter, inspecting military installations and executing detainees. This mission was intended to fortify internal discipline and terrify all who might oppose the new government. During the operation, Lieutenant Colonel Efraín Jaña Giron in Talca and Major Fernando Reveco Valenzuela in Calama were dismissed for 'failure to fulfill military duties' when they expressed discomfort about the atrocities. General Joaquín Lagos, designated governor of Antofagasta province, met with Pinochet personally to denounce fifty-six of the executions carried out by Arellano and his subordinates.

deeply scarred the army.⁷⁹ On this point it is worth noting that as late as 1947, there was still a living link with the 1891 Civil War. That year a retired vice admiral recalled his experiences as a young official when the nation's army and navy had fought each other, and observed that each side believed its cause was just and patriotic.⁸⁰ It goes without saying that officers wanted to avoid a repeat of that division. Similarly, the navy internal purge of suspected pro-government sailors prior to September 11, 1973 was absolutely informed by its institutional memory of the 1931 naval mutiny.

The Chilean people frequently weave their complex and rich history into political discourse and perhaps no two institutions in Chilean society are more historically conscious than the army and navy, for whom history constitutes a rich fount of lessons and inspiration. Their professional journals are filled with lengthy articles about historical figures and events from the nation's history, but from 1971 to 1973 it was the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* that revisited the armed forces most recent intervention in politics, with implicit meanings for the present.

In 1971, General Gustavo Leigh Guzmán who was serving as editor in chief of the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile*, approved the decision to begin reprinting chapters from 'The Revolution of the Lieutenants', a history of the 1924 military intervention written by retired army captain Raúl Alduante, in successive issues. In a glowing prologue, Leigh wrote that Alduante's history restored life to 'unknown

⁷⁹ *Ercilla*, November 29, 1972, 11.

⁸⁰ Vice Admiral Luis Langlois V. (R), "Recuerdos de la guerra civil de 1891," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 536 (1947).

political-military precedents'. Retired general Bartolomé Blanche remarked that the book faithfully retraced the history of the Lieutenant's Revolt and constituted a warning to civilians not to create similar conditions.⁸¹ In the same issue, retired aviation colonel Enrique Flores Álvarez described the 1924 military movement as 'consequence of a long period of political anarchy, financial disorder, weariness and disillusionment' prompting young idealistic army officers - without political ambitions - to 'eliminate the ineffective administrative system of the era'.⁸²

Significantly, Alduante treated the causes and events leading up to 1924 revolution, but not its consequences, notably avoiding the politicization of the armed forces during the Ibáñez dictatorship and the unpleasant civilian backlash that followed. By 1973, only the high command had any memories of the period from 1924 to 1931, which made the history's retelling significant. During this historical episode, officers had entered politics to end a prevailing political stalemate and establish a new basis for an enduring political order.

The last chapter of Alduante's history appeared in June of 1972, reproducing the junta's stated reasons for assuming control of the state. The manifesto's final words are instructive:

This movement is the spontaneous fruit of circumstances. Its object is to abolish the gangrene in politics; its method of procedure, energetic but peaceful, is a work of surgery; not of vengeance or punishment. This movement is independent of sects or parties, equally directed against all the political camps which have

⁸¹ Army Captain Raúl Alduante Phillips (R), "La Revolución de los Tenientes," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 119 (1971).

⁸² Aviation Colonel Enrique Flores Álvarez (R), "Historia Aeronáutica de Chile," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 119 (1971).

trampled the national consciousness and which have caused our organic corruption. No political faction may claim for itself the inspiration for our acts, and should not hope to reap the harvest of our efforts. We have not seized power to maintain it. We have not, and will not proclaim any caudillo because our work must be of all, for all.⁸³

The Military Junta
Santiago, September 11, 1924

The 1924 manifesto contained several ideas that would have resonated with officers in the present. First, an organic conception of state embodied in the phrase ‘gangrenous politics’ and second, the emphasis on the apolitical motivations of military actors. In 1924 this group of young officers had demanded a new constitution and the right to make surgical repairs to what they called an exhausted, moribund political system that threatened social stability. Exactly forty-nine years later, military leaders put a coup into motion with many of the same justifications. This time, however, there would be no remarks about a movement without a punitive or vengeful spirit. In 1973, the authors of the coup believed they were at war with irredeemable internal enemies.

To give another striking anecdote with historical content, French socialist François Mitterand reported that Allende had shown him a bust of president José Manuel Balmaceda in 1971 and declared that he would take his own life if opponents tried to overthrow him, repeating what Balmaceda had done during the civil war of 1891.⁸⁴ On September 11, 1973 he fulfilled that pledge.⁸⁵

⁸³ Army Captain Raúl Alduante Phillips (R.), “Ruido de Sables,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 123 (1972). The English translation is from Nunn, *Chilean Politics 1920-1931*, 179.

⁸⁴ Spooner, *Soldiers in a Narrow Land*, 51.

NATIONAL SECURITY IDEOLOGY

Officers believed national security was an integrated concept, not strictly confined to the preservation of geographic borders, but in 1970, the Chilean military lacked an official doctrine regarding their place in society apart from the constitution's non-deliberation clause. In November 1972, Carlos Prats explained that the concept of national security had evolved to encompass new legitimate spheres of military interest such as the nation's 'geo-economic sovereignty'. Here Prats was referring to the Popular Unity's nationalization of the mining sector but he also saw a legitimate place for the armed forces improving communication infrastructure, formulating energy policy, or contributing to other aspects of national development that effected national security.⁸⁶ When asked about contingent politics, Prats indicated that 'in the struggle among political parties we are neutral'. Prats described the military's role in national politics as political with a capital 'P' in the sense that officers could contribute ideas to the formulation of national policies, but sectarian politics or politics with lower case 'p' remained strictly off limits.⁸⁷ However, for many of his colleagues, Marxist politics threatened internal cohesion, social equilibrium, and the survival of the state itself.

At the end of 1972, Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Moya, published the politically significant essay 'Participation, in Theory, of the Armed Forces in the Politics of Modern

⁸⁵ There is controversy surrounding the death of Salvador Allende. Initially, the Left insisted that he had died resisting the military, but evidence points to suicide. Conspiracy theorists say he was actually murdered by a Cuban agent on orders from Fidel Castro because Allende's death would have symbolic value for the international Left.

⁸⁶ *Ercilla*, November 29, 1972, 12.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

States'. Moya argued that the role of the armed forces in developed states was confined to external defense while the role of militaries in the developing world was more complex and variable because the latter had to stay abreast of technological advances in warfare and rectify structural deficiencies in the nation's political and economic order.⁸⁸ Politically, they had to maintain stability and social equilibrium in political systems where various ideologies – some violent and exclusive – competed for power. In short, the armed forces had to insure incremental progress and political stability while being 'prepared to modify, reject, or accept violent changes that the gradualness of the system creates spontaneously, sporadically or permanently.'⁸⁹ For Moya this meant a role in sectarian politics excluding extreme ideologies that undermined steady, incremental progress.

Citing Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador where military governments were developing territorial hinterlands and building roads to connect far flung population centers to national markets, Moya considered this state-building impulse a legitimate sphere of military activity because such global plans for economic development had important effects on national security. Echoes of Moya's ideas had appeared in defense journals for some time, but never as a coherent thesis justifying military participation in economic policy or as an instrument excluding certain ideologies from the political system.

⁸⁸ Interestingly, North American military officers were expressing similar ideas. From 1970 to 1973, *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* editors published at least half a dozen articles by American officers who wanted civilian leaders to consider a new internal security role for the military in light of racial conflict and student radicalism. These articles reflect the worldwide ferment of the time and uncertainty about the future, both in terms of domestic developments and the new theatres of conflict in a post-Vietnam world.

⁸⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Moya V., "Participación, en Teoría, de las Fuerzas Armadas en la Política de los Estados Modernos," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 369 (1972).

Prior to 1970, Frederick Nunn described the Chilean political system as having the unique ability to contain diversity as long as it was within the bounds of gradualism. Yet, the election of a minority president espousing radical ideology profoundly tested a political economy that was already under severe strain.⁹⁰ As we have already seen, pragmatic nationalism was a defining military value. Officers believed in progressive reform, but it had to be within the bounds gradualism and political leaders had the obligation to harmonize social divisions or suffer a politicization that would debilitate the social cohesion necessary for a nation to achieve its long-term goals.⁹¹

By 1973, class conflict in the streets and newspapers directly clashed with military's idea that a great spiritual solidarity knit all Chileans together. On May 28, 1973 a group of retired generals and admirals wrote to Allende. They began the letter by expressing gratitude to the president for his understanding of the armed forces' institutional concerns (budget) and then quickly outlined three principal concerns: economic disorder, perceived violations of law, and social peace. They said class conflict undermined national security and insisted that the nation's progress required human solidarity, not socio-economic division.⁹² In September of 1972, retired General Alfredo Canales said the great governing principle of the country ought to be 'national

⁹⁰ Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 258. There is consensus that Allende inherited an exhausted political economy lacking the economic resources to further incorporate new social sectors. Allende's solution to the problem was socialization of the means of production.

⁹¹ Corvette Captain Rubén Scheihing N., "Hacia una Conceptualización de la Seguridad Nacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 679 (1970).

⁹² Pinochet, *El Día Decisivo 11 de Setiembre de 1973*, 196.

reconciliation and the cessation of class conflict between fellow citizens'.⁹³ For Canales and his colleagues, class struggle imperiled national security by undermining the unity necessary to secure the common defense and carry out social and economic reform.

The Allende era was characterized by a popular effervescence - marches, rallies, street clashes - that polarized and exhilarated many Chileans on the Right and Left. These political mobilizations, however, deeply disturbed the military's sense of duty, order, and discipline. In their worldview, social discipline and hard work led to national development, not politics. Moreover, we have already seen that officers tend to view the masses as an excitable, unstable social mass vulnerable to demagoguery and manipulation. Thus, responsible politicians had the obligation to restrain this impulse towards disorder.

In post-coup military propaganda, two important themes stand out. First, the country had experienced a surfeit of politics and the Left was to blame for magnifying the problem, but politicians of all political hues shared blame for the excessive politicization. Second, Chile had become an international battleground where foreign revolutionaries sympathetic to Allende, especially Cubans, had come to install a new communist beachhead. Estimates vary concerning the exact number of foreign revolutionaries in Chile, somewhere between 6,000 and 12,000, but the point is that these militants, many of them Cuban, lent credence to fear of Marxist conspiracy.

Major Juan Barriga's essay 'What We Should Know about Security and National Defense' represents a turning point in military discourse. Published amid the volatile

⁹³ *Ercilla*, September 27, 1972, 8.

conditions of August 1973, Barriga did not argue that Chile's armed forces *ought* to participate in the political system he proclaimed their *right* to do so given the existence of extremists who refused to operate within the nation's democratic framework.⁹⁴ In spite of overwhelming societal consensus that extra-legal actions were illegitimate, violent minorities used terrorism to achieve political objective and foment 'social disintegration' in order to achieve a violent seizure of state and subsequent alignment with external powers that shared the same ideology.⁹⁵ Given the gravity of this security threat, legitimate governments had to control extremism, maintain rule of law, and foster social peace. Furthermore, Barriga linked internal security to external security by pointing to Argentina's vociferous demands for control of the Beagle Channel in the far south. If the state lacked internal stability, the national territory was vulnerable to external attack.

Since soldiers understood national security better than any other social sector, Barriga reasoned, they ought to receive specialized training in state administration, statistics, international law, economics, geopolitics, and social legislation so they could hold important government positions and participate in decision making at all the highest

⁹⁴ Major Juan D. Barriga M., "Lo Que Debemos Saber Sobre Seguridad y Defensa Nacional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 373 (1973).

⁹⁵ Barriga is referring to the MIR (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*) VOP (*Vanguardia Organizada del Pueblo*) and possibly *Patria y Libertad*. The first two were extreme left groups that actively encouraged workers to arm themselves and poor peasants to seize land in preparation for the coming revolution. One reason Allende lost credibility with the military was his failure to control these groups. When a journalist asked Allende about the MIR - his nephew Andrés Pascal Allende was a leader - he called the group a collection of 'idealistic youths'. *Patria y Libertad* was a right wing organization that used assassinations, sabotage, and other illegal tactics to combat the UP. It actively tried to provoke military intervention. Politically, it sought a corporatist movement based around a single leader in the model of Franco's Spain. It should be noted that each of these groups rejected liberal democracy.

levels of governance.⁹⁶ Finally, to ensure that all government officials, police, and military officers understood the goals of the national security state it would have to undertake a ‘veritable indoctrination of state officials about the desirability of maintaining and defending our democratic system, nationality and fatherland, which have been distorted by groups who appear to serve foreign interests.’⁹⁷

Barriga’s essay was both an indictment of Allende’s government and a vision of what he believed ought to replace it, specifically a centralized, authoritarian state that would make political and economic decisions for the benefit the entire community rather than one socio-economic sector. This state would exclude extreme ideologies that threatened the nation’s cultural and historical foundation and harmonize social differences, in effect performing a role as ‘instrument of equilibrium’. As we will see, many of these corporatist ideas appear in the junta’s 1974 ‘Declaration of Principles’, a foundational text that designated a new, legitimate role for the military to participate in society in the interest of national security. For the first time, a Chilean officer was formally articulating a coherent set of principles that could be described as national security doctrine.

INSTITUTIONAL COHESION

Institutional cohesion was an issue that loomed large for Chile’s armed forces between 1970 and 1973. As we have already seen, discipline, hierarchy and ‘el deber de

⁹⁶ This was already true of Peru and Brazil, especially Peru’s *Centro de Altos Estudios Militares* where officers trained for roles at practically all levels of the state apparatus.

⁹⁷ Op. Cit. “Lo Que Debemos Saber Sobre Seguridad y Defensa Nacional”.

cumplir' constitute bedrocks of Chilean military culture.⁹⁸ Military leaders wanted to ensure unity of command and prevent the outbreak of internal conflicts. For example, prior to Allende's election, the high command urged Eduardo Frei to democratize compulsory military service out of concern that their overwhelmingly lower class conscripts might possess a political allegiance that took precedence over the institution they served.⁹⁹ By 1970, the army had actually begun using social science methodologies to evaluate the institution's political tendencies.¹⁰⁰ Air force, navy, and army intelligence was especially sensitive to civilian contacts with their soldiers during the Popular Unity government.

As Chilean society became progressively more polarized the military increased its efforts to shore up institutional cohesion. The *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* devoted attention to the role of reserve officers and civil defense pilots during times of war.¹⁰¹ Naturally, civil airfields and citizens with military training or experience as pilots would become vital human resources in the event of a civil war. The navy paid noticeable

⁹⁸ Corvette Captain Gerald Jacob Neumann, "Meditaciones sobre los Fundamentos del Mando," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 680 (1971).

⁹⁹ Prats, *Memorias*, 141-142.

¹⁰⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Juan Von Chrismar, "Evaluación de Moral del Personal," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 361 (1971). The author compares the Chilean army's project to Plan Camelot, a social science effort directed by the Pentagon to measure the political attitudes of Chile's key social actors - officers, students, workers - in an effort to determine the nation's susceptibility to internal war.

¹⁰¹ Fleet Captain Alejandro Lubet Vergara (A), "La Reserva Activa es Valioso Aporte para la Fuerza Aérea," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 121 (1971). By the same author, "Fundación de la Escuadrilla de La Reserva Aérea San Felipe," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 119 (1971). Aviation Colonel Enrique Flores Álvarez (R), "Precursos de la Reserva Aérea en Chile," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 121 (1971).

attention to retired officers who formed part of the institution's 'great spiritual reserve'.¹⁰² Editorials lauded these individuals as a spiritual wellspring of patriots ready to serve their former institutions during extraordinary circumstances.

By June 1973, groups of officers in each branch of the armed forces had begun to plot against Allende. In this frenzied political climate, rife with talk of civil war and armed confrontation, MIR and MAPU militants visited barracks to post signs reading *Soldado, no obedezcas al oficial golpista y reaccionario* or *Soldado tú también eres explotado* (Soldier, do not obey reactionary and pro-coup officials. Soldier, you too are exploited).¹⁰³ The radical wings of the UP had begun to anticipate a military coup. Their hope was that servicemen would resist it, although the net result of such messages was to magnify the conviction that the *Unidad Popular* wanted to divide the armed forces.¹⁰⁴

EL TANQUETAZO

On the morning of June 29, 1973, Lieutenant Colonel Roberto Souper led a column of tanks towards the presidential palace to depose Salvador Allende. The putsch, dubbed the *Tanquetazo*, did not succeed but it was highly significant. First of all, Souper had acted independently of his superiors, in the hopes that other mid level officers would follow him. He knew that a solid majority of officers wanted to end the Popular Unity

¹⁰² "Editorial: La Marina del Espíritu," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 669 (1969). "Editorial: Retirados y Reserva Naval," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 691 (1972).

¹⁰³ *Ercilla*, August 15, 1973, 10.

¹⁰⁴ Carlos Prats recounts a private conversation with Salvador Allende on September 8, 1973 when he explained to Allende that regardless of the presumed constitutionalist convictions of Pinochet and Leigh, it was unlikely they would be able to maintain discipline among their colleagues and prevent a revolt against his government. In order to prevent a civil war between 'golpista' and 'constitucionalista' factions, he urged Allende to temporarily abdicate, to which Allende responded 'jamás!' See Prats, *Memorias*, 509-510.

government. This fact alarmed Carlos Prats and Augusto Pinochet because it threatened to fracture of the military's basic unity and result in intra-military bloodletting.

As the tanks columns headed towards la Moneda, Colonel Julio Canessa received orders from his superiors to secure positions around the palace and return fire if Souper's battalion used force. But there was a problem. Two captains and two majors made it clear to Canessa and then General Prats that they would not repress their brothers in arms or defend a government they felt was taking the country towards a dictatorship of the proletariat.¹⁰⁵ This was Prats' basic dilemma and the dilemma of senior officials: maintaining discipline in an increasingly unhappy, restive institution.

By noon, Carlos Prats and Augusto Pinochet managed to put the revolt down before it escalated into a massive confrontation (seventeen soldiers lost their lives), but the unity of the armed forces had been in the balance. Leaders recognized that it could have ended differently, with a chaotic fracture of the military, leading to open civil war. Colonel Canessa wrote that it was the most difficult day of his life because if the army's cohesion had been broken, it could have split the army in two, making the coup on September 11, 1973 impossible.¹⁰⁶

The *Tanquetazo* revealed the exceptional volatility of Chile's political situation. At the same time it revealed the army's agility. Unity of command had been preserved at the top and Prats had managed to take control of a complex situation. In less than two hours, four 'loyalist' columns had taken up positions around La Moneda. The

¹⁰⁵ Arancibia and Balart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 129-131.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 132.

Tanquetazo also revealed something very important: when Allende called on the *cordones industriales* - his supposed bastion of worker support - to flood the streets and defend his government, they did not muster. If the workers were not willing to defend Allende's government this changed a basic political dynamic in Chile's unfolding drama. Was Carlos Prats' fear of massive slaughter in the streets unfounded?

A SOLDIER'S CONSCIENCE: LAW AND DISSIDENT

In February 1973, the UP announced plans for a National Unified School. The project was immediately controversial because it proposed giving the government control over curriculum in Chile's parochial schools as a means to 'transform each Chilean into an actor of his own destiny' and 'secure the socialist system'. Massive civil resistance forced Allende to delay its implementation, but the reform convinced many officers of the government's intention to forcibly change Catholic education and *ipso facto* Chilean identity. For the armed forces, Roman Catholicism is a pillar of shared national identity and many officers felt the president did not seek a genuine reform of Chilean education but rather a social base of power to conquer the hearts and minds of Chile's youth?¹⁰⁷

In 1973, the overwhelming majority of commissioned officers had come to believe Salvador Allende threatened the nation's historical-cultural identity. Further, he appeared to lack control over his coalition and was either unwilling or deliberately refusing to discipline its radical elements.

¹⁰⁷ Ismael Huerta Díaz, *Volvería a Ser Marino* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1988), 10-20. See also Declaración de la Asamblea Plenaria del Episcopado sobre la Escuela Nacional Unificada, Punta de Talca, April 11, 1973, Centro de Estudios Miguel Enríquez, <http://www.archivo-chile.com/>.

Inside the air force, General Mario López Tobar reveals that groups of officers began to identify high-ranking officers who were ‘leaders’ (willing to support a movement against Allende) and those who could not be counted on to support a coup after the March 1973 congressional elections.¹⁰⁸ By March, Tobar thought it was unconscionable that military commanders Carlos Prats González (army) Raúl Montero Cornejo (navy), and César Ruiz Danyau (air force) continued to fulfill their pledges of loyalty to Allende. In his view, these officers had a higher obligation to the nation, not to a man who refused to discipline his coalition and put a stop to the nation’s self-destruction. Allende’s actions nullified their oath of loyalty to him; their loyalty was to the fatherland unbound by a temporal oath.

A significant minority of officers disagreed. Army generals Mario Sepúlveda Squella and Guillermo Pickering concurred with their chief Carlos Prats that a constitutional solution to the political crisis was the only legitimate solution. Similarly, several leaders of the Carabineros, including the institution’s commander in chief José María Sepúlveda, remained partisans of the president. Because most officers squarely blamed Allende’s coalition for creating the political crisis of 1972-1973 it was difficult to understand these police officials who in José Toribio Merino’s words ‘appeared rather indifferent to the daily problems facing the nation’.¹⁰⁹ These Carabineros had a different perspective: they were supporting a democratically president who enjoyed the preeminence of law.

¹⁰⁸ López, *El 11 en la Mira de un Hawker Hunter*, 64.

¹⁰⁹ Merino, *Bitácora de un Almirante*, 224.

By June 1973, the great majority of commissioned officers - somewhere between eighty and ninety percent - supported a military intervention in Chilean politics, but as Jorge Magasich shows, a group of conscripts, non-commissioned officers, and even some commissioned officers actively opposed the coup, facts that contradict the notion of a monolithic military uprising against the Marxist president. Magasich denominates those members of the armed forces who refused to participate in a coup 'legalists', because the force of law supported their refusal to obey the orders and dictates of superior officers who wished to overthrow the democratically elected president.¹¹⁰

The complexity of Chile's political situation raises a number of questions that transcend a binary distinction between 'golpistas' and 'legalistas'. In August 1973 the Chilean Supreme Court, Comptroller of the Republic, and Chamber of Deputies (lower house of congress) declared the executive branch in violation of the Constitution. What did this mean for a soldier's professional obligation to obey the president? In 1973, Chile's political had reached an impasse. A legal impeachment required a two-thirds majority in both the Senate and Chamber, but Allende's opposition fell short of that margin by nearly ten percent points. Society remained hopelessly polarized.

However, one strand in military thought is the idea that the armed forces do not require a popular mandate to intervene in politics when they perceive the nation's permanent interests in jeopardy. As a special group of patriots devoted to serving the fatherland, they had every right to intervene if they perceived the nation to be in peril.

¹¹⁰ Magasich, *Los Que Dijeron "NO"*, 9-16.

In the month of August, a majority of officers began a process of isolating and removing officers who they feared would refuse to act against Allende. Carlos Prats was forced to resign on August 22 and replaced by Augusto Pinochet. Shortly thereafter, the navy's council of admirals forced Raúl Montero to resign and selected the conservative José Toribio Merino as replacement. A similar process took place in the air force. To isolate the pro-Allende Carabinero leadership, newly appointed air force General Gustavo Leigh contacted General César Mendoza on the day before the coup and secured his adherence a movement against Allende (he was fourth in line for the position of Carabineros commander in chief). Allende was isolated from loyalists.

THE POPULAR UNITY'S DEMISE

Fernando Villagrán, a student and MAPU militant recalls the attitude of his comrades toward the possibility of a military coup against Allende. Villagrán writes:

We always thought that if a coup materialized against Allende there would be a sector of the armed forces that would defend the constitutional government. And our mission, to the extent of our modest forces, would be to help them prevent the consummation of the coup.¹¹¹

In other words, he expected a division of the armed forces and civil war to break out, which at this point in Chile's political crisis was both conceptually possible, and for some actors, expected. This expectation describes the exact outcome military leaders resolved to prevent.

In the final months of Allende's government, political rhetoric reached a new level of excess. Political actors on the Left and Right discussed the possibility of violent confrontation. Members of the ultra right wing *Patria y Libertad* have revealed that navy

¹¹¹ Villagrán, *Disparen a la Bandada*, 13.

officers provided instructions in July of 1973 to sabotage the government during a major transportation strike by cutting power lines and contributing to a climate of disorder that would discredit the government and create the conditions for a change of government.¹¹²

During this agitated period inexperienced, youthful revolutionaries inspired by the cult of the heroic *guerrillero* proclaimed their willingness to defend the government with arms if the ‘reactionaries’ attempted to overthrow it.¹¹³ Yet, Chile’s armed forces were nothing like Fulgencio Batista’s poorly trained army in Cuba. On the contrary, they were professional soldiers, deeply imbued with a sense of their role as guardians of the nation’s ‘permanent values’. When left wing militants talked about armed resistance, they probably thought such rhetoric would discourage military action, but such naive bluster had the opposite effect by making credible the existence of a dangerous Marxist enemy bent on enslaving the Chilean people under a totalitarian dictatorship. Steve Stern writes,

The energy and bravado by the Left after March 1973 to denounce imminent civil war and to call on the *pueblo* and the Left to organize for the coming clash turned back against the Left, lending a certain cultural credence to government propaganda and spectacular exposés about the dangers of leftist violence.¹¹⁴

Chilean officers knew the UP lacked the training, strategy, and arms to mount a major coordinated offensive, but they feared workers might flood the streets to defend

¹¹² Manuel Fuentes Wendling, *Memorias secretas de Patria y Libertad: y algunas confesiones sobre la guerra fría en Chile* (Santiago: Editorial Grijalbo, 1999), 296-299.

¹¹³ Consult the communist newspaper *El Siglo*, pro-government tabloids *Puro Chile* and *Clarín* as well as the opposition paper *El Mercurio* for the month of August and the days leading up to September 11, 1973. For an insightful critique of the Left, see Jorge G. Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed: the Latin American left after the Cold War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993). Castañeda identifies an obsession with armed struggle among young revolutionaries and dismissal of liberal democracy when it was not useful.

¹¹⁴ Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 36.

Allende and use the *cordones industriales* – worker controlled factories – to paralyze production and sustain resistance to a military coup. Officers had studied twentieth century warfare and they knew insurgencies could prove intractable once they put down roots in the civilian population. Moreover, the armed forces knew that UP militants were preparing for the possibility of armed conflict. Brian Loveman writes,

All the major parties of the Popular Unity coalition made some, generally haphazard, efforts to train armed cadres for the eventual confrontation. Cuban military advisers and other foreign sympathizers provided arms and training to some of these groups. Army, Navy, and Air Force intelligence services, aware of these initiatives, and perhaps overestimating the leftist cadres' military capabilities in 1972-73, took countermeasures, including purges within the armed forces themselves to eliminate leftist sympathizers.¹¹⁵

The Navy acted swiftly when its intelligence service discovered a group of seamen had made contact with socialist party chief Carlos Altamirano as well as militants from the MIR and MAPU to reveal navy plans for a coup and their desire to defend the government.¹¹⁶ Similarly, after the coup, the air force conducted an energetic purge of air force officers accused of conspiring with Popular Unity politicians.¹¹⁷

THE COUP

On September 9, 1973 José Toribio Merino Castro, the navy's new commander in chief, sent a message to Augusto Pinochet Ugarte (army) and Gustavo Leigh Guzmán (air

¹¹⁵Loveman, *Legacy of Hispanic Capitalism*, 254.

¹¹⁶ See 'Carta de los Marineros Torturados a Salvador Allende,' in "Documentos Claves de la Izquierda Chilena, 1964-1973," edited by Arturo T. Fontaine, Cristián Pérez, and Ximena Hinzpeter, *Estudios Públicos* 91 (2001). See also "Infiltración en la Armada," *Ercilla*, August 15, 1973. "La Subversión del Almirante La Torre," *Ercilla*, August 22, 1973. "La Infiltración en la Marina," *Ercilla*, August 29, 1973. "Fuerzas Armadas: La Infiltración Extremista," *Ercilla*, September 5, 1973.

¹¹⁷ Villagrán, *Disparen a la Bandada*, 22-27.

force) that the navy would overthrow Salvador Allende on September 11, 1973.¹¹⁸ Before this moment, the three branches had had virtually no contact, since institutional mechanisms worked to ensure navy, air force, and army officers did not confer with each other outside of formal channels. In fact, inter-service communication was a career ending offense. Yet once resolved, the three services unleashed a highly efficient coup d'état. Among the junta's first edicts was an ultimatum that the presidential palace would be bombarded at 11am if Allende did not surrender, followed by the warning that all resistance to the junta 'will be punished in the most drastic manner on the very site where the resistance occurs.'¹¹⁹ The bombardment of the presidential palace is the most iconic and vivid demonstration of the junta's steely resolve to meet all potential resistance with a frightening show of force.

¹¹⁸ On Sunday September 9, Carlos Altamirano gave a speech from Teatro Caupolicán in which he denounced a navy conspiracy and called for resistance to any military coup. On that day José Merino decided to contact the other services. Merino, *Bitácora de un Almirante*, 222-223.

¹¹⁹ Manuel A. Garretón Merino, *Por la Fuerza sin la Razón: análisis y textos de los bandos de la dictadura militar* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 1998), 58.



Figure 4.1, 'Bombardment of La Moneda Presidential Palace, September 11, 1973',¹²⁰

Military training emphasizes preparation for every battlefield contingency and Chile's junta did not underestimate the possibility that Allende's partisans would mass in the streets to defend his government. When *Ercilla* asked General Sergio Arellano Stark why UP partisans had mustered so little resistance on September 11, 1973, the general replied that the armed forces had completely surprised them with 'speed and decisiveness'.¹²¹ Air force general Nicanor Díaz recounted that one B-26 equipped with sixteen machine guns had dispersed a group of Allende partisans marching towards La Moneda by firing several bursts of fire ahead of the crowd. Díaz explained that such

¹²⁰ Source: National Library of Chile.

¹²¹ *Ercilla*, December 19, 1973, 16.

shows of force demonstrated the will of the armed forces to crush all opposition and this determination saved lives by averting a civil war or prolonged resistance.¹²² This is an important part of the reason why Chile's military leadership opted for a 'golpe duro'.

Here it is useful to mention Army General Bernardino Parada Moreno's *Polemología Básica* published in 1968.¹²³ Marked by its accessibility, originality, and fluent use of examples from military history, Parada sought to deduce immutable, universal laws governing war and geopolitics through 'scientific analysis'. To this day, his book remains a standard text at Chile's war academies.

Two of Parada's most important laws are the 'law of action' and the 'law of concentration'. The former asserts that only offensive action can secure a decisive victory while the latter underscores the importance of attacking one's adversary with concentrated force at the vital center of resistance rather than in equilibrium along the enemy line.¹²⁴ Parada writes, 'one of the greatest errors a military strategist can commit is to employ force 'by drops' when confronting the enemy.'¹²⁵ Without enumerating Parada's principle of 'tenacity' or 'surprise', it clear that the Chilean military efficiently applied these principles to their homeland on September 11, 1973 in a determined offensive backed by a massive show of force in Santiago.

¹²² Spooner, *Soldiers in a Narrow Land*, 44-45.

¹²³ Bernardino Parada Moreno, *Polemología Básica* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1968). Parada was director of Chile's Academy of War from 1961 to 1963 and commander in chief of the Chilean army from 1964 to 1967. A professor at the Academy of War for eight years, he won great esteem for his intellectual sophistication.

¹²⁴ Ibid. 51, 103-112.

¹²⁵ Ibid. 101-102.

Immediately after the coup, most Chileans thought the military would purge the political system of Marxists and restore the *status quo ante*.¹²⁶ Few could have predicted the military would carry out a fundamental reorganization of the republic or remain in power for sixteen years. For the new junta, September 11, 1973 was a ‘movement’, not a typical Latin American military intervention because the armed forces had acted with a moral force derived from history, law, and the will of the general population to remove a destructive government already declared illegal by the legislature and judiciary.

At the end of 1973, the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* presented all the reasons, soon to become orthodox, for the military intervention: Chile was subject to a process of systematic destruction by the forces of Marxist-Leninist ideology, which had been responsible for bringing an ‘exemplary democracy’ to the brink of civil war. What had taken place was no accident. Popular Unity chiefs had deliberately refused to control extreme elements from the coalition that were covertly building a parallel army with arms and revolutionaries from abroad. The UP’s ultimate objective was to seize the state and replace the judiciary and legislature with popular tribunals that would mete out revolutionary justice to all who opposed the new order. Facing this reality, ‘the Armed Forces and Carabineros of Chile faced the urgent need to fulfill their mission to safeguard the survival of our institutional structures, nationality and historical reality.’¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Patricio Aylwin, chairman of the Christian Democratic Party, expected a transition to democracy by 1976; the year Allende would have completed his constitutional term. *Ercilla*, October 24, 1973, 9. Similarly, the traditional landholding elite and rent-seeking members of the national bourgeoisie expected the military to restore old patterns of agrarian life and continue to provide tariff protection to manufacturing interests. In practice, they enacted reforms that did the exact opposite. Javier Martinez and Alvaro Díaz, *Chile: The Great Transformation* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1996).

Did officers believe Allende's coalition was actually preparing for a civil war? The question is an important one because the military orchestrated a deliberate psychological campaign to paint the Left as bloodthirsty and treasonous after the coup. In early junta sessions, Admiral Merino expressed his fear that Cuban ships were delivering arms to dissidents inside the country or using coastal islands as way stations for the transfer of weapons to the continent.¹²⁸ On October 8, 1973, the junta's first order of business was to 'analyze, in detail, the worrying fact that a scarce number of large arms have been found in spite of fact that [the Left] is certain to have at least five or ten thousand more arms interred or still circulating.'¹²⁹

REPRESSION AND REJUVENATION

In a memo to Henry Kissinger on November 16, 1973, assistant secretary of state Jack B. Kubisch explained that international opinion was becoming a more significant pressure on the junta to ease repression, but he stressed that Chile's military chiefs would decide for themselves what levels of repression the security situation required because,

The Chilean military, persuaded to some degree by years of Communist Party propaganda, expected to be confronted by heavy resistance when they overthrew Allende. Fear of civil war was an important factor in their decision to employ a heavy hand from the outset. Also present is a puritanical, crusading spirit – a determination to cleanse and rejuvenate.¹³⁰

Kubisch's assessment is accurate. The officers who put the coup into motion had prepared for the possibility of significant resistance and concluded that the best strategy

¹²⁷ "Editorial: ecos de un proceder," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 129 (1973).

¹²⁸ AHJG, No. 5, 9-19-73. AHJG, No. 7, 9-21-73.

¹²⁹ AHJG, No. 17, 10-8-73.

¹³⁰ CDP, US State Department, Memo from Jack B. Kubisch to Secretary Kissinger, 11-16-73.

was to crush their opposition before it could establish a firm base of support among the civilian population. Kubisch's words 'cleanse' and 'rejuvenate' are particularly appropriate to describe the spirit of military action. As we saw in chapter II, all three branches of the armed forces shared an organic conception of the state. Speaking to the nation shortly after the coup, Augusto Pinochet said the armed forces would reestablish a democracy 'purified of vices and bad habits that wound up destroying our institutions.'¹³¹ The body politic had to be purged of demagoguery, divisiveness, and corruption. From one perspective, they had a patriotic duty to guard over the state's health and extirpate or repress unhealthful social components.

The UP, alleged the military, had wished to infiltrate the armed forces, seize the state, and ally with the Soviet bloc. Such seditious intentions threatened the existence of the state and operationalized the military's intrinsic role as guardian of the nation's permanent objective interests.

EXTERNAL CAUSES OF THE COUP

Economic disorder and political polarization are factors that precipitated Allende's overthrow. Yet, scholars do not agree on the relative importance of external and internal factors, which caused these two realities. For example, Lois Hecht Oppenheim and Peter Kornbluh emphasize the Nixon administration's efforts to undermine Allende and how those forces - largely out of his control - led to his demise.¹³² Joaquín Fernandois and Frederick Nunn prioritize internal factors as the principal causes

¹³¹ Pinochet, *El Día Decisivo 11 de Setiembre de 1973*, 167.

¹³² Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 103-105. Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File*, 89.

of the institutional breakdown.¹³³ In my view, powerful external forces interacted with Chile's domestic actors, but they never predominated. The Nixon administration wanted a military coup in 1970, but the armed forces refused to provide one. Given this ongoing debate, it is necessary to briefly evaluate some of external factors at play from 1970 to 1973.

Russian historians Olga Ulianova and Eugenia Fediakova reveal that the Soviet Union provided 400,000 dollars to the Chilean Communist Party in 1970 and by 1973 that figure had increased to 650,000, totaling about two million dollars for the entire period. Apart from financial assistance, Chilean communist party cadres flew to Moscow for training, education, and recreation. These intangibles, argue Ulianova and Fediakova, generated deep connections to a global movement and help to explain why Chilean communists were willing to endure such tremendous hardships and periodic persecutions.¹³⁴ This relationship might even be said to parallel that of some Chilean soldiers who traveled to the United States during the fifties and sixties where they acquired a sense of belonging to a global community defending western civilization from expansive communism.

Former vice director of the KGB's Latin America Department Nikolai Leonov indicates that the Soviet leadership viewed Salvador Allende's election in 1970 as a major event with profound significance because it held the possibility to weaken US

¹³³ Joaquín Fernando Huerta, "¿Peón o Actor? Chile en la Guerra Fría (1962-1973)," *Estudios Públicos* 72 (1998). Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 295-308.

¹³⁴ Olga Ulianova and Eugenia Fediakova, "Algunos Aspectos de la Ayuda Financiera del Partido Comunista de la URSS al Comunismo Chileno Durante la Guerra Fría," *Estudios Públicos* 72 (1998).

interests in the western hemisphere. By 1972 however, the Politburo decided to deny a major subsidy to the Popular Unity because it felt Allende was unwilling to consolidate his control over the nation's security forces or firmly repress his opposition.¹³⁵ From the Soviet point of view, supporting a lost cause made no sense in light of the harm it would do to relations with the United States.¹³⁶

Vasili Mitrokhin a dissident Soviet archivist claims that Salvador Allende received over 80,000 dollars cash from the KGB between 1970 and 1973 in exchange for information he supplied as a confidential informant.¹³⁷ Presently it is impossible to confirm Mitrokhin's claims, but there is some basis to believe they are true due to the large amounts of cash and imported luxury goods found in Allende's Santiago home after

¹³⁵ Nikolai Leonov, "Conferencia La Inteligencia Soviética en América Latina Durante La Guerra Fría," *Estudios Públicos* 73 (1999). Leonov indicates that the Soviet Union viewed Latin America as a zone of American influence but also a place where Moscow could weaken its main adversary by infiltrating American intelligence agents, acquiring US technology, and cultivating military or financial ties with anti-American nationalists.

¹³⁶ Leonov's account of the Allende years shares a tendency with Peter Kornbluh and Christopher Andrew's books to marginalize the agency of local actors. I believe this is so because their histories rely on the secret documents of larger more powerful states, which filter reality through the perspective of foreign powers with broader strategic interests. Consequently, one gets the impression of a battle between superpowers to manipulate local actors who have no agency whatsoever. In Christopher Andrew's book, Allende comes off, to some extent, as a pawn in larger game of Soviet machinations to secure a foothold in South America. According to Vasili Mitrokhin's notes about KGB meetings with Allende, the Soviets lacked a real appreciation of the domestic constraints he faced as president. In Kornbluh's book, Allende's and Pinochet's falls from power are attributed to US pressure.

¹³⁷ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going our Way: the KGB and the battle for the Third World* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 1-114. Vasili Mitrokhin, a dissident KGB agent and archivist, brought a veritable treasure trove of notes about KGB activities to West when he defected to Great Britain in 1992. His information led to the unmasking of Soviet agents across the West, which makes his story difficult to ignore. At the same time, Mitrokhin only had notes of secret documents, not copies of the originals to confirm his claims. On the complications of the Mitrokhin Archive see J. Arch Getty, review of Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield* in *American Historical Review* 106:2, April 2001.

the coup. Many Cubans were in Chile by 1973 but we will not know the full extent of covert Cuban and Soviet involvement until researchers have access to those archives.

American covert involvement in Chile's internal affairs was continuous and extensive from 1964 to 1973. The CIA spent three million dollars to support Eduardo Frei's presidential campaign in 1964 and to smear Allende. When Allende was in power from 1970 to 1973, the United States spent roughly eight million dollars to bankroll his opposition and leverage international financial institutions to adversely influence Chile's credit rating.¹³⁸ For Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, the prospect of Marxist government in Chile augured the expansion of Soviet influence in the western hemisphere and constituted a major threat to US interests. Perhaps even more threatening was Chile's potential to be a replicable model of democratic socialism for Latin America and Western Europe.

Yet, it is a mistake to see the United States as some omnipotent force calling all the shots and pulling all the strings. Allende's domestic opposition ranged from housewives to center-Left Christian Democrats to radical right wing nationalists. These groups wanted the UP gone but they had different ideas about what should follow. Similarly, Chilean communism was not a mere extension of Soviet aims and interests. The Chilean CP had its own homegrown traditions and history. Chilean actors were not mere stooges of any external force. They had their own goals and motivations.

¹³⁸ *Covert action in Chile, 1963-1973: staff report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1975). For a look at CIA efforts to influence female voters about the danger of a Marxist government, see Margaret Power, *Right Wing Women in Chile, 1964-1973* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 2002).

In fact, one might say that Chile illustrates the *limits* of American power rather than its extent. The CIA failed to prevent Allende from reaching power. It never had assets among Chile's high command and therefore lacked a clear picture of what was happening inside the services at their highest levels. For the duration of the UP government, the agency had to wait and see what would happen. Its role was limited to funding Allende's opposition. Similarly, the US government proved relatively unable to influence the Pinochet regime after 1975 despite a forceful application of diplomatic, military, and financial pressure.

The Popular Unity's economic mismanagement caused hyperinflation, fiscal deficits, and material scarcity that increased civil conflict, just as Allende's refusal to discipline the radical wings of his coalition handily contributed to the country's political polarization and convinced many in the military he was leading the country to civil war. The United States sent messages to the armed forces that they could count on American diplomatic and financial support if they overthrew him, but the Chilean military was no stooge of the Pentagon. Shortly before Chile's 1970 presidential election, the State Department's Latin America division demonstrated a clear understanding of Chile's internal dynamics, writing that the:

Chilean military is the only instrument in Chile capable of overthrowing Allende, but we hold out little promise that the military would move to this end on its own initiative, short of acts by Allende that were flagrantly subversive to Chilean institutions or directly menacing to the military itself.¹³⁹

By 1973, the military had, in fact, concluded that Allende threatened the unity of their

¹³⁹ CDP, Dept. of State, 'Extreme Option – Overthrow of Allende', Assistant Secretary Meyer to Under Secretary Johnson, 8-17-1970.

institutions and had flagrantly subverted Chilean law.

CONCLUSIONS

Had Salvador Allende won the 1958 election – which he almost did – his coalition, the *Frente de Acción Popular* (FRAP) would have come to power in a world context much more rigidly defined by Cold War structures.¹⁴⁰ Twelve years later, *la vía chilena hacia el socialismo* was conceptually possible in a way it was not twelve years earlier. Chilean society had moved decidedly leftward since 1960. The nationalization of US copper companies was welcomed by the vast majority of Chileans who had few, if any problems, with the state acquiring control over strategic sectors of the economy.

When Allende took power on November 3, 1970, members of the armed forces feared that a Marxist government would amplify class contradictions and lead to societal conflict but they also saw the possibility that his government would increase the state's economic autarky and provide needed resources for institutional modernization. Perhaps Allende could accomplish what other presidents had failed to do: accelerate social and economic development.

Unfolding circumstances from 1972 to 1973 led to an institutional consensus that the UP was a direct threat to Chile's national security and the military needed to assume control of the state. At the start of Allende's presidency, Chile's officers had serious concerns about the arrival of a Marxist government to La Moneda, but they were also proud of their nation's democracy and unwilling to enter politics. The violence of the

¹⁴⁰ The political platform of the FRAP was decidedly less radical than the UP's platform in 1970, which reflected the Cuban Revolution's reconfiguration of leftist politics and hemispheric dynamics.

1973 coup was the result of a military that came to see the Popular Unity and its leaders as dangerous internal enemies who had to be defeated with the full extent of modern military science.

Part Two

CHAPTER V

Consensus, Ambiguity, Conflict: early regime ideology, 1973-1976

Up to now Chilean business has been a battlefield. Today the concept should be completely different: businesses should be the harmonious grouping of capital and labor unified by a common sense of humanity.¹

Gustavo Leigh Guzmán

In 1974, Chile's ambassador to the UN, Raúl Bazán, explained to *Ercilla* that the junta's negative international image was a consequence of exiled Chileans – those responsible for the nation's institutional breakdown - who cultivated the erroneous idea that Salvador Allende had enjoyed an electoral majority before a cabal of ambitious generals subverted Chilean democracy and usurped power for themselves. Meanwhile, communist states and their allies in the West worked tirelessly to ensure world opinion remained hostile to the junta by propagating lies about the regime and undermining its efforts to rebuild the country. The international community, insisted Bazán, lacked an honest appreciation of Chile's internal conditions and the basic fact that Allende had deliberately brought the nation to the brink of civil war, obliging the military to intervene.² Bazán's statement sums up a widespread view of world opinion.

This chapter examines the outlook of officers during the first three years of the dictatorship. During this time no conceptual project united the armed forces. In 1973, officers had a general idea of the things they opposed - Marxism, demagoguery, foreign

¹ "Hacia el 'Tiempo Social,'" *Ercilla*, November 27, 1974.

² "Tres Etapas para un Proceso," *Ercilla*, May 15, 1974.

ideologies - but what did they intend to create? They spoke about changing the mentality of their countrymen and applying a military ethos of discipline, efficiency, and realism to society, but what did that mean in practice? Officers agreed on the importance of defeating ‘subversion’, but there was no consensus with respect to the state’s repressive apparatus or how long the armed forces should stay in power. Was their mission to transform state structures or simply defeat subversion and return power to civilian leaders?

The regime’s ‘Declaration of Principles’ released in March of 1974 was ambiguous in many respects. It spoke of long-term objectives rather than timelines and expressed a preference for a corporatist political organization bound by spiritual principles over material ones. It also explicitly eschewed rigid ideology in favor of ‘nationalist solutions’ and ‘historic traditions’. But how would nationalism, as a principle, translate into policy? Given the lack of a specific political itinerary from 1973 to 1976 this period constitutes a valuable window into the ideas of officers before Pinochet outlined a clear institutional project in 1977.³

The introduction of a neoliberal ideology into military discourse came about as a result of technocrats selected to advise the junta.⁴ These American trained economists wanted to radically transform Chilean society, not just lower inflation or increase GDP.

³ On July 9, 1977 Pinochet spoke of a phased transition to ‘protected democracy’.

⁴ Neoliberal ideology holds that human potential and freedom is best achieved inside of an institutional structure where the state enforces strong property rights, free trade, and competitive markets and where the state is removed from economic decision-making as much as possible. The state’s role is to guarantee the integrity of money and provide for external defense, internal order and maintain legal structures to secure the proper functioning of the market system. Neoliberal ideology assumes the common good will be achieved if as much human activity as possible is brought into the domain of the market.

They successfully convinced the junta to implement a shock plan, which, on one level made sense to a profession trained to make decisions with implied hardship in order to achieve strategic goals. Capitalist restructuring resonated with values like rationality, efficiency, and realism. On the other hand, the shock doctrine had a very high social cost. These concerns disturbed the military's idea that changes in society ought to proceed gradually and worried officers who believed Marxism would resurface if Chilean society lacked social justice.

A JUST REBELLION

Speaking to a group of jurists and students in April 1974 Gustavo Leigh said that 'what happened September 11 constituted the legitimate exercise of the right of rebellion against an illegitimate, immoral, and failed government that had deliberately and seriously separated itself from the common good and plunged the country into a state of hunger and fratricidal conflict.'⁵ As a result, Leigh said, the junta enjoyed total legitimacy of origin because a majority of the Chilean population had called on the armed forces to exercise its right of rebellion.

With respect to the prevailing legal order, Leigh defined the country as existing in a 'state of internal war' where the military government would apply a military code of justice and utilize a different legal structure to defeat internal subversives. However, he insisted that courts would retain their independence vis à vis the government (a very untrue statement) and then acknowledged isolated instances of government security forces committing extralegal abuses. Nonetheless, Leigh warned his audience that when

⁵ Gustavo Leigh Guzmán, *La Junta de Gobierno Frente a la Juridicidad y los Derechos Humanos* (Santiago: Editora Nacional Gabriela Mistral, 1974), 9.

Marxists seized power, their first order of business was to install revolutionary tribunals and execute every one of their opponents. In a war with such dangerous adversaries, it was necessary to grant the government significant leeway.⁶

The legal basis for overthrowing Salvador Allende had multiple pillars, beginning with the charge that Allende had systematically violated the 'Statute of Constitutional Guarantees' upon which his presidential ratification rested. In 1972 the nation's general council of lawyers (Chilean equivalent to the American Bar Association) formally accused the government of undermining rule of law with arbitrary and illegal actions. A year later the Supreme Court and Comptroller of the Republic formally declared the UP in violation of the constitution and in August 1973 the Chamber of Deputies (Chile's equivalent to the American House of Representatives) passed a resolution declaring the UP illegal and called for military action to remove the president.⁷ Gustavo Leigh said:

It is not a matter of dispute that the [Popular Unity] government was legitimate in its origin because it stemmed from the application of mechanisms provided by the Constitution for the election of the President of the Republic. But it is an indisputable fact that [the government] lost its legitimacy over time by separating itself gravely and repeatedly from the Constitution.⁸

The junta claimed the right to remove Allende on behalf of the truckers, doctors, lawyers, nurses, and small and large business owners who had paralyzed the country with anti-government strikes between 1972 and 1973. An army editorial described these

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ *Ercilla*, October 14, 1970, 8-12. Critics point to Allende's interview with Régis Debray when he said the decision to sign the Statute of Constitutional Guarantees was a 'tactical necessity'. This statement is used to argue that Allende never intended, from the outset, to keep his word. Régis Debray, *Conversations with Allende: socialism in Chile* (London: N.L.B., 1971), 119.

⁸ Gustavo Leigh Guzmán, "Celebración 21 de Marzo de 1974," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 130 (1974).

various social components coalescing together in opposition to Marxism, at which point the armed forces ‘responded to the citizenry’s dramatic call and proceeded to say “Enough!”’⁹ Put another way, the ‘mass of citizens demanded our intervention’ at which point the armed forces ‘came together in a monolithic union to depose the disastrous government.’¹⁰ Navy editors described the Chilean people as solidly united in the task of rebuilding the nation from the ashes of material and spiritual ruin.¹¹

Until the end of the dictatorship, military officers called September 11, 1973 a ‘movement’ rather than a *coup d’état* because they associated military coups with Caribbean style barracks uprisings. Their ‘movement’ had expressed the population’s right to overthrow an illegal government. The basic problem with this organic vision of the Chilean people coalescing around the armed forces to exercise their ‘right of rebellion’ was that approximately forty to forty five percent of the population steadfastly *supported* Allende’s government, including a small but significant group of police and military officers. How did this sizeable minority fit into the narrative? A majority of Chileans did indeed favor Allende’s overthrow, but there was no popular mandate for sixteen years of dictatorship.

Viewing itself as repository of patriotic values and guardian of the nation’s permanent interests, junta members claimed the right to reorganize society without consulting the population. This fact ultimately led important political figures like

⁹ “Reflexiones en Torno a un Proceso Histórico,” *Armas y Servicios*, No. 2 (1975).

¹⁰ Op. Cit. “Celebración 21 de Marzo de 1974”.

¹¹ “Editorial: El Aporte Solidario Chileno a la Reconstrucción del País,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 698 (1974).

Eduardo Frei and Patricio Aylwin to terminate their initial support for the military government, especially when it became clear that Pinochet planned to remain in power well into the eighties. Over time, the military's discourse of an organic uprising against Allende became less prevalent. The blame for the institutional crisis was more generally assigned to 'irresponsible politicians' who had failed to prevent Allende from reaching power. After all, the Popular Unity government came to power with thirty six percent of the vote in 1970. Officers blamed right, center, and center-left parties for failing to form a single coalition that could defeat the institutional threat of Marxism. This political memory strongly informed military thought about the transition to civilian rule and the renewal of political activity in the eighties.

The early years military rule are notable for a special emphasis on mothers and young people.¹² In this discursive imaginary, youths and mothers represented the promise of a depoliticized future untainted by corrupt ideologies, false promises and demagoguery. Housewives possessed a special type of social legitimacy as symbols of the Chilean family. The 'March of the Empty Pots', a food shortages protest in 1971, was cited as proof that they had carried out the will of Chile's mothers who rejected socialist economics based on their 'objective' demand that government ensure access to

¹² Gustavo Leigh Guzmán, *La junta de gobierno se dirige a la juventud: discurso pronunciado por el general Gustavo Leigh ante dirigentes juveniles en el edificio Diego Portales el 20 de diciembre de 1973* (Santiago: Editora Gabriela Mistral, 1974). Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, *Chile Lights the Freedom Torch* (Santiago: Editora Gabriela Mistral, 1976), 13. See also part three of the *Declaración de Principios del Gobierno de Chile*, subsection nine titled 'La familia, la mujer y la juventud: pilares de la reconstrucción nacional'.

basic foodstuffs. In speeches Augusto Pinochet praised housewives for their resistance to the Popular Unity and singular concern for their families rather revolutionary politics.¹³

A WARTIME FOOTING

In the first issue of *Armas y Servicios*, an army publication designed to foster *esprit de corps* among NCOs and subaltern officers, Saturnino Azua Barraza described September 11, 1973 as a transcendent moment when ‘we saw ourselves obliged to evict the enemy from power, pushed more than anything else by the will of the people who called for armed intervention to change course, and then immediately take control of the national government.’¹⁴ Azua wrote that Chile’s soldiers were presently engaged in the task of destroying a dangerous enemy that threatened the fatherland, a task that connected them to all future and past generations who had given their lives in defense of the nation.¹⁵ Casting the ‘war against subversion’ as a crusade of historic importance, this language captures the disturbing context that turned compatriots into enemies and justified state terror.

Days after decree law No. 5 described the country in a ‘state of war’ Interior Minister General Oscar Bonilla made the shocking announcement that recently surfaced documents proved UP militants were planning to assassinate military commanders and

¹³ For analysis of female resistance to Allende see Margaret Power, *Right Wing Women in Chile, 1964-1973* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

¹⁴ SOF. Saturnino Azua Barraza, “Enemigos que Hoy Enfrentan las FF.AA.,” *Armas y Servicios*, No. 1 (1974). Less technical and more ideological than the *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, *Armas y Servicios* was intended for non-commissioned and subaltern officers (lieutenants and captains) who would be the ones to carry out anti-subversive missions.

¹⁵ Anderson, *Imagined communities*.

impose a dictatorship of the proletariat.¹⁶ The various stockpiles of machine guns, gas masks, mortars, grenades, and bazookas discovered at Salvador Allende's house in Santiago and elsewhere across the country appeared to support the supposed left wing conspiracy to seize power *Plan Zeta* – Plan Z. These discoveries – exaggerated for effect – lent credibility to the idea of a bloodthirsty left bent on murdering its opponents. Were Allende's condemnations of extralegal militias a big hoax to conceal a sinister plot? Was he preparing for civil war while denouncing it in public?

Military culture recognizes the vital importance of public relations during wartime and the importance of mobilizing public support for national objectives even if public support might require emotional manipulation.¹⁷ To substantiate the claim of a coordinated conspiracy of UP militants, the government prepared a report called the *White Book* that assembled a collection of secret documents supposedly acquired by military intelligence shortly after the coup.¹⁸ The report's documents alleged that the UP was planning to murder military chiefs and thousands of its political opponents across the length of the country - doctors, lawyers, journalists, and businessmen - in a bloody Bolshevik coup. Given Chile's unique geography, such a plan would have been a major logistical undertaking and testament to the guile and organization of the left.

This claim was a fabrication, but it combined elements of reality to make the allegation appear credible. For example, one document in the *White Book* titled 'Report

¹⁶ Consult *El Mercurio* from the middle of September 1973 to the end of November 1973.

¹⁷ Recall Chapter II

¹⁸ Secretaría General de Gobierno, *Libro blanco del cambio de gobierno en Chile, 11 de septiembre de 1973* (Santiago: Editorial Lord Cochrane, 1973).

form the Military Committee of the Socialist Party' outlined the need to contact politically sympathetic officers in the armed forces who could provide early warnings of an impending coup so that the coalition could alert workers and prepare an armed response.¹⁹ Such a document, which may have been authentic, lent an aura of credibility to the *White Book's* fictitious claim that the UP was conspiring to assassinate military chiefs on September 19. Furthermore, the armed forces found photographs and psychological profiles of top commanders with information about their political leanings during raids of communist and socialist party headquarters. Where did this information come from? What was it for?²⁰

In the first month after the coup, the government was quick to publicize images of a sizeable weapons cache found at Salvador Allende's home in Santiago and ask why the president had these weapons? They certainly contradicted everything the public knew of Allende the professional politician and metropolitan sophisticate. Was he actually a charlatan who had been stockpiling weapons for armed revolution?

¹⁹ Ibid. 'Report form the Military Committee of the Socialist Party', Addendum No. 6, 110-115.

²⁰ Arancibia and Palart, *Conversando con el General Canessa*, 142. Vasili Mitrokhin claims the KGB made intelligence available to the Communist Party. Andrew, *The World Was Going Our Way*, 82-85.



Figure 5.1, Allende aiming an AK-47 at his Tomás Moro home in Santiago.²¹

The military also organized public viewings of arms stockpiles seized from left wing militants. Whether or not all of these arms belonged to the left is immaterial. The point of the public relations campaign was to show that an armed minority had intended to enslave a vulnerable majority. Thus, the Chilean military had not merely overthrown an irresponsible government; it had overthrown internal enemies who wished to seize the

²¹ Image taken from an English language propaganda brochure was produced for consumption outside Chile, declaring its intent to 'illustrate the reality Chileans lived through during the three years of Allende's Marxist Government...in view of the distorted image of our country which has been disseminated by the world press.' Marcelo Maturana, *Three Years of Destruction* (Santiago: Asociación Impresores de Chile, 1973).

state and ally with the Soviet bloc. In such a conflict, it was kill or be killed. Again, such claims derived credibility from Chile's political context in the months leading up to the coup. Some UP militants *had* discussed civil war as a historically inevitable outcome and from July to August of 1973 the left and right had clashed daily on the streets. And what about the foreigners who had come to support Chile's socialist revolution? Had they come to form a clandestine army?



Figure 5.2, Seized arms on public display following the coup. The caption for this image reads: 'Cannons, arms, munitions and rockets sent to kill Chileans who did not agree with international communism'.²²

Plan Zeta was designed to strengthen public support for a 'war against internal subversion' that required censorship, repression, and a powerful intelligence apparatus. Military leaders considered the country in a state of war and they knew the active or tacit

²² Image taken from *Chile Ayer y Hoy* (Santiago: Editora Nacional Gabriela Mistral, 1975).

support of the civilian population was necessary for them to accomplish their objectives. Thus, even if *Plan Zeta* was a falsehood, it was a necessary falsehood to win a larger, strategic battle for hearts and minds. Of course, this does not mean Chile's high command thought the UP was benign. Many believed the military had saved the nation from a bloody civil war and Marxist dictatorship.

Propaganda from this era provides a clear sense of what Chile's soldiers found so disturbing about the years from 1970 to 1973. They detested the popular effervescence, the street marches, slogans, and ideological dogmatism. It seemed that Chilean society had experienced a breakdown of social discipline and social obligation. Workers and students marched and chanted instead of working and studying. The visibility of socialist symbols, foreign revolutionaries, and flags from Cuba and the Soviet Union gravely offended nationalist sentiments just as officers resented the US imperial actions that had resulted in the death of Rene Schneider. Officers hoped to construct a society that would be de-politicized and disciplined. Citizens would only fly Chilean flags. Students and workers would study and work. There would be abundance in the nation's stores, and above all tranquility on the streets.

On June 14, 1974 the junta issued decree law No. 521 creating the *Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia* (DINA), a secret police endowed with powers to gather information, detain persons, and carry out operations related to policy formulation and national security. An outgrowth of the Army Academy of War's 'DINA Commission', established in November 1973, the DINA was placed under the control of the junta but in

practice it answered to Augusto Pinochet and was free from any judicial or legislative oversight.

An ideology of internal war underpinned the DINA. Its leaders considered the nation at war with subversives loyal to foreign states and foreign ideologies, which gave the Chilean state a legitimate right to destroy those enemies. This was an irregular war, which had a different logic than the conventional wars governed by the Geneva Convention. As we have seen in previous chapters, the intellectual scaffolding for such an organization had diverse foundations rather than a single point of ideological origin.

The DINA was not uncontroversial in the armed forces. Some officers viewed the secret police as unnecessary, even counterproductive. Others rightfully saw it as an instrument of Pinochet's political power. Regardless, the DINA became a fixture in Chile's political life; undercover agents monitored not just civil society, but also political groups and the military itself. No one was immune.

THE HISTORICAL FRAME

When citizens donated cars, jewelry and other valuable objects to help with the nation's desperate financial situation, editors of the *Revista de la Marina* compared this outpouring of public support to the supposed patriotic euphoria that followed Arturo Prat's heroic gesture on May 21, 1879.²³ The early years of military rule were filled with these types of historical comparisons.

²³ "Editorial: El Aporte Solidario Chileno a la Reconstrucción del País," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 698 (1974).

Frederick Nunn writes that ‘Chilean history is so rich in content that any successful political movement must be historically oriented in some way’.²⁴ Indeed, the junta claimed to be restoring the politics of Diego Portales who, in conservative historiography, inherited a divided state in 1830 and went on to establish a civic tradition that laid the basis for all of Chile’s nineteenth century achievements. In the eyes of military officers, he embodied the nation’s cultural and historical essence: pragmatic, non-ideological and nationalist.

In the early republican era, Portales felt the country was unprepared for democracy because its citizens lacked ‘civic virtue’ and had ‘bad habits’. He lambasted liberals for deluded idealism and insisted on the need for a strong authoritarian state. His political code: ‘a strong centralizing government whose men are true models of virtue and patriotism, and who can thus set the citizens on a path to order and virtue.’²⁵

Implicit to this entire discussion was the idea that Salvador Allende had violated a civic tradition established by Diego Portales. First, Allende lacked realism and responsibility after his economic policies began to fail. Second, Allende had enjoyed an extravagant lifestyle during periods of nationwide scarcity. Thus, his personal lifestyle

²⁴ Nunn, *The Military in Chilean History*, 153. On the way governing elites create artificial connections between past and present to legitimate their rule see Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, editors, *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge Press, 1983). For an alternative perspective consult Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (New York: Routledge, 1998). Smith accepts that nationalists use the past to construct symbols and myths for their own political ends but he argues that nationalisms, which build on actual religious, linguistic, or historical forces can effectively give people a sense of connectedness to a distant past and more successfully capture the allegiance of the desired audience.

²⁵ Wikisource, “Carta de Diego Portales a José M. Cea,” March, 1822.

was an affront to national tradition and supreme hypocrisy for a man claiming to represent the working class. The nation's leaders ought to model austerity and sobriety.²⁶

Another component of this outlook was the idea that Chile's citizens were periodically seduced by foreign ideas and practices. For example, at the end of the nineteenth century, national leaders modified Chile's political system to resemble a European parliament, but the subsequent period from 1891 to 1925, dubbed the 'parliamentary republic', is known for political disorder, petty squabbling, and unresponsive government. Military authors traced this outcome to cosmopolitan elites who foolishly abandoned the Portalian paradigm in favor of 'foreign doctrines'.²⁷

In speeches, Pinochet frequently attributed Chile's political polarization to an unhealthy attraction to 'foreign ideologies' rather than national traditions, which had resulted in 'bad habits' and eroded republican virtue. It is easy to see what Pinochet would have like in Portales, the non-ideological conservative who professed patriotism as his political creed and considered the ideas of European liberals inappropriate for early nineteenth century Latin America.

Pinochet also viewed Chilean history as a series of cycles. Periodically, leaders like Diego Portales, José Manuel Balmaceda, and Carlos Ibáñez entered power with the intention of refiguring societal structures that would establish a solid basis for future stability. From this historical lens, the junta's objective was no different. They had a

²⁶ "Los Escándalos del Allendismo," *Ercilla*, September 26, 1973. When military authorities raided Allende's home they found large quantities of expensive liquor, imported clothes, and a personal stash of money his presidential salary could not justify.

²⁷ Captain Alejandro Valdes V. and Lieutenant Luis San Martin M., "El Nacionalismo: sus Luchas y Conquistas Positivas para la Patria," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 5 (1976).

historical mandate to modernize the Chilean state and establish a firm foundation for future economic health and political stability.²⁸

Another premise deeply rooted in military intellectual culture was the idea that all states experience vital cycles of the growth and regeneration, periodic decay and subsequent renewal. From the view of a vital cycle of growth and decay, the military's intervention in civilian politics from 1924 to 1925 ended the 'parliamentary republic', restored executive authority, and set the country on a new trajectory of growth and renewal. Yet, forty years later, the 1925 Constitution had become an antiquated political arrangement sapped of *fuerzas vivas*. Its excessive liberalism had allowed foreign ideologies - liberal democracy and eastern communism – to progressively infiltrate society.

In this long established cycle of renewal and regeneration 'September 11 represents not only the liberation of an oppressed people, which is in and of itself great and transcendent, but also the revitalization of a spirit, the reaffirmation of a collective, unified will of being in history.'²⁹ From this point of view, 1973 represented the conclusion of one vital cycle and the beginning of the next.

Furthermore, during periods of disorder, it was Chile's pattern for intuitive leaders, supported by creative minorities, to establish new foundations for stability, as was the case in 1833 and 1925. Thus Chilean history provided a clear set of lessons about these alternating cycles of decay and renewal. *Armas y Servicios* wrote:

²⁸ "Imperativo Histórico del 11 de Septiembre," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 3 (1975).

²⁹ Ibid.

In 1830, when Chile had fallen into such a state of anarchy and economic chaos (similar to that experienced prior to September 11, 1973) he [Portales] decided to intervene, becoming the leader of the popular movement that fought against political factions who were ruining the nation and that had introduced deceit and immorality in all areas.³⁰

The key point here is not whether any of these historical interpretations have merit but that Chile's exceptionally 'useable past' provided content and meaning for a government composed of men who revered a common set of historical symbols and personalities.

THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

On March 11, 1974, exactly six months after the coup, the junta outlined its shared social, political, and economic orientation in the *Declaración de Principios del Gobierno de Chile*. This statement is significant because it represents a heterogeneous confluence of ideas at the start of military rule, before the implementation of radical free market reforms, the writing of the 1980 Constitution, or the consolidation of Pinochet's personal power. The Declaration of Principles could be interpreted in different ways, and as we will see, multiple components of this statement conflicted with the institutional project that developed. In this, and subsequent chapters, I will examine the tensions between the regime's early ideological statement and the policies that were actually implemented.

The starting point for the Declaration of Principles was a rejection of rigid ideology. It declared the junta's political orientation to be pragmatic, nationalist, non-ideological, and non-utopian, explicitly rejecting the notion that there was one universally valid path to development or that any foreign ideology had the answer to national

³⁰ "Validez Actual del Pensamiento Portaliano," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 3 (1975).

problems.³¹ The junta promised pragmatic authoritarianism consonant with the nation's historical traditions and revered nineteenth century leaders.³² As the purest repository of national values and tradition, the armed forces embodied this authentic nationalism.

Armas y Servicios explained that this brand of nationalism was:

an essentially spiritual and pragmatic position that seeks the practical resolution of national problems by applying solutions that are appropriate for each individual nation...it is not exportable and cannot be considered an international philosophy.³³

According to the Declaration of Principles, the new government would be inspired by the nation's civic tradition of impersonal leadership and selfless public service - 'authentic' nationalism. *Armas y Servicios* described the previous forty years of liberal democracy as a poor imitation of European political forms and promised the new government would be appropriate for national circumstances, consistent with Chilean history. The Declaration also affirmed the state's right to protect itself from anti-national groups and ideas. The new government would not be neutral to Marxism or any other political ideas it deemed intent on destroying Chile's cultural and historical foundation.³⁴

As the purest repository of national values, the armed forces had the right to exclude any ideas as particular, anti-Chilean, anti-national, and undermining 'authentic'

³¹ This statement constitutes a rejection not just of the Cuban, Russian or Chinese Revolutions with their pretensions to universal applicability, but also a rejection of modernization theory that posited the universality of the North Atlantic experience.

³² *Declaración de los Principios del Gobierno de Chile*.

³³ "ABC del Nacionalismo," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 3 (1975).

³⁴ *La Declaración de Principios de la Junta de Gobierno*, I. Chile en el contexto mundial: base para una definición.

nationalism.³⁵ When *Ercilla* asked what type of political dissent would be permitted under the military government, Colonel Pedro Ewing explained that civilians did not have the right to deceive people with false political ideas.³⁶

To what extent did civilians contribute to the Declaration of Principles? We know, for instance, that jurist Jaime Guzmán Errázuriz urged the junta *not* to set a timetable for military rule because he believed it would limit their ability to effectively reorder society.³⁷ Taking his advice, the junta established the objective of restructuring state and society. Thus, the military government would not represent a short historical ‘parenthesis’ between the next civilian government, but instead, an unspecified period of reorganization, and only the junta would determine when it was time to return power to civilians.

Guzmán, who admired Franco’s Spain, wrote many of Pinochet’s speeches and helped to conceptualize that new institutional order. He, and other conservative jurists belonged to an indigenous intellectual tradition that disdained contemporary Chilean politics as infected with ‘demagoguery’ and ‘political manipulation’. The basic problem for them was that the political system had veered away from the proven paradigm of a centralized, authoritarian, presidential system established by Diego Portales.³⁸ They

³⁵ Major Carlos Durán P., “Política de Tratamiento de la Opinión Pública,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 383 (1975).

³⁶ “Coronel Ewing: la ideología del Gobierno Militar,” *Ercilla*, November 21, 1973, 15-16.

³⁷ Renato Cristi, *El Pensamiento Político de Jaime Guzmán: autoridad y libertad* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2000).

³⁸ Huneeus, *The Pinochet Regime*, 139-169.

revered the same historical figures as the armed forces and believed in the revitalization of executive authority according to ‘national traditions’.

American trained technocrats and right wing civilian advisors played an important role in the military government but they did not enter a political vacuum on September 11, 1973. There were numerous points of ideological convergence between civilian advisors and military culture. For example, the technocrats’ discourse of rationalization and market ‘objectivity’ appealed to the military’s values of efficiency and realism, while the corporatism of Jaime Guzmán appealed to the desire for an ordered society without class conflict. It goes without saying that Diego Portales, for the armed forces, embodied a civic tradition they wished to emulate. In short, officers and regime advisors shared multiple points of convergence in their diagnosis of Chile’s problems even though their proposed solutions might differ.

STATE AND SOCIETY

The Declaration of Principles recognized a relationship between human liberty and government, such that ‘the greater the statism, the less effective freedom society has’.³⁹ Defined as excessive state control over social and economic spheres of life, statism was identified as a major cause of the country’s institutional breakdown in 1973 because it had politicized public administration in addition to harming individual initiative and generating redundant bureaucracy.

Repeating Friedrich von Hayek’s central thesis in *The Road to Serfdom*, Ship Captain Sergio Tomás Unwin explained that the logical outcome of progressive state

³⁹ *Declaración de los Principios*, Section II. El bien común exige respetar el principio de subsidiariedad.

control over the economy was totalitarianism.⁴⁰ From this lens, the Popular Unity's effort to acquire control over the transportation sector or newsprint industry would have given the government strategic control over where resources went and what information got printed. Similarly, Allende's plan to create a nationally unified educational system would have given him control over the hearts and minds of Chile's youth.⁴¹ Increasing the government's power to allocate goods or information politicized every aspect of human activity and prioritizing bureaucratic control over production.⁴²

The Declaration of Principles limited the state to accomplishing what individuals and groups could not accomplish for themselves such as securing the national defense, maintaining relations with other countries, protecting private property, and breaking up economic monopolies. State intervention was legitimate only when individuals or intermediary groups could not achieve the common good (the principle of subsidization). By reducing the state's control over production and allocation, it would be impossible for future leaders to impose their vision of society on all others. But the Declaration of Principles went beyond the goal of creating a limited, ideologically neutral state. The junta declared its goal to 'change the mentality of Chileans' with regard to the role of the

⁴⁰ Ship Captain Tomás Unwin Lambie (R), "Qué Es el Fascismo?," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 706 (1975).

⁴¹ Luis A. Pazos de la Torre, *Qué Pasó en Chile Bajo el Régimen Socialista?* (Santiago: Editorial Tradición, 1973).

⁴² Scholarship into the nature of state socialism demonstrates that the fundamental drive of state socialism is not producing more goods but increasing the bureaucracy's ability to allocate what goods exist in the context of structural scarcity. Thus, the power of allocation is what matters. Consult Julie Hessler, *A social history of Soviet trade: trade policy, retail practices, and consumption, 1917-1953* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004). Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: ordinary life in extraordinary times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

state in their lives.⁴³ Individuals needed to look to themselves rather than the state for the solutions to life's problems.

The emphasis on individual initiative and protection of private property might seem like an obvious precursor to neoliberal policies, but these principles did not preclude the state's right to create general plans for national development or to control resources of 'vital or strategic nature for the country.'⁴⁴ The Declaration was overtly corporatist, affirming the state's responsibility 'to harmonize the understandable longings of each sector [*gremios*] with the national interest inside the real possibilities of our economy.'⁴⁵ Here, the Declaration of Principles contained a concrete ambiguity. How would the state relate to professional associations, labor unions, and other social bodies? Would the state play a role directing industrial development with subsidies and tariff protection? How would the junta translate the 'principle of subsidization' into concrete action or define the 'common good'? In 1975, Lieutenant Colonel Juan Barriga said the state could only interfere with the free play of market forces 'for reasons of national security and/or according to the principle of subsidization.'⁴⁶ Unclear was how the transport, mining and telecommunications sectors related to the issue of national security?

⁴³ *Declaración de los Principios*, Section III. Los valores y el estilo del gobierno nacionalista.

⁴⁴ Ibid. Section II. El respeto al principio de subsidiariedad supone la aceptación del derecho de propiedad privada y de la libre iniciativa en el campo económico.

⁴⁵ Ibid. Section III. Una nueva y moderna institucionalidad: tarea para el actual gobierno.

⁴⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Juan Barriga M., "El Sistema Económico Nacional y el Programa de Recuperación Económica," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 386 (1975).

AN ELEVATED SPIRIT

The Declaration of Principles defined Chile in opposition to atheist materialism of socialist countries, which ‘enslaved man to the state’ but it also declared the nation in opposition to the consumer societies of Europe and the United States for ‘a materialism that spiritually strangles and enslaves man.’⁴⁷ According the Declaration, Chile was different from the First World because it defended spiritual values, rather than materialistic ones. In 1977 Captain José R. Martínez wrote that the West had achieved material prosperity but it had come at the price of spiritual emptiness, social protest, drug use, and sexual revolution. ‘The dilemma is that societies with the most technology are least happy if they fail to understand the essence of its content which is to enable the integral spiritual and material development of man, his happiness, and not his alienation as an instrument of production and consumption.’⁴⁸

The first years of dictatorship were marked by a strong critique of western democracies for their materialism, reflecting, perhaps, the legacy of twentieth century Hispanism and authors like José Enrique Rodó who urged young Latin Americans to reject Anglo-Saxon materialism.⁴⁹ In 1974, officers spoke of the need for a socially integrated society that harmonized liberty, social justice, and economic development. In such an endeavor, there was no ‘ideological recipe’ or universal model to achieve this

⁴⁷ *La Declaración de Principios*, Section III. Un desarrollo económico acelerado, un efectivo progreso social y una escala de valores morales que los jerarquice respecto del hombre: metas insolubles de la reconstrucción nacional.

⁴⁸ Captain José R. Martínez Muñoz, “La Dilemática y Paradójica Tecnología,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 394 (1977).

⁴⁹ José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988).

balance between man's spiritual and material needs. Thus, Chile's path would be rooted in national traditions and historical experiences and lack universal validity.

When defining the nation's historical-cultural identity the military valorized Chile's Hispanic character, Iberian military traditions, and Roman Catholicism. The later constituted an anchor of cultural identity because it embodied authority, tradition, and western civilization.⁵⁰ Pinochet and Merino even stated on several occasions that they believed God and the Virgin had chosen them to save Chile from Marxist tyranny.⁵¹

REALISM, SOBRIETY, AUSTERITY

From 1973 to 1976, the military government asked the Chilean population for collective sacrifice and citizens responded to the call. By May of 1974, the junta's reconstruction fund had received over half a million dollars in cash and gifts from citizens of all social classes. The junta's decision to let food prices float in 1973, rather than continue price fixing, caused immediate hardship for households across the country, but it should be placed in the context of a military leadership that believed in temporary sacrifice for long term gain. Military leaders did not believe politics could solve national problems. They believed social discipline and collective sacrifice could achieve incremental progress. In 1974 the government reduced pension benefits for retiring servicemen by twenty seven percent.⁵²

⁵⁰ Alvaro Villamandos E., "Ecos de Chile en la Madre Patria," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 387 (1976). Juan Barrientos Maturana, "Rica Tradición Caballeresca Hispana," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 387 (1976). This issue also reports on Pinochet's visit to Spain to attend Francisco Franco's funeral.

⁵¹ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 385. Merino, *Bitácora de un Almirante*, 226.

Realism and frankness are two important military values. Officers often defined themselves in opposition to politicians who promised rapid social and economic development without asking for the necessary sacrifices. For the military mind, poverty was a regrettable ill to be reduced; to think it could be completely eliminated indulged utopian fantasy. Addressing the nation on September 11, 1976, General Pinochet declared ‘We have never yielded to false demagogical illusions, or to the impatience with which some have demanded spectacular achievements in short terms.’⁵³

One week after September 11, 1973 Interior Minister Oscar Bonilla visited Población Ho Chi Minh (there can be no doubt about the neighborhood’s political orientation) and asked a nervous housewife if she was afraid of him. To this question she boldly replied ‘Yes, because there are rumors that you want to bomb us.’ General Bonilla responded, ‘Do you believe that? We are here to solve problems. Tell me what the principal problem of this population is.’ Neighborhood leaders communicated their desire for a health clinic, school, and permanent housing, but after the exchange Bonilla said ‘I make no promises. What we have here is a challenge.’⁵⁴ On a separate occasion, the general told a group of workers ‘we are not peddlers of promises nor do we deal in illusions. We only promise hard work and self-denial.’⁵⁵

⁵² AHJG, No. 92, 2-14-74. The confederation of retired admirals and generals petitioned the junta to reconsider this measure.

⁵³ Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, *Address by H.E. the President of the Republic of Chile* (Santiago: Impresora Filadelfia, 1976), 26.

⁵⁴ “La Visita del General,” *Ercilla*, September 26, 1973, 47-48.

⁵⁵ Op. Cit. *Three Years of Destruction*. See also Gustavo Leigh Guzmán, *La junta de gobierno se dirige a la juventud: discurso pronunciado por el general Gustavo Leigh ante dirigentes juveniles en el edificio Diego Portales el 20 de diciembre de 1973*, (Santiago: Editora Gabriela Mistral, 1974).

By all accounts, General Bonilla did have a genuine interest in the problems and mood of the population. He wanted to win its trust and support. At the same time, the sensitivity he showed for the day-to-day struggles of the poor did not alter his conviction that defeating ‘subversion’ required repression, including terrifying sweeps of neighborhoods suspected of harboring ‘subversives’.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CORPORATISM

Appointed vice president of CORFO General Sergio Nuño Bawden (no known relation to author) affirmed the role of incentives as a means to increase production, but explained that ‘the condition of the worker should be considered equally important inside of a business. Unjust, arrogant or arbitrary treatment should be totally eradicated.’⁵⁶ Nuño’s vision of industrial relations was hierarchical and disciplined. Workers had an obligation to respect their managers; managers had a duty to show paternal concern for their workers.

Nuño explained to *Ercilla* that military officers were intimately connected to the problem of inequality and injustice because they commanded conscripts from every province of the nation who arrived for military service barefoot, half-literate, and malnourished. He wanted poor Chileans to receive adequate health care and housing and to acquire an appropriate sense of morality and patriotism. After all, they constituted a sizeable portion of the nation’s ‘internal front’.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ “Corfo: la fórmula es participar,” *Ercilla*, October 17, 1973, 25.

⁵⁷ See Mario López Tobar, *El 11 en la Mira de un Hawker Hunter: las operaciones y blancos aéreos de septiembre de 1973*, (Santiago: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999), 32-33.

Decree law No. 31 addressed the nation's working class in straightforward language. It insisted that September 11 was not an attack on the working class and promised to maintain the social protections workers had won over many years of struggle. However, the junta made clear that social justice 'will never be achieved with deception, easy promises, sinecure, or the criminal division of our people, but with honest work, shared vocation and unity of interest.'⁵⁸ Edict thirty one might be dismissed as an empty rhetoric since the Chilean working class wound up losing so much during the dictatorship, but the junta's legislative sessions in 1974 reveal a high command that had no intention of altering labor law to the detriment of workers or restoring semi-feudal social relations in the countryside.⁵⁹

Speaking to a group of industrialists, General Leigh said that the junta's goal was to change the nature of the labor/capital interaction with social policies that synchronized the interests of workers, owners, distributors, and consumers. Leigh said 'Up to now Chilean business has been a battlefield. Today the concept should be completely different: businesses should be the harmonious grouping of capital and labor unified by a common sense of humanity.'⁶⁰ Gustavo Leigh often declared his preference for a strong state endowed with the power to harmonize labor/capital relations and direct economic development.

⁵⁸ Manuel A. Garretón Merino, *Por la Fuerza sin la Razón: análisis y textos de los bandos de la dictadura militar* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 1998), 85.

⁵⁹ Consult AHJG, No. 70, 1-15-74. AHJG, No. 84, 1-19-74. AHJG, No. 132, 5-10-74.

⁶⁰ "Los Esbozos de una Política," *Ercilla*, August 7, 1974, 11.

Editors of *Armas y Servicios* shared General Leigh's cleavage to some sort of corporatist model, declaring their preference for a strong 'Nationalist Integrative State' that would provide a dignified quality of life for 'responsible and disciplined' citizens of the nation.⁶¹ In November 1973, junta secretary Pedro Ewing said the government would never be opposed to 'worker participation' or 'delivering land to the people who work it.'⁶²

1973 to 1975 was an era of idealism. Officers spoke of changing the country's mentality in the field of labor relations. Many explained that the best antidote to radical politics was social justice. Air Force General Nicanor Díaz said succinctly:

Marxism did not appear in Chile by spontaneous generation, it was a consequence of and response to the selfishness of many entrepreneurs. We do not want to reinitiate the cycle. That is why we are devising new ways and rules to eliminate injustice. But more than anything, this requires a change of mentality and attitude of employers to value the social problem.⁶³

General Díaz, like many of his peers, wanted industrial relations to be more like the military itself: disciplined, hierarchical, and unified by a common sense of purpose. Although the regime insisted that Chile would copy no other country, a number of officers expressed appreciation for corporatist Spain and social democracies in Northern Europe where workers advised management, owned company stock, and participated in

⁶¹ "ABC del Nacionalismo," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 3 (1975).

⁶² "Coronel Ewing: la Ideología del Gobierno Militar," *Ercilla*, November 21, 1973, 15.

⁶³ "Hacia el 'tiempo social,'" *Ercilla*, November 27, 1974, 13.

business decisions.⁶⁴ These preferences put into relief the tensions generated by economic shock therapy, which had an enormous social cost.

Finally, the talk of restoring national unity and building harmonious labor relations had an evident contradiction. While Gustavo Leigh spoke of changing the way workers and owners thought about each other, his government was undertaking a violent purge of labor leaders. The nation's business sector experienced no similar repression.

INTERNAL DISSENT, EXTERNAL PRESSURE

After the 1973 coup, military leaders expected to receive unwavering support from the Roman Catholic Church and Christian Democratic Party, but the opposite happened. In 1974, religious leaders from every religious confession formed the Pro-Peace Assembly (*Comité Pro-Paz*) to assist victims and relatives of persecuted leftists, collect information about torture victims, file habeas corpus petitions, and perhaps most troubling of all for the junta, pass this information on to foreign news sources for worldwide dissemination.⁶⁵ For outraged military leaders, religious organizations were choosing to aid internal enemies and embarrass the country abroad, thereby wittingly or unwittingly serving Soviet imperialism.

From 1974 to 1975 Chilean exile communities in Mexico, Venezuela, Western Europe and the United States organized solidarity groups to draw attention to human rights violations in their home country and worked to keep international opinion against the junta. Bernardo Leighton, a top ranking Christian Democrat who had opposed the

⁶⁴ A revealing interview with General Javier Palacios appears in *Qué Pasa*, October 25, 1973.

⁶⁵ See *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 100-116. Pamela Lowden, *Moral Opposition to Authoritarian Rule in Chile, 1973-1990* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

1973 coup (coreligionists Eduardo Frei and Patricio Aylwin supported it), attempted to consolidate a center-left political opposition in Chile but was forced into exile where he continued his political activities. Orlando Letelier, a Popular Unity member and former ambassador to the United States, successfully lobbied a Dutch company to cancel a 62.5 million dollar investment in Chile and used his Washington connections to pressure the World Bank to deny the junta credit. More consequentially, Letelier encouraged Ted Kennedy to sponsor legislation terminating all US arms sales to Chile.

The junta's response to these challenges was swift and defiant. The inter-faith coalition was disassembled, foreign clergy from the Pro-Peace Assembly expelled from the country, and some priests arrested. After 1975, the Catholic Church would assume principal responsibility for moral opposition to the junta.⁶⁶ In 1975, Chile's secret police contracted to have Bernardo Leighton murdered (he was shot in Rome but survived). A more horrific fate awaited Orlando Letelier who was assassinated by car bomb in the heart of Washington DC in 1976.⁶⁷ As with other instances of state terror, these acts were officially blamed on left wing extremists.

Another international assassination merits explanation. In 1974, the Chilean secret police assassinated Carlos Prats by car bomb in Buenos Aires. Although politically inactive, Prats' murder by the DINA was apparently a preemptive action to preclude his possible leadership of an opposition movement to the dictatorship. Prats'

⁶⁶ After the *Comité Pro-Paz* was dissolved, the Catholic Church formed the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*, which continued to provide safe haven for persecuted Chileans and collect information about the human rights violations.

⁶⁷ John Dinges and Saul Landau, *Assassination on Embassy Row* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).

murder, like the hits against Leighton and Letelier, sent a clear political message to dissidents and exiles that no one, not even a former army commander in chief, was untouchable.

REALIZING GOALS FROM THE PREVIOUS DECADE

In the sixties, Chilean officers repeatedly lamented the fact that so few civilians had the training to speak with them about matters related to national defense. Generally speaking, there was a desire for contact points with civilians so as to establish a common ground for dialogue on matters pertaining to national development and defense. Officers proposed to partner with civilians at universities and private institutions to conduct research in fields such as aviation and oceanography. In this respect, officers desired more contact with civilians, not less.⁶⁸

On December 26, 1974, the junta issued supreme decree No. 538, creating the Superior Academy of National Security. It was described as realization of ‘a long sought after aspiration by the institutions of national defense and for all those who have granted particular significance to the problems of national security.’⁶⁹ All four branches of the armed forces contributed instructors and administrators to the new academy, which enlarged the institution’s role training civilians in matters related to state security.⁷⁰ The

⁶⁸ This is a comment on the assertion that the Chilean armed forces had cloistered themselves from civilians and were increasingly ghettoized institutions by the seventies. Certainly, there was a civil-military disconnect, but the point here is that civilians had helped to create that situation to some extent by taking too little an interest in national security issues.

⁶⁹ *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 1 (1976).

⁷⁰ The Academy of National Defense had been in operation since the forties to train a select group of high-ranking military officials and a small group of civilian officials.

academy also received a mandate to formalize and consolidate a specifically Chilean security doctrine for the Defense Ministry.⁷¹

The academy's quarterly journal *Seguridad Nacional* featured contributions from civilian supporters and military personnel on a range of topics - education, health care, the economy, telecommunications and international relations - and how each subject related to national security.⁷² Civilian advisors and cabinet officials like Jaime Guzmán and Miguel Kast outlined their ideas about the economy and 1980 Constitution. In this way, the publication provided a forum for regime officials to diffuse the intellectual foundation of the new institutional structure they believed would put Chile on track for sustained prosperity and political stability.

After changing its name to the National Academy of Political and Strategic Studies (ANEPE) in 1982, the institution began graduating more classes of civilians and especially women.⁷³ Trained in geopolitics, state administration, and national security matters, these graduates had the vocabulary to discuss national defense with officers. Interestingly, by the middle of the eighties as many as half of the academy's graduates were women, the most famous being Michele Bachelet who graduated from ANEPE after

⁷¹ In 1980, the Academy delivered a document to the Defense Minister titled "Bases para una Doctrina de Seguridad Nacional," *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 17 (1980).

⁷² Doctor Fernando Monckenberg Barros, "Daño Sociogenico Producido por la Miseria," *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 2 (1976). Miguel Kast Rist, "Política Social," *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 3 (1976). Carlos Rojas Labra and Miguel Teller Soria, "La Educación en la Seguridad Nacional," *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 3 (1976). Edgardo Zamorano Illesca, "Las Telecomunicaciones en la Seguridad Nacional," *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 5 (1977).

⁷³ Miguel Navarro, Air Force War College Instructor, made this point to me during a conversation in Santiago on May 15, 2007. Navarro also indicated that the Superior Academy of National Security changed its name in 1982, in large part because 'National Security' had become synonymous with state terror.

the transition to democracy and served as Chile's defense minister during the administration of Ricardo Lagos before her election as president of the republic. While defense minister she won respect for her ability to speak fluently with members of the armed forces about national security issues and the requirements of a modern military.

APPLIED GEOPOLITICS

Decree laws No. 573 and No. 575 initiated an administrative reform in July 1974 that grouped Chile's twenty-five existing provinces into thirteen regions, each with a respective capital and intendant. Underpinning the administrative reform was the goal of generating autonomous poles of economic activity across the breadth of the country, especially in less developed regions, so as to arrest the uneven concentration of people and capital in the heartland. By endowing administrative units with more local autonomy, it was hoped that entrepreneurs would look to their provincial capitals, rather than Santiago for resources and directives. Similarly, freed from excessive bureaucracy, municipal authorities would more effectively deliver social services to local citizens. Vice president of the National Commission for Administrative Reform wrote that the 'crux of this new institutional structure will be the decentralization of power, both in functional terms and in territorial terms.'⁷⁴

A visible example of this ideology in action was the junta's decision to relocate the National Congress from Santiago to Valparaíso in 1987. A navy editorial opined that physically separating the legislative and executive branches would advance the goal of

⁷⁴ Colonel Juan Barrientos V., "Reflexiones Sobre la Regionalización," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 384 (1975). In this new system, municipal authorities would meet with their regional leaders to discuss strategies to improve their economies and effectively deliver social services at the local level. Legislation also created a regional development council to assist research and investment.

territorial decentralization and have a salubrious effect on the functioning of government while achieving the ‘harmonious growth of the country, promoting the development of all regions, according to its particular characteristics, and in this way impelling many progressive forces still repressed by old centralist practices.’⁷⁵ This same rationale underlined the junta’s reform of superior education. After 1980, the provincial campuses of the University of Chile were either separated from the home campus in Santiago or merged with existing universities in the provinces. Suspicious of universities as bastions of concentrated social power, the regime wanted to diminish the University of Chile’s powerful influence over politics and intellectual life, in part by spatially decentralizing superior education and encouraging the growth of private technical colleges.

The armed forces’ concern for the spatial relationship between a state’s administrative center and peripheral regions has its roots in the geopolitical principles taught at Chile’s war academies, which held that a state’s peripheral regions, especially frontier zones, needed to grow at a relatively equal rate with the center. Having served at posts across the country, officers were well aware of the nation’s uneven levels of development from region to region and particularly concerned about the communities in isolated zones suffering from extreme poverty and inadequate infrastructure. These social deficiencies were considered especially dangerous in the northern and southern frontiers, considered the nation’s organic extremities. Lifting these citizens out of extreme poverty and getting their children to enroll in school was a strategic priority.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ “Editorial: Congreso Nacional en Valparaíso,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 787 (1988).

Similarly, Pinochet's *Carrera Austral* – a system of highways in the southern territories – was designed to attract citizens from the center to isolated and unpopulated regions in the south.⁷⁷

Broader strategic concepts came to bear on social policy. On October 10, 1974 Miguel Kast presented the junta with a map of extreme poverty based on data from the 1970 census that showed 'extreme poverty', loosely defined as those citizens without indoor plumbing and waste removal, affected twenty one percent of the nation and was disproportionately concentrated among independent industrial artisans and rural peasants, rather than places like Lota, a coal mining city outside of Concepción. Furthermore, fifty percent of the citizens living in extreme poverty were children, many who did not attend school or have access to health care.⁷⁸

Kast and his team at ODEPLAN recommended eliminating or scaling back subsidies to workers in the formal economy (things like minimum salaries and fixed prices for consumer goods) in order to transfer those resources to medical attention, school lunch programs, and vocational training for the country's most marginalized social groups. The idea was to get these citizens, many of whom lived near subsistence, connected to social services and trained for more productive activities. This strategy complemented regionalization by privileging isolated, under-populated regions and

⁷⁶ Lieutenant General Julio Canessa Robert, "Visión Geopolítica de la Regionalización Chilena," *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 6 (1977).

⁷⁷ Major Jaime Garcia Covarrubias, "Reflexiones Sobre el Núcleo Vital de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 415 (1984).

⁷⁸ AHJG, No. 159, 10-1-74.

drawing resources away from metropolitan zones of Valparaíso, Santiago and Concepción.

The regime's public sector cuts and overall reductions in social spending harmed the organized working class and lower middle class most. A well-established fact is that these two social groups bore the brunt of the neoliberalism's social cost. Their living standards declined as well as their sense of social status accrued over years of struggle.⁷⁹ However, the very poorest members of Chilean society, many living in isolated rural zones, actually began to receive health and educational benefits for the first time. Carol Graham writes of this strategy:

Despite overall reductions in social welfare expenditures per capita, total spending for the poorest decile increased, and indicators such as infant mortality continued to improve. In addition, many of the poorest that had been marginalized from benefits under the previous system were reached for the first time.⁸⁰

In Pinochet's Chile, the rich benefited most but the poorest Chileans experienced gains. Because the regime improved pre-natal care, introduced free milk programs and increased preschool enrollments the situation for the most impoverished ten percent was less acute. Infant mortality fell from 82 of 1000 live births in 1970 to 18 in 1990.⁸¹ The regime wanted to improve the business sector's ability to generate capital, but it also

⁷⁹ See Peter Winn, editor, *Victims of the Chilean Miracle* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). Larissa Lomnitz, *Chile's Middle Class: A Struggle for Survival in the Face of Neoliberalism* (Boulder: L. Rienner Publishers, 1991).

⁸⁰ Carol Graham, "From Emergency Employment to Social Investment: changing approaches to poverty alleviation in Chile," in Alan Angell and Benny Pollack, editors, *The Legacy of Dictatorship: political, economic and social change in Pinochet's Chile* (Liverpool: Institute of Latin American Studies, 1993).

⁸¹ Loveman, *Chile, the Legacy of Hispanic Capitalism*, 289.

prioritized reducing extreme poverty. In all of this, the organized working and middle classes received little strategic consideration. The junta viewed these social sectors as overly politicized and privileged during previous governments.

THE COLD WAR AND MARXISM

The regime rejected all of Marxism's basic presuppositions: class conflict as the motor of history, proletarian internationalism, material forces as the sole determinants of social reality, a presumed direction to history. The idea of social classes locked in conflict upset the military desire for an integrated national community horizontally bonded by culture and history. As an atheist ideology, it was also incompatible with Chile's Christian heritage and the Roman Catholicism of many officers.

Officers considered Marxist-Leninism a violent, exclusive ideology intrinsically opposed to coexistence with other worldviews.⁸² Without an ethical grounding in anything higher than the supposed interests of the proletariat, communists pursued power opportunistically, sometimes using legal channels and sometimes using armed revolution. As such their political positions could 'vary from a peaceful and innocent extreme to a violent and immoral extreme' depending on the circumstances and advantages derived from either position.⁸³ There could be no peace with such a dangerous ideology that existed in a perpetual state of war with all other non-communist states.⁸⁴ In 1976 Pinochet said,

⁸² Ship Captain Luis Bravo Bravo, "Breve Estudio Crítico del Marxismo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 715 (1976).

⁸³ Canis Venatici, "La Pax Soviética," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 710 (1976).

Marxism is not merely a mistaken doctrine, as we have had so many in history. No. Marxism is an intrinsically perverse doctrine: therefore anything flowing from it, regardless of how healthy it may appear to be is corroded by the venom that gnaws its root – it provides no room for dialogue or possible transactions.⁸⁵

In official regime discourse, practically anything could be said to serve the ultimate aims of Marxism-Leninism and therefore be repressed or excluded. Under this vast umbrella fell universities, unions, the press, and other organizations in civil society. The principal exception was the Catholic Church, which retained a significant degree of autonomy.⁸⁶

In regime discourse, Marxists forfeited their right to civic participation because they used liberal institutions to undermine the unity of democratic society. Since Marxist-Leninism claimed an exclusive monopoly on truth and evangelical vocation to spread the ideology, there could be no negotiation, dialogue, or compromise with it. Any contact with the ideology created opportunities for the Soviet Union to penetrate civil society and achieve economic, diplomatic, and sociological gains. Marxists who proclaimed a commitment to liberal democracy were charlatans. Their tactics might differ from the MIR but they served the same evil ideology. In sum, anti-Marxist repression protected Chilean society from individuals who sought to divide it, seize power, and ally with external powers. Given the nature of this dangerous ideology, it was legitimate to silence and exclude any societal force tainted by Marxist ideas.

⁸⁴ Ship Captain Luis Bravo Bravo, “Breve Estudio Crítico del Marxismo,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 714 (1976).

⁸⁵ Op. Cit. “*Address by H.E. the President of the Republic of Chile*” 46.

⁸⁶ The Catholic Church retained significant leeway to protect persecuted leftists and keep archives of human rights violations even though the regime could deport foreign-born priests and intimidate the ecclesiastical leadership.

To an outside observer, the regular denunciations of ‘Soviet imperialism’ by José Merino, Gustavo Leigh, and Augusto Pinochet might seem absurd. After all, CIA interference in Chilean affairs was well-established fact by 1975. What could the Soviet Union really do to harm Chile?

First, the regime saw the USSR as the origin of an ideology responsible for many of Chile’s internal problems. Second, the Soviets used their position in the United Nations to sponsor resolutions against the regime for human rights violations. Third, the Soviet Union directed a press campaign to exaggerate the extent of human rights violations in Chile and keep the regime diplomatically isolated.⁸⁷ Fourth, the USSR used its satellites to beam Radio Moscow into Chilean territory on shortwave radio as well as *Escucha Chile*, a program by Chilean Communist leader Volodia Teitelboim who lived in exile in Moscow. Fifth, navy officers believed that Soviet fishing vessels, which operated just outside of Chile’s territorial waters, were collecting military intelligence.⁸⁸

These factors, among others, are the context in which to put repeated declarations that Chile was under constant attack from the Soviet Union. The USSR was an imagined adversary, an ever-looming menace manipulated for domestic purposes, but it was also hostile to the regime in real ways. Chile had symbolic value for the USSR as the country in South America with the largest, most organized communist party and where a Marxist president had died in a military coup backed by the United States.⁸⁹ One naval officer

⁸⁷ Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going our Way*, 86-88.

⁸⁸ Admiral José Toribio Merino, “Las Armadas del Mundo en el Decenio 1980,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 743 (1981). See also Nikolai Leonov, “Conferencia La Inteligencia Soviética en América Latina Durante La Guerra Fría,” *Estudios Públicos* 73 (1999).

wrote simply, ‘our country is implicated in this war with international Marxist-Leninism. They have declared it at the international forums they dominate. And we feel the effects.’⁹⁰

From 1970 to the present, Chile has loomed large in the international imagination, constituting a focal point of debate and discussion across the world.⁹¹ In United States, Senator Ted Kennedy denounced the junta as a notorious violator of human rights while conservative commentator William F. Buckley described the junta as a victim of Soviet propaganda. Whichever side you were on, Chile represented a reference point with respect to US imperialism and the Cold War.⁹² In the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev famously declared that he would not tolerate ‘another Chile’ after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.⁹³

⁸⁹ Illustrative of the Chile/USSR relationship during the dictatorship was the release of imprisoned Chilean Communist Party chief Luis Corvalán Castillo. Corvalán, who received the Lenin Peace Prize for the 1973-1974 year, received asylum from the USSR in 1976 and lived in Moscow until the end of the dictatorship. However, the junta only agreed to release Corvalán after the Soviets released Soviet dissident and political prisoner Vladimir Bukovsky.

⁹⁰ Jorsec, “Estrategia de la Dominación Mundial por el Marxismo-Leninismo,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 708 (1975).

⁹¹ Modern Chile is both a symbol of neoliberal success and neoliberal nightmare. For some, Salvador Allende is an iconic symbol of progressive, democratic change defeated by American imperialism and domestic reactionaries. For others, Allende is hypocrite who embodied the violence and political intransigence of the Cold War. For some, Augusto Pinochet is a heroic soldier who saved the country from Marxist tyranny. For others, he symbolizes the violent defeat of a more just society.

⁹² “Duplicidad de la NU,” *Ercilla*, November, 20, 1974.

⁹³ Spooner, *Soldiers in a Narrow Land*, 147.



Figure 5.3, Luis Corvalán and Salvador Allende on East German and Soviet stamps respectively.⁹⁴

While anti-communism represented an important pillar of shared ideology for the military government, the junta could also be decidedly un-ideological in practice. The regime maintained a good relationship with People's Republic of China because the Chinese did not break diplomatic relations after the coup and did not denounce the regime at international forums. In return, the junta maintained Allende's one China policy and continued to recognize the communist mainland instead of Taiwan. Interestingly, Sino-Chilean relations blossomed during the dictatorship.⁹⁵

THE MILITARY AND THE MARKET

In 1973, material shortages, black markets, and hyperinflation presented a very immediate problem. Forced to accept humiliating shipments of food aid, the junta knew it had to get control of runaway inflation that was ravaging the integrity of workers' salaries. This context of economic chaos created a window of opportunity for a group of

⁹⁴ From the Wikimedia Commons.

⁹⁵ In the seventies, China supported Chile's official claim to the Antarctica and after China's embrace of trade and market economics, the two countries had even more in common. In the eighties China and Chile strengthened military ties, briefly considering a joint project to manufacture arms. While still commander in chief of the army from 1990 to 1998, Pinochet visited China twice. See "República Popular China: un amigo de Chile," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 12 (1978).

hard-nosed economists to present their itinerary for a radically different economic direction.

The history of the ‘Chicago Boys’, so called because they studied under Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger at the University of Chicago, dates back to 1956 when the University of Chicago Economics Department signed an agreement with Chile’s Catholic University in Santiago, promising among other things to provide postgraduate scholarships to a selection of outstanding students.⁹⁶ As a result of this institutional connection, a group of Chilean economists became convinced that the solution to Chile’s economic problems lay with free markets and monetarist principles.

The University of Chicago was not part of any premeditated plan, concocted in Washington, to introduce neoliberalism across Latin America. In 1973 the Chicago Boys were as out of step with prevailing orthodoxies in their own country as Milton Friedman was in the United States.⁹⁷ Moreover, it makes sense, from one perspective, that Chilean students proved receptive to Friedman’s free market ideology. Apart from Cuba, the Chilean economy was the most protected and regulated in Latin America; its economy was characterized by slow growth and high inflation.

The starting point for the Chicago Boys’ access to the military government was December 1972 when retired Navy Captain Roberto Kelly visited his friend Admiral José Toribio Merino in Valparaíso wondering if the military had a plan to take control of the country. Merino responded, ‘Getting rid of Allende is easy. But if we move now, we’ll

⁹⁶ See Juan Gabriel Valdés, *Pinochet’s Economists* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁹⁷ Famously, Richard Nixon claimed to be a Keynesian after accepting the use of rent and price controls in response to inflationary pressures.

have to take charge of this interminably chaotic situation and they [the left] will blame us for it. The truth is that we do not have an alternative project to save the country.’⁹⁸

In the wake of this conversation, Kelly asked a group of Chicago trained economists at *La Católica* University to prepare a plan of action for economic recovery in the event of an institutional breakdown.⁹⁹ The economists obliged and Captain Kelly began to pass chapters of their plan on to navy officials in June of 1973, including Admiral José Merino Castro who became commander in chief of the navy in September. So impressed by the bold vision of economic transformation, Merino tapped several of its authors to advise the junta since the navy was given control of economic affairs after the coup. Before the end of September, two hundred copies of *El Ladrillo* had been distributed to the new military authorities.¹⁰⁰

Shortly after the start of military rule, the government decreed a policy of free-floating prices to correct for distortions, which was one of the first recommendations made by authors of *El Ladrillo*. Speaking to a news magazine, Admiral Merino put the policy into a much larger philosophy of market competition and efficiency. Asked if Chile’s industrialists and merchants were ready for such competition he said:

Economically speaking, we believe that the only way to recover the real value of things that the entire population requires is for them to be sold at the price it costs to produce them. Besides putting us on a foot to export, with advantages, the

⁹⁸ Patricia Arancibia Clavel, *Conversando con Roberto Kelly V.: recuerdos de una vida* (Santiago: Editorial Biblioteca Americana, 2005), 135.

⁹⁹ “*El Ladrillo*”: *bases de la política económica del gobierno militar chileno* (Santiago: El Centro, 1992).

¹⁰⁰ Patricia Arancibia Clavel, and Francisco Palart Páez, *Sergio de Castro: el arquitecto del modelo económico chileno* (Santiago: Editorial Biblioteca Americana, 2007), 176.

surplus our domestic market cannot absorb, the sacrifice that we make today will result in prosperity and high living standards.¹⁰¹

A statement like this one, so close to the start of military rule evinces Merino's exposure to the ideas of Chile's Chicago trained economists, but it should not be taken as a sign that officers no longer believed the state had a central role to play directing the country's process of development. Officers felt that realism ought to guide economic decision-making and the Chile's bourgeoisie needed to be more efficient. Socialist economics had been discredited, but state planning had not. The Declaration of Principles spoke of a social market economy founded on pragmatism and limited state intervention in society, but what did that mean in practice? Early junta meetings offer an insight into the meaning of the 'social market economy' for key officers.

On May 10, 1974 the junta met to discuss how to privatize government owned enterprises nationalized by the previous government. The vice president of CORFO felt that some small businesses could, in all likelihood, continue to be worker owned and operated but he thought the trouble was ensuring the Chilean state received a fair market price when it sold shares of large enterprises to individual workers. General Bonilla interjected 'this problem should not be dealt with from a strictly commercial criteria.'¹⁰² He felt selling company shares below market value made sense from a social perspective because it ensured property remained in the hands of individual workers and would therefore give them a stake in their own productivity and prosperity.

¹⁰¹ *Ercilla*, October 31, 1973.

¹⁰² AHJG, No. 132, 5-10-74.

Interestingly, Bonilla criticized Gustavo Leigh's plan to create obligatory business committees on the grounds that any arrangement requiring workers to collaborate with their managers about improving efficiency and competitiveness was unrealistic. Leigh argued for business committees on the grounds that they would foster cooperative capitalism by providing a meaningful avenue for workers to participate in the management of private enterprises. Bonilla doubted the benefits of having labor leaders attend business committees, but he and Leigh both agreed on the importance of worker ownership and participation in the process of production.

Leigh and Bonilla also agreed that Chile stood at a 'historical moment' with the unique opportunity to restructure capitalist relations and put an end to the old patterns of class struggle. Officers who attended this junta session concurred that reducing inflation was a priority and would require austerity measures likely to produce unemployment, but the discussion had clear Keynesian hues. To ameliorate the effects of an austerity program, Augusto Pinochet suggested enrolling more conscript soldiers in infrastructure projects across the southern territories as a way to stimulate the economy.¹⁰³

Sergio de Castro recounts that cabinet meetings on the subject of what to do with industries nationalized under the Allende Administration tended to revolve around two criteria for military officers: did the enterprise have a strategic character and what would be the social effects of any decision taken?¹⁰⁴ The technocrats had a different perspective. They wanted to carry out structural adjustments quickly, before the regime lost political

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Arancibia and Palart, *Sergio de Castro*, 194.

capital. By contrast, the junta's advisory committee of senior officers was concerned that radical economic measures with harsh social consequences could destabilize the government.¹⁰⁵

There was also a strong mistrust of civilians. Economic Minister Fernando Léniz indicates that officers simply lacked confidence in civilians, especially civilians peddling a new ideology. Léniz recalls accompanying Pinochet 'to assemblies attended by hundreds of officers to explain the new economic model' in Arica, Copiapó, Concepción, and Punta Arenas.¹⁰⁶ De Castro remarks 'if I had to summarize, in one verb, what my job consisted of in the first stage of the military government, I would say that it was to 'convince'...We would speak every time we could with ministers, businessmen, and members of the junta.'¹⁰⁷ In June 1974, the junta named Pinochet supreme chief of the nation and one month later, he appointed Jorge Cauas Minister of Finance. In December 1974 the junta jointly appointed Pinochet president of the nation, notwithstanding Gustavo Leigh's opposition. This set of developments made possible a policy sea change because Pinochet had the executive power to appoint cabinet members.

Why did Cauas and other American trained technocrats appeal to Pinochet? Here it is useful to mention a memo that appears in the legislative *Actas de las Sesiones de la Honorable Junta de Gobierno Militar* dated just before the appointment. The memo lacks a signature but its author, who completed graduate training in the United States,

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 188.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 184.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 186.

insists that it was not enough for members of the junta to criticize ‘statism’ or ‘demagoguery’; they had to make clear how their government would depart from traditional economic and political structures, how their political project would be a clear rupture with the past.¹⁰⁸ Evoking Franklin Roosevelt’s ‘New Deal’ and John F. Kennedy’s ‘Alliance for Progress’, the memo urged the junta to name their transformational project and launch it with great fanfare on September 11, 1974.¹⁰⁹

The idea of a grand project for the twenty first century appealed to Pinochet. Military culture celebrates men like O’Higgins and Portales who had their own visions of republican transformation. Moreover, the total philosophy behind neoliberalism would have had appeal for Augusto Pinochet and José Merino whose formation as professors of geopolitics made them attentive to systems and totalities. The Declaration of the Principles also promised that the junta would only hand power back to civilians when grounds for a new stability had been established. This is where Gustavo Leigh diverged from Merino and Pinochet. Leigh’s idea of a new order was amending the constitution to eliminate Marxist parties and making a few adjustments to social policy.

With all cabinet ministers present in November 1974 Jorge Cauas explained that over the past four decades politicians had decreed automatic salary adjustments or

¹⁰⁸ This memo can be found between Acts No. 138 and No. 139 in the *Actas de la Honorable Junta de Gobierno* during the month of July 1974.

¹⁰⁹ The memo encouraged junta members to conceive of long-term objectives over a fifty-year time frame rather than focus on more immediate bread and butter issues. The memo urged the junta to frame policy changes that would contribute to a fundamentally different Chile. For example, if Merino spoke of a new maritime orientation or the promotion of non-traditional exports such as krill or fishmeal, he ought to frame those goals as part of a project to achieve economic diversification and lessen Chile’s dependence on the international price of copper. Steve Stern appropriately calls the month of September ‘memory season’ due to the month’s symbolic value either as the day Chile was saved from Marxist tyranny or symbol of dictatorship and repression.

assigned subsidies for lower income groups by printing money at the Central Bank which caused inflation and sustained a vicious cycle of fiscal imprudence. In reality, there were only three ways to finance the budget: taxation, loans, and currency emission, but given constraints on the amount of money Chile could borrow, acquire from internal taxes, or generate from export revenues, he offered two choices: dramatically reduce the budget or continue to print money and suffer the effect of inflation. 'There are no miracles when it comes to the economy.'¹¹⁰

Cauas made clear that the social cost of halting currency emission was high: the unemployment rate would probably double. Nonetheless, he urged structural adjustment, budget reductions, and export promotion to finance public spending. Sobriety and realism constitute key military values and Chilean officers liked to counter-pose their approach to national problems against the utopianism of politicians or revolutionaries. Economists like Cauas spoke of hard facts and urged bold action to rectify difficult realities. Such a discourse would have resonated, on one level, with military officials.

Given Pinochet's fundamental role adopting the shock plan, it is essential to emphasize the nature of his relationship to the Chicago Boys, technocrats who espoused an all-encompassing philosophy using a language of 'objective truths' and 'scientific rationality'. The geopolitically minded Pinochet liked their technocratic language. Further, the Chicago Boys lacked political ambition or intimate connections to political parties and business elites. For someone who mistrusted civilian politicians, Pinochet could not have found a better match. The technocrats would not undermine him

¹¹⁰ AHJG, No. 171, 11-14-74.

politically and he offered them a unique opportunity to implement their ideas unconstrained by democracy. It was an alliance that suited all parties involved.

Endowed with broad powers, Jorge Cauas opened Chile's economy to international competition and restructured tariff policy. He proceeded to massively trim the public sector and imposed a harsh fiscal discipline on state spending. The 'shock plan' of 1975 marks a dramatic reversal of economic orthodoxy since the Great Depression and it was indeed painful shock treatment. GDP fell 12.9 percent, unemployment soared to 16.5 percent, and real wages remained a third lower than they had been in 1970.¹¹¹ Chile had abandoned state led industrialization. The die was cast.

By all accounts, the structural adjustment was disorienting for a profession that lived inside the orbit of state structures. Resources for national defense came from government coffers, as did their paychecks.¹¹² Officers must have wondered what was happening?

In 1975 the *Memorial del Ejército de Chile* printed a series of lectures by regime technocrats to reassure the institution that the recession would be followed by growth and macroeconomic stability. These lectures explained that shock therapy was the painful but necessary measure to remedy to forty years of 'state capitalism', which had bequeathed the regime a legacy of distorted prices set by government, inefficient production, budget

¹¹¹ Collier and Sater, *A History of Chile*, 369-373.

¹¹² Arancibia and Palart, *Sergio de Castro*, 175.

deficits, insufficient private sector investment, and the general misallocation of resources by state officials.¹¹³

While real wages fell and unemployment soared, the *Revista de la Marina* printed a group of officers' papers explaining how the government's austerity measures conformed to the Declaration of Principles. Two of these officers, Captains Gustavo Pfeifer y Jorge Fellay, explained that the social market economy was premised on the idea that citizens themselves, not the state, had to decide what to buy and how to invest. The state could only do things citizens themselves could not such as break up monopolies, enforce contracts, and provide for defense.¹¹⁴

Corvette Captain Claudio Aguayo wrote that the whole structure of government price supports, subsidies, and tariff protections had created structural imbalances, fiscal deficits, and bureaucratic inefficiency that harmed the poorest members of society because these subsidies tended to benefit the rich and middle class (politically articulate groups). Furthermore, fixing prices without regard for supply and demand created black markets and scarcity.¹¹⁵ By running massive fiscal deficits and printing money without concomitant increases in production or the price of goods and services, Allende's government had caused hyperinflation. The result, wrote Frigate Captain Rolando

¹¹³ See Colonel Hector Barrera Valdes (R), "Seminario de Desarrollo Económico Para Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 387 (1976). "El Sistema Económica Nacional y el Programa de Recuperación Económica," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 4 (1976).

¹¹⁴ Frigate Captains Gustavo Pfeifer Niedbalski and Jorge Fellay Fuenzalida, "Los Elementos del Mercado," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 709 (1975).

¹¹⁵ Corvette Captain Claudio Aguayo Herrera, "La Política de Libertad de Precios," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 707 (1975).

Vergara was speculation, black markets, and scarcity. More generally, the endemic problem of inflation regressively distributed wealth and created disincentives to invest or save.¹¹⁶

These navy captains were affirming monetarist principles – attention to money supply and balance of payments - counter posed against structuralism, the prevailing economic wisdom since the thirties. One important justification for the new agenda of market reform was that the previous regime of subsidies for foodstuffs, transport, and industry had actually benefited the rich much more than the poor. Rectifying these structures then served every member of society, not just one socio-economic group.

The Declaration of Principles was an important reference point for this group of authors, especially the Declaration's emphasis on discipline, efficiency, and realism. Monetarism and market principles were realistic, structuralism was not; Chile needed to orient the economy to achieve efficiency and international competitiveness. Ignoring these economics truths, like the immutable truths of geopolitics, would only generate chaos.

Another discursive quality to these articles was the underlying conviction that temporary sacrifices would lead to the realization of a prosperous economy with high growth, macroeconomic stability, and full employment in *productive activities* as opposed to inefficient ones. In 1975, no one could deny that government policy had contributed to high unemployment, low public spending, and high prices, but if the

¹¹⁶ Frigate Captain Rolando Vergara González, "El Fenómeno Inflacionario," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 709 (1975).

immediate hardship yielded long-term gains and ultimately created new opportunities for all citizens, the hardship was justified. This type of cost-benefit analysis made sense to the ethos of professional soldiers.

Limiting the role of state in the national economy was a new idea in 1975, but a petition for short-term sacrifices to achieve long-term goals would have carried resonance for many soldiers. Lieutenant Colonel Juan Barriga M. explained:

That the system and the economic program will succeed is practically undisputed for national and foreign technicians. The problem lies in its cost and if the majority of citizens are prepared to pay for it with a shared effort and sacrifice. Once again, we the members of the Armed Forces and Carabineros, are obliged to set an example on the path of effort, austerity, and patriotism.¹¹⁷

Barriga had it right. He and his colleagues were being asking to put their faith in a bold recovery plan with a high social cost.

The new social and economic policies engendered friction in the armed forces. The junta's advisory committee opposed shock treatment, urging gradual changes to economic policy. As we have seen, military culture tends to be suspicious of revolutionary ideologies, sudden breaks with the past, or night-to-day transformations. Air force leaders supported the goals of reducing inflation and introducing competition to Chile's protected industries, but they continued to believe that the state had a major role to play directing a process of national development. *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* editors emphasized the Declaration of Principles' corporatist elements, writing in 1975 that the state had a responsibility to:

¹¹⁷ "El Sistema Económico Nacional y el Programa de Recuperación Económica," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 386 (1975).

Stimulate and legally structure a progressive participation that encourages and welcomes the creativity of individuals and their organizations, in order to realize the humanization of relations between Chileans in an atmosphere of order and labor discipline.¹¹⁸

All three branches stressed order and discipline, but the air force envisioned a role for the state to mediate between labor and capital during salary negotiations. From this perspective, national security partly depended on fairly remunerated jobs, general access to health care, and social housing for the poorest members of society.¹¹⁹ Where the navy emphasized efficiency and realism, the air force emphasized social justice and harmonious labor/capital relations. General Leigh hoped to channel and control social participation by establishing state sponsored organizations for Chile's youth, women, and professional groups.

At the start of 1975, an air force editorial revealed that 'several legal texts are in consultation or in the process of being adopted that will make possible improved social and economic treatment for workers, namely: the Business Social Statute and the revision and modernization of the labor code.'¹²⁰ The *Estatuo Social de la Empresa* was a plan drafted by Air Force General Nicanor Díaz in conjunction with a group of mostly air force officials to create business committees where the state would act as arbiter between owners and workers. As we have seen, these officers did not conceive of this plan as a mere ploy to coerce workers into agreement with their bosses. The air force leadership believed the state had to facilitate a process of social development and guarantee labor's

¹¹⁸ "Política Social de Gobierno," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 135 (1975).

¹¹⁹ "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 132 (1974).

¹²⁰ Ibid.

right to protect its interests vis à vis capital because failure to do so would result in the resurgence of leftist politics.¹²¹

By 1976, it was clear that the air force's initial vision of labor relations was not coming to fruition. Simultaneously, Augusto Pinochet's power had grown along with the position of technocrats who occupied key government ministries. Symbolically, Air Force Generals Nicanor Díaz and Francisco Herrera resigned from the health and transport ministries as a result of disagreements with leading technocrats Jorge Cauas, Sergio de Castro, and Miguel Kast. One important exception to this process was Brigadier General Fernando Matthei who became Minister of Health in 1976. Unlike his air force colleagues he converted to neoliberalism under the tutelage of Miguel Kast.

Matthei reports that his time at the ministry of health was difficult. Doctors complained of eviscerated budgets, low salaries, and low morale.¹²² Yet, it was during this time that he converted to the new ideas about state and society espoused by the young technocrats around him. Writing about social expenditure, Matthei affirmed that deficit spending would only renew the old cycles of inflation and economic stagnation. As a convert to the new climate of fiscal discipline, he insisted that spending on health care had to move in tandem with increased production.¹²³ From Matthei's perspective,

¹²¹ "Programas Integrales de Desarrollo: una solución a la extrema pobreza," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 140 (1976).

¹²² Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 208-223.

¹²³ Brigadier General Fernando Matthei Aubel, "La Salud y el Gobierno," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 139 (1976).

his frustrated colleagues in the air force lunchroom were tragically attached to a political economy that had proven disastrous for the country.

From 1927 to 1931 military dictator Carlos Ibáñez enacted a progressive labor code and tried, unsuccessfully, to organize state controlled unions. His political model was founded on a program of state led industrialization, authoritarianism, and social justice meant to undermine the pull of radical ideologies. Historian Verónica Valdivia convincingly argues that Gustavo Leigh represents the continuity of *Ibañismo* during the dictatorship.¹²⁴ In the early years of military rule a fundamental battle for the direction of the military regime took place that resulted in the defeat of ideas associated with Carlos Ibáñez.

In 1976 Army Colonel Gerardo Rencores summarized several key lines of thought in Chile's national security doctrine. First, external security required a powerful conventional deterrent capable of winning regional wars of brief but brutal intensity. For this line of thought, Israel constituted a model of sorts. Second, internal security required a mixture of repression and social justice. Rencores writes:

To avoid irreparable loss and grave damage to the nation, it is essential for the Armed Forces to defeat subversion at its inception rather than its advanced stages through an economic policy that eradicates poverty, especially extreme poverty, in coordination with adequate ideological implementation.¹²⁵

Rencores stressed the importance of eliminating the social realities that permitted Marxism to grow and expand. Here was the slippery point: military leaders did not all

¹²⁴ Verónica Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate, *El Golpe Después del Golpe: Leigh v. Pinochet Chile 1960-1980* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2003).

¹²⁵ Colonel Gerardo Rencores, "Introducción a la Seguridad Nacional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 390 (1976).

agree on the balance between repression and social justice. The *Ibañista* line of thought urged rapid social progress, especially for the organized working class in order to defeat subversion while the *Pinochetista* line placed a greater priority on repression and the amelioration of extreme poverty among the very poorest members of society.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY STATE

By 1976, every single state in the Southern Cone was under military control and animated by national security doctrine. This ideological affinity failed to dampen inter-American disputes, but it did provide a measure of coherence to military regimes across the region.

The basic premise of national security doctrine (NSD) was that communist states attacked third world nations by supporting armed insurgents who shared the same ideology and overriding goals. Given the nature of the threat and civil society's inability to deal with it, militaries had the right and obligation to assume control of the state and protect it from internal enemies.

Another underlying premise of NSD was that South American society suffered from foreign ideas that were poisoning the region. One Argentine general traced the origin of Marxist subversion to university professors who had received scholarships to study at institutions of higher learning in the West *and* Soviet bloc. Across the national territory, these professors infected students who then demanded university autonomy in order to convert institutions of higher learning into extraterritorial islands of Marxist subversion totally immune from interference. To combat these ideas, military governments viewed censorship and repression as legitimate tools to exclude dangerous

ideas that served anti-national goals.¹²⁶ Marxism, wrote Augusto Pinochet, affected the internal front in two principal ways:

On the one hand, it infiltrates the vital nucleuses of free societies, such as intellectual and academic circles, the media, labor unions, international agencies, and as we have seen, the ecclesiastical sector...On the other hand, it promotes lawlessness in all its forms. Material disorder, with street agitations. Social disorder, with ongoing strikes. Moral disorder, with the promotion of drugs, pornography, and breakdown of families...The final objective of this general disorder is to weaken societies the red sect does not control so [communists] can sink their claws into them at the opportune moment and convert them into new satellites of Soviet imperialism.¹²⁷

If hostile powers used ideas and immoral practices to weaken the internal cohesion of nations, it was imperative to exclude or censor them. Pinochet and others thought the United States had lost the Vietnam War precisely because it was unwilling to muzzle internal subversives who turned domestic opinion against the conflict and forced Nixon to abandon South Vietnam.

NSD was not simply about repression. It could mean arresting the possible explosion of the national liberation movement or directing a process of national development to ensure economic growth and state security. Among Chile's neighbors, Brazil exercised a considerable influence. After Brazilian officers assumed power in 1964 they initiated a state led industrialization process and simultaneously built trans-Amazon highways to achieve territorial integration. After the oil shocks of 1973 the military initiated the push to produce ethanol from sugar in an effort to achieve energy independence. The Brazilian growing arms industry also lessened the country's

¹²⁶ Brigadier General Adel Edgardo Vilas (R), "Reflexiones Sobre la Subversión," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 402 (1979).

¹²⁷ General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, "Seguridad Nacional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 391 (1976).

dependence on the West for weapons. For many, Brazil appeared to be the national security state *par excellence*.¹²⁸

What is the origin of national security doctrine? Guillermo O'Donnell interpreted NSD as global capitalism's response to the social mobilizations across the third world where transnational corporations required military regimes to neutralize labor unions and create a business climate favorable to capital investment.¹²⁹ Although highly influential, O'Donnell's theory did little to explain the divergent development strategies of different military regimes or their relationship to international finance.¹³⁰ Frederick Nunn traced NSD to the values and beliefs European trainers inculcated in their pupils from 1890 to 1940 that favored military intervention in politics.¹³¹ Another view of NSD is that it was a set of ideas formulated by the Pentagon and diffused at US war academies after the Cuban Revolution. The Pentagon did indeed advocate principles of NSD but this interpretation ignored the indigenous processes of ideological development in the region.¹³²

¹²⁸ Op. Cit. "El Nacionalismo: sus Luchas y Conquistas Positivas para la Patria". Chilean officers had long expressed admiration for Brazilian leaders. In 1962 Colonel Waldo Brucher wrote 'Los dirigentes de este país, entre los cuales los hay con brillantes cualidades de estadistas, comprensión y tienen conciencia cabal de la proyección de Brasil en el plano continental; y también mundial.' Colonel Waldo Brucher Encina (R), "Misión en Brasil," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 309 (1962).

¹²⁹ Guillermo O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: studies in South American politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

¹³⁰ Alain Rouquié, *The Military and the State in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

¹³¹ Frederick M. Nunn, *Yesterday's Soldiers: European Military Professionalism in South America, 1890-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

¹³² Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare," in *Armies and Politics in Latin America*, edited by Abraham F. Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1986).

For South American military governments, NSD was the legitimate response to a real threat posed by irresponsible populists and armed revolutionaries who were enemies of the fatherland. It was a legitimate response to the challenge of weak domestic economies and insufficient territorial integration. It was not a package of ideas forced on them by the Pentagon but a sober response to a clear and present danger. In Chile, political circumstances from 1972 to 1973 convinced many soldiers of NSD premises while professors of geopolitics like Augusto Pinochet and Alejandro Medina considered NSD the concrete application of their academic discipline to state management.¹³³

THE END OF AN ERA

From 1974 to 1975, US/Chile relations worsened. In terms of executive policy, there was continuity from Richard Nixon to Gerald Ford, but the US Congress was different. After 1973, many American journalists and congresspersons came to believe the US government had the obligation to moderate a regime they felt responsible for ‘creating’ after revelations emerged about US covert action in Chile from 1970 to 1973.

Chilean officers had a different perspective: they believed that American senators and congresspersons misunderstood what had transpired in Chile, arrogantly assigning an undue importance to the role of US imperialism and reaching the erroneous conclusion that the United States had been responsible for the breakdown of democracy in Chile. Their truth was that the armed forces had acted out of national obligation, independently of US wishes.

¹³³ Colonel Alejandro Medina Lois, “Teoría de la Seguridad Nacional,” *Seguridad Nacional*, No. 2 (1976). Foucault’s concept of ‘power-knowledge’ is useful here. See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the birth of a prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

According to army colonel Richard Neeb, Washington's inability to influence Chilean affairs before and after Allende had created a 'guilt and frustration complex'. Guilt because American leaders thought they had caused the breakdown of democracy and frustration because Washington's efforts to overthrow Allende and control the junta had failed.¹³⁴ US Senators, wrote Neeb, believed the Chilean armed forces had some inherent distaste for, or intrinsic opposition to democracy when in reality they had saved Chile's democracy. 'How would the military defeat Allende's dangerous regime, with democracy?'¹³⁵ The real threat of internal war had forced the military to adopt a national security doctrine.

In late 1975, US Army Lieutenant General Howard Fish explained to the Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance: 'When a country purchases modern arms to the extent that that country requires provision of spares from the United States, it is tied to us as far as the capability of their armed forces is concerned for the future.'¹³⁶ That year, Chile had already ordered 68.2 million dollars worth of US arms - principally jet aircraft – but the Kennedy amendment, which passed by a vote of 47 to 41 terminated military assistance to Chile and made arms sales contingent on a yearly assessment of the human

¹³⁴ Lieutenant Colonel Richard Neeb Gevert, "Comentarios a "Militares Chilenos" de Frederick M. Nunn," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 398 (1978).

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Subcommittee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, 94th Congress, First Session on S. 795, S. 854, S. 1816, S. 2662, and S. Con. Res. 21, Foreign Assistance Authorization, Arms Sales Issues, 141, 502.

rights situation.¹³⁷ The amendment was designed to restore US moral standing in the world and show that anti-communism alone would not assure American political support.

The effect of the Kennedy Amendment was dramatic. Figuratively speaking, the rug was pulled out from underneath Chile's armed forces. It cut the air force and navy off from logistical support and the ability to purchase of spare parts for existing systems, which left Chile's front line services exposed and vulnerable. Pro-regime press derided the arms restrictions as the work of showboating Democratic Senators or legislators who erroneously believed the CIA had installed Pinochet in 1973 and somehow they had a responsibility to undermine the junta.¹³⁸

Just before giving a speech about human rights at the OAS general assembly in Santiago on June 8, 1976 Henry Kissinger met privately with Augusto Pinochet and his foreign minister Admiral Patricio Carvajal. Kissinger thanked Pinochet for overthrowing Allende, but underlined that the human rights issue had complicated US/Chile relations since Congress controlled military aid and could restrict the sale of weaponry.¹³⁹

Most of the Kissinger/Pinochet discussion dealt with Lima's bellicose stance towards La Moneda and the US position in the event of war. Kissinger explained that he could do little to change the mood of Congress with respect to US arms restrictions and then he asked what Chile would do in the event of an emergency. Pinochet indicated the

¹³⁷ Ibid. 140.

¹³⁸ "El Caso de la CIA en Chile," *Ercilla*, September 25, 1974.

¹³⁹ CDP, Dept. of State, 'Memorandum of Conversation', 6-8-76.

military was modifying older weapons and fixing junked units to face a Peruvian army with 600 Soviet tanks.¹⁴⁰

What Pinochet really wanted from Kissinger was a pledge of support in the event of war, but Kissinger was non-committal, repeatedly saying that circumstances would determine the American position. In other words, the American executive offered encouragement but no promises. As a result of US arms restrictions, the regional balance of power strongly favored Peru and Argentina.

This declassified conversation is illustrative because the junta quickly learned that the Americans were unreliable partners. Pinochet, who never trusted the Americans, saw Kissinger's non-committal stance as just one more example of Washington's inconsistent policies with respect to Chile.

Around this time an illustrative exchange took place between a Democratic representative from state of Massachusetts - Michael Harrington - and regime supporter Pablo Aldunate. Harrington felt that the United States had shamefully contributed to the destabilization of Chilean democracy by blocking financial resources to Allende and then renewing them to the junta in 1974. In his view, US military aid benefited the US arms industry and ignored the continent's more pressing issues of social underdevelopment.¹⁴¹

Aldunate's acerbic reply to Harrington summarizes a number of shared sentiments across the armed forces. First, Aldunate rejected the Harrington's suggestion that Latin American countries should redirect their defense spending to social issues. This

¹⁴⁰ On this subject consult Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 193-203.

¹⁴¹ "Respuesta de M. Harrington y Réplica de Pablo Aldunate: polémico debate sobre el proceso chileno," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 5 (1976).

suggestion was the equivalent of politely asking the United States to disarm NATO and devote all its resources to caring for its own poor, unemployed, and needy. Second, Aldunate rebuked Harrington's assertion that the Nixon administration had economically strangled Allende's government from abroad. This interpretation of events irked the regime because it assumed Chile's domestic scene could be completely manipulated by an external power. The reality, according to Aldunate, was that Allende had strangled himself through mismanagement, incompetence, and failure to control the extreme elements of his coalition.¹⁴²

Third, he correctly observed that the United States proportioned economic and military aid based on strategic calculations, not humanitarian ones; US friendly autocrats in geopolitically important regions of the world received military aid. The truth, he argued, was that Congress did not perceive a Soviet threat to the hemisphere, leaving Chile to confront the disproportionate weight of the USSR by itself. Where was the gratitude to a regime that had not only saved the country from Marxist rule, but also prevented the birth of a Havana-Santiago axis?¹⁴³ If Kissinger represented a non-committal US executive, Harrington represented its paternalist Congress that had an overly simplistic appreciation of regional issues.

FOREIGN AGGRESSION

On October 5, 1976, Chile's minister of foreign relations Admiral Patricio Carvajal accused the Soviet Union of intervention in Chile's internal affairs at the UN

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 138 (1976).

Assembly in New York. Specifically, Admiral Carvajal denounced Radio Moscow emissions into Chilean territory and the Soviet sponsorship of UN resolutions against his country. It was the height of hypocrisy, said Carvajal, for the USSR to accuse any country of authoritarianism and disregard for human rights given its own history.¹⁴⁴ General Gustavo Leigh said ‘Chile accepts no lessons on the subject of human rights because this government came to power precisely to preserve them.’¹⁴⁵ In official discourse, the military had acted to prevent the left from reaching power and murdering its enemies with impunity. What they faced after 1973 was an organized campaign of psychological warfare perpetrated by the international Left.

Regime officials rarely denied human rights violations; they mostly highlighted the disproportionate international attention Chile received compared to other regimes guilty of egregious human rights violations. For this reason, external criticism lacked proportional legitimacy. If there was no communist conspiracy directed at Chile, why did the United Nations refrain from condemning communist autocrats who trampled human rights? Why would the New York Times run sixty-six stories about human rights violations in Chile and just four stories about Pol Pot’s ghastly atrocities in Cambodia? While the Argentine junta carried out a far more systematic and brutal campaign of state terror, Chile remained the focus of international attention on the issue of human rights.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Vice Admiral Patricio Carvajal Prado, “Violación del Principio de no Intervención,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 391, (1976).

¹⁴⁵ (Gustavo Leigh’s speech commemorating the institution’s anniversary March 21), *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 142 (1977).

The diplomatic pressure exerted on the regime in these years was largely perceived as the result of the negative image cultivated by Marxists or simply the result of ‘great powers’ intervening in the internal affairs of ‘small powers’ with complete disregard for their dignity and sovereignty. It may have moderated regime behavior to some extent, but the net effect of this pressure was to amplify a siege mentality. For a proud military with a long tradition, attacks from the outside fortified a defiant attitude towards the international community and worked to strengthen the junta’s unity in light of internal disagreements.

Referring to the Soviet Union’s claim that 700,000 had been killed after the 1973 coup, Navy Second Lieutenant Daniel Prieto wrote:

The initial misinformation campaign about the massive killings that supposedly took place in Chile during the military coup on September 11, 1973 was sufficient to shape the entire free world’s attitude towards our country. And even after Western countries discovered the falsity of this information, the lingering image in people’s minds is difficult to eradicate.¹⁴⁷

Officers often made the statement that Chile faced psychological attacks from Marxists across the Soviet bloc as well as Marxists inside the West. Colonel Luis Ortiz called this ‘the weapon Marxism employs on a global scale to undermine the systems of government it considers enemies for being contrary to its interests.’¹⁴⁸ In hands of communists this weapon was particularly potent because they could take advantage of the West’s liberal

¹⁴⁶ Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going our Way*, 86-88. According to Vasili Mitrokhin, Yuri Andropov approved operation TOUCAN on August 10, 1976 to magnify and exaggerate the extent of crimes committed by the Chilean secret police.

¹⁴⁷ Second Lieutenant Daniel Prieto Vial, “Guerra Sicológica,” *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 721 (1977).

¹⁴⁸ Colonel Luis Ortiz Lorenzo, “Hablemos de Psicopolítica,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 398 (1978).

democracies and free presses to disseminate false ideas about their enemies while tightly controlling news media at home. The West's only means to protect itself was censorship. Yet, European governments and the United States were ignorant of, or unwilling to stop the Soviet disinformation campaign or the depth of psychological penetration in their own societies.

CONCLUSIONS

For the duration of the dictatorship, officers believed they had saved the country from 'becoming another Cuba' or at the minimum they had saved it from a bloody civil war. True or not, the years from 1972 to 1973 absolutely convinced key officers of their legitimate right to assume control of the state and defeat those who had caused the institutional breakdown to occur. However there was disagreement about how to defeat left wing subversion. Officers like Oscar Bonilla and Gustavo Leigh believed it required a mixture of repression and social justice. Manuel Contreras wanted to destroy the left outright with repression and terror.

Military thought was quite heterogeneous at the outset of dictatorship. The Declaration of Principles opposed Marxism and excessive state intervention in society, but it could be read as an ideological statement supporting the establishment of a corporatist state along the lines of Franco's Spain or a statement supporting radical capitalist restructuring. In 1974, it was quite unclear what policies the regime intended to pursue and what role the state would play in the new order.

An unmistakable idealism characterized the first year of military rule. Officers saw their moment on the national stage as a historic opportunity to purge society of

Marxism and remake it with firm foundations for a stable, prosperous future. Several generals hoped to shift the balance between labor and capital in the favor of workers as a means to win working class support and dampen the appeal of radical ideologies. Military values of austerity, sobriety, and realism informed early decisions about social and economic policy. The junta knew cutting public sector jobs and allowing prices float would have a high social cost but they saw it as a necessary sacrifice to achieve long-term goals.

In 1924, Chilean officers had forced constitutional changes to their nation's failing political system at a moment of intense political crisis. This precedent may not have been important for the military's decision to intervene in 1973, but retrospectively officers could look at this episode and see an instance when societal consensus had broken down and civilians proved incapable of resolving their own political disputes. Thus, officers had a historical framework to understand their government as yet another patriotic mission to implement changes and lay the foundation for a stable new order as officers had done fifty years earlier.

From 1973 to 1976, the regime did not draw its strength exclusively from fear and repression; a broad sector of Chilean society actively or passively supported the regime. The junta may have lost the battle for international opinion, but on the domestic front many citizens saw the armed forces as having saved the nation from a bloody Bolshevik coup. This fact that made policy implementation much easier than would have otherwise been the case, especially since the population faced economic austerity measures and a police state that persecuted and even killed some citizens.

Chapter VI

Crises and Consolidation: 1977-1981

No one is willing to go down in history as the first Chilean soldier to surrender.¹

Julio Canessa Robert

From the perspective of the Chilean junta, Jimmy Carter represented everything wrong with the United States. He was the architect of naive policies that alienated potential allies in South America. He seemed unwilling to confront Soviet aggression in the Third World. He was the public face of a weak, demoralized society whose foreign policy was shaped by moral hypocrisy, misguided idealism, and reckless lawmakers.

One symbol of the United States' domestic politics was Senator Frank Church. From 1975 to 1976, Church chaired a Senate subcommittee investigation into the FBI and CIA that publicized instances of illegal conduct and abuse by both intelligence agencies, including the CIA's efforts to assassinate or overthrow foreign leaders. During these investigations, critics asked to what extent the CIA's capacity for effective action had been set back by the release of information about its operational methods. It seemed, from one perspective, that US lawmakers were leaking state secrets. In 1978 Congress passed laws restricting the CIA and FBI's institutional autonomy, and subjecting both agencies to legislative oversight.

In Chile, Colonel Herbert Orellana questioned the United States' ability to win the Cold War in such a domestic climate. He pointed out that Soviet leaders did not face

¹ Arancibia and Balart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 231.

critics at the highest echelons of power who wished to circumscribe the state's national security instruments; Soviet leaders operated inside of a one party system that lacked institutional transparency. The problem with American society, wrote Orellana, was that 'since the late sixties and especially after Watergate, its consensus about national security has eroded'.²

This chapter examines the Chilean military as it confronted manifold internal and external crises. In 1978, the junta faced condemnation from the United Nations, worsening relations with the United States, and the real possibility of war with Argentina and Peru. Simultaneously, disaffected air force officers attempted to remove Augusto Pinochet from the junta. In the end, these external and internal crises did not weaken the military government; they strengthened it. International condemnation amplified a defiant attitude towards outside detractors and the near outbreak of war provided the entire armed forces with a powerful collective experience: preparing to defend the national territory from outside attack.

From 1977 to 1981, officers lambasted the West as shamelessly unwilling to confront international communism. After NATO countries signed the Helsinki Accords, which recognized Eastern Europe as a permanent part of the Soviet bloc, critics accused NATO of deciding to accommodate the Soviet Union and leave the developing world to its own fate. Thus, in spite the West's wealth and technology, it had chosen to abdicate its moral responsibility to aid developing countries locked in the East/West conflict.

² Colonel Herbert Orellana Herrera, "La Comunidad de Inteligencia de los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 405 (1980). See also Aviation Colonel René Alzérreca de Gortázar, "Relaciones Entre el Pentágono, el Ejecutivo y el Congreso de Estados Unidos de Norteamérica," *Minerva*, No. 16 (1988).

What this meant was that Southern Cone dictatorships would have to shoulder the burden of defending western civilization alone while the cowardly states of the developed world withdrew behind their own borders. The tone of moral superiority characterized the discourse of the period.

This chapter also examines the regime's internal conflicts. In 1978, dissident air force generals mounted an unsuccessful attempt to remove Pinochet from the junta, culminating in Gustavo Leigh's expulsion from the junta and the voluntary resignation of eighteen air force generals. Alarmed by Augusto Pinochet's personal power and the regime's institutional direction, these officers represented a strand of dissatisfaction that existed in each military service. In 1979, the elimination of subsidies for the merchant marine provoked general outrage in the navy.

Policy disagreements existed but they did not impinge on the junta's overriding unity of purpose after 1978. First, there was a deep conviction that the chosen institutional direction was correct. Second, Admiral Merino and General Matthei agreed on the importance of maintaining a united front. They knew confronting Pinochet and his army would have political consequences for the entire armed forces. Third, the harrowing experience of defending the national territory from Peru and Argentina fostered inter-service cohesion.

THE NEGLIGENT NEIGHBOR

Immediately after taking office in 1977, Jimmy Carter declared human rights the guiding principal of his administration's foreign policy and moved to reduce or eliminate military aid to Latin American governments accused of human rights violations. By 1977

Chile was not eligible to purchase American weapons or receive military aid, but Carter's foreign policy elicited strong denunciations for its perceived contradictions.

For the 1977-1978 fiscal year, Washington maintained 230 million dollars of military aid to Park Chung-Hee's dictatorial regime in South Korea while reducing military aid to Taiwan during an era of diplomatic normalization with Beijing. In other words, strategic criteria determined US designations of military aid. The Philippines, Iran, and Indonesia did not meet any uniform standard of respect for human rights but they continued to receive high levels of military aid. *Raison d'état* trumped humanitarian considerations. The message South American military governments took from Carter's policy was that his government placed a low strategic priority on Latin America.³ Furthermore, Chilean officers asked what moral authority the United States had to lecture Chile on the subject of human rights? Many officers had actually witnessed institutionalized racism while studying in the Jim Crow South.

A Naval War Academy professor explained the poor state of US/Chile relations as a byproduct of the American inability to understand any political system different from its own in spite of the fact that some countries, facing serious security threats, had legitimate reasons to establish undemocratic authoritarian governments. Ironically, Americans leaders held the rather intolerant conviction that their political system was universally valid, replicable, and exportable, and this belief compelled them to dismiss the diverging political and historical evolution of individual states in the world.⁴ Frigate

³ "Noticiero: La ayuda militar estadounidense al exterior para el año fiscal 77-78," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 719 (1977). Hugo Llanos Mansilla, "Los Derechos Humanos: en la política exterior del presidente Carter, con referencia a América Latina," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 726 (1978).

Captain Carlos Carrasco wrote, accurately, that the United States showed low regard for the sovereignty and particular circumstances of individual countries in the hemisphere.⁵ The United States had violated the non-intervention cause of the OAS charter in Guatemala (1954), Cuba (1961), the Dominican Republic (1964), and Chile.⁶

These criticisms of US policy were hardly new. John F. Kennedy had said he would not recognize any military government that overthrew a legally constituted one, but he quickly set aside that democratic ideal to recognize anti-communist regimes in Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic for practical, strategic reasons. US administrations had a long history of attempting to implement a foreign policy based on lofty ideals only to change course when it became clear that idealism would sacrifice American interests.⁷ This history did not diminish frustration with Jimmy Carter or the 1975 arms embargo, but it did provide a framework to understand the arms embargo as the latest instance of US intervention in Chile's internal affairs.

US/Chile relations reached a new low point in 1979 when the Carter Administration excluded Chile from joint naval maneuvers in the South Pacific (UNITAS) to punish the government's unwillingness to hand over Chilean citizens who

⁴ Andrés Huneus (Naval Academy of War), "Nuestras Relaciones con EE.UU.," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 402 (1979).

⁵ Frigate Captain Carlos Carrasco Acuña, "Programa de Asistencia Militar y Las Ventas Militares de EEUU al Exterior," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 712 (1976).

⁶ Frigate Captain Samuel Ginsberg Rojas, "Crisis del Sistema Interamericano," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 728 (1979). Frigate Captain Samuel Ginsberg Rojas, "Las Reformas al Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Reciproca (TIAR)," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 736 (1980).

⁷ Consider George W. Bush's 'freedom agenda'. Bush had to modify his stated goal of spreading democracy in the greater Middle East after Hamas, a radical Islamist political party in Palestine, reached power in a free and fair election. Subsequently, the goal was 'responsible democracy'.

had committed state terrorism on US soil. Canceling UNITAS touched a nerve because it seemed to demonstrate a lack of concern for mutual security interests.⁸ The same year the Sandinistas came to power in Nicaragua. The USA, it seemed, was disinterested in a strong inter-American system. Where was the concern for inter-American security? Chile protected the hemisphere's southern flank, but instead of gratitude, it suffered a hostile American Congress that refused to assist its less developed ally.⁹ Chile was the 'small but firm defensive stronghold in the American Southern Cone' offering its victorious military legacy to the United States in a common fight against communism wrote Colonel Victor Chaves.¹⁰ What Chile lacked was a reliable partner.

In 1980, navy editors lamented the persistence of a world order dominated by the USSR and USA. At the start of the seventies, international relations experts had predicted that small, semi-industrial states would achieve meaningful ways to pursue their collective interests through regional trading blocs and international associations. That political reality, however desirable, had not come to pass. The fact was that culture, geography, and tradition tied Chile to an immature, irresponsible superpower shirking its global responsibilities. Like it or not, Chile's fight against the Soviet Union tied it to the United States.¹¹

⁸ "Editorial: Los Océanos y la Política Internacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 737 (1980).

⁹ Colonel Herbert Orellana Herrera, "Las Reformas del TIAR y sus Repercusiones," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 739 (1980).

¹⁰ Colonel Victor Chaves Dailhe, "Carta Abierta", "Una Carta Para Carter", and "Otra Carta Para Carter," in *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, Nos. 397, 398, 399 (1978).

¹¹ "Editorial: Los Océanos y la Política Internacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 737 (1980).

The bipolar character of the world system may not have changed in the seventies, but the era of preponderant American military influence in the Southern Cone did. By 1980, Peruvian, Chilean, Argentine, Uruguayan, and Brazilian officers did not train in, or buy arms from the United States. Illustrative are the actions of regional leader Brazil. In 1978, Brazil canceled several military agreements with the United States including a 50 million dollar credit for military equipment when the Carter Administration stipulated that military assistance was contingent on a US human rights assessment. This effectively ended the long established military alliance between Brasília and Washington. Brazil also began to prefer West European arms while developing its own rather large domestic arms industry. Brazil, like Chile and Argentina, had broken nearly all their intellectual and material ties to the Americans.¹²

THE UNREQUITED PARTNERSHIP

In 1961, Navy Captain Arturo Troncoso Daroch had called for a partnership between South American navies and NATO as a measure to contain communism in the western hemisphere and strengthen a broad transatlantic alliance that included Latin America.¹³ Twenty-five years later, little had changed. Admiral Patricio Carvajal, Chile's foreign relations minister, spoke to the junta in 1975 about the possibility that

¹² "Noticiero," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 720 (1977). "Crónica: Intercambio de Oficiales con Países Hermanos," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 723 (1978).

¹³ Frigate Captain Arturo Troncoso Daroch, "América Latina y su Importancia Para el Bloque Occidental," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 621 (1961).

signatories of the Inter-American Reciprocal Treaty would conduct joint military maneuvers and achieve some degree of military coordination like NATO countries.¹⁴

Navy commander José Merino insisted that the industrial powers of the North Atlantic needed partners on the global periphery to patrol far-flung sea-lanes and check Soviet expansion in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. To arrest the global spread of communism, developed states in the free world had a responsibility to treat arms sales and military assistance as something more than just a moneymaking venture or tool of political pressure. Merino wrote, ‘small countries in the east-west struggle have an obvious need for modern naval equipment which affects everyone in [the free world] equally and is not a simple commercial transaction.’¹⁵

Chilean officers considered their country a strategic asset to the free world because their navy patrolled maritime lanes between the Atacama Desert, Easter Island and Antarctica and it controlled the passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Yet, the feeling was one of abandonment. The US arms embargo had left Chile surrounded by hostile neighbors and barred from purchasing spare parts for existing American weapons.¹⁶ Military leaders desired recognition of their role in the defense of western civilization. Instead, it felt like the United States and its European allies were selectively applying a hypocritical human rights policy that pushed away natural allies and failed to appreciate South America’s strategic value to the free world.

¹⁴ AHJG, No. 205, 5-13-75.

¹⁵ Admiral José T. Merino, “El Rol de las Armadas en los Años 1980,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 713 (1976).

¹⁶ Colonel Victor Chaves Dailhe, “Carta Abierta,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 397 (1978).

The general feeling was that sovereign states had every right to conduct their internal affairs as they saw fit. In the case of the Chilean military government, it was protecting the state from destructive internal forces. But there was another accusation of hypocrisy leveled at the northern countries. Herbert Orellana observed accurately that industrialized states in the West had given birth to international law as means to protect their own interests but they did not apply it to their colonies or to themselves in the first half of the twentieth century. Yet, as the West's economic development improved in the postwar decades, international law and human rights became a central part of their political agenda.¹⁷

THE MORIBUND WEST

In the summer of 1975 every NATO and Warsaw Pact country signed the Helsinki Accords, which recognized the inviolability of existing territorial and ideological boundaries in East and West Europe. This was a great diplomatic achievement for the Soviet Union because it effectively fated East Europe to perpetual alignment with the Soviet Union. In Chilean military discourse, the Helsinki Accords represented the West's abdication of any moral responsibility to help free peoples in Eastern Europe or to back anti-communist allies in South America. The West was compromising other peoples' freedom to ensure its own short-term security. In the same vein, officers denounced *détente* and *ostpolitik* as naive. Such policies, they said, would

¹⁷ Ship Captain Luis Bravo Bravo, "El Derecho Internacional Humanitario," *Política y Geoestrategia*, No. 32 (1984). Brigadier General Herbert Orellana Herrera, "Derecho Internacional," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 426 (1987).

allow the Kremlin to infiltrate European universities, unions, and convince the continent's citizens that a peaceful road to socialism was indeed possible.¹⁸

During this period, the ideas of Soviet dissident and Gulag survivor Alexander Solzhenitsyn peppered Chilean defense journals. Solzhenitsyn and other high profile Soviet exiles like Vladimir Bukovsky believed the West was too soft on communism. He accused the West of alienating real allies and ruining its credibility with peoples under siege by Soviet or Chinese imperialism in Asia and Africa. From his perspective, the West had already allowed Soviet forces to impose communism on the citizens of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuanian, Moldova, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and East Germany. Excluding actions in Greece, Turkey, Berlin, and Korea, the West had retreated from its efforts to stop the spread of an expansive ideology bent on enslaving all of humanity.¹⁹

Another message with resonance for the military was Solzhenitsyn's charge that liberty had become an impoverished concept in the West, bereft of a sense of duty or responsibility. Instead, it had been reduced to freedom from external pressure or state compulsion. It was the freedom to sell or consume anything.²⁰ According to Solzhenitsyn, *libertad verdadera* – true freedom - imposed duties and responsibilities on free peoples. The truth was that western societies had abandoned these high ideals to

¹⁸ Jorset, "Estrategia de la Dominación Mundial por el Marxismo-Leninismo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 708 (1975). "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 138 (1976). Major Luis Zanelli Ripoll, "Política y Estrategia en los 30 Años de Guerra Fría," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 401 (1979).

¹⁹ Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "Los Grandes Perdedores de la Tercera Guerra Mundial," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 3 (1975). The essay's title refers to the idea that World War III commenced August 15, 1945 and was lost, symbolically on April 30, 1975 when the United States evacuated its embassy in Saigon.

²⁰ Andrés Huneeus Perez, "Del Individualismo al Totalitarismo," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 735 (1980).

secure their own material prosperity. This is what motivated the West's pursuit of pacific coexistence with the Soviet Union and its growing reluctance to commit military forces to defend freedom overseas. The West's Achilles' heel was the 'human desire to prolong prosperity at the price of illusory concessions'.²¹

At western universities, Solzhenitzin harangued students, professors, and journalists who admired Marxist revolutionaries.²² He simply could not understand why anyone in the West would have sympathy for what he considered an intrinsically mistaken ideology. The Chilean people, wrote *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* editors, understood Solzhenitzin's message because they had directly experienced three years of Marxist destruction.²³ Gustavo Leigh said 'We unmasked the fraudulent possibility of any "peaceful path to socialism"...May the tragedy we lived before 1973 serve as a warning to other people who are still free!'²⁴

The idea of a cowardly moribund West carried meaning for Chile and other anti-communist dictatorships in South America. It provided emotional comfort in the face of international isolation. It explained their role in the Cold War and bolstered their sense of historic mission to defend western civilization as erstwhile allies capitulated. In this discourse, the armed forces fought to defend an elevated concept of freedom.

²¹ Op. Cit. "Estrategia de la Dominación Mundial por el Marxismo-Leninismo".

²² "La Perpelidad de Solzhenitsyn," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 141 (1976).

²³ "Solzhenitzin y la Libertad," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 140 (1976).

²⁴ "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 138 (1976).

More concretely, historian Gonzalo Vial points out that Chilean officers found the West's withholding of political support incomprehensible since they saw themselves as having frustrated the creation of a new Cuba. At the same time, international consternation heightened the regime's awareness that committing human rights violations could have adverse political consequences.²⁵ Had world opinion been a non-issue, it is reasonable to assume that the human rights situation might have been worse.

BATTLEGROUND AFRICA

In July 1975, seven months after the dramatic evacuation of the United States Embassy in Saigon, ten thousand Cuban troops landed in Angola to support Marxist forces embroiled in a civil war there. Two years later, Cuban/Soviet forces intervened on behalf of Ethiopia to defeat Somalia in the short-lived Ogaden War. These events led many to conclude that international communism had begun a new phase of expansion after the collapse of American influence in Southeast Asia.

Anti-communist authors saw events in Africa through a highly ideological lens where the Soviet Union had begun a new phase of global expansion because the American public was unwilling to accept police actions after the Vietnam debacle thereby allowing the Soviets to take advantage of propitious conditions for expansion. Since South America had come under the rule of anti-communist regimes, Africa was the natural choice for Moscow's adventures given the continent's political immaturity and racial, tribal, and linguistic divisions. More importantly, the West was unwilling to check Soviet aggression on the continent even though it alone had the technological and

²⁵ Gonzalo Vial Correa, *Pinochet: la biografía* (Santiago: El Mercurio: Aguilar, 2002), 277, 293.

material capabilities.²⁶ Gustavo Leigh accused the West of hypocrisy for watching indifferently as:

Soviet imperialism put its claws into Angola, this time not just with the support of arms, but also with the direct intervention of more than 12,000 Cuban troops, who will remain in Africa as a looming threat to other nations on that continent.²⁷

Cuba's involvement in Angola seemed irrefutable proof of Soviet duplicity. The Kremlin pursued a policy of 'peaceful coexistence' in Europe while Cuban soldiers intervened in vulnerable regions across Africa and Latin America. Particio Carvajal and Ricardo Claro argued this point to Henry Kissinger in 1976.²⁸ Ship Captain Francisco Ghisolfo and Alfredo Hernandez - a Carabinero - both concurred that Rhodesia and South Africa represented the only serious checks on Soviet aggression on the African continent.

Hernandez wrote of South African countries as a set of:

key points not only for Europe but also for South Africa and Brazil, and even for some states in South America, which, as a result of their anticommunist ideology are in fact indirect members of the NATO, including Chile, which also has an outlet to these great waters by its extreme Southern Cone.²⁹

Whether or not most officers thought of themselves as indirect members of NATO, it is accurate to say that they saw themselves as part of the free world, effected by the expansion of Marxist outside of the western hemisphere. In this respect, they saw the

²⁶ Santiago Murphy Rojas, "África, Agresión a Occidente," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 714 (1976). Luis Melo Lecarus, "El Surgimiento de la Guerra Fría. Paz Basada en la Fuerza?," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 395 (1977).

²⁷ "Editorial," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 138 (1976).

²⁸ CDP, Depart. of State, 'Memorandum of Conversation', 6-8-76.

²⁹ Alfredo Hernandez Camus (Carabineros), "África y la Defensa de Occidente," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 715 (1976). Ship Captain Francisco Ghisolfo Araya, "Sudáfrica y el Expansionismo Soviético," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 743 (1981).

United States and West Europe as unreliable partners who failed to understand the nature of the Cold War in the developing world.

Did most Chilean officers *believe* the West was in global retreat, divided and uncertain of itself during a period of Soviet expansion? It is impossible to answer this question but the discourse in defense journals certainly divided the western world into countries that confronted communism and countries that had lost faith in the values that made the fight worthwhile. Events in Angola, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Afghanistan appeared to confirm that communism was on the march in the Third World and the existence of large well organized communist parties in Western Europe appeared to augur an expansion of Soviet influence in Europe. If Western European states fell to Marxism, this would leave the Western Hemisphere isolated and vulnerable.³⁰ Thus, South America's armed forces constituted a powerful bulwark against further Soviet aggression. Despite condemnation from the West, South America was the free world's vanguard, not its pariah. At such a dangerous point in the Cold War, South America's national security states were indispensable.

NEOLIBERALISM AND THE PAN-AMERICAN POSSIBILITY

From 1973 to 1976, the regime's economic goals had been relatively straightforward: curb inflation, introduce market principles to the economy and impose fiscal discipline on public spending. But as Chile emerged from recession in 1976, technocrats pushed to introduce reforms that went well beyond the regime's initial goals. Sometimes called neoliberalism, this package of social and economic reforms had

³⁰ Op. Cit. "Política y Estrategia en los 30 Años de Guerra Fría".

consumer choice and economic freedom as its organizing principles, as well as the overriding goal of removing the state from economic decision-making as much as possible and circumscribing the state's responsibilities for social welfare. In practice, that would mean liberalizing labor and financial markets, privatizing health and educational services, fostering competition and consumer choice. It was a redefinition of the state's role in society and neoliberalism was controversial for many officers. Inside of the junta, Gustavo Leigh worried that high unemployment – one result of neoliberal restructuring – would lead to destabilizing social unrest. In all branches, officers questioned the wisdom of privatizing strategic sectors of the economy.

José Merino and Augusto Pinochet embraced the neoliberal promise of a dynamic private sector that would create jobs and prosperity. They embraced the idea of an 'ownership society' where citizens would look to themselves rather than the state as the impetus for development. In geopolitical terms, they saw neoliberalism replacing an inefficient, decrepit and discredited political economy. The enumerated vision was one of a modern state that secured prosperity for the nation's citizens, generated revenue for military modernization, and undermined the attraction of radical politics.

At the start of the dictatorship, officers still wrote about the Andean Pact as an entity which represented multiple possibilities: improved relations with Peru and Bolivia, accelerated economic growth inside of a common market, industrial strength vis à vis Argentina.³¹ However, the Andean Pact was completely incompatible with the vision of an open economy because member countries were committed to harmonize tariff policy

³¹ Major Juan Chiminelli Fullerton, "El Pacto Andino y su Influencia en la Economía Nacional," *Armas y Servicios*, No. 1 (1974).

and restrict the entry of foreign capital into the region. Addressing the junta in 1975, Jorge Cauas explained that ‘no one is willing to join Chile in the revising of the mechanisms that allow foreign investment.’³² By 1977 the possibility of a sub-regional common market had ground to a halt. Sergio de Castro unilaterally set Chile’s rules for foreign investment and substantially lowered tariff rates for every sector of the national economy. For the Andean Pact to work, member countries had to standardize their tariff policy and rules concerning foreign capital.³³

The junta’s decision to abandon regional economic integration and pursue a radically different economic strategy was a symbolic defeat of the O’Higinist paradigm (pan-Americanism, integration as source of collective strength) and victory for the Portalian paradigm (balance of power, economic independence from regional economies). Given the reality of Chile’s deep international isolation, there was an initial push in the direction of a pan-American strategy as an avenue for collective strength vis à vis the United States and international community. Neighboring military governments might have shared the Chilean junta’s mistrust of the northern hemisphere or United Nations, but this fact did relatively little to dampen longstanding inter-American disagreements.

Unfortunately, one case of pan-American cooperation was Plan Condor. In the seventies, military regimes across Latin America believed that they were answering a patriotic call to defeat ‘terrorism’ and reorganize the political and economic structures of

³² AHJG, No. 254, 12-23-75.

³³ AHJG, No. 299, 3-9-77.

their societies. In this respect, Chilean officers were no different from their counterparts in Uruguay, Brazil, or Argentina. However, the Chilean military believed it had a special mission within Latin America that stemmed, in part, from a belief that they had delivered a crucial blow to Soviet/Cuban expansion in 1973 and had been anointed to lead a continent wide fight against subversion.

In 1975, Manuel Contreras invited representatives of South American intelligence agencies to Santiago where he outlined a plan for their nations to share intelligence and coordinate the capture and assassination of political enemies in member countries.³⁴ The proposal went even further by envisioning the creation of a multinational secret service composed of agents from member countries who would be able to carry out joint missions and execute mutual enemies inside and outside of Latin America. The second half of the plan did not come to fruition, but Plan Condor had deadly consequences for South Americans who, fleeing persecution in their own countries, were detained and returned by another country's security service.

THE CONSULTATION OF 1978

The assassination of Orlando Letelier by car bomb on September 21, 1976 in the middle of Washington DC quickly became a focal point of international attention. Letelier, a Chilean diplomat and critic of the Pinochet regime, had successfully lobbied American congressmen to punish the junta for human rights violations and as a result became a target of state terror. When American investigators determined the culpability of Chilean actors, Justice Department officials requested the extradition of one American

³⁴ John Dinges, *The Condor Years*.

in Chile and several DINA agents including Manuel Contreras.³⁵ To deal with this politically liability, Pinochet dissolved the DINA in August 1977 and replaced it with the CNI (National Intelligence Center). He then isolated Manuel Contreras and made sure Chilean courts would not recognize the evidence presented by the US Justice Department. The Letelier affair constituted a persistent point of diplomatic tension between the United States and Chile for many years to come but it had much more far-reaching political consequences.

On December 16, 1977 the United Nations' General Assembly approved a resolution condemning the Chilean government for human rights violations and other abuses of power. Unlike past resolutions, this one could not be easily dismissed as Soviet manipulation because it was redacted by diplomats from the Carter Administration and co-sponsored by Cuba. Of the 135 countries that voted, 96 approved the resolution and this group included the United States, Venezuela, and Panama. 14 opposed and 25 abstained. Unlike past UN resolutions censuring Chile for the human rights situation, this one had a broader base of support and foreshadowed possible political and economic ramifications. It was not clear how the regime would respond.

On December 21, Pinochet addressed the nation and called the UN resolution an unjust judgment and the work of exiled Chileans trying to subvert the new order. It was the vengeful work of those frustrated by 'the defeat our country inflicted on international communism on September 11, 1973.' Framing the UN resolution as an affront to national honor, Pinochet informed the nation that on January 4, 1978 all Chileans over

³⁵ John Dinges, *Assassination on Embassy Row* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).

the age of eighteen would be required to vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on a simple ballot reading ‘Facing international aggression...I reaffirm the legitimacy of the government of the Republic.’³⁶ The ‘national consultation’, as it was called, would give every Chilean citizen an opportunity to reject ‘foreign aggression’.

Long before the dictatorship, it was common for officers to express a dim view of international law, but Gustavo Leigh and José Merino opposed Pinochet’s plan. First, it could backfire and embarrass the regime. Second, it seemed a dangerous political precedent. Would it lead to demands for popular participation? Third, it illustrated the increasingly personalist nature of the military government as the voting card read: ‘I support President Pinochet in his defense of the dignity of Chile and I reaffirm the legitimacy of the government of the Republic to lead the country’s process of institutionalization: Yes or No’.

A report from the US Embassy in Santiago reported that the plebiscite, in spite of the outward facade of unity, had ‘sharpened and brought into the open institutional divisions within the military’.³⁷ The Gustavo Leigh even took the unprecedented step of leaking two letters to the national press expressing open disapproval of the ‘consultation’. General Mendoza sided with Pinochet, but rumors began to circulate in the national press about the junta’s disagreement. Facing a climate of rumor and speculation, the junta granted permission to a pair of journalists to inquire about the matter on December 28,

³⁶ “Se Convocó a Plebiscito Nacional,” *El Mercurio*, December 22, 1977.

³⁷ CDP, Telegram from Santiago to US State Department, ‘Taking Stock of the Chilean Plebiscite’, 1-24-78.

1977. Leigh refused to comment and Merino maintained, along with Pinochet, that personal differences did not alter the unity of the junta.³⁸

The vote on January 4 was neither completely free, fair, nor secure. Those who urged ‘No’ could not campaign, press censorship negated the possibility of an open public debate, and the vote lacked mechanisms to prevent repeat voting and ensure voter privacy. In the lead up to the vote, newspapers printed lists of professionals, union leaders, artists and intellectuals who supported the ‘Yes’.³⁹ The official result was seventy five percent voting ‘Yes’ (4,012,023), twenty percent voting ‘No’ (1,092,226) and five percent annuled or invalid.

How should we interpret the 1978 plebiscite? Undoubtedly some Chileans would have feared the regime was monitoring voters and might punish anyone who voted No. At the same time, many citizens probably considered the UN resolution as a violation of Chile’s national sovereignty. What is certain is that the outcome affirmed Pinochet’s personal authority, his preeminent place in the junta, and showed, despite caveats, that his regime could mobilize millions of citizens for an act of solidarity with the government at a national level.

³⁸ AHJG, No. 336, 12-28-77.

³⁹ See *El Mercurio*, December 25, 1977 to January 3, 1978.

¡VAMOS CHILENO! A TERMINAR CON LA FARSA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS



TODO CHILE CONTRA LA AGRESION INTERNACIONAL

SI A CHILE

Figure 6.1, 'Let's go Chileans! End this United Nations farce. All of Chile against the international aggression. Yes to Chile.'⁴⁰

Three months after the plebiscite, the junta decreed a general amnesty for all crimes committed between September 1973 and March 1978.⁴¹ Given the number of political dissidents in Chilean jails and the number of state officials who had participated

⁴⁰ *El Mercurio*, Dec. 31, 1977. This piece of propaganda is particularly interesting because the Chilean on top of the United Nations is the archetypal 'roto chileno', Chile's lower class citizen, typically from the countryside, who in military lore constituted the great warrior of the War of the Pacific. Unlike the nation's cosmopolitan elites, 'el roto chileno' was keenly patriotic during moments of national peril.

⁴¹ A fact of Chilean political history is that amnesties consistently follow political crises involving violence and illegal acts. See Brian Loveman and Elizabeth Lira *Las Suaves Cenizas del Olvido: vía chilena de reconciliación política, 1814-1932* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 1999).

in counterinsurgency operations, this law had weight. Looking back, Army General Javier Urbina writes that the law ‘was necessary to pacify the spirits of all Chileans.’⁴² Of course, not all Chileans shared General Urbina’s view of the amnesty, least of all, those whose family members had been disappeared, but the 1978 Amnesty carried major significance. The state of siege was lifted in favor of a state of emergency, which provided a new measure of protection for political dissidents.

Yet, not all was well within the armed forces. Gustavo Leigh had become very unhappy with the ‘modernization’ process. When legislation to privatize social security reached the junta, he insisted it was simply too risky for the private sector to manage people’s retirement savings. What if market interest rates plummeted or the national money depreciated?⁴³ In another illustrative junta session, Finance Minister Sergio de Castro bemoaned the high cost of labor in Chile due to overly generous unemployment benefits. The solution to Chile’s unemployment problem, he said, was to liberalize labor markets and make it easier for employers to hire and fire workers. If employers had fewer obligations to compensate laid off workers, they would hire more and expand operations. After de Castro had spoken, Leigh proposed the opposite:

Traditionally, one way to combat unemployment has been through emergency government programs, either through housing or public works programs because they stimulate the entire country, its industry and its production. So I think that one way to overcome this - I am not a technician, I am not a specialist - would be to undertake extensive programs to build 40 thousand or 50 thousand houses, which would create a huge demand for labor.⁴⁴

⁴² General Javier Urbina Paredes, “Algunos recuerdos sobre la Academia de Guerra del Ejército, 1966-2000” in *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, 175.

⁴³ AHJG, No. 337, 1-2-78.

This classically Keynesian strategy to jump start the economy was quickly rebuked by De Castro who insisted Leigh's plan would artificially increase the cost of labor and undermine macroeconomic economic stability. The solution was lowering the cost of labor. De Castro believed the organized working class would remain hostile to the regime regardless of any wage increases or favorable labor legislation so their reaction was a non-issue. Gustavo Leigh, by contrast, feared that 'anti-labor' policies would alienate citizens domestically and create a negative image of the country abroad. This preoccupation for the regime's *imagen política* set him apart from Pinochet. Leigh said of Pinochet in 1979, he 'lacks a real vision of the country's internal and external political situation.'⁴⁵

Before his conversion to neoliberal precepts in the ministry of health, air force general Fernando Matthei Aubel described himself as *desarrollista* who thought the state had to be the principal agent of economic and social change. He shared his fellow officers mistrust of the technocrats brought in to the government. Matthei recalls the first time he heard these technocrats give a presentation about deregulation and market driven growth, he heard a fellow air force general mutter 'Have you heard the latest? The development plan consists of not having a development plan.'⁴⁶

The lone convert among his colleagues, Fernando Matthei thought the government's new political economy would put the country on track for stability and

⁴⁴ AHJG, No. 343, 4-24-78.

⁴⁵ Florencia Varas, *Gustavo Leigh: El General Disidente* (Santiago: Ediciones Aconcagua, 1979), 29.

⁴⁶ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 208.

prosperity. He thought it was a chance for Chile to abandon policies that had failed to produce growth, but for his colleagues the high unemployment and low wages produced by the shock policies augured a resurgence of Marxism and an ignoble end to the military government. During lunchroom conversations, Matthei reports that air force generals were making comments like ‘this political economy is a disaster’ and ‘the government isn’t going to last another three months’.⁴⁷ These officers believed Pinochet had violated the spirit of the ‘September 11 Movement’ by failing to construct a social market economy outlined in the ‘Declaration of Principles’.⁴⁸

In April 1978, the CNI discovered and neutralized an air force conspiracy to remove Pinochet from the junta. In July Leigh gave an interview to the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, in which he said Chile ought to return to democracy within five years rather than Pinochet’s plan for presidential elections in 1989. He also said if Orlando Letelier’s assassination proved to be the work of DINA agents, he would reconsider membership in the junta. This indiscretion was unacceptable to Pinochet, Merino, and Mendoza who forced Leigh to quit the junta on July 24. Fernando Matthei took his place as commander in chief of the air force, but not before eighteen air force generals resigned in solidarity with Leigh.

This conflict between Pinochet and Leigh reveals the tensions that existed in every branch of the armed forces where similar criticisms of Pinochet and the regime could be found. Leigh’s departure from the junta had taken place without a violent

⁴⁷ Ibid. 240.

⁴⁸ Varas, *Gustavo Leigh: El General Disidente*.

struggle, but the loss of Chile's air force high command came precisely at the moment Chile needed strong leadership to face the Argentine threat. The bitterness of the dispute and its ramifications for Chile's national security strengthened Matthei's resolve to impose a strict apoliticism on the air force.⁴⁹ In coming decade, he withdrew men from government ministries and worked to cultivate a culture of professional detachment from politics.

On the occasion of the air force's anniversary in 1979, Fernando Matthei repeatedly emphasized that the institution was not an armed political party that would feud or seek advantage over other institutions. His air force would be a 'non-deliberative' state organ devoted to serving the military government.⁵⁰ In 1980, the *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea* featured a protocol salute to the president of the republic and minister of defense, which reproduced traditional civil-military norms.⁵¹

The same can be said of Admiral Merino who, like Matthei, wished to avoid a politicization of his institution and avoid a conflict with the army. Merino had direct memories of the navy's politicization under Carlos Ibáñez and the disorder that emerged in the wake of the dictator's sudden demise. Merino was also historically conscious of the 1891 civil war when the army and navy had found themselves in conflict. These factors – among others - contributed to Merino prioritizing a stable political order and accepting Pinochet's supreme position in the junta. Matthei and Merino did not always agree with Pinochet, but the two leaders understood that internal politics could quickly

⁴⁹ Ibid. 273-284.

⁵⁰ *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 150 (1979).

⁵¹ *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 152 (1980).

undermine the junta, their institutions, and damage the military's ability to defend the country. This was a lesson made apparent by military governments across the globe from Argentina to Pakistan.

THE NEAR OUTBREAK OF WAR

In 1971 Salvador Allende's Administration agreed to submit Chile's longstanding dispute with Argentina over possession of three strategic islands just off the coast of Tierra del Fuego to international arbitration. By 1975, indications reached the junta that a ruling favorable to Chile was likely. However, this seemingly positive development came at the time when Chile lacked both a credible military deterrent and access to major arms markets. By contrast Argentina's military did not suffer from similar supply problems.⁵² What would stop the Argentines from rejecting an unfavorable judgment and taking the contested islands by force? Another distinct possibility was a Peruvian invasion of Chile's north if Argentina invaded Chile's south.

Given these dynamics, the junta resolved to exhaust every diplomatic channel but not at the price of giving up an inch of national territory. To understand the high command's outlook it is necessary to highlight the lingering memory of La Moneda ceding Atlantic Patagonia to Buenos Aires in 1879 as a measure to prevent Argentina from entering the War of the Pacific on the side of Bolivia and Peru.⁵³ From the junta's perspective, Argentina was picking a fight because Chile was vulnerable and might be

⁵² European governments such as Austria and West Germany sold arms to Argentina while simultaneously refusing them to Chile.

⁵³ AHJG, No. 190, 4-15-75.

forced to concede territory once again. The junta's suspicions were confirmed in 1977. International arbiters declared Chile the sole owner the islands in the Beagle Channel - Nueva, Lennox and Picton – but Argentina's military government immediately rejected the arbitral award and began reinforcing its Atlantic naval base Ushusia. Given the south's insular characteristics, immediate defense of the national territory would fall to Chile's navy, a navy that was both outmatched in size and sophistication. Ironically, Admiral Merino was the junta's hawk. He thought war was unavoidable. Pinochet, by contrast, viewed war with Argentina as an outcome that could only harm Chile.⁵⁴

In 1978, Chile's navy scrambled to muster a credible deterrent by readying older air/sea naval units for combat.⁵⁵ The government, for its part, exhausted every available diplomatic channel to forestall a war with Argentina and prevent Peruvian or Bolivian involvement. During this period the armed forces quietly and soberly prepared to repel twin invasions of the south and north by Argentina and Peru respectively. One great drama of this period was the fact that Chile could not commit its limited human and material resources to just one theater of operation. Moving military forces from the north to Tierra del Fuego created a new set of vulnerabilities vis à vis Peru.⁵⁶ Chile's difficult geography made defense of the national territory a challenging enterprise to say the least.

Was the Southern Cone really on the verge of war? Several factors might suggest otherwise. First, Argentina's military government began to publicly stir up domestic support for war against Chile in 1978. This fact seems to belie a serious intention to

⁵⁴ Patricia Arancibia and Francisco Bulnes, *La Escuadra en Acción* (Santiago: Grijalbo, 2005).

⁵⁵ Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, 1527-1538.

⁵⁶ Arancibia and Palart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 253-267.

launch a large-scale land invasion. Perhaps Argentina's generals were just saber rattling to unify the country and justify their national security doctrine? Second, it can be difficult to imagine the United States allowing a major conflict to unfold in the western hemisphere without decisive intervention.⁵⁷ Third, Operation Condor stands as one clear example of transnational cooperation between the governments of Chile and Argentina.

After taking into account all available evidence, I offer the following interpretation: Argentina hoped to win quick and easy territorial concessions by intimidating Chile. However, things looked different on the other side of the Andes. Santiago feared a regional conflict in the far south might touch off a wider war involving Peru. Moreover, once Buenos Aires committed itself to a military operation, it would become more difficult to predict the course events. In the later half of 1978, Chilean soldiers deploying to the northern and southern territories said farewell to family members unsure if they would return home.⁵⁸ Full-scale war seemed a real possibility in Chile if not in Argentina.

The moment of truth finally arrived on December 22 when the Argentine junta launched *Operación Soberanía*. Buenos Aires' strategy was to occupy the disputed islands off the coast of Tierra del Fuego and wait for Santiago's response. If Chilean resistance did not materialize, Argentina would be able to negotiate a favorable settlement from a position of strength. To the surprise of most foreign observers, Admiral Merino dispatched the fleet with orders to engage the enemy.

⁵⁷ Arancibia and Palart, *Sergio de Castro*, 306.

⁵⁸ *La Academia de Guerra del Ejército de Chile 1886-2006*, 175.

Here it important to put the Chilean response in the context of its distinction as undefeated military. The navy's patron saint Captain Arturo Prat had died a martyr's death facing similar odds during the War of the Pacific. In the words of one army general 'no one is willing to go down in history as the first Chilean soldier to surrender.'⁵⁹ Even though Chile's outgunned navy had a slim chance of repelling the invasion, it hoped an energetic struggle might deter the enemy and force a ceasefire.

Fortuitously for Chile, a storm delayed the Argentine advance and in those hours of delay, a papal envoy arrived in Buenos Aires offering mediation. The pope's offer forced the Argentina junta to consider the consequences of rejecting papal mediation. Argentina had been the aggressor and this fact would undoubtedly shape world opinion. After all, the Argentina junta benefited enormously from Chile's inability to acquire weapons as a result of its negative image. But also important, perhaps equally important, was the realization that their adversary was determined to fight.

THE MERCHANT MARINE CONTROVERSY

In 1974, the junta proclaimed supreme decree No. 346, which defined all the waters along Chilean littoral the 'Sea of Chile'. The junta also strengthened existing legislation from Carlos Ibáñez's administration to protect and subsidize the nation's merchant's marine.⁶⁰ These acts generated a palpable excitement about the dawn of a

⁵⁹ Arancibia and Balart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 231.

⁶⁰ "Editorial," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 700 (1974).

new era. Editors of the *Revista de la Marina* wrote that Chile, now liberated from ideologies of class struggle, could finally pursue its maritime vocation.⁶¹

The legislation to grow the nation's merchant fleet relied on several mechanisms. First, only Chilean vessels would be allowed to transport goods along the national coast. Second, it established a fifty percent target reservation for Chilean ships transporting goods abroad. Third, it provided operation and construction subsidies, commercial concessions, and low interest loans to the shipping industry. Fourth, the state matched thirty five percent of every shipping firm's annual profits to help them acquire new ships and expand the nation's domestic capacity.

By 1977, the legislation was having a clear impact. Domestic ship owners were purchasing vessels from Brazil and Japan to transport new exports like fishmeal and wood pulp. In 1978, the Merchant Marine's cargo capacity surpassed a million tons, roughly double the capacity of 1973, but there was an inherent contradiction. The state had chosen to help one sector of the economy while it imposed market reforms on the rest of Chilean society.⁶² Why did the merchant fleet deserve special treatment? From the navy's point of view, domestic shipping was a matter of national security.⁶³

The *Revista de la Marina* insisted that all enterprises related to maritime activities – ship repair, ship building, port construction and repair - had economic and strategic value for the country. These maritime industries generated employment and enhanced

⁶¹ "La Juventud y el Mar," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 700 (1974).

⁶² "Noticiero," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 724 (1978).

⁶³ "Política de Fomento de la Marina Mercante," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 717 (1977). Rear Admiral Oscar Manzano Villablanca (R), "Chile y su Marina Mercante," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 720 (1977).

the nation's base of indigenous technicians, but more importantly, Chile's commercial fleet represented the nation's ability to transport vital goods to and from the country. For this reason, among others, it was clear that:

Chile's naval industry requires special legislation to compete abroad since every country in the world, directly or indirectly, protects and subsidizes its shipyards being an industry with economic, strategic and geopolitical effects.⁶⁴

Yet, not all junta members and government officials shared this view. Fernando Matthei said he would not sign into law any legislation that treated the merchant marine differently from the aviation industry.⁶⁵

When legislation authored by navy officials reached the junta in November 1979 that preserved key aspects of the 1974 law including reciprocal tariffs and subsidies for the purchase of new vessels an emotionally charged session ensued. Miguel Kast of ODEPLAN opposed the legislation on the grounds that it was discriminatory to other economic sectors. The minister of transportation agreed: any regime of protection and subsidies for maritime shipping should be the same for aviation and terrestrial shipping. After a long lecture about the new political economy (something he did often), Finance Minister Sergio de Castro said 'frankly, I do not share the concern of the navy's cabinet that the merchant marine must be the only activity of the country that is entirely out of step with the general political economy.'⁶⁶ Mendoza, Matthei and Pinochet agreed, they saw no compelling reason to maintain the existing law.

⁶⁴ "La Armada y Los Intereses Marítimos," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 731 (1979).

⁶⁵ AHJG, No. 367, 4-25-79.

⁶⁶ AHJG, No. 381, 11-6-79.

Rear Admiral Aldo Montagna passionately argued that the merchant marine deserved special treatment because every other nation on the planet subsidized its commercial fleet either directly or indirectly. How would Chile compete with Japan, West Europe, and the USA? Its shipping industry confronted a structural inequality that made commercial expansion into profitable routes exceptionally difficult.⁶⁷ Officers reasoned that the junta's 'principle of subsidization' had established the state's right to intervene in the economy when individual citizens could not accomplish things that affected the common good. In the case of the commercial fleet, the state had a national security interest to protect and foment its maritime industries.

Merino and his legislative team lost the debate. On November 21, 1979 the junta promulgated Merchant Marine Law No. 3059, which terminated the old regime of protections and subsidies. From the navy's perspective, the government was rashly implementing a political economy without pausing to evaluate its impact on national interests. Investment in the merchant marine made perfect sense if one took into account the long-term benefits and contribution to Chile's human capital.⁶⁸

Ship Captain Jorge Hadermann insisted that the mechanics of comparative advantage had to be harmonized with questions of national security. Since Chile had resolved to export what it could produce efficiently and import what it could not, oceanic transport acquired a new strategic importance. An open economy and dependence on

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ "Letter to the editor by Corvette Captain Hugo Zuloaga Orrego," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 737 (1980). See also Ship Captain Enrique Medina Aedo, "El Concepto Costo-Efectividad: usos y abusos," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 738 (1980). Corvette Captain Abel Osorio Espinoza, "Evaluación Social de Proyectos," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 741 (1981).

external trade necessitated secure maritime transport. In the event of a world war, local conflict or commercial boycott, Chile needed the ships and personnel to conduct its own coastal shipping and carry vital commodities such as fossil fuels back home. Without this external capacity, Chile would be subject to the whims of foreign vessels charging exorbitant prices or refusing to trade.⁶⁹

Frigate Captain Tomás Sepulveda agreed, noting that Latin America found itself in a difficult position during World War II because European ships, which had handled the region's foreign trade, suddenly became unavailable thereby driving up transportation costs. Several authors pointed to the Dunkirk evacuation in 1940 and Falklands War in 1982 as moments when Britain's merchant marine was mobilized as a naval reserve to provide logistical support for a war effort. The general feeling was that leaving the nation's commerce to the vicissitudes of supply and demand was dangerous.⁷⁰

Competition, efficiency, and markets might be fine for Chile's domestic industry, but structures of inequality conspired against the transportation sector because developed nations with economies of scale enjoyed enormous advantages on the free market. Chile's merchant marine faced distorted international competition because foreign governments protected and subsidized their merchant marines. In such a 'free market' Chile's ship owners would never be able to enjoy equal access to international markets

⁶⁹ Ship Captain Jorge Hadermann Valenzuela, "Marina Mercante y Seguridad Nacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 743 (1981). Officers believed Chile's merchant marine required a capacity of three million tons, sixty percent short of the actual figure, to independently handle its own commerce.

⁷⁰ Frigate Captain Tomas Sepulveda Whittle (R), "Marinas Mercantes Latinoamericanas," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 746 (1982). Frigate Captain Sergio Ostornol Varela, "ASMAR y la Industria Naval," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 749 (1982). Second Lieutenant Gabriel Robles Gonzalez, "letter to editor," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 749 (1982).

without the state negotiating reciprocity agreements or rectifying certain structural imbalances. Vice Admiral Oscar Buzeta wrote:

Only the state has the ability to correctively intervene in this distorted and unequal market by the only solution that exists: compensating and conceding support and economic aid to the national shipping companies as a means to offset the artificial benefits provided by other states to their own register of ships. This favorable state intervention is legitimate inside of our current economic system because it restores fairness in order for free competition to flourish.⁷¹

Rear Admiral Francisco Ghisolfo emphasized the inexistence of perfect competition in world markets and the national security imperative of having a strong domestic shipping industry. Concerning the possibility of a national emergency Ghisolfo wrote:

Practically speaking, one might ask if it is more logical and cost-effective to pay, during peacetime a small additional cost to acquire the merchant navy we need, rather than during war, when - in addition to being very expensive – we have no reasonable certainty of being able to do it.⁷²

Senior officers agreed that the government was failing to strike the proper balance between national security and economic rationalization. Frigate Captain Hervé Dilham acknowledged that Chile's ship owners had artificially expanded their capacity to a million tons from 1974 to 1979, but he underlined that the Chilean state lacked a clear formula to reconcile Chile's 'social market economy' with matters of state security.⁷³ Naval officers believed Chilean industry ought to export what it could produce most

⁷¹ Vice Admiral Oscar Buzeta Muñoz, "La Marina Mercante Prospectiva Geopolítica," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 747 (1982).

⁷² Rear Admiral Francisco Ghisolfo Araya, "Marina Mercante Nacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 752 (1983).

⁷³ Frigate Captain Hervé Dilhan Boisier responding to an article by Rear Admiral Ghisolfo Araya, *Revista de la Marina*, No. 754 (1983).

efficiently, but ‘such efforts were of little use if we do not put [those goods] on the solid decks of numerous Chilean ships.’⁷⁴

The merchant marine was an emotionally charged issue because officers believed Chile’s national security required a powerful navy and large merchant marine. At the core of this conviction was nationalism: Chile ought to have a nationally owned and operated merchant marine.⁷⁵ A larger merchant marine meant self-sufficiency in the area of domestic shipping and more Chileans with the technical training to enter the naval reserve in times of emergency. Echoing Alfred T. Mahan’s *The Influence of Seapower Upon History*, Frigate Captain Carlos Schnaidt wrote:

Those peoples who have used the sea to transport the goods they produce and the goods they need to survive with their own commercial fleet, manned by nationals and protected in international waters by an adequate naval power, will prevail over terrestrial powers, however large they may be.⁷⁶

Maritime aggrandizement was framed as fulfillment of a vision bequeathed to the nation by its republican fathers.⁷⁷ José Merino wrote ‘our most visionary leaders are those who raise their eyes and imagination to the oceanic horizon. O’Higgins, the father of the nation, with unheard of effort creates the first national squadron...Portales, years later, with great vision, organizes our merchant marine.’⁷⁸ Merino routinely framed Chile’s

⁷⁴ Ship Captain Claudio Collados Núñez (R) and Frigate Captain Juan MacKay Barriga, “Editorial: El Transporte Marítimo,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 736 (1980).

⁷⁵ Op. Cit. “El Rol de las Armadas en el Año 2000”. See also Rear Admiral Eri Solis Oyarzún, “Nuestra Marina Mercante,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 755 (1983).

⁷⁶ Frigate Captain Carlos Schnaidt Parker, “Concepciones Geopolíticas en las Teorías de Mahan,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 740 (1981).

⁷⁷ “Visión Marítima de Don Diego Portales,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 699 (1974).

republican history as a struggle between those with and those without maritime consciousness.⁷⁹

The navy's internal discussion of the merchant marine is noteworthy because it illustrates the tensions free market reforms brought to bear on all three branches. Army and air force officers had similar concerns. Generals Roberto Guillard, Fernando Lyon, and Alejandro Medina Lois opposed the privatization of Entel – Chile's state telecommunications company – on the grounds that telephone services represented the country's nervous system. Like the coal or steel industries, they felt putting telecommunications in private hands was dangerous.⁸⁰ Yet, these disagreements never threatened the military government's unity. Generals Guillard, Lyon, and Medina's loyalty to Pinochet and the regime was steadfast.

THE 1980 CONSTITUTION

On July 9, 1977 Pinochet gave a speech from the Chacarillas Hill in Santiago and spoke of a phased transition to civilian rule. In that speech he outlined a vision of democracy that would be 'depoliticized, authoritarian, protected, integrative, and technical' with a tutelary role for the armed forces. Yet, Pinochet underscored that his government would not hand power back to civilians until it had achieved all of its goals

⁷⁸ Admiral José T. Merino, "Mes del Mar," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 718 (1977).

⁷⁹ Admiral José T. Merino, "El Mar de Chile: garantía para la recuperación nacional," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 754 (1983).

⁸⁰ Raquel Correa, Malú Sierra, and Elizabeth Subercaseaux., *Los Generales del Régimen* (Santiago: Editorial Aconcagua, 1983), 197.

and objectives. For three years, an enigma surrounded the Chacarillas speech. When would the phased transition to civilian rule begin?⁸¹

On July 9, 1980, exactly three years later, the regime announced a new constitution would be put to a national vote on September 11, 1980. Among the constitution's most salient features was the transitional phase to democracy. Pinochet would serve an eight-year presidential term from 1981 to 1989 with the possibility of his perpetuation in power until 1998. The constitution also established a permanent, tutelary role for the armed forces in the life of the nation.

The ideology underpinning of the 1980 Constitution was the idea of 'protected democracy'. Just as single-party communist states in Cuba or China justify political exclusion as means to protect the revolutionary gains of 'the people' from class enemies, the 1980 Constitution promised ideological pluralism insofar as it did not endanger 'the people' from a minority of enemies espousing evil ideologies. The notion of a 'protected democracy', modeled to some extent after the German Federal Republic, established the principle that civil society – press, universities, unions – required protection from social enemies seeking to destabilize the whole of society.⁸²

Another key military idea underpinning the Constitution was the explicit imposition of duties and responsibilities on all citizens. On September 11, 1976 the junta issued decree law 1.552 enumerating the traditional rights and constitutional guarantees common to liberal democracy. However, in Chile these rights would come with duties,

⁸¹ "Cumpleaños con enigma," *Hoy*, July 9, 1980.

⁸² The Federal German Republic's Constitution had explicit provisions to avoid the excessive liberalism of the Weimar Republic that had facilitated the rise of totalitarian fascism.

among them: respect for national emblems, defense of national honor and its fundamental values, and vigilance for national security. According to this law any citizen who diffused doctrines of class conflict was violating their responsibilities to the nation.⁸³ For the government, individual rights were not sacrosanct; they were necessarily limited by larger obligations and duties. This idea of citizenship being a balance between rights and duties had deep roots in the culture of men who spent most of their lives in uniforms, carrying out orders and pledging service to the fatherland.⁸⁴

Captain Sergio Cea wrote that a crucial difference between the 1925 and 1980 Constitutions was that the new *carta fundamental* explicitly contained provisions to protect the family and deal with the issue of terrorism. Anyone convicted of terrorism could lose his or her citizenship. It also enshrined the regime's 'seven modernizations' designed to depoliticize the state in the areas of labor, agriculture, education, health, social security, justice, and public administration.⁸⁵ For example, the 1980 Constitution guaranteed the right to public *or* private health care, right to public *or* private education, right to join *or* not to join a union. These constitutional provisions were meant to restrict the centralization of social power by prohibiting closed shop unions and creating a multi-tier system of education and health care that would check the politicization of state structures. For opponents, the Constitution delivered a fatal blow to past collective solidarities and institutionalized a new regime of societal *anomie*.

⁸³ Decree Law 1.552, 'Acta Constitucional No. 3 de los derechos y deberes constitucionales'.

⁸⁴ "Editorial," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 404 (1980).

⁸⁵ Captain Sergio Cea C., "Aspectos Preponderantes de la Constitución Política de la República de Chile de 1980," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 409 (1982).

From the regime's perspective, the 1980 Constitution enshrined a modern, national security state that protected the community from its internal enemies and guaranteed individual liberties. It created a National Security Council composed of army, navy, air force, and police commanders, presidents of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, the Comptroller General, and president of the republic. However, the council did not merely advise the president at his or her request. Any two of the council's members had the power to convoke the council and manifest opinions or concerns to the other members about anything that might compromise the nation's institutional structure.

Other controversial aspects of this 'modernized' version of democracy was that the armed forces would retain exclusive control over their process of retirement and advancement and elected presidents would not be able to remove commanders in chief once they had appointed them from among the five most senior officials of each armed institution. The constitution also designated nine non-elected senators to be drawn from a pool of past presidents, Supreme Court justices, and military commanders. All of this institutional structure ensured that civilians would not be able to undo what military regime had built because there were clear limits to civilian control over the political system. The constitution recognized a role for the military maintaining and protecting of the constitution itself. Major Luis Zanelli the year prior summed up the logic of the constitution when he wrote 'modern democracy should incorporate elements of control and self-defense to secure its survival in an active and dynamic way'.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Op. Cit. "Política y Estrategia en los 30 Años de Guerra Fría".

On August 28, two weeks prior to the vote, the academy of military history organized a talk at the army general staff to put the new constitution in historical perspective. Just as the 1833 and 1925 constitutions had been appropriate for the specific needs of the people who had written them, the 1925 Constitution maintained key elements of the 1833 document while eliminating its outmoded aspects and making key modifications such as the need for a new balance of power between the legislative and executive branches. Likewise, the 1980 Constitution eliminated anachronistic qualities of the 1925 document and introduced key modifications such as a second round presidential election to avoid a minority president from reaching power.⁸⁷ Thus, the 1980 Constitution preserved the political paradigm established by Diego Portales in 1833 - the proven model for all of Chile's constitutions - while introducing key innovations. It was a modern, historically evolved achievement.

MILITARY MEMORY AND THE 1980 CONSTITUTION

These most controversial features of the 1980 Constitution should be placed in the context of bitter institutional memories from the previous decades. The government of Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970) showed little concern for the needs of a modern military, believing that diplomacy would suffice to solve outstanding frontier disputes. Based on this assumption, Christian Democrats drew resources away from Chile's defense budget in order to fund social programs and their own political machine. This fact skewed the region's military balance of power in favor of Peru and Argentina and

⁸⁷ Lieutenant Colonel Luis Beas Valenzuela (R), "Bases de Nuestra Carta Fundamental: algunos antecedentes sobre las Constituciones de 1818, 1833 y 1925: El Movimiento Militar de 1924 y la Nueva Institucionalidad," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 405 (1980).

left Chile in a vulnerable position during the seventies.⁸⁸ To prevent a similar situation, the 1980 Constitution reserved a full ten percent of all export revenue from CODELCO (the state copper company) for the defense budget.

Officers concurred that Frei's under-funding of the armed forces had gravely imperiled national security. But resentment for the Christian Democrats went beyond the issue of material impoverishment. Some party members had derisively called the nation's soldiers 'state parasites' and 'mentally castrated' automatons in the sixties. These insults and humiliations lingered in the memory of a proud military. More generally, officers viewed the PDC as largely responsible for 'giving the country to Marxism' by refusing to make an alliance with the political right in 1970.

Another sore point was Eduardo Frei's selection of military commanders in chief. In 1968, shortly after eighty army officers had resigned to protest their notoriously low salaries, Frei selected personal friend Sergio Castillo to be the army's commander in chief, knowing full well that he would refrain from voicing the army's grievances over low pay and insufficient resources. General Castillo was not only Frei's political ally; he had been selected over the heads of four other more senior army generals who would have presumably vocalized those institutional grievances. Inside army barracks Frei appeared indifferent to the social needs of the military and their declining capacity to defend the nation.

⁸⁸ Consult Lieutenant Colonel Jaime Ojeda Torrent, "Realidades Vividas Durante Los Gobiernos Comprendidos entre 1964 y 1973," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 433 (1989).

Issues in the navy resembled those in the army. Commander in chief Jacobo Neumann threatened to resign if the government denied resources for naval aviation. Frei promptly asked for his resignation. From Neumann's perspective it would have been disservice to the navy if he did not manifest the institution's concerns and grievances. Carlos Tromben writes that Frei's presidency was traumatic for the navy because the institution had four different commanders in chief, thereby depriving it of stable, continuous leadership during a period of escalating tension with Argentina.⁸⁹ Naval officers felt equally undermined by their president.

The 1980 Constitution made it impossible for civilian presidents to remove sitting commanders in chief. This provision effectively resolved a major grievance from the Frei years. Moreover, the National Security Council established a formal role for the armed forces in the political system itself. Military commanders in chief could convoke the council when they perceived a threat to the nation's institutional structure (i.e. threats from left wing parties). From a military vantage point, the 1980 Constitution included key features to ensure the armed forces would not be marginalized by civilians, underfunded, or abused by arbitrary executive authority.

THE PLEBISCITE

Several key political figures questioned the legitimacy of any vote organized by the regime. What assurances did the Chilean people have that the government would abide by an unfavorable result? Former president Eduardo Frei Montalva said the new

⁸⁹ Carlos Tromben Corvalán, "Cambios en el Alto Mando de la Armada de Chile. Un caso para el estudio de las Relaciones Civiles-Militares durante el Gobierno de Eduardo Frei Montalva," Paper presented at the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, Santiago, Chile, October 28-30, 2003.

constitution fundamentally violated Chile's democratic traditions. Pinochet said it restored and revitalized an older, civic tradition. The Catholic Church shared Eduardo Frei's concerns and urged a NO vote. Gustavo Leigh Guzmán called the constitution 'institutionalization of the dictatorship' and the newest affirmation of Pinochet's personal power.⁹⁰

In the run up to the plebiscite, Pinochet showed he could still mobilize Chileans during his tour to promote the *Constitución de Libertad*. Speaking to large crowds across the length of the country, he said the constitution would restore Chile's truthful civic tradition and mark a new era of authentic democracy free from the libertarianism and demagoguery of the past (Figure 6.2). To reject it would be to turn the clock back to 1973 and the possibility of yet another institutional breakdown. In August, Eduardo Frei led a major public gathering to oppose the constitution at Santiago's Caupolicán Theater. He demanded open elections and a return to democracy. The next day Pinochet responded with his own public event and warned of a return to political chaos if the constitution did not pass.

⁹⁰ "General Leigh: "Votaré No," *Hoy*, August 27, 1980.



Figure 6.2, Pinochet addresses a crowd during his tour to promote the 1980 Constitution.⁹¹

Any election carried out in the context of dictatorship is inherently ambiguous. What role does fear play in people's decisions? How does the absence of a completely free media influence the outcome? In 1980, the Pinochet regime stymied its opposition in multiple ways.

First, the opposition had insufficient time to coordinate a response to the referendum, which was announced two months prior to the vote. Second, anyone with a national identification card could vote. The only safeguard against repeat voting was an ink mark each voter received on their thumb, but that mark could be washed off. Third, the government used one-minute television slots to promote the constitution while the opposition had no such access. Fourth, many of Chile's most politically articulate citizens were living in a state of exile, outside of the country.

⁹¹ *Ercilla*, September 1, 1980.

It should also be noted that Chile was enjoying an economic boom in the years from 1978 to 1980. In 1979 the economy grew by 8.3 percent and Chile's middle and upper classes enjoyed previously unthinkable access to automobiles and consumer goods. There was no immediate threat of war with Argentina. It was a year of growing confidence and institutional consolidation that put the government in a credible position to present the constitution as a positive step forward in 1980.

To the elation of Pinochet and his supporters, the constitution passed with 67 percent of the vote on September 11, 1980. Critics insisted that irregular electoral procedures invalidated the outcome. Nonetheless, the vote was a watershed moment in the nation's political history. Opposition to the government from unions, clergy, and statesmen like Eduardo Frei added an appearance of legitimacy to the contest, even if those groups had lacked unfettered access to national media. Moderate opponents like Emilio Filippi of the center-left newsmagazine *Hoy* remarked:

There is no doubt Chile has entered a new phase. The President of the Republic has proclaimed it and the Chilean people, supporters of the regime or not, have voted or chosen to abstain making clear the passing from a seven year period of emergency to an eight year period of transition.⁹²

The 'Constitution of Liberty' that went into effect on March 11, 1981 was an undeniable achievement for Pinochet and his supporters. It enshrined the regime's political and economic project and created a permanent tutelary role for the military in national life. It provided the military government with a powerful base of legitimacy, and meant that

⁹² *Hoy*, September 16, 1980.

Pinochet, unlike so many other military leaders in the hemisphere, would spend the next eight years ruling as constitutional president.

CREATIVE ELITES

Writing in the forties and fifties, British historian Arnold J. Toynbee proposed that civilizations flourished when societal elites formulated appropriate solutions to contemporary problems. Conversely, civilizations declined when elites lacked the creative vision to overcome political, religious, economic, or environmental challenges. Pointing to Europe's destructive religious wars in the sixteenth century, Toynbee argued that European political elites judiciously created a new political framework in the subsequent centuries to accommodate the reality of religious pluralism. In the early part of the twentieth century, he believed Europe's ethnic nationalisms had torn the continent apart and would continue to do so unless elites constructed a European Union with a supranational identity and universal church. Such a solution would allow the West to retain its Christian heritage and acquire a new base of political and economic power to meet the challenge of eastern communism.⁹³ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Toynbee identified Otto von Bismarck and John Maynard Keynes as creative elites who formulated innovative solutions to the challenge of communism. The former established social legislation to protect the working class and keep them from turning to communism. The latter offered a solution to capitalism's cyclical crises that preserved private initiative and economic freedom.

⁹³ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972).

From 1960 to 1990 Toynbee's ideas peppered Chilean defense journals.⁹⁴ That Toynbee's ideas found a receptive audience among Chilean officers is significant for several reasons. First, the notion of creative elites with the intuitive foresight to lead acquiescent masses into a new era would have resonated with the military's understanding of national figures like Diego Portales, José Manuel Balmaceda, or Carlos Ibáñez, all of whom had reordered or attempted to reorder society at historically critical junctures.⁹⁵

Second, Toynbee was interested in what caused civilizations to grow and decline, something that resonated with the military's preexisting notion that all states experienced vital cycles of decline and regeneration. The challenge was to preserve Chile's spiritual and cultural legacy while effectively responding to the challenge of communism, demographic expansion, inflation, and economic stagnation. In pursuit of this goal it did not matter if the population loved or hated the military government; what mattered was the government's vision. It triumphed the masses' inherently short term preoccupations.

The political right shared these ideas as well. Chile's special ambassador to the UN from 1974 to 1979, Mario Arnello, spoke of a historical project led by 'a minority that interprets tradition, understands it, and is impelled to transform it into destiny.'⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Carlos Fredes Aliaga (Professor of geography and history invited to lecture at the Naval War Academy), "Algunas Ideas de Toynbee Sobre la Historia," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 619 (1960). Carlos Fredes Aliaga, "Algunas Ideas de Toynbee," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 301 (1961). See also Pittman, "Geopolitics in the ABC countries," 80-91.

⁹⁵ These ideas link to a conservative tradition in Chile that stresses the importance of authority, visionary leadership, and the past as a model for present reconfiguration. Alberto Edwards Vives, *La Fronda Aristocrática, Historia Política de Chile* (Santiago: Editorial del Pacífico, 1952). Renato Cristi and Carlos Ruiz, *El Pensamiento Conservador en Chile: seis ensayos* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1992).

Jurist Jaime Carvallo echoed Arnold Toynbee when he said ‘all acts of social creation are the work of creative individuals’ or ‘innovative minorities.’⁹⁷ This intellectual scaffolding is essential for understanding the Pinochet regime and its core supporters who believed most of their countrymen lacked sufficient vision to understand the long term projection of their institutional project.

CONCLUSIONS

During the second half of the seventies, Chilean officers accused the West of moral cowardice. The Helsinki Accords, Cuban intervention in Angola, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and US evacuation from Saigon were taken as proof of a decadent, moribund West shirking its responsibility to confront global communism. While South American military governments formed a vanguard in the fight against international communism, wealthy nations in the West foolishly accommodated the socialist bloc and allowed Marxists to penetrate their civil institutions. By contrast, the Chilean government created a ‘protected democracy’ to ensure the exclusion of Marxism and defense of western civilization. In a world where putative allies shunned them, the Cold War gave Chilean officers an abiding sense of mission and purpose.

The junta’s unity was strong at the start of the eighties. Navy chiefs might have detested the elimination of state subsidies for Chile’s merchant marine but those objections did not threaten the regime’s unity of purpose. Furthermore, all officers shared the formative experience of preparing to defend the country’s territorial integrity

⁹⁶ Mario Arnello Romo, “El Futuro de Chile, Debemos Construirlo Hoy,” *Minerva*, No. 3 (1984).

⁹⁷ Jaime Carvallo Soto, “Geopolítica y Relaciones Internacionales,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 718 (1977).

from outside attack. Reflecting on the period from 1974 to 1984, Julio Canessa said ‘When I said to my subordinates that we were preparing for war, it was not some abstract consideration: everyone knew war was a real possibility.’⁹⁸

From 1977 to 1981, the Chilean economy averaged six percent growth per annum, while inflation – Chile’s longstanding scourge - had begun to steadily decline. This economic success inspired a feeling of confidence, as did the feeling of having overcome manifold internal and external crises. At the same time, Chile was a nation of deep spiritual and spatial fractures. Dissidents began to rethink their political strategies at the start of the eighties. Notably, the Communist Party decided to embrace all forms of struggle against the dictatorship, including armed struggle. 1981 ended with clear signs of problems brewing, but the military government possessed the intellectual and cultural armor to weather the storms ahead.

Pinochet, Merino, Mattei, and Mendoza (along with a select group of jurists and economists) believed they had established the basis for a vital cycle of expansion in the life of the Chilean state. This group was strengthened by the conviction that great men of intuitive genius periodically transformed state and societal structures during key historical junctures, often without approval or popular comprehension of their transcendent deeds. The 1980 Constitution represented the culmination of a creative vision to ensure social peace and prosperity for the Chilean people.

⁹⁸ Arancibia and Palart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 287.

Chapter VII

Circling the Wagons: the survival of the Pinochet regime, 1982-1986

The permanent enemies of the western world operate inside of their own countries with the intention of provoking bloody internal wars that destroy democracy.¹

Augusto Pinochet Ugarte

On March 11, 1981 Pinochet began serving an eight-year term of office in accord with the 1980 Constitution. This was an enormous personal triumph for a man who had established a legal framework, approved by national plebiscite, to legitimize his perpetuation in power until the end of the decade. But storm clouds were gathering. The economy was on the cusp of a colossal meltdown.

In 1982 gross domestic product fell 14.3 percent. Unemployment surpassed twenty percent and a quarter million Chileans enrolled in state administered minimum employment programs.² In April Pinochet accepted the resignations of Finance Minister Sergio de Castro and Interior Minister Sergio Fernández. He then began filling key cabinet posts (economy, interior, national planning) with trusted military men. Not since 1973 had so many officers held cabinet positions. The symbolism of a military cabinet was not lost on the national press.³ Pinochet was circling the wagons.

¹ *Mercurio*, August 24, 1988.

² Figures from Loveman, *Chile: the Legacy of Hispanic Capitalism*, 281, 293.

³ *Hoy*, April 28, 1982.

The economic crisis that rocked Chile from 1982 to 1984 had manifold causes. On the one hand, international conditions conspired against the regime; the price of commodities fell and the price of oil rose. On the other hand, regime policymakers had dogmatically refused to regulate the unscrupulous activities of domestic financial groups during the boom years (1977-1980). After several years of easy access to external credit and virtually no restrictions on their reckless borrowing and speculation, Chile's heavily indebted private sector was unable to get capital from foreign banks to repay debts. Monetary policy also contributed to the crisis. Sergio de Castro had overvalued the nation's currency by fixing the Chilean peso to the dollar.⁴

Facing a total collapse of the country's capital markets, the state began to bail out banks and other financial institutions. To critics this was sickening injustice. After the government had imposed a free market economy on the population, it was socializing the losses of the nation's capitalists. In May, Pinochet spoke of reviving the idea of business committees to increase the interaction between labor and capital, a clear return to the German style capitalism and political economy favored by dissident air force generals Nicanor Díaz and Gustavo Leigh.⁵ In June, Pinochet devalued the peso. Was the regime about to do an about-face and return to Keynesian economics?

For the rest of 1982, criticism of the regime reached new, unexpected heights, especially among the political right. Former president Jorge Alessandri blamed the government's economic policies for the present crisis, and erstwhile supporters of the

⁴ Alejandro Foxley, *Latin American experiments in neoconservative economics*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

⁵ *Hoy*, May 11, 1982.

military government began to demand the restoration of democracy. Pinochet was characteristically defiant. He blamed the crisis on exogenous conditions and accused the opposition of manipulating economic hardship for political purposes. In January 1983 Pinochet said: 'I repeat before the entire country today: the government is not going to alter the course the people of Chile have chosen in a free and sovereign manner.'⁶

On May 11, 1983 the entire nation responded to a call from the Confederation of Copper Workers to participate in a nationwide strike. Families kept their children home from school, banged pots, and chanted *¡Que Pinochet se vaya!* (Pinochet out of power!) After ten years of silence Chile erupted in catharsis. Even traditionally conservative sectors of society joined the protest. In subsequent months, more protests followed as students, journalists, politicians, and activists brazenly defied the regime. Political opponents all demanded Pinochet's immediate resignation, but their tactics differed. Angry slum dwellers burned tires and barricaded streets. It was uncertain how the regime would respond to such a complex political crisis.

On June 16, Pinochet asked the junta for permission to impose a state of siege, but the junta denied his request. They feared a state of siege would leave them with no alternatives but to abdicate power if protests continued. Imposing a state of siege, they reasoned, would harm Chile's image abroad and play into the hands of an opposition that wanted to escalate the conflict. General Matthei and Admiral Merino compared the agitated political state to the outset of the Great Depression and Merino, in particular, wanted to avoid a power vacuum similar to the one that occurred when another army

⁶ "La Comezón Derechista," *Hoy*, January 5, 1983.

general - Carlos Ibáñez – abdicated the presidency in 1931.⁷ Merino had memories of the large-scale naval insurrection that year as well as the communist assault on army barracks in Copiapó and he was determined to prevent a repeat of the unstable conditions that followed General Ibáñez's rapid departure from power.⁸

Fortunately for the junta, their opposition had a rift to exploit. One contingent of political parties favored dialogue with the government. Another contingent of communists and left wing radicals rejected negotiation. They called for a mass insurrection. While moderate political groups refrained from violent confrontation with security forces many lower class shantytown dwellers used Molotov Cocktails, rocks, and slingshots to draw the police into confrontation.⁹ This dynamic put distance between the upper and lower classes and hardened the government's resolve to impose order.¹⁰ In June of 1983, Pinochet said plainly 'we will confront the germs of subversion without surrendering.'¹¹

In the years after 1982, Pinochet demonstrated his staying power but in the words of Steve Stern 'he lost cultural power' among the general population, ceasing to be the man who had saved the country from Marxist totalitarianism and who was guiding it

⁷ AHJG, No. 14, 6-16-83.

⁸ Consult Chapter I for a discussion of the period from 1931 to 1932.

⁹ Cathy Lisa Schneider, *Shantytown Protest in Pinochet's Chile* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995).

¹⁰ See Javier Martinez and Alvaro Díaz, *Chile: The Great Transformation* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1996), 32-33.

¹¹ *Hoy*, June 22, 1983, 7.

towards peace and prosperity.¹² However, Pinochet's cultural power remained largely intact inside of the armed forces. Why? This chapter highlights the largely ignored historical and cultural factors that fostered military cohesion and unity of purpose during a period of seemingly perpetual crisis.

First, it is important to recall that the armed forces had already faced the real threat of civil war in 1973, the near outbreak of war with Peru and Argentina, condemnation by the United Nations, a severe economic recession (1974-1975), and generally poor diplomatic relations with a broad sector of the international community. The navy's institutional history describes the military government as operating inside of 'an almost permanent state of war or crisis' from 1973 to 1981.¹³ Economic collapse and social protest generated serious tensions, but it would be a mistake to see the government as completely disoriented or panicked. They had weathered crises of considerable magnitude including the threat of territorial invasion.

Second, officers considered leaving power from a position of weakness a taint on their distinction as an undefeated military - *fuerzas armadas siempre victoriosas, jamás vencidas*. From this perspective, any premature departure from power was tantamount to military defeat and equivalent to capitulation and dishonor. General Matthei warned the political opposition that trying to topple the military government without a consensual agreement would result in civil war because the armed forces 'will not allow themselves

¹² Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 328.

¹³ Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, 1538.

to be defeated...there will be no unconditional surrender.’¹⁴ Any exit from power had to be an honorable one. While individual officers favored a quicker transition to democracy, they largely agreed with Admiral Merino who said ‘We arrived together and we will depart together.’¹⁵ Speaking to the nation on September 11, 1984 Pinochet said the constitutionally planned transition to democracy was irreversible.¹⁶

Third, armed opposition added legitimacy to the regime’s national security doctrine and rallied the troops in each branch of the armed forces. The existence of a large communist party advocating ‘mass insurrection’ against the regime bolstered the conviction that any transition to democracy had to occur within the confines of ‘protected democracy’. Moreover, the junta recognized that handing power to civilians from a position of weakness not only jeopardized the institutional structure they had labored to establish, but also made groups of officers vulnerable to criminal trials for human rights violations.

Fourth, Pinochet handled his opposition adroitly with ‘bait and switch’ tactics. Typically, he would make temporary concessions to the leaders of political or labor movements at pivotal moments before or during protest cycles and then reverse the government’s position once the immediate crisis had been averted.¹⁷ In this way,

¹⁴ “El Aterrizaje Político,” *El Mercurio*, September 23, 1984.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ “Tradicional Mensaje de S.E. el Presidente de la República,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 417 (1984).

¹⁷ CDP, ‘Chile: Pinochet Under Pressure’, CIA intelligence assessment, 7-1-84.

Pinochet blocked the creation of a united coalition by mixing force and compromise to exploit his opponents' divisions. He was a formidable political adversary.

This chapter also examines the effects of the US arms embargo, which impelled the Chilean military to locate new weapons suppliers and push for a greater degree of material self-sufficiency. One outgrowth of the Kennedy Amendment was a burgeoning arms industry. Another outgrowth was decreased US influence in Chile. Washington lost leverage over the regime because it lacked formal contact with the Chilean armed forces. Pinochet, for his part, learned that he did not need American support to remain in power.

WHY DID PINOCHET SURVIVE THE CRISIS?

From 1982 to 1990, a majority of the Chilean population ceased to support the military government and after 1983 there was ample reason to expect its collapse. Regime technocrats had promised per capita income would equal Portugal's by the end of the eighties. Instead, the state was bailing out a bankrupt financial sector. The junta pledged to depoliticize the country, but politics had returned with a vengeance. Old political and ideological identities did not die in the previous decade.¹⁸

From 1983 to 1984 Pinochet instructed his civilian interior minister to initiate a dialogue with the *Alianza Democrática*, a coalition of right, center, and center-left political parties demanding the full restoration of democracy. Forced to recognize their voice, Pinochet promised greater transparency with respect to the junta's legislative

¹⁸ On the persistence of political identities see Brian Loveman, "Military Dictatorship and Political Opposition in Chile, 1973-1986," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1986).

process.¹⁹ And yet the Pinochet regime emerged from the crisis years intact while military governments in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay collapsed under the weight of social pressure, economic crisis and internal division.

One mode of explanation for the Pinochet regime's resilience focuses on the political and institutional factors that prevented disputes within the armed forces from erupting into open conflict. For example, Pinochet's control over promotion and retirement allowed him to remove and isolate all the officers who threatened his position of leadership while he simultaneously created a cadre of exceptionally loyal subordinates who saw their careers tied to his. Similarly, Pinochet successfully channeled the army's Prussian tradition of apoliticism and respect for hierarchy into unconditional support for his executive authority.²⁰

Military governments in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay established collegial power sharing arrangements with mechanisms to prevent individual junta members from becoming too powerful. This was an effective check on personal ambition, but internal politics could more easily devolve into open conflict during periods of crisis. By contrast, Pinochet could rely on a disciplined military establishment and a loyal, well-organized civilian sector to support him without fear of dissident coalitions or inter-service squabbles. Undoubtedly, his dominance of the army and junta helped to mute inter-service conflict. Karen Remmer argues that Chile's peculiar authoritarian structure

¹⁹ *Hoy*, June 22, 1983. See also AHJG, No. 19, 7-19-83. In this legislative session the junta discussed the public's negative perceptions of its activities and the call for greater transparency.

²⁰ Genaro Arriagada Herrera, *Pinochet: the politics of power* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1988).

– centralized, technocratic, personalist – made possible the implementation of long-term objectives and insulated the regime from internal politics or popular pressure.²¹

Robert Barros' argues that the dictatorship's stability was not necessarily the result of Pinochet's supreme authority, but the junta's willingness to compromise. Barros draws attention to the fact that Pinochet had to compromise with junta members during the writing of the 1980 Constitution and this power sharing arrangement reinforced regime stability.²² Although Barros' revisionist argument might overstate the extent to which the junta was collegial, Pinochet did indeed need Merino's support to remove Leigh. Similarly, Pinochet's ambition to remain in power after 1990 was blocked by Matthei and Merino.

Historian Alain Rouquié has accurately highlighted that Chile, unlike Brazil or Argentina in the twentieth century, had a political right capable of winning elections without support from the military.²³ Since the turn of the century, Chile's conservative tradition was different from others in the region in terms of the depth of its social and intellectual bases.²⁴ Once the military entered power it could count on a significant base of technicians, businessmen, women, intellectuals and former politicians who actively

²¹ See Karen L. Remmer, "Nepatrimonialism: The Politics of Military Rule in Chile, 1973-1987," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1989).

²² Robert Barros, "Personalization and Institutional Constraints: Pinochet, the Military Junta, and the 1980 Constitution," *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2001).

²³ Rouquié, *The Military and the State in Latin America*.

²⁴ Cristi and Ruiz, *El Pensamiento Conservador en Chile*.

supported the dictatorship and checked the opposition's ability to push the junta out of power.

The Pinochet regime's ability to weather political crises that toppled other military governments in the region had much to do with the junta's unity of purpose and the armed forces' general cohesion. What ideas fortified this cohesion?

A MENTAL FORTRESS

In 1980 Colonel Jorge Muñoz wrote that armed Marxists had largely been defeated excluding small groups of subversives who persisted in their efforts to undermine order and freedom. The real battle was a permanent and ongoing mental struggle against pedestrian enemies who undermined the regime with 'words, rumors, foreign ideologies, and utopian solutions' in homes, factories, classrooms and other social places. Shutting out this talk was essential to defeating subversion. Muñoz urged soldiers who heard this talk to take refuge in their own 'mental fortress'.²⁵ He urged soldiers to insulate themselves from the political talk of civilian society.

Colonel Muñoz divided the country into two camps: Chileans who supported 'steady progress' and those Chileans who did not. His message for members of the armed forces was simple: any type of criticism directed at the government undermined the armed forces' morale. Institutional strength required officers to place their faith in the president and governing junta, to obey their superiors, and to ignore the 'siren song' of opponents who criticized the regime and demanded a faster transition to democracy. Finally, he put September 11, 1973 on the Chilean military's list of military victories and

²⁵ Colonel Jorge Muñoz Pontony, "La Trinchera Mental," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 405 (1980).

reminded his audience that bending before any political opposition would taint the military's distinction as undefeated in war. This type of thought - already well established before 1982 – was one source of institutional strength that worked to insulate the armed forces from political pressure.

On August 23, 1983, the junta and high-ranking officials from each branch of the military gathered to celebrate Pinochet's tenth year as commander in chief of the army. The ceremony, which took place at the height of Chile's social and economic crisis, reaffirmed Pinochet's authority and the armed forces' 'monolithic cohesion'. Vice commander in chief of the army Julio Canessa presented Pinochet with the 'Collar of Merit' for distinguished services as Captain General – a title last held by Bernardo O'Higgins – and spoke of the military's 'solid institutional cohesion' and 'unwavering loyalty' to his person.²⁶ In return, Pinochet assured his uniformed comrades that history would view their time in power as a transcendental point in the nation's history. Implicitly, he was saying the present crisis was a temporary setback and their fates, like his, were inextricably bound together. He said:

The army, navy, air force and carabineros have fulfilled countless missions of war and peace over the course of their history and today they have reaffirmed their cohesion...in my condition as generalissimo I am responsible to ensure their honor is never tarnished.²⁷

Was the junta really united? At the start of eighties, José Merino and Fernando Matthei favored a faster transition to democracy and feared Pinochet's ambition to remain in

²⁶ "10 Años en el Cargo de Comandante en Jefe del Ejército," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 413 (1983).

²⁷ Ibid.

power past his constitutional mandate would foster political instability. There was also a general weariness of military rule and a feeling that their original mission had been achieved once the 1980 Constitution went into effect.²⁸ However, the economic crisis and protests of 1983 changed things. Matthei and Merino felt the moderate opposition had proven itself untrustworthy by failing to denounce violence or break all ties with the Communist Party.²⁹ This context rallied the junta around Pinochet and strengthened its resolve to see the constitutional timeline to its conclusion. It is similarly reasonable to see this perspective as common to the entire armed forces.

In 1976, Henry Kissinger said to Augusto Pinochet ‘I gather Chile generally wins its wars.’ The dictator responded, ‘We have never lost a war. We are a proud people.’³⁰ Two years later Motta Gur, a retired Israeli General, said to Pinochet ‘I know that the Chilean army is accustomed to victory and has the ambition to continuing winning.’³¹ In both instances, outsiders reinforced the whole notion of Chile’s military as undefeated even if Kissinger only wanted to make a flattering comment and Gur wanted to sell Israeli weapons. This discursive fixture in Chilean military culture influenced the junta’s decision to resist *Operación Soberanía* and its steadfastness during the nationwide protests of 1983-1984. Any capitulation before perceived enemies was not an option to

²⁸ In 1989 interview with the *Revista Mundo* José Merino said: ‘A mí, en lo personal me habría gustado haber entregado el gobierno el año 1980, cuando se hizo la Constitución.’ This interview appears in the annex of Merino, *Bitácora de un Almirante*, 514.

²⁹ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 365.

³⁰ CDP, Dept. of State, ‘Memorandum of Conversation’, 6-8-76.

³¹ Israel Shahak, *Israel Armó las Dictaduras en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Canaán, 2007), 53.

consider.

Another force for military unity was the Chilean Communist Party, a highly disciplined and organized institution whose party membership had deep presence in Chile's unions and urban working class. Proportionally the largest communist party in the Americas (excluding post revolution Cuba), it had proven itself resilient in the face of regime efforts to intimidate, murder, or exile its chiefs from 1973 to 1981. After 1982 the party decided to embrace all forms of struggle against the regime, including armed struggle; its leadership thought it naive to believe Pinochet would ever voluntarily leave power.

What did the battle against Pinochet look like from inside of the Communist Party and working class slums of Santiago? First, it is important to underline that street protests became more destructive and furious after May 1983, not less. Chile's long silent *poblaciones* (slums) had erupted in rage and many observers thought some sort of a political transition was close at hand.³² After all, military leaders had promised to restore order and depoliticize the country but after ten years of dictatorship fear was no longer a force sufficient to keep dissidents from defying the regime in print or on the street. In December 1983 a group of communists formed the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR), a group explicitly dedicated to armed struggle and which rejected any negotiation with the regime.³³ The following year Pinochet declared a State of Siege.

The FPMR saw the battle with Pinochet in military terms. On the one hand, it was

³² Schneider, *Shantytown Protest*.

³³ See *Publications of the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez*, Princeton University Latin American Pamphlet Collection, Politics in Chile, Roll No. 43, Princeton University Library, 1987.

a fight to overthrow the regime by force. On the other hand, it was also a sociological battle to win the hearts and minds of Chile's citizens and overcome the regime's efforts to confuse and disintegrate the masses' collective solidarity. The FPMR's stated aim was to undermine the military's cohesion by putting a wedge between one sector of the military and Pinochet.³⁴ The FPMR understood that defeating Pinochet meant changing the outlook of the armed forces. The organization's official organ *El Rodriguista* explained:

To the extent that we Chileans make the country ungovernable for the dictatorship and reject the legality of Pinochet, it will open a path toward freedom and will also open the door for a real 'dialogue' with individuals inside the armed forces who wish to separate themselves from the tyrant and move towards democracy.³⁵

Officers saw the situation along the same lines. To win, communists would have to restructure the military and disarticulate its anti-communism. Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Krassnoff explained that the fundamental dynamic of Chilean politics was that the armed forces represented a bulwark against the possibility of any Marxist parties seizing power. As such they would stand firm against opponents trying to divide or politicize them.³⁶

From 1984 to 1986, FPMR militants carried out a number of high profile assassinations and acts of sabotage hoping to generalize a climate of disorder that would precipitate a popular insurrection. However, these acts had the opposite effect; they tended to strengthen regime unity and the conviction that if state security forces

³⁴ "La Guerra Sicológica: un arma del régimen," *El Rodriguista*, No. 20 (1986).

³⁵ "Editorial," *El Rodriguista*, No. 21 (1986).

³⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Krassnoff Martchenko, "La Infiltración y Destrucción de las Fuerzas Armadas," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 417 (1984).

committed crimes – something that happened periodically – the fault for the violence belonged to the ‘terrorists’ who had set out to provoke a disproportionate state response.³⁷ Furthermore, the 1980 Constitution had established a legal role for the military to ensure the continuity of the existing government and officers had clear conceptual categories through which to interpret the FPMR’s actions and its relationship to the political opposition. ‘Fighting subversion and terrorism’, wrote Major Jorge F. Perez, ‘does not constitute politicization or de-professionalization of our functions, it is a normal, legally established mission’.³⁸

Regime stalwarts did not recognize a legitimate political opposition; they collapsed Christian Democrats and reformed socialists into the same camp as the Communist Party with its policy of popular insurrection. Thus, moderate or ‘democratic’ opponents belonged to a single group that wittingly or unwittingly served international communism.³⁹

It is also worth mentioning that the Chilean junta did not fail to notice what happened in Argentina when civilians got back into power. Fernando Matthei recounts that the junta discussed the trial and conviction of Argentine officers for crimes committed during the *Guerra Sucia*. Famously, Admiral Massera insisted he and his

³⁷ In March of 1985 the bodies of three Communist Party members were found near the Santiago airport, their throats slashed. This case forced the resignation of Carlos Mendoza Durán commander in chief of the carabineros whose men had committed the crimes. Exactly one year later a young Chilean photographer and his companion were set on fire by the army during a street demonstration in Santiago. Although badly disfigured one of the victims lived.

³⁸ Major Jorge F. Perez Labayru, “Policialización de las Fuerzas Armadas una Respuesta,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 428 (1988).

³⁹ See the ANEPE allocution speeches given by Brigadier General Arturo Álvarez Sgolía and Brigadier General Mario Navarrete Barriga. *Política y Geoestrategia*, No. 31 and 32 (1984).

colleagues had fought and won a just war, but because they lost the sociological battle they were being unjustly judged by the defeated. After having Massera's statement read aloud, Pinochet said to the junta 'Gentlemen, we won the war of arms, but we are losing the psychological war. This is what will happen to us if we lose.'⁴⁰

THE HISTORICAL IMAGINATION

As we have already seen, officers believed that one purpose of history was to discover natural laws governing the harmonious growth of human societies as well as their vital cycles of decay.⁴¹ In 1983, social protests and economic collapse did not upset the junta's basic faith that the Chilean state had already left a state of decay and was headed towards a stage of healthy expansion. The period from 1982 to 1985 constituted a detour, not a stage of decline. Leading officers still believed history was on their side in the same way a Marxist might put his faith in the putative truth of dialectical materialism. The difference in meta-narrative was one of historical direction. Chilean soldiers saw repeating cycles of decay and renewal while Marxists assumed the inevitable triumph of a communist utopia. In multiple ways, the military's historical imagination contributed to its cohesion by providing a framework to filter the present crisis.

Behind the unity of the junta and military government was abiding consciousness of Chile's past and their place in it. For example, General Matthei described Admiral Merino as a sailor to the bone, deeply conscious of naval glories, in a way that:

⁴⁰ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 376.

⁴¹ "Editorial: La Ley Suprema de la Historia," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 415 (1984). Colonel Victor Chaves (R), "Los Ciclos de la Historia," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 415 (1984).

He felt the obligation to achieve the same level of greatness of the heroes of the Chilean navy. He was also aware of the army's role forging of the national character, something that reinforced good relations with General Pinochet. The affection both men shared for their respective institutions led them to consider each other very close brothers in arms. Everything that the Admiral has said or done should be understood in this described context.⁴²

The relationship between Merino and Pinochet illustrates a larger truth about the army and navy. In spite of any institutional differences both services felt inextricably bound by a shared history, a fact that fostered *esprit de corps*.

In 1983, an editorial in the *Memorial del Ejército de Chile* recalled the army's occupation of Peru from 1881 to 1883. During the 'War of the Sierra' Chilean squads had chased Peruvian guerilla fighters across the countryside in a campaign characterized by 'surprise attacks, ambushes, counteroffensives, marches and countermarches'.⁴³ These difficulties, however, did not break the resolve of the army to complete the mission: get a peace treaty and depart from Peru victorious. The analogy to the present was obvious. To abandon power at a moment of crisis would contradict Chile's victorious tradition and dishonor the armed forces. This was a time of 'counteroffensives, marches and countermarches' en route to ultimate victory.

From 1982 to 1984, the military's academy of history gave regular conferences about the role of armed forces during moments of national crisis. In 1982 eminent historian Gonzalo Vial Correa gave a lecture to government authorities titled 'the armed

⁴² Ibid. 318. General Matthei characterized air force officers as more individualistic than their counterparts in the navy and army, in part, due to the nature of the profession. They take orders from superior officers but each pilot also enjoys a high degree of autonomy in the cockpit.

⁴³ "Editorial: El Fin de Una Jornada," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 413 (1983).

forces facing the social crisis from 1891 to 1925' at the Diego Portales building.⁴⁴ Other academics recalled the officers who held high state office or served in congress from the very foundation of the republic to the present.⁴⁵

All of this historical production reflected a growing civil-military disconnect. For a significant segment of the population, the military regime represented corruption and tyranny. Meanwhile, army editorials described the armed forces as defenders of democracy and a great reservoir of tradition and morality stretching back to the time of Pedro de Valdivia.⁴⁶ From 1980 to 1986, the army wrote an institutional history, which manifested strong tendencies towards self-glorification.⁴⁷ There was also a marked decline in the mention of the 1973 coup as an expression of popular will. Increasingly, the view was that the armed forces did not need popular approval to participate in national life because they enjoyed historical legitimacy to do so which flowed from the institutions themselves.

THE KENNEDY AMENDMENT: A RETROSPECTIVE

Chile's air force and navy faced a grave crisis when the Kennedy Amendment terminated their access to the arms, training, and spare parts formerly supplied by the United States because Peru and Argentina did not lose their ability to acquire

⁴⁴ "Academia de Historia Militar," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 410 (1982).

⁴⁵ Consult Enrique Cañas Flores, "Militares en el Congreso Nacional de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 411 (1982). Gustavo Cuevas Farren, "Las FF.AA. y el Desarrollo Político e Institucional de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 415 (1984).

⁴⁶ "Editorial," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 424 (1986).

⁴⁷ Hernán Vidal, *Mitología Militar Chilena: surrealismo desde el superego*, (Minneapolis: Institute for the Study of Ideologies and Literature, 1989).

sophisticated military technology abroad. At the time, Peru was being supplied by the Soviet Union and Argentina had diverse suppliers, mostly in Europe. After 1975, the Chilean armed forces began to locate new sources of supply and training in Western Europe, Israel, South Africa, and Brazil while renovating and recuperating antiquated US arms. Interestingly, this process, although fraught with difficulty, had a salubrious effect on Chile's domestic arms industry and the achievement of self-sufficiency with respect to technical capacity and the ability to renovate existing weapons systems.⁴⁸

Reflecting on the Military Aid Pact, Frigate Captain Hervé Dilhan wrote that the acquisition of older, often obsolete ships from the United States allowed Chile to maintain an active navy, but it also exacted a high cost because the navy gradually lost its capacity for advanced engineering by accepting outdated norms, specifications, and operational systems from World War II era vessels. This technical, material, and intellectual dependence resulted in a loss of self-management of the domestic defense industry and exposed Chile to a major vulnerability if political currents changed in the country supplying these arms. All of this had obvious consequences for national security.⁴⁹

In 1967 Chile's Defense Ministry had established contracts with British shipyards for the construction and modernization of several frigates, submarines, and destroyers, which reached Chile in 1976 despite the efforts of British unions to prevent delivery of

⁴⁸ Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, 1503.

⁴⁹ Frigate Captain Herve Dilhan Boisier, "Adquisición de Buques de Guerra," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 742 (1981).

these new or reconditioned vessels.⁵⁰ For Chilean naval engineers, this modernization program had multiple effects because these British vessels represented a significant technological upgrade and transfer of technical training, which permitted Chilean engineers to achieve a new level of sophistication and capacity to maintain and modify modern vessels.⁵¹

Apart from these acquisitions, the navy purchased a merchant ship from Germany and converted it for use as the submarine fleet's mother ship in 1977. The same year, the navy acquired two highly maneuverable missile-launching ships (SAAR 4) from Israel, both having demonstrated their effectiveness by sinking Syrian and Egyptian ships in the Yom Kippur War (1973). Small and fast, these ships also had the added benefit of incurring fewer costs to a navy with limited resources.⁵²

The Chilean air force encountered similar problems. After the arrival of eighteen US-made F-5E Tiger jets to Chile in 1974, the air force lost its ability to acquire spare parts for the duration of the dictatorship. Simultaneously, British unions refused to permit Rolls Royce motors destined for Chile's fleet of Hunter Hawks jets to leave port. Fernando Matthei says that the air force circumvented the problem with ingenuity and industrial espionage, but the Chilean air force was still highly exposed and

⁵⁰ Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, 1508-9. To give a sense of the political climate in Great Britain in 1974, the Labor government cancelled a traditional ceremony at Westminster Abbey to commemorate Lord Thomas Cochrane (first commander of the Chilean navy). One Chilean destroyer did not leave Newcastle until 1976 despite the fact that its modernization was complete in April of 1973.

⁵¹ Carlos Tromben Corvalán, *Ingeniería Naval, una Especialidad Centenaria* (Valparaíso: Imprenta de la Armada, 1989), 317.

⁵² Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, 1509-1510.

vulnerable. It had insufficient antiaircraft defenses and no radar systems. To prepare for twin invasions, the army laid mines across the northern and southern frontiers while the air force modified mortars to serve as antiaircraft bombs, which they named PJ-1 (para joder). Such aerial defenses - as the name suggests - had little chance of ever being effective.⁵³ Matthei says the experience of having insufficient means to defend the country when the threat of war appeared imminent was transformative and magnified his determination to make the FACH ready for any future conflicts.⁵⁴

CHILE'S DOMESTIC ARMS INDUSTRY

In 1982, air force editors remarked that Chile's inability to acquire arms from the United States and other European suppliers during the crisis with Argentina dramatized the urgent need 'to develop the national defense industry and to progressively diminish the excessive dependence on foreign suppliers.'⁵⁵ By 1982, a number of private enterprises and state industries began to manufacture armored vehicles, airplane armor, and sea landing ships. The army's munitions company FAMAE (Factories and Workshops of the Army) increased production of gunpowder, mortars, aircraft bombs, naval artillery, hand grenades, antitank mines, and a variety of other implements of destruction.

This domestic arms industry was part of a strategic vision to reduce external dependence and avoid a repeat of Chile's precarious position in 1978. It was also a

⁵³ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 284.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 294.

⁵⁵ "Industria Bélica en Chile," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 160 (1982).

source of pride. In 1987, Fernando Matthei observed that it had been a full ten years since Chile had imported a single bomb. Meanwhile Chile's private arms industry had acquired contracts abroad for more than sixty thousand bombs, equal to the sale of four hundred million dollars.⁵⁶ 'Senator Ted Kennedy did us a great favor by forcing us to make due on our own' said General Julio Canessa.⁵⁷ Another general said the growth of Chile's domestic arms industry had a 'trigger effect' on the entire armed forces' technical sophistication and self-sufficiency.⁵⁸

Although British, German, Dutch and American governments had refused to sell arms to Chile in the years immediately after the 1973 coup, the air force successfully upgraded its fleet with sixteen Mirage 50 jets purchased from France in 1979. Subsequently, the National Aeronautic Company of Chile (ENAER) modernized electrical components and carried out structural modifications of those Mirage jets in 1985 with technical assistance from the Aeronautical Industry of Israel.⁵⁹

With this growing technical capacity came the aeronautical industry's greatest achievement: the T-35 Pillán. In the late seventies, Chile's air force realized that it would be feasible to manufacture a single-prop training aircraft to alleviate pressure on its decrepit American trainers, which had become difficult to repair following passage of the

⁵⁶ "Discurso Pronunciado Por el Sr. Comandante en Jefe," *Minerva*, No. 12 (1987).

⁵⁷ Arancibia and Balart, *Conversando con el General Julio Canessa Robert*, 264.

⁵⁸ Brigadier General Caupolicán Boisset Mujica, "La Importancia de la Investigación Tecnológica para el Desarrollo de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile," *Minerva*, No. 5 (1984).

⁵⁹ Andrés Pérez-Cotapos D. and Francisco Poblete B., *Alas de Chile: aeronaves de la fuerza aerea 1913-2006* (Santiago: Ediciones Santillana, 2005), 104. See also Israel Shahak, *Israel Armó las Dictaduras en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Canaán, 2007).

Kennedy Amendment. Although US legislation restricted the sale of military aircraft to Chile, there was no similar restriction on US commercial firms, which allowed the air force to contract with Piper Aircraft in 1979 – a private US company – for help manufacturing its Piper Dakota PA-28. From this base, Chilean pilots and engineers modified the Dakota into an instructional plane with two seats in tandem. They also increased its visibility from the cockpit and made other modifications suitable for a training craft.⁶⁰ Respected for its comfort, maneuverability, visibility, and competitive price, Chile has since sold the T-35 Pillán to Spain, Paraguay, Guatemala, Honduras, Ecuador, El Salvador, Panama, and the Dominican Republic.

In light of Chile's political difficulties with British shipyards and the inability to acquire spare parts from the United States, it is unsurprising that the Chilean navy strove to expand domestic construction. In 1976, the navy's Shipyards and Workshops (ASMAR) initiated a fifteen million dollar program to improve capacity for the repair and construction of auxiliary ships. In no small measure, this upgrade was possible because naval engineers had acquired the technical knowledge to build and maintain smaller ships during the modernization of Chile's fleet in Great Britain.⁶¹

Retired Vice Admiral Jorge Sweet, who served as rector of the Chile's Catholic University, sponsored a program that partnered university technicians with naval engineers to modernize weapons systems on several ships in the national fleet representing the type of civil-military collaboration officers had hoped for throughout the

⁶⁰ "Historia del Pillán: Entrevista al Sr. Comandante en Jefe," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 161 (1982).

⁶¹ Tromben, *Ingeniería Naval*, 314-318.

sixties.⁶² In the long term, navy officers looked to a day when Chilean engineers might design planes and ships suitable for Chile's specific theatres of operation.⁶³ In light of Israel's achievements, this was conceptually possible; by the late seventies Israeli Shipyards Ltd. in Haifa had achieved 'excellent design standards for the construction of high-speed units, mainly missile launching boats of light and medium tonnage.'⁶⁴

In the same vein, Chilean officers admired Brazil and Israel's successful entry into the global arms trade. Both militaries had prioritized self-sufficiency decades earlier and realized that the efficient manufacture of arms required large-scale production in excess of domestic requirements. One solution to this problem was export markets, which would allow both countries to build self-sustaining arms industries and to satisfy limited domestic needs.⁶⁵ Taking advantage of propitious market conditions arising from the Iran-Iraq War, Chilean industrialist Carlos Cardoen specialized in the manufacture of cluster bombs, which he exported in large quantities to Saddam Hussein.

'THE FIFTH WORLD'

⁶² Tromben, *La Armada de Chile Desde La Alborada Al Sesquicentenario*, 1555.

⁶³ Corvette Captain Werner Wachtendorff Latournerie, "Diseño Nacional para Construir Buques," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 761 (1984). Corvette Captain Juan Chales de Beaulieu Montero, "Diseño Nacional Para Adquirir Buques," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 762 (1984). Ernesto Zumelzu Delgado (Civil Engineer), "Ingenieros para la Construcción Naval: la experiencia de Chile," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 763 (1984).

⁶⁴ First Lieutenant Victor Montaña Mardones, "La Industria Naval Israeli," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 779 (1987).

⁶⁵ "Interview with Lieutenant Brigadier George Belham Da Motta (Brazilian AF)," *Minerva*, No. 3 (1984). Frigate Captain Altien Pires Miguens (Brazil), "La industria Bélica de Brasil," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 777 (1987). See also Kwang-il Baek, Ronald D. McLaurin, and Chung-in Moon, editors, *The Dilemma of Third World Defense Industries: supplier control or recipient autonomy?* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989).

Notwithstanding a growing domestic capacity, Chile was still a long way off from manufacturing combat jets or destroyers. Like other underdeveloped countries, Chile had to depend on a handful of advanced industrial states for its most sophisticated weapons. As we have seen, this arms market was not apolitical.

The Soviet Union and the United States, observed Colonel Renato del Campo, used arms sales to acquire political influence in countries across the Third World, but there was a crucial difference. While American intellectuals and journalists could convince their Congress to terminate the provision of arms to allies, Soviet leaders did not face any similar constraints. Thus, the USSR's unchecked ability to acquire influence across the Third World by selling arms represented an 'extraordinarily efficient weapon to confront the West'.⁶⁶ Chile could not buy arms from either superpower. This was the dilemma facing countries in the 'Fifth World'.

Air Force Brigadier General Sergio Linares dubbed Chile, Israel, South Africa, and Taiwan members of the *Quinto Mundo* because of their difficult position in the East-West confrontation. Although decidedly aligned against countries in the socialist bloc, they faced discriminatory treatment from those aligned members in the free world that controlled supply of certain technologies.⁶⁷ This position of vulnerability in the North-South divide magnified the importance of material self-sufficiency.

Of course, achieving material independence was no easy task for a technology driven institution like the air force. On the one hand, Chile's air force could purchase

⁶⁶ Colonel Renato del Campo Santelices, "Las Ventas Militares y La Penetración Ideológica," *Minerva*, No. 2 (1983).

⁶⁷ Brigadier General Sergio Linares Urzua, "Calidad y Cantidad," *Minerva*, No. 1 (1983).

obsolete bombers on less regulated markets and then modify those planes with parts derived from low cost combat jets and trainers. On the other hand, operating costs for obsolescent planes tended to be high due to their antiquated technology and greater consumption of fuel. Acquiring outdated hardware on global markets was easier and cheaper but it also carried major disadvantages. For one, older hardware incurred high maintenance costs and could result in long-term technological backwardness. Furthermore, resorting to less regulated markets meant that buyers received fewer guarantees from their sellers and prices fluctuated according to global demand.⁶⁸

General Linares observed that a nucleus of modern jets was indispensable to any air force's ability to attack strategic targets and accomplish counteroffensive missions. This nucleus had to be top of the line, which created two problems. First, high unit costs meant Chile could only purchase a limited number of planes. Second, the purchases had to be made from developed countries, which carried inherent risk.⁶⁹ Chile had recently acquired a fleet of Mirage jets, but what would stop France from placing restrictions on future sales, technical assistance, or spare parts?

Chile's difficulty acquiring arms in the seventies energized the military's resolve to eliminate as many material vulnerabilities as possible and also brought into sharp focus the 'quantity-quality' issue. During the dictatorship officers acquired first hand experience negotiating restricted global armed markets inside of tight fiscal constraints such that Chile had to maximize the value it derived from advanced hardware like Mirage

⁶⁸ Colonel Jaime González Ortega, "Industria Nacional o Importaciones: dilema de países en vías de desarrollo para su equipamiento militar," *Minerva*, No. 9 (1986).

⁶⁹ Op. Cit. "Calidad y Cantidad".

jets while simultaneously achieving as much material independence by modifying or refurbishing older units. All of this generated a strong sensitivity to dependence on external arms suppliers. On an intellectual level, Chilean officers stopped looking to Europe and the United States as models.

In 1990, navy editors remarked, with pride, that the contributions officers made to the *Revista de la Marina* were more original and covered a wider array of topics than at any time in years past.⁷⁰ Indeed, it was becoming hard to find any content of external origin. The same was true of the army and air force. In 1965 the *Memorial del Ejército de Chile* printed seventeen articles either translated or transcribed from external sources (mostly Spain, France, Germany, and the United States) comprising a total of 251 pages or 38 percent of all published content for the year, a figure that remained roughly constant in 1970 and 1975.⁷¹ In 1980, however, army editors *only* published articles by Latin American officers and in 1985 the journal's content was *entirely* national. This fact reflects the confidence of institutions with greater technical sophistication and intellectual independence from external sources.

US POLICY: A RETROSPECTIVE

'US policy toward Latin America changes course constantly, it's like a pendulum that swings from one extreme to another: from a multilateral position to an exclusively

⁷⁰ "Editorial," *Revista de la Marina*, No. 794 (1990).

⁷¹ When I surveyed the *Memorial* for 1970 and 1975 the percentage of translated or transcribed articles was roughly the same in 1965 (25-35 percent), except that for both years there was an issue missing from the collection I examined. This incomplete data set made a precise figure impossible.

bilateral one' wrote Aviation Colonel Hernán Verdejo in 1987.⁷² Indeed, American policy had experienced major changes since 1968, from Richard Nixon's unequivocal support of anti-communist regimes to Jimmy Carter's human rights agenda to Ronald Reagan's broad based support for anti-communist governments his first term and then general support for South American democratization his second term. American policy was perceived as unpredictable for a reason.

Reflecting on the period from 1945 to 1960, Colonel Máximo Venegas described the role of the United States in the western hemisphere as 'massive' and 'determinant'. For one, the United States helped to form a generation of military leaders who shared the political values of the West and were prepared to collaborate on the issue of continental defense. But by the seventies, pan-American sentiments, which had been so characteristic of the fifties and early sixties, gave way to geopolitical antagonisms, and aggressive nationalisms so that by 1975, war appeared likely to destabilize parts of South America. At this point, the American Congress had severely reduced or completely eliminated aid to most militaries in the hemisphere. Venegas writes of this era:

It is necessary to bear in mind that the Kennedy Amendment came into effect precisely at the moment when the situation in the sub-region of the Southern Cone was acquiring strong sources of tension that had already manifested themselves in a near outbreak of war between Chile to Peru in 1975 and the first signs of the serious crisis with Argentina that unfolded in late 1978. In this international atmosphere, the first direct political effect of the amendment was precisely to aggravate tensions, to the extent that it meant a real reduction of the military capabilities of the Chilean armed forces, especially the Air Force and the Navy's abilities to accomplish local deterrence in light of the region's geographical conditions. The amendment significantly increased the already notorious military inequality between Chile and any of its potential adversaries with the exception of

⁷² Aviation Colonel Hernán Verdejo Rojas, "La Política Exterior Norteamericana," *Minerva*, No. 13 (1987).

Bolivia. From this perspective, this initiative, instead of achieving its goal of political pressure, contributed to increased local tension, in apparent detriment of U.S. interests in the Southern Cone.⁷³

Indeed, US policy had the unintended consequence of exacerbating a military imbalance that nearly touched off a war involving Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina. With the Kennedy Amendment in place, Peru and Argentina could feel secure about their own arsenals, which came principally from the Soviet Union and West Europe respectively. Perhaps the greatest irony of it all was that Chile had been the ‘most loyal to U.S. defense technology and thus most dependent on Washington for the technical efficiency of its defense structure’.⁷⁴

In the seventies, the United States quickly ceased to be the main supplier of doctrine, tactics, and hardware to countries in the Southern Cone as militaries turned to Israel, Germany, England, France, and Italy for what they could not produce themselves. The elimination of US military aid to Southern Cone dictatorships also meant the United States had fewer ways to influence events and pressure governments. This era stands in stark contrast to the fifties.

Despite frustration with US policy, Chilean officers acknowledged that American disengagement from the inter-American system tended to generate instability. Even if the northern colossus was unstable and unreliable, it remained a superpower. Furthermore, Chilean soldiers could not imagine an alternative to alignment with the United States. Venegas summed up his position when he said Latin American states

⁷³ Colonel Máximo Venegas F., “La Brecha Tecnológica con Estados Unidos y la Defensa Continental,” *Minerva*, No. 14 (1987).

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

were ‘forced allies of the United States’ in the Cold War.⁷⁵ He and his colleagues viewed US power as an unavoidable reality in the hemisphere. What they hoped was that the United States would take South America seriously as a partner in continental defense and the struggle against communism.

THE WORLD AND THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Looking back on the period from 1945 to 1975, officers at the Army Academy of War criticized developing countries for denouncing northern hemisphere imperialism while simultaneously expecting help from the developed north in the way of high prices for their primary commodities or preferential access to heavy capital goods. This culture of underdevelopment, they said, had had a big impact on Chile’s domestic life. It led to a belief in the power of the state and political ideologies to solve national problems and moved the country away from ‘foreign policy pragmatism’ towards a belief in pan-American projects like the Latin American Free Trade Association and Andean Pact regardless of whether either idea served the national interest.⁷⁶ By 1980, there was strong skepticism of international and regional organizations and their ability to deliver tangible results. Officers generally shared the conviction that it was naive to expect economic development and security from any external state, international body or regional organization. Reflecting this outlook, the Chilean state vigorously pursued bilateral free trade agreements instead of multilateral ones.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ “Edición Especial en Homenaje a la Academia de Guerra del Ejército en el Año de su Centenario,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 423 (1986).

The military's interpretation of the Falklands War is also instructive. When Argentina's junta decided to take the disputed South Atlantic islands they assumed that Margaret Thatcher would not send the royal fleet to retake the islands and therefore, occupation would put the junta in a sound negotiating position. The junta also thought the Treaty of Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance, which committed every American state to assist all others in the event of external attack, would ensure their ability to act with impunity.

Unsurprisingly, this piece of diplomatic architecture did not mean the United States was prepared to prevent its most important ally, Great Britain, from retaking the islands. The United States argued that the Argentine invasion was illegal, unprovoked aggression, and that fact nullified any US obligation to repel it. When British forces arrived Argentina's numerically superior army was logistically unprepared to defend the islands. Argentina had naively placed faith in diplomacy and inter-American arrangements at an enormous cost. It was in the eyes of many, a clear example of why the inter-American system lacked credibility.⁷⁷

Chile, however, benefited from the Falklands War. In 1984, one year after Argentina's transition to democracy, the Argentine public overwhelmingly approved the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, which formally recognized the disputed islands in the

⁷⁷ Viceadmiral Horacio Justiniano Aguirre, "Conflicto Atlántico Sur: política y estrategia," RM, No. 751 (1982). Viceadmiral Patricio Carvajal Prado, "Entrevista al Sr. Ministro de Defensa Nacional," *Minerva*, No. 2 (1983). "La Guerra de los Errores," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 414 (1983). "La Batalla del 1 de Mayo en el Conflicto del Atlántico Sur," *Minerva*, No. 7 (1985). Aviation Colonel Carlos Baraona, "Aspectos Jurídicos Esenciales en las Actuales Relaciones Internacionales," *Minerva*, No. 14 (1987). Major Julio Gutierrez Campos, "Efectos Generados por el Conflicto de las Malvinas en el Sistema Interamericano," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 430 (1988).

Beagle Channel as Chilean, thereby ending a tense chapter in relations between the two countries.

The Falklands War and US invasion of Panama in 1989 confirmed what Chilean officers already thought about the inter-American system: it was not governed by any higher set of principles. States had to look to themselves for security, not international bodies or international laws. During the dictatorship, the country's pan-American tradition represented by Bernardo O'Higgins lost force while the nationalist, exclusive politics represented by Diego Portales were strongly reinforced.

The Cold War continued to cast its shadow across the Western Hemisphere in the eighties. Bloody civil wars fueled by ideology raged in El Salvador and Nicaragua. In Peru, the Maoist Shinning Path left a path of destruction across the countryside. In Chile, the discovery of a large cache of arms in northern Chile reinforced the regime's insistence that the armed forces had to play a continued role in the life of the nation as a bulwark against communism.⁷⁸ At the end of the dictatorship, the Chilean military continued to see the developing world as the Cold War's principal theatre. It was the *raison d'être* of Chile's protected democracy.

In the eighties the navy leadership was convinced that Soviet bloc fishing vessels operating just outside of Chile's territorial waters were collecting intelligence or communicating with dissidents. When a large shipment of arms was smuggled into the country – these arms were used in the assassination attempt on Pinochet's life in 1986 -

⁷⁸ Major Daniel Carrasco Leiva, "La Crisis Centroamericana y en Particular la Situación en el Salvador," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 426 (1987). Guillermo Holzmänn Pérez, "El Rol de las Fuerzas Armadas Frente al Terrorismo," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 426 (1987).

the navy supposed that a national fishing ship had received the arms from a Soviet or Cuban ship just outside of territorial waters. There was no concrete evidence to link Soviet ships to the arms trade but Admiral Merino, who believed a Third World War was inevitable, said ‘we know that the Soviets are not interested in fishing as much as making preparations for the future conquest of this continent.’⁷⁹

When Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985, Chilean officers interpreted Glasnost/Perestroika as a Soviet stratagem to make the West think they had abandoned longstanding imperial aims. The real intention of any supposed détente or cultural opening was to penetrate the West and strengthen the Soviet position before the next offensive.⁸⁰

DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE SOUTHERN CONE AND CHILE

From 1981 to 1984, Pinochet had a friendly American administration to work with. The Reagan Administration made it possible for Chile to receive import-export bank loans and invited the Chilean navy to participate in UNITAS. But American policy towards Chile began to change after Ronald Reagan’s reelection. In December 1984 the Department of Defense, CIA, and State Department agreed that Pinochet’s perpetuation in power was likely to foster armed resistance and radicalize the country’s moderate

⁷⁹ “Miscelánea: Entrevista al Comandante en Jefe de la Armada de Chile,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 778 (1987).

⁸⁰ Rear Admiral Eri Solis Oyarzun, “El Expansionismo Ruso, una Constante Histórica,” *Revista de la Marina*, No. 759 (1984). Colonel Enrique Montealegre J., “El Expansionismo Soviético En América Latina,” *Minerva*, No. 16 (1988). Lieutenant General Julio Canessa Robert, “El Partido Comunista y El Sistema Institucional Democrático Chileno,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 430 (1988).

political opposition. Rather than an anti-communist bulwark in the Southern Cone, the aging dictator seemed more of an impediment to long-term stability.⁸¹

Beginning in 1985, the US State Department actively supported moderate opposition groups in Chile and pressured Pinochet to leave power in accord with the 1980 Constitution. However, Pinochet had learned that he could get on without the Americans. In September 1983, US Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs Langhorne Motley wrote:

Our ability to decisively influence the course of events in Chile is limited. Overall diplomatic leverage is weak. Our connections to the opposition are improving but are not strong...The military sphere is critical but we cannot get to them in the absence of FMS [Foreign Military Sales], normal training assistance, and the [Congress] certification issue.⁸²

Because the US government no longer provided military assistance or sold arms to Chile, it had few mechanisms to influence the military. With respect to financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, it had to tread carefully. The US wanted to strengthen the political center, but withholding loans or refusing to refinance Chile's debt held the possibility of generating economic instability that would favor 'anti-systemic' forces such as the Communist Party. In 1985, the US Embassy wrote to the State Department with a plain assessment: 'a democratic transition is impossible without the acquiescence of the military'. The armed forces were Chile's power brokers. Only they could change Pinochet's mind or remove him from power. Given this assessment the embassy urged

⁸¹ CDP, Dept. of State, 'U.S. Policy Toward Chile', Motley to Deputy Secretary, 12-20-84.

⁸² CDP, Dept. of State, 'Chile Policy Memo', Motley to Eagleburger, 9-23-83.

Washington to change congressional legislation so as to permit ‘improving ties through regular military-to-military contacts’.⁸³

Interestingly, the United States government saw Chile’s political dynamics from the same lens that the FMRP did, believing that the only way to force a transition was to put a wedge between Pinochet and the armed forces. A year later, a new strategy paper by Elliott Abrams and US Ambassador Harry G. Barnes repeated conclusions from the previous year: Pinochet was determined to remain in power and his ability to do so depended on continued support from the armed forces. Abrams and Barnes wrote to George Shultz:

Given that Pinochet is the obstacle, he must be persuaded to change or be removed. The only viable approach is to convince the Chilean military that its institutional interests are jeopardized by continued unconditional support for Pinochet. To do this we need to be able to communicate more easily and effectively with the military.⁸⁴

The impression one gets from these strategy papers is not one of confidence but impotence. The Americans feared using economic leverage for a variety of reasons and the Kennedy Amendment had terminated Washington’s ability to acquire influence through aid and training programs. Clandestine methods of penetrating Chile’s highly disciplined armed forces had also proven ineffective.

For Pinochet and his hard-line supporters, US pressure fit into the well-established conceptual categories. It was ‘foreign aggression’, outside intervention into

⁸³ CDP, Dept. of State, ‘The Military Leadership-Mission, Political Views and inter-Service Relations’, Santiago to State, 4-29-85.

⁸⁴ CDP, Dept of State, ‘Strategy Paper’, Santiago to State, 7-8-86.

the affairs of a sovereign state, and moral judgments that lacked any appreciation of local conditions. The regime rejected Washington's pretension to leadership over political changes taking place in the Southern Cone and described the American Congress and State Department as hopelessly infiltrated by pacifists, Marxist scholars, and fifth columnists.⁸⁵

A more general view was that restored democracy required military participation to prevent post-authoritarian disorder and ensure the new government did not fall into the hands of communists.⁸⁶ A peaceful transition to democracy required foreign actors to stay out of the internal process and for domestic actors to stop asking for their intervention. Political commentator Arturo Lane wrote:

For the democratic transition to be fruitful, it must be the product of the internal decision of the government with support from the armed forces. For this to occur, Chile's diverse political sectors must commit to dispense with their tendency to internationalize Chilean politics. Presently, the US government is financing social and political sectors it considers democratic replacements.⁸⁷

In the end, US efforts to pressure Pinochet and his uniformed colleagues were unsuccessful. Pinochet convinced the junta to support his candidacy for another eight-year term in the 1988 plebiscite.

OPERATION TWENTIETH CENTURY

On September 7, 1986 militants from the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front ambushed Pinochet's presidential motorcade as he traveled to Santiago from his home in

⁸⁵ Arturo Lane Ortega, "La Política Exterior Norteamericana y sus Contradicciones," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 425 (1987).

⁸⁶ Hernán Cubillos, "El Punto de Vista de Chile," *Minerva*, No. 14 (1987).

⁸⁷ Arturo Lane Ortega, "La Política Norteamericana y el Establecimiento de Regimenes Comunistas," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 424 (1986).

Cajón de Maipo. Using rocket propelled grenades and machine guns smuggled into Chile from Cuba, the extraordinarily well-planned attack code named *Operación Siglo XX* left five soldiers dead and wounded a dozen more, but the rocket that struck Pinochet's car failed to explode, allowing the driver to escape amid hails of gunfire. Appearing on television that night Pinochet said in front of his bullet ridden Mercedes-Benz 'We are in a war between Marxism and democracy.'⁸⁸

The attempt on Pinochet's life marks a turning point in Chile's political history. Had the assassination succeeded it would have altered a host of political dynamics in Chile's unfolding political process. It discredited any notion that Pinochet could be pushed out of power by force and it caused the FMRP to split from the Communist Party as a result of tactical and strategic differences.

The failed assassination attempt was also powerful symbol for those who favored Pinochet's perpetuation in power. The fact that internal militants had acquired their weapons from Cuba appeared to justify a national security doctrine dedicated to repressing 'anti-national' subversives who would try to seize control of the state and ally with foreign powers. The event also strengthened Pinochet's aura of strength and the notion that he alone could protect the nation from armed minorities.

CONCLUSIONS

The economic and political crisis from 1982 to 1984 tested the resolve and unity of the military-civilian coalition in Chile. Explanations for the military government's survival have tended to stress institutional structure and Pinochet's ability to mute inter-

⁸⁸ This news report is available online at <http://www.tvn.cl/>

service conflict. These are important factors to be sure, but ideas mattered a great deal as well. Officers believed the 1980 Constitution represented a long-term solution to the nation's political instability and they knew that civilians were likely to reverse key aspects of the constitution if the military government left power from a position of weakness.

Also important was the sense that leaving power amid a financial crisis and popular mobilization was an unacceptable military defeat. The Chilean military had been forced to leave power in 1931 and what followed was a year of intense disorder. Much more was at stake in 1983 because of the scope and ambition of the 1973 intervention. The fact that Argentine officers were going to jail on the other side of the Andes in 1984 also provided a warning about what handing power to civilians could mean.

The resurgence of the communist party as an organized presence with an armed wing receiving weapons from Cuba provided a powerful enemy to rally the troops. Furthermore, the peculiar nature of Chile's civil-military coalition was important. The institutional architecture put in place by 1981 had intellectual roots in the nation's indigenous political tradition as well as military culture, making the civil-military coalition stronger than elsewhere in South America. Further, the military government enjoyed the steadfast support of a cadre of civilians with training in matters related to national security, many of whom studied at the military's own National Academy of Political and Strategic Studies (ANEPE).

The restriction of arms sales to Chile after 1975 jeopardized the military's ability to defend the nation during a critical period in the seventies. One consequence of this arms embargo was a serious re-evaluation of the US/Chile relationship and the inter-American system. On the one hand, Chilean officers learned how dangerous their dependence on the Americans had been. On the other hand, they witnessed how a lessening of American power in the region had led to regional instability and the real possibility of war.

The Kennedy Amendment spurred the advance of Chile's defense industries and a growing technical capacity illustrated by the aviation industry's manufacture of the T-35 Pillán. By the eighties both the air force and navy had located new suppliers of military hardware in Europe and Israel, overcoming an excessive dependence on the United States. The US arms embargo had been painful, but it increased Chile's material self-sufficiency and reduced the country's political vulnerabilities with respect to US pressure.

CHAPTER VIII

The Transition to Protected Democracy: 1987-1990

No type of opposition, boycott, embargo, protest or cajolery could have changed our path one iota or stopped us from fulfilling our duty.¹

Fernando Matthei Aubel

When the armed forces handed power back to civilians in 1990, it was from a position of strength and confidence. Speaking on the occasion of his retirement from active duty in 1990, navy commander in chief José Merino chastised everyone who had expected the military regime to bend before external threats or international isolation. The regime's adversaries, said Merino, failed to appreciate the depth of pride and tradition, which had sustained them during an extremely difficult period of national service.

Sailors! In these 16 years we have given the best of our abilities; each one of us has carried out the task imposed by tradition [in spite of] the difficult conditions imposed on us from abroad by foreigners and Chilean nationals who hoped to make us fail. How wrong they were! Or rather, how ignorant they were of our enormous legacy of victory, which is why in spite of the silent and insidious fight against this small country, we have triumphed with the help of God and the ability of its people, even in the face of military threats at our borders by those who naively believed that our equanimity would diminish before so much treason and slander.²

Merino's speech captures a feeling shared by many officers at the time of Chile's transition to democracy: 'mission accomplished'. We prevailed over foreign and

¹ "Discurso Pronunciado por el Sr. Comandante en jefe de la FACH," *Revista de la Fuerza Aérea*, No. 185 (1990).

² *Revista de la Marina*, No. 795 (1990).

domestic enemies in spite of arms embargos, foreign boycotts, United Nations condemnations, social protests, and denunciations from Chileans abroad. We saved Chile's democracy from communist totalitarianism. We successfully defended the nation from Peruvian and Argentine aggression. We built safeguards into a constitution that will prevent another institutional breakdown from occurring. We worked tirelessly for the common good and we can be confident that our nation is on a solid footing for a future of political stability and material prosperity. Our completed mission belongs to the armed forces' list of historic victories.

Fifteen years later, General Julio Canessa insisted that popular pressure played no part whatsoever in Chile's transition to democracy. The military government created constitutional mechanisms to ensure an orderly transfer of power and fulfilled that pledge in spite of pressure leveled by opposition groups and external actors.

Not the terrorists, the underclass, the communists, the occasional democrats behind [national] mobilizations, the respectable personalities, nor the messages of foreign governments influenced the military government's decision to comply, with absolute fidelity, its itinerary toward full democracy.³

In 1990, Fernando Matthei said 'No type of opposition, boycott, embargo, protest or cajolery could have changed our path one iota or stopped us from fulfilling our duty.'⁴ The mood at the conclusion of military rule was defiant and triumphant.

Another group of thinkers cast the past sixteen years of dictatorship as entirely consistent with the ebb and flow of Chile's political history stretching all the way back to colonial governors or captain-generals who had governed a forbidding country with

³ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Conversando con el General Canessa Robert*, 301.

⁴ Op. Cit. "Discurso Pronunciado por el Sr. Comandante en jefe de la FACH".

peculiar geographic features and hostile Indians. The armed forces, said Augusto Pinochet, enjoyed a historical mandate to direct the state's evolution because they had created the nation-state. 'From the time of the Conquest men-of-arms led, controlled, and promoted the establishment of a new society.'⁵ In the national period, duty had periodically obliged them to take control of the country to lead it through moments of peril or transformation.

Such historical arguments were particularly characteristic of the army, but certainly not without resonance in the navy or air force. Indeed, the historical outlook of officers provided a whole framework to understand the meaning and purpose of military rule from 1973 to 1990 as rooted in legitimate national traditions. It also contributed to institutional cohesion during periods of crisis.

This chapter examines the transition from dictatorship to democracy and the ideas that officers developed to explain the significance of their recent participation in national life and future role in the political system. In 1990, the overwhelming conviction in the armed forces was that they had accomplished what they set out to do in 1973. They had modernized the country for the good of everyone rather than the particular interests of any one social or political minority. Nothing could have been further from the truth for their critics. They had terrorized a political sector of the country and imposed a brutal capitalist model that mostly benefited the nation's wealthiest citizens.

THE 1988 PLEBISCITE

⁵ General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, "La Participación del Ejército en la Organización y Desarrollo del Estado de Chile," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 436 (1990). Speech to military cadets on September 17, 1990 and roughly eight months after handing power back to civilian leaders.

In 1987, most opponents of the military government conceded that popular mobilization was unlikely to push the regime from power. The government's coalition was simply too powerful and too durable. The failed attempt on Pinochet's life in 1986 had magnified the dictator's aura of invincibility and the opposition camp agreed to participate in a constitutionally mandated plebiscite that could lead to civilian rule. Agreeing to accept a plebiscite organized by the government carried obvious risks in light of the 1980 referendum, but opposition leaders understood two things. First, a direct confrontation with the regime was likely to result in unacceptable levels of conflict and probably could not be won anyway. Second, a majority of Chileans wanted Pinochet out of power and a full restoration of democracy. Thus, they had an advantage if most Chileans registered to vote and a free and fair election was held.

Even though Pinochet had said he would not stay on as president of the republic after 1989, his desire to remain president into the nineties was clear to everyone. Interestingly, influential members of the political right thought it imprudent to nominate a soldier rather a civilian. Pinochet, they reasoned, was too polarizing and unpopular to have sufficient national appeal. Nonetheless, the junta declared Pinochet the government's candidate on August 30, 1988.

The military's attitude towards the plebiscite should also be put into context. For many years, officers in each branch of the armed forces had publicly and privately stressed their 'sacred commitment' to restoring democracy in 1989.⁶ There is little reason to doubt the sincerity of that commitment, but the 1980 Constitution also provided

⁶ CDP, Embassy to State, 'The Military Leadership-Mission, Political Views and inter-Service Relations', 4-29-85.

a mechanism for Pinochet's reelection. On that point, many officers had misgivings about Pinochet's perpetuation in power past 1989. For example, during the drafting of the 1980 Constitution, the navy and air force had favored an open election in 1988 rather than a plebiscite. The eventual compromise was that if Pinochet won another eight-year term of office he would have to renounce his position as commander in chief of the army.⁷

More generally though, Matthei and Merino thought eight more years of Pinochet had all the makings for a volatile political situation with negative consequences for their respective institutions.⁸ The army high command actively supported Pinochet's intention to remain in power, a reality evident by the total silence in navy and air force journals from 1988 to 1989 with respect to Chile's political situation. By contrast, the *Memorial del Ejército* was heavily invested in the outcome of the election; it addressed the upcoming election and campaigned for Pinochet as the only choice for the country's stability. The army's institutional association with his person was deep.⁹

The opposition's decision to accept the 1988 plebiscite came with clear drawbacks. The junta would still control crucial aspects of the transition to democracy if Pinochet was defeated by ballot box and if the government won, full democracy would

⁷ Robert Barros, *Constitutionalism and Dictatorship: Pinochet, the Junta, and the 1980 Constitution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁸ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 392-6.

⁹ See "Editorial: Libertad Sin Demagogia," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 429 (1988). "Homenaje a S.E. el Presidente de la República, Capitán General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, con motivo de cumplir 15 años de mando de la institución," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 429 (1988).

not be restored until 1997.¹⁰ Nonetheless opposition leaders agreed that no matter how much they managed to mobilize society, electoral mobilization held their best chance to end the Pinochet regime.

The coalition of political parties that opposed Pinochet, the *Concertación de los partidos por el NO*, showed remarkable civic courage in 1988. They took on a regime that enjoyed privileged access to channels of communication and its leaders had to successfully register millions of voters before the election, - a major undertaking in and of itself - convince voters that the election would not be rigged or result in violence, and mount an effective electoral campaign against a firmly entrenched regime.

POLITICAL PROPAGANDA

A survey of YES campaign propaganda (Yes to 8 more years of Pinochet's presidency) reveals a vision of what the regime felt it had accomplished.¹¹ The regime claimed to have laid a foundation for the twentieth first century by modernizing the state bureaucracy and unleashing the country's entrepreneurial potential, successfully transforming Chile into a modern country with all the signs of progress - high rise buildings, computers, fax machines, modern consumer goods - one might find in Europe or the United States. An illustrative cartoon comic strip described Santiago's smog and traffic jams as visible reminders of the country's dramatic progress since 1970.

¹⁰ *Conditions for Chile's Plebiscite on Pinochet: a report based on a joint WOLA-CHIR delegation to Chile* (Washington DC: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1988).

¹¹ Unless otherwise noted, all descriptive analysis of plebiscite propaganda is based on sources from *The 1988 Plebiscite in Chile [microform]: a collection of documents*, Princeton University Latin American Pamphlet Collection, (Princeton: Princeton University Library, 1989).

Vehicular congestion and air pollution were the happy problems of countries experiencing economic growth.¹²

The government claimed that Chile was a vanguardist model for countries attempting to deal with the breakdown of the welfare state. The nation's two-tier health care system and market driven personal retirement saving accounts were proudly advertised as examples of Chilean innovation, proof that Chile was 'ahead of the curve', not only in Latin America but also the developed world in several respects. Of course the NO campaign pointed out that for all the government's talk of modernization, Chile retained a decidedly authoritarian political structure quite unlike the western nations its military leaders cited as points of reference.

In 1980 Augusto Pinochet said the goal for the coming decade was to 'enable one Chilean in every seven to own a car, one in every five to watch his own television, and one in every seven to install a telephone.'¹³ Since 1970 the number of private automobiles on the road had experienced a fivefold increase and the percentage of homes with television sets had nearly tripled. Similarly, washing machines, radios, and other domestic appliances had become more abundant, not only in middle class homes, but also in the homes of Chile's poorest citizens. YES campaign materials highlighted the population's access to consumer goods as a measure of national progress and emphasized the fact that Chile had diversified its export base to include salmon, wood pulp, fishmeal, wine, and fruit, leaving behind the previous dependence on copper production. It might

¹² See "Todo Entiende y Gil Engaño Visitan Chile," *The 1988 Plebiscite in Chile*.

¹³ Quote taken from Valdés, *Pinochet's Economists*, 35.

seem odd to glorify Chile's place as a world leader in fishmeal exports but for the regime it demonstrated everything they had achieved since 1970: an efficient, internationally competitive export economy, freed from single commodity dependence.

The idea of freedom espoused in YES campaign propaganda is telling of regime ideology. Freedom was framed as something citizens experienced when they had options, chose products, decided if their retirement savings should go into privately or publicly managed accounts. Freedom was utilizing an efficient telecommunications network or living in a country freed from dependence on a single export. Liberty was freedom *from* a unified education system, single pension plan, obligatory union, or unified health service. Millions of Chileans lacked the financial resources to partake in the neoliberal freedoms, but the consumer choices did exist.

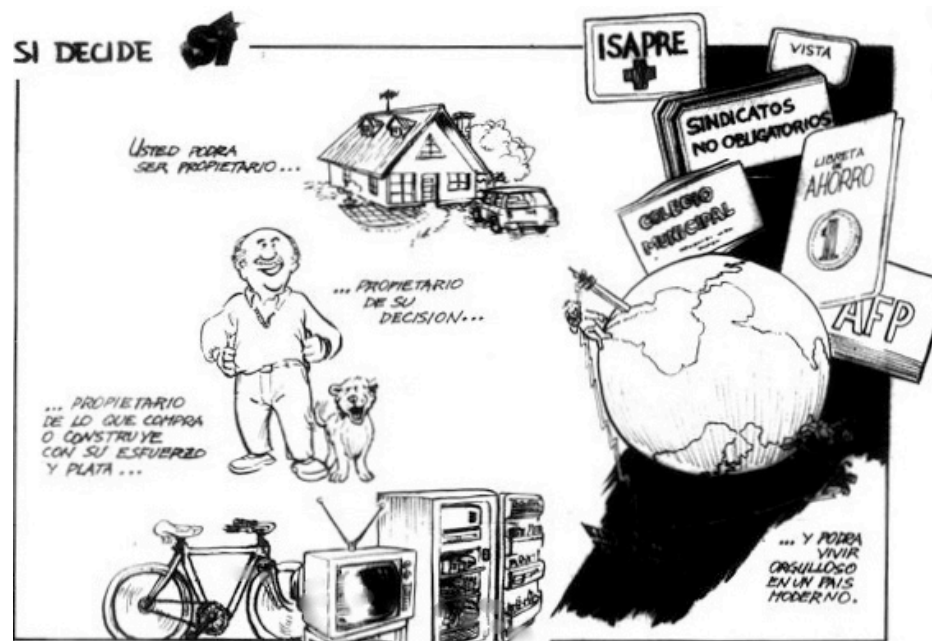


Figure 8.1, 'If you decide YES, you will be a proprietor...in charge of your own decisions...holder of what you buy and construct with your effort and money...and you will be proud to live in a modern country.'¹⁴

¹⁴ Op. Cit. "The 1988 Plebiscite in Chile".



Figure 8.2, 'With modern highways across the country. With technological progress at the level of developed countries.'¹⁵

The campaign slogan *Chile: País del Futuro* – Chile: Country of the Future – captures the regime's optimism that Chile had assumed a position of leadership in Latin America as a model of dynamism, efficiency, and global integration. Regime supporters like Joaquín Lavín expressed a positive exuberance about the country's dynamic export sector and the availability of modern technology. He argued that infrastructure improvements in the poorest neighborhoods – paved roads, improved bus service, schools, supermarkets – were certain to progressively integrate the poor into the mainstream economy and give them the tools to be successful in the new economic

¹⁵ Ibid.

order.¹⁶ From 1986 to 1988, Lavín's argument was bolstered by a robust economy recovery. The economy averaged six percent annual growth and unemployment fell from 16.3 to 10.9 percent. Yet, poverty remained high in Chile. As a result of the neoliberal reforms, many in the middle and working classes had fallen below the poverty line.

NO propaganda portrayed a very different society emerging from military tutelage; one that sociologist Eugenio Tironi described as fundamentally bifurcated into a modern, globally integrated sector and a marginalized majority looking to the state for help.¹⁷ Some Chileans enjoyed a standard of living close to the norm in the developed world, but millions more remained excluded from the process of modernization and unable to access the fruits of neoliberal freedom.

YES propaganda frequently cited Chile's infant mortality rate – the lowest in Latin America by 1988 – as evidence of the regime's success ameliorating extreme poverty. This achievement had come about as a result of targeted social spending on prenatal care, milk programs, and assistance to groups living in extreme poverty and is part of the reason why *Pinochetistas* could be found among Mapuche Indians, shantytown dwellers, and the rural poor who felt the dictatorship had responded to their needs in ways democratic governments never had.¹⁸ By contrast, the regime had shown contempt for the organized, politically articulate working class, which it considered

¹⁶ Joaquín Lavín, *Chile, Revolución Silenciosa* (Santiago: Zig Zag, 1987).

¹⁷ Eugenio Tironi, *Autoritarismo, Modernización, y Marginalidad* (Santiago: Ediciones SUR, 1990).

¹⁸ Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 350-351.

hopelessly ideological and historically pampered. Among the ranks of the middle and working classes, aggregate poverty had increased from 1973 to 1988.

The NO campaign promised to do more for those who had suffered under economic restructuring while YES campaign materials warned voters not to be duped by promises and demagoguery. Development, the campaign insisted, was an inherently slow going process. The poor could not expect sudden improvements in their standard of living. Social progress could only be achieved within the realities of the nation's market economy.

YES propaganda framed Pinochet as the paternal figure standing above politics, never making unrealistic promises to the poor, but always concerned with their wellbeing. He was a protector of the nation who had avoided destructive wars with Argentina and Peru and kept the country safe from Marxism. Accordingly, Pinochet alone had the foresight and steadiness to ensure peace, stability, and social improvements for all Chileans. Voting NO then, was certain to plunge the nation into a repeat of the political polarization and economic chaos of the late Allende period: street protests, ration cards, factory seizures, class conflict, inflation, queues. YES propaganda presented the plebiscite as a black and white choice; a fork in the road between two opposing trajectories, one of regressive doom and the other of orderly development that only Pinochet could provide. Propaganda alleged that the NO coalition contained cells of committed Marxists who would hijack a democratic victory to pursue their revolutionary aims and sow disorder.

The NO campaign effectively counteracted the apocalyptic vision of a future without Pinochet with an alternative image of a diverse, open, and democratic nation unafraid of liberal democracy. Making outstanding use of new techniques in the arena of mass entertainment and communication, the NO campaign projected a positive vision of the future while the YES campaign focused on negative memories from the past and the need for continuity, order, and material progress. While YES television advertisements replayed footage of street protests and bread lines from the Allende years, NO advertisements imparted a sense that the country was on the cusp of recuperating rule of law and a lost space for creative self-expression. The campaign's catchy slogan *Chile, La Alegría Ya Viene* – Chile, Happy Days Are Ahead – captured this message. At the end of the campaign, Chileans agreed that the Pinochet regime had come off reactive and fear mongering while the NO had effectively conveyed a sense of confidence and optimism.¹⁹

Of the roughly seven and a half million Chileans who turned out to vote on October 5, 1988 fifty six percent voted to restore democracy, much to the chagrin of an angry, isolated Pinochet. When it became clear the NO had won Pinochet asked the junta for authority to annul the vote, but Matthei and Merino refused to grant such a request.²⁰ This was a pivotal moment when the junta limited Pinochet's political ambition.

Yet, the outcome of the plebiscite was far from a landslide victory. Forty four percent of the population had voted to grant Pinochet eight more years in office and it would be a mistake to conclude that three million plus Chileans who voted YES were

¹⁹ José Luis Piñel Raijada, *La Cultura Política del Ciudadano y la Comunicación Política en TV, en la Transición Política del Plebiscito Chileno* (Madrid: CEDEAL, 1992), 15-16.

²⁰ Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 411.

merely dupes of government propaganda or representatives of Chile's wealthy and conservative groups. Pinochet had always enjoyed a popular base of support and the ability to appeal across class lines and mobilize supporters with a passion and intensity equal to his opposition. When the NO campaign mobilized 15,000 volunteers to knock on doors and encourage people to register for the plebiscite, thousands of right-wing women went door to door reminding fellow mothers about the bread lines and disorder of the UP era, encouraging them to vote YES.²¹ Moreover, the 56/44 split of the vote was evenly distributed throughout the national territory. Pinochet's support was not overwhelmingly rural, urban, or overly concentrated in specific regions.

The 1988 plebiscite was a defeat for Pinochet and his most committed supporters, but it did little to undermine the regime's triumphalism. In 1974, the junta had declared that it would stay in power as long as it took to reorganize society. In 1990 Pinochet could claim that the original mission had been accomplished: he was handing power to a democratically elected civilian in the context of a 'protected democracy' that would be safe from another institutional breakdown.

In 1997, the sociologist Tomás Moulian described the 1988 plebiscite as a Faustian Bargain that resulted in a win/win situation for the regime. Pinochet stepped down as president, but his constitution and laws remained secure. By accepting the plebiscite, civilian leaders accepted the prevailing institutional order and allowed Pinochet to remain commander in chief of the army until 1998 at which point he would

²¹ Margaret Power, "Defending Dictatorship: Conservative Women in Pinochet's Chile and the 1988 Plebiscite" in *Radical Women in Latin America*, edited by Victoria González and Karen Kampwirth (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 2001).

take a place as *senador vitalicio* (lifetime senator), immune to legal prosecution for any crimes committed during the dictatorship.²² Did Pinochet lose in 1988?

The extent to which the US State Department and other external actors influenced the outcome of the plebiscite is still a matter of scholarly debate, but most evidence shows it to be the result of an internal process directed by Chileans.²³ Chile's constitutional tribunals insisted on the transparency of the election and General Matthei assured the opposition that the plebiscite would be free and fair. The junta's members did not want Pinochet subverting the constitutional process they had created.²⁴

The role played by Chilean actors in the transition to democracy (the constitutional tribunals, right wing, political opposition, and especially the junta itself) stand out above all other external forces. The Chilean junta was very accustomed to weathering pressure from American administrations, the UN, and West European governments. They had done it multiple times before. What mattered in 1988 was the will of the junta and the constitutional tribunals. Merino and Matthei refused to let Pinochet annul the vote because they saw his illegal presence in power as a threat to their services' institutional interests.

THE NEW, NON-NEGOTIABLE ROLE

²² Tomás Moulian, *Chile Actual: anatomía de un mito* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 1997).

²³ Morris Morley & Chris McGillion have a book forthcoming on this subject. By the same two authors, "Soldiering On: the Reagan Administration and Redemocratization in Chile, 1983-1986." *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (2006).

²⁴ Barros, *Constitutionalism and Dictatorship*.

In the wake of Pinochet's defeat on October 5, 1988 a certain euphoria filled the air as political commentators spoke of Chile's happy return to democracy and the armed forces long last return to their 'traditional' role as professional, non-deliberative organs of state. From this perspective, September 11, 1973 was an unfortunate rupture in an otherwise progressive democratic trajectory.

The opposition talked of abolishing the 1980 Constitution or eliminating its restrictions on civilian authority over the armed forces, in particular the inability of civilian presidents to remove military commanders and the designation of a number of military commanders to the Senate for lifetime appointments. The official army response to this talk was immediate: there would be no changes to the institutional order established by the military government. 'The Constitution of 1980, supported and approved by a majority of all Chileans in a secret, free and informed vote' had restored 'authentic' democracy.²⁵

Even though the military government handed power to civilians from a position of strength and confidence, a number of uncertainties lingered. Immunity from any crimes committed during the dictatorship depended on the fate of the established institutional structure. Would civilians try to change the constitution or prosecute criminal activity from the dictatorship? This political climate precluded any thoughtful reflection on the military regime's mistakes.

Colonel Carlos Molina Johnson, who wrote extensively on the issue of civil-military relations during this transitional period, made clear that the armed forces would

²⁵ "Editorial: FF.AA. y de Orden y Democracia Plena," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 433 (1989).

not return to the barracks, as some citizens seemed to expect, as if nothing had happened the last sixteen years. No, they would not allow civilians to destroy the social, political, and economic model they had created or become a neutral instrument of civilian leaders, indifferent to all ideologies or social forces. The 1980 Constitution had redefined civil-military relations so that military participation in the political system was indeed acceptable ‘the moment that the nation’s permanent values or the institutional regulations become endangered, clearly regulated legal channels now exist to permit the armed forces to participate in matters that demand their action.’²⁶ They had a constitutional obligation to ensure the system’s survival. Henceforth, ‘the armed bodies of the republic, by the simple effect of their constitutional authority, now assume a leading role. The role of spectators, or sporadically of actors, is over.’²⁷

Colonel Molina offered two reasons in support of a new constitutionally established role. First, officers had been playing a de facto role in the evolution of the Chilean state from Spanish conquistador Pedro de Valdivia to early republican presidents like Bernardo O’Higgins and Manuel Bulnes to twentieth century presidents like Carlos Ibáñez and Augusto Pinochet. As members of the nation’s most patriotic institution they embodied national values and were extraordinarily well prepared to provide leadership at crucial moments and deal with issues of internal disorder.²⁸

²⁶ Colonel Carlos Molina Johnson, “Chile: Los Militares y la Política,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 430 (1988).

²⁷ Colonel Carlos Molina Johnson, “La Constitución Política, la Obediencia y la No Deliberancia Militar,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 434 (1990).

²⁸ Carlos Molina Johnson, *Chile: Los Militares y la Política* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1989).

Second, civilian leaders had firmly established the pattern of using the armed forces to resolve political turmoil. During the parliamentary republic (1891-1924) civilian leaders had repeatedly used the armed forces to break industrial strikes at the same time they refused to enact progressive social legislation. Molina correctly points out that from 1932 to 1973, every civilian government used the armed forces to resolve internal conflicts. They sent military officers to govern provinces during national emergencies and used them to negotiate with striking workers.²⁹ Salvador Allende was no different than his predecessors. He had brought officers into his cabinet to negotiate agreements with striking workers in 1972, leaning on the military to enforce a peace he could not maintain. When societal consensus broke down in 1924 and 1973 political leaders of every ideological stripe had looked to soldiers as supreme arbiters, only proclaiming their opposition to military interventions afterwards. Recognizing these patterns, the present military government, unlike its predecessor in 1924, had written a constitution that properly enshrined the role of the armed forces in the life of the nation in order to obviate the need for any further interventions.

Molina did not deny the existence of military conspiracies in the past.³⁰ What he drew attention to was ‘the use of military force by political leaders, as the instrument to

²⁹ Gabriel González Videla had used the army to resolve industrial conflict and repress communists from 1947 to 1948. Carlos Ibáñez del Campo had used the armed to restore order after urban riots in 1957 and Eduardo Frei Montalva had deployed the army to end a copper strike in 1966, which resulted in eight deaths at the El Salvador mine.

³⁰ In 1939, 1969, and 1973 officers attempted three failed political plots (*Ariostazo*, *Tacnazo* and *Tanquetazo*). In the forties and fifties, there had been two secret societies with clear political orientations (*Por Un Mañana Auspicioso*, *Línea Recta*).

solve internal conflicts.’³¹ Given this history, he put forth that it was unacceptable to exclude the armed forces from the political system; unacceptable for them to suffer the ire of political elites who caused ruptures of national consensus, but asked them to intervene when institutional breakdowns occurred. Molina had a point. In the twentieth century, Chile’s political class had never viewed the military as a neutral organ of state. Civilians of every political stripe had sought military participation when political consensus broke down in 1891, 1924, and 1973. On army general said simply ‘civilians are the ones who come knocking on barracks doors, not the other way around.’³²

Major Eduardo Aldunate, another important commentator on the subject of civil-military relations, reserved his sharpest attack for the whole notion that Chile had ever been a ‘model democracy’. In his view, Chilean elites had built a ‘formal democracy’ that responded to pressure groups and oligarchs, but it did little to incorporate ordinary citizens into civic life. Moreover, the military had undertaken three major interventions in the political system from 1891 to 1973. At two critical junctures - 1924 and 1980 - they produced constitutions. In truth, Chile *was* like other developing nations; it only appeared exceptional by comparison to its more disorderly neighbors. ‘In general, Chile has been a slave of its own myth; that of the exemplary democracy which, in our judgment, is one of the many reasons why there was such a vigorous external condemnation of events on September 11, 1973.’³³

³¹ Molina, *Chile: Los Militares y la Política*, 195.

³² Interview with General Roberto Arancibia Clavel 7-5-07. See also *Historia del Ejército de Chile*, Vol. VIII, 314.

Departing from the premise that Chile's suffered from many of the same problems as other countries in the third world, Aldunate distinguished between the professional role of militaries in the developed and underdeveloped world. In developed countries, soldiers focused exclusively on external defense. In Latin America, Africa, and Asia professional soldiers had to provide for external defense and protect the nation from a constellation of internal threats.³⁴ In the social democracies of Western Europe such an expanded role would be unthinkable, but European societies did not face similar domestic problems and civilian leaders were not forced to rely on the armed forces to resolve domestic conflict. In Chile and other underdeveloped countries, civil authorities used military force, legitimately, during national emergencies but also to ensure orderly elections and neutralize acts that threatened internal stability. Thus, civil-military relations in Europe or the United States could not be usefully compared to civil-military relations in Latin America. It was a case of comparing apples to oranges.

Major Aldunate and Colonel Molina wanted civilians to concede that *civilians*, not officers, had created the conditions that had forced military interventions in 1891, 1924, and 1973. Furthermore, ambition and egotism did not motivate the Chilean officer core; duty and patriotism motivated soldiers to carry out legitimate missions of institutional stabilization, saving the country from collapse on multiple occasions.

³³ Eduardo Aldunate Herman, *Las FF.AA. de Chile, 1891-1973: en Defensa del Consenso Nacional* (Santiago: Estado Mayor del Ejército, 1989), 196.

³⁴ Ibid. 31-33. The idea that underdeveloped countries had a different role to play in their political systems was not a new idea in 1989. Major Claudio López Silva, "Las Fuerzas Armadas en el Tercer Mundo," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 356 (1970).

Civilians owed them respect and gratitude, not opposition to a new institutional role in the political system.

Major Aldunate insisted that a positive civil-military relationship depended on contact and cooperation, but also reciprocal understanding and confidence. Civilian leaders had to accept that Chile had never been an exemplary democracy and Chilean soldiers had made a valuable contribution to the country's institutional development. If civilians tried to circumscribe the armed forces' role strictly to 'external defense' problems were likely to emerge.³⁵ The National Security Council, wrote Aldunate, created a legitimate channel for military participation in the life of the nation that ensured a healthy civil-military relationship. Such a mechanism negated the need for the armed forces to intervene in the political system.³⁶ As such, civilians needed to recognize this type of institutional architecture as historically legitimate, not undemocratic.

Molina and Aldunate dispelled some myths about Chilean democracy but they also avoided the fact that sixteen years of military dictatorship was entirely *inconsistent* with Chilean history. The republic had never been so estranged from civilian rule or experienced a regime marked by such personalism. According to the military's own historical imagination, Diego Portales had established the principle of impersonal authority. Pinochet may have reestablished authority but it was hardly impersonal.

³⁵ Major Eduardo Aldunate Herman, "Fuerzas Armadas de Chile 1891-1973: Espectadores o Actores?," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 430 (1988).

³⁶ The 1980 Constitution created the National Security Council, a body composed of the president of the republic, presidents of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, chief justice of the Supreme Court, comptroller general, and commanders in chief of the army, navy, air force and carabineros. Any two of the council's members had the power to convoke the council (the army and navy for instance) in order to manifest opinions or concerns to the other members about anything that might compromise the nation's institutional structure. After constitutional reforms in 2005, only the president of the republic can convoke the council.

Similarly, there was a great deal *sui generis* about the 1973 intervention. Some aspects of it paralleled the 1924 intervention, but many things did not. The repression of the Pinochet regime had no historical precedent. On this point, there was no reflection about the long-term consequences of military rule for national unity. Finally, these authors avoided the complicated legacy of the Ibáñez dictatorship (1927-1931) and its poisonous consequences for military cohesion and civil-military relations.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

In 1989, Rafael Valdivieso - a civilian regime supporter - wrote that the military had given birth to a stable and increasingly prosperous society from the ashes of a ruined one.³⁷ Outgoing Interior Minister Carlos Cáceres agreed. The military government had restructured society for the good of all citizens and protected Chile's position in the region, its permanent values and historical identity, deterred external enemies from invading, and confronted the menace of internal enemies who wished to overthrow the existing order. Furthermore, the military regime had achieved all of these things while being maligned abroad and subject to hostile acts by enemies like Cuba that sent arms to irregular armies inside of Chile.³⁸ Who could deny these enormous achievements, thought Valdivieso and Cáceres?

Lieutenant Colonel Germán García claimed that construction of the *Carretera Austral* (completed in 1988) compared in historical consequence to Manuel Bulnes taking possession of the Strait of Magellan in 1842. This 'titanic undertaking', wrote García,

³⁷ Rafael Valdivieso Ariztía, *Crónica de un Rescate: Chile, 1973-1988* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1988).

³⁸ Carlos Cáceres, "Fuerzas Armadas y Democracia," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 434 (1990).

represented 'Chile's most transcendental effort in the entire century to overcome and modify nature.'³⁹ By connecting isolated territories to the nation's heartland the highway laid a basis for future human settlement, strengthening Chilean sovereignty over the region and blocking Argentina's ability to expand.

At the start of nineties, Latin America's democracies were weak and economically depressed. Mexico and Brazil's economic miracles had long since sputtered as had Venezuela's oil boom and Argentina's military power. In the eighties every Latin American country had suffered financial crises and bloated external debts but Chile, wrote Major Rene Meza, was different. Its national power was rising at a time when the national power of its neighbors was declining. The Chilean state was uniquely prepared to compete in a post-industrial world.⁴⁰

The army preferred to see the criticisms of the military as attacks originating from a small minority of professional politicians and revolutionaries, not the Chilean people. In 1990, an editorial in the *Memorial* wrote: 'It is increasingly clear that the country maintains a healthy affection for its military organizations.'⁴¹ Another editorial opined 'Today, Chile is a society, endowed with all the necessary elements to become a developed nation. Why not to recognize without false humility that it was possible thanks

³⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Germán García Arriagada, "Carretera Longitudinal Austral: la respuesta a un desafío," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 433 (1989). See also Mario Arnello Romo, "Visión Geopolítica de Chile en el Año 2050," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 433 (1989).

⁴⁰ Major René Meza Larenas, "Hacia un Reordenamiento del Mapa Geopolítico de Sudamérica?," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 433 (1989).

⁴¹ "Editorial: Cumpliendo la Misión," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 436 (1990).

to the armed forces?’⁴² From the army’s view, a small group of enemies motivated by the desire for revenge were criticizing the outgoing government, but in truth, a majority of Chilean citizens thought the regime had held onto power far too long and employed far too much repression. In 1973 the junta had promised to depoliticize the country and achieve ‘national reconciliation’. But in 1990, those goals had not been met. Political identities existed and state repression had irreparably fractured the national community both spiritually and spatially.

AN UNEASY TRANSITION

On March 11, 1990 Pinochet handed the presidential sash to Patricio Aylwin Azocar but it came with restrictions. He and a generation of civilian leaders would not have the authority to undo the military’s institutional reforms or initiate legal action against any officers accused of crimes during the dictatorship.

⁴² “Editorial: Septiembre,” *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 435 (1990).



Figure 8.3, Pinochet hands the presidential sash to Patricio Aylwin Azócar.⁴³

Just ten days after the handoff to civilians, militants from the FPMR entered the office of Gustavo Leigh and shot him in the face, abdomen, arms, and eye. Miraculously, he survived. Soon after, another group of FPMR militants kidnapped the son of Augustín Edwards, owner of the conservative *El Mercurio* newspaper. On April 1, 1991 FPMR militants assassinated Jaime Guzmán, one of Pinochet's key advisors. These three acts of violence were vengeful, but they also symbolized the continuing logic of the era: a nation of enemies in a zero-sum political game.

It goes without saying that the collapse of the USSR in August 1991 took just about everyone by surprise. The Chilean Communist Party and especially the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front appeared anachronistic in the years to come, the later

⁴³ With permission from *La Segunda*. www.lasegunda.com

dissolving completely in 1997. The stated justification for many of the 1980 Constitution's most controversial features such as the National Security Council was ostensibly to protect the country from the institutional threat of Marxism. After 1991, that rationale lost force. Until Pinochet's detention in London England in 1998, the council served, principally, to protect military officers from being prosecuted for crimes committed during the dictatorship.

Shortly after his inauguration as president, Patricio Aylwin established the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation Report chaired by Raúl Rettig to document human rights violations that had taken place during military rule. Six months later the commission determined that at least 2,279 persons were killed for political reasons during Pinochet dictatorship.⁴⁴ The army's response to the report illustrates the civil-military disconnect at the conclusion of the dictatorship.

Army editors angrily accused the Rettig Report of failing to assign principal blame to the political groups that had created the conditions precipitating military intervention. Violent political groups – not the military - had openly called for the overthrow of the state and declared the military an enemy of the people. As such they

⁴⁴ *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación*, Vol. I, Corporación Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Santiago: Andros Impresores, 1996), 32-40. The report assigned responsibility for the collapse of Chilean democracy in 1973 to political groups on the left and right who rejected democracy and looked to the 'vía armada' as the correct path to assume power. With respect to the military it identified ideas at the army's academy of war as the ideological point of origin for a national security doctrine and assigned a role to the United States proportioning this ideology. It also identified the military's lack of knowledge of Geneva Convention norms as a factor contributing to human rights violations. The Rettig Report assigned responsibility for the most egregious human rights violations (physical disappearance) to the DINA, highlighting that the organization was not accountable to any other state body except the person of Augusto Pinochet. The organization's power, entirely unchecked until 1977, had behind it an ideology of internal war that legitimized violence directed at its perceived enemies. The lack of limitations on the DINA's ability to commit acts of violence by an independent judiciary, comptroller general, or legislature made possible the most extreme abuses of human rights.

bore full responsibility for the institutional breakdown. The armed forces had only used violence to safeguard the state from grave internal threats.

The report was taken as an attack on the honor of the army and editors insisted that it simply enumerated acts of violence, some true, others not, but it did not establish the legitimate reasons for repression or the patriotic motives of officers who intervened. 'We mustered a legitimate response to a real threat to the nation rooted in patriotism...the armed forces did not seek the political role an historical imperative obliged them to assume in 1973.'⁴⁵

Military leaders felt the Rettig Report had the opposite effect of fostering national reconciliation because it opened old wounds and caused further division. Disappearances and torture centers, like left wing violence, belonged to an unfortunate part of the nation's recent past that everyone would be better off to forget in the name of national unity. But this position illustrates a fundamental contradiction of the regime dating back to its inception. The regime pledged to restore national unity while simultaneously carrying a violent purge of the political system that involved murder and torture. The military could not undo this contradiction.

CONCLUSIONS

The Pinochet years were transformative ones for military thought on social, political, and economic subjects. In 1970, most officers viewed the state as the appropriate motor of economic development and dispenser of social justice. By 1990, a solid majority had assimilated major tenets of neoliberal ideology and its alternative

⁴⁵ "Editorial," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 437 (1991).

vision of modernization. The idea that officers had to play a tutelary role in the life of the polity to safeguard the nation's permanent interests was no longer just an idea but formally institutionalized in the constitution. Uneasiness may have accompanied the transition to democracy, but the armed forces left power from a position of strength.⁴⁶

The overall cohesion and consensus of the Chilean armed forces in 1990 is striking when one considers the length of the dictatorship and that many officers had disapproved of various regime policies and actions. Nonetheless, Chilean officers overwhelmingly agreed that the reasons for military intervention on September 11, 1973 were legitimate and that they had patriotically led the country through a perilous time when it was under siege, beset by hostile forces everywhere – regional adversaries, traditional allies in the West, domestic opponents, and the forces of Soviet imperialism. This foundational conviction overwhelmed many forces of division.

It is also important to underline that a generation of officers had faced the greatest test of their profession (the threat of territorial invasion) and overcome it. They also had become less politically or materially dependent on other nations for arms and training. These challenges brought the armed forces together, contributing to a unity of purpose and a strong sense of having prevailed over foreign and domestic enemies.

⁴⁶ Major General Alejandro Medina Lois, "Valorización de la Nacionalidad Chilena," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 435 (1990). Colonel Carlos Molina Johnson, "Algunos Alcances Sobre las Relaciones Civiles-Militares," *Memorial del Ejército de Chile*, No. 435 (1990).

EPILOGUE

The Cold War cast a long shadow over Chile in the second half of the twentieth century. Its logic of confrontation and exclusive politics touched the whole of Chilean society and exacted a heavy toll on a nation known for tolerance and civility. One only needs to stroll down Calle Londres on a Thursday evening in Central Santiago to see Chileans assemble at the site of a former torture center and demand that those responsible for state terror be tried and punished to understand this truth. The Cold War's bitter legacy still haunts the country.

From 1990 to 1998, Pinochet stayed on as commander in chief of the army, where he stood above the transition to civilian rule as a looming symbol of an era and its politics. Patricio Aylwin, Chile's president from 1990 to 1994, urged Pinochet to abdicate, but Aylwin lacked the constitutional authority to make it happen, symbolizing the uneasy state of civil-military relations. The consolidation of civilian control over the armed forces would have to wait until the start of the next century.

In the two decades since the return to civilian rule, Chile's political class has made a determined effort to avoid the divisive winner-take-all politics of the sixties. Presidents Aylwin, Frei, Lagos, and Bachelet have all worked constructively with the armed forces, if uneasily at times. They have actively sought a positive civil-military relationship and have worked to avoid the mistakes of the sixties.

The story of Chile's current president, Michelle Bachelet, reveals something about Chile's recent past and its changing civil-military relations. The daughter of air

force general Alberto Bachelet who was condemned for treason by his own institution and died in prison because he had served in Salvador Allende's government, Michelle Bachelet was detained, tortured and exiled in 1975, but returned to Chile in 1979 where she completed medical school and eventually entered politics after the transition to democracy. Under two separate governments, she served as health minister and subsequently won a scholarship to study at the College of Inter-American Defense in Washington DC. She also graduated from Chile's own *Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos*. These qualifications opened the path for her to become Latin America's first female defense minister (2002-2004) and in many respects she embodies the type of civilian leader Chilean officers had clamored for in the sixties. Trained at the military's own ANEPE, she won acclaim for her ability to speak fluently with officers about security issues and long range plans for military modernization.

For most of the nineties, Chile's economy expanded at an average of six percent per annum. The ruling left center coalition has managed to reduce Chile's poverty rate to one of Latin America's lowest, but it has not altered, in any substantive way, the macroeconomic structure established by the military. Income inequality remains high, but on the whole, Chile's post-authoritarian success has lent strength to the military's own triumphal narrative. During chats with a retired army colonel who owns a bakery near Santiago's National Library, he often chastised old revolutionaries from Chile's socialist party who became millionaires under the new market conditions. These 'bourgeois socialists', he said, lavishly benefited from what the military built after they brought the country to ruin.

But Chile's post-authoritarian economic success is only one part of the story. A segment of Chilean society is convinced the armed forces saved the country from Marxist totalitarianism, faced down regional adversaries, and forged an institutional architecture that has effectively prevented a repeat of the 1973 breakdown. This segment of the population believes the military modernized the country and handed it back to civilians prosperous, stable, and at peace.

Today the Chilean military one of the most technologically advanced in South America, thanks in good part to a constitutional provision that reserves ten percent of revenue from the state copper company for defense spending. This money has been used to complete major purchases of German Leopard tanks, French *Scorpène* class submarines, Dutch frigates, and F-16 fighter jets. These recent acquisitions reflect military's diversified arsenal, overall technical sophistication, and Chile's good relations with arms exporting states. ENAER, Chile's aviation industry is reportedly in talks with Brazil's aviation industry to jointly design and manufacture South America's first indigenous line of military transport planes. One cannot look at these developments without considering the impact the Kennedy Amendment. It strengthened the armed forces' manufacturing and technical capacity and its sensitivity to over reliance on any one state for sophisticated weaponry.

The military's modernization program should be put into another historical context. Chile's armed forces want to avoid a repeat of the sixties when the regional balance of power began to favor Argentina and Peru. Chile's relations with Peru and Bolivia have improved greatly since the seventies, but institutional memories of Chile's

conventional weakness in the seventies have not faded and civilian leaders have been sensitive to that fact.

Pinochet's detention in London England in November 1998 opened a Pandora's box. While receiving medical treatment in London, Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón requested the aging dictator's extradition to stand trial on charges related to the murder of Spanish nationals. Unexpectedly, British authorities placed Pinochet under house arrest and a protracted extradition process got underway. Although he returned to Chile in March of 2000, Pinochet lost his diplomatic immunity and was indicted for crimes by Chilean courts. Pinochet had said on several occasions that he expected to meet his end at the hands of assassins, but he never imagined living his remaining years in legal limbo or under house arrest. Even more damaging was the evidence uncovered in 2004 that he and his family members had enriched themselves at state expense. This fact changed public perceptions of Pinochet who had always claimed to be a selfless patriot.

After his death on December 3, 2006, the old soldier did not enter posterity as he had hoped, receiving none of the state honors afforded ex-presidents. Only military barracks flew flags at half mast. Evincing old wounds in the armed forces, the grandson of former army commander in chief Carlos Prats spit on Pinochet's coffin. One group of Critics described him as just another Latin American dictator who enriched himself at the expense of his own people. Of course, the legacy of Pinochet's laws and economic structures are far deeper and complicated than those of 'just another Caribbean dictator'. He is easily the most influential Chilean of the twentieth century with a legacy that goes far beyond human rights violations and secret bank accounts. In the near future he will

continue to be a polarizing figure, a hero to some a villain to others. The best assessments of his life and legacy will undoubtedly come from future generations of Chileans more removed from the passions of the twentieth century.

In years since 1998, the navy and air force have tended to stress their professionalism during the military government and distance their institutions from Pinochet's notorious secret police. A new generation of army leadership is setting a different tone after twenty-five years under the same commander in chief. In 2004, commander in chief Juan Emilio Cheyre spoke of abandoning the Cold War mentality that dominated thought in the second half of the twentieth century. Cheyre wrote that the army had acted with absolute certainty its actions served the common good in 1973, but even the best intentions could not excuse human rights violations. Thus, 'the Chilean Army takes the difficult, but irreversible decision to assume responsibility for all shameful and morally unacceptable acts [it committed] in the past.'¹

In addition to this admission, Cheyre said the army was repositioning itself in Chilean society as a modern, professional institution focused on the diverse threats of the twenty first century. He expressed his desire for the army to be perceived as an institution for all Chileans that valued human rights and cooperated with civilian leaders, emphasizing that soldiers were not a caste of citizens standing above civil society with the occasional obligation to correct their irresponsible countrymen.

Cheyre's essay was hardly uncontroversial among his colleagues. Some felt it was an unwarranted *mea culpa* that ignored the underlying causes of situation the army

¹ General Juan Emilio Cheyre, "Ejército de Chile: el fin de una visión," *La Tercera*, May, 11, 2004.

had responded to in 1973. Some thought it a statement that sullied the honor of the army and did injustice to an institution that had saved the nation from totalitarianism. Some saw it as designed to please the nation's politicians.

The extent to which Cheyre's convictions represent his colleagues is difficult to determine, but many retired officers view the legal proceedings against former officers as political revenge directed at patriots who served their fatherland during a perilous era of manifold threats to the nation. General Matthei summed up this perspective when he said: 'One must not forget that it was the Marxists who initiated a campaign of hatred and violence in a country where it did not exist before and now they have been the ones allowed to judge the reaction to the hate they themselves created.'²

In the last fifteen years, civil-military relations have experienced a marked improvement. The present generation of Chilean officers is not so defined by the Cold War, but memories of the past will certainly linger for institutions as closely attuned to their own traditions and history. With respect to the idea that soldiers have the right to intervene in the political system under certain circumstances, that idea is likely to persist. In 1973, Chilean officers believed their nation was on the cusp of a destructive civil war. Few if any officers of that generation would call into question the legitimacy or necessity of that fateful intervention.

² Arancibia and de la Maza, *Matthei: Mi Testimonio*, 206.

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