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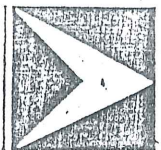
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Military Is Planning An 'Authoritarian' Democracy for Chile

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SANTIAGO, Chile — Traditional democracy has as much chance of triumphing in Latin America as a canary in a cockfight. Such is the vision of Chile's military government.



NEWS
ANALYSIS

What current history requires, the Chilean leadership says, is a new "authoritarian democracy" that has the agility and discipline to protect Western ways from the cutting and

stabbing of Marxism.

So Gen. Augusto Pinochet, the 61-year-old Chilean president, has dismissed many of Chile's democratic traditions, dissolving even non-Marxist political parties. Marxist parties have been outlawed since the armed forces seized power from the late President Salvador Allende in 1973.

AS BLUEPRINTS for "authoritarian democracy" slowly emerge, the idea is drawing both fervent support and acid criticism.

Jorge Retamales, 52, a corpulent merchant of fruits and vegetables who is nicknamed El Gordo, maintains a middle position.

"A dictatorship is OK for maybe five, six, eight years, but not more," Retamales said. "After that, they should go back to the vote.

"But not with so many parties," he added. "No more than two: left and right, period. And not so much politicking. Politicking is what ruins a country."

Retamales said his small downtown shop, crowded with big wicker baskets of apples and lemons, has not been much of a money-maker since the armed forces took power. He complained about high taxes and the country's economic depression.

The best feature of military rule, he said, has been "mucho tranquilidad." Much tranquillity.

SOME CRITICS doubt that Pinochet intends to establish any kind of democracy, authoritarian or otherwise.

"I think what Pinochet wants is to be a dictator like Franco," said a prominent Santiago journalist. The Chilean general has made no secret of his admiration for the late Spanish generalissimo.

However, the journalist predicted that the Chilean regime will continue to care about international opinion, which he said is a moderating influence on Pinochet and his fellow generals.

"They don't want the whole world to compare them with Idi Amin," the journalist said.

He added that Pinochet is firmly entrenched in power, supported by a secret intelligence service called DINA and the armed forces, which he is careful to keep economically comfortable.

IF PINOCHET goes ahead with his experiment in "authoritarian democracy," he will be carrying on one of Chile's most notable recent traditions — that of treating the nation as a political test tube.

In the 1960s, Christian Democratic President Eduardo Frei set the country's political cauldron aboil with what he called "revolution in liberty." The goal was deep social and economic reform without Marxism and within a system of traditional democracy.

Allende, a Marxist-Socialist who won the presidency in 1970 elections, took Chile down a more radical route, one he called the "road to socialism."

That led to economic chaos, political turmoil and a bloody military coup on Sept. 11, 1973. Authorities say that Allende committed suicide that same day.

SINCE THEN, a military junta headed by Pinochet has been in charge, ruling with dictatorial powers. There is no congress, no elections of any kind, no open partisan politicking.

The "political recess" applies mainly to opponents of the regime, as one Roman Catholic priest observes.

"The military men say they are not making politics," the priest remarked, "but any government makes politics."

The four-man junta includes Pinochet as the commander of the army and the commanders of the navy, air force and national police. Since the 1973 coup, the junta's collective power progressively has faded and Pinochet's power as president has grown.

"He obviously enjoys the job," said a foreign diplomat in Santiago.

IT IS KNOWN that there have been differences among the four commanders, and it is widely believed that Pinochet has considered breaking up the junta and personally assuming its remaining powers.

Such a move might not be easy. Gen. Gustavo Leigh, the air force commander, said in a recent speech that he supports the plans for "authoritarian democracy" — but "without personalism."

The junta has decreed four "constitutional acts" in the past two years to overhaul the constitution. Pinochet has promised that others coming this year will "give a more complete vision of the new institutional structure we are building."

SOME BASIC points of the plan already are clear:

- Political parties are to be mere "currents of opinion," not vehicles for seeking power.

- Marxist parties, including the Communists, are to remain illegal.

- The armed forces are to retain an important role in national life, with special emergency powers for combating subversion.

Sergio Onofre Jarpa, a former conservative political leader and currently Pinochet's ambassador to Colombia, says Chile's planned system will include popular elections, "but not only based on political parties. Unions, professional associations, universities, trades, etc., also will participate."

A MILITARY source said popular elections will fill a number of seats on a proposed legislative chamber, and other seats will be filled by presidential appointment. Asked about the proportion between elective and appointive seats, the source said: "I don't have that very clear yet."

He also said presidential elections are being considered, with Pinochet as a candidate. The source gave no indication of what other candidates might be permitted to run, and he cautioned: "All this is still very much in diapers."

A Christian Democratic leader said privately that the military plan for a legislative chamber is a "masquerade."

"First we need a constitution approved by plebiscite, that is by the Chileans, and not by a dictator or a group named by him," the Christian Democrat said.

He added that he believes there are "dissident groups" within the armed forces who agree with the Christian Democrats. He said the party is working for a "great civilian-military understanding" aimed at returning the country to full democracy over a period of two or three years.

HOWEVER, the political leader said such an understanding would have to be reached with military men other than Pinochet and his junta. "They have been burned, domestically and internationally," he said, referring to widespread accusations of human rights violations by the regime.

The military government openly shows its irritation over the continuing activities by Christian Democrats, sometimes accusing party members of subversion.

"Why do they keep trying to stir things up?" said the wife of an army officer. "We don't want to go back to strikes, demonstrations, disturbances and all those things."

"Why don't they leave things in peace?"

PEACE AND ORDER are goals that the regime doggedly has pursued. The armed forces have intervened in once turbulent universities, labor unions, and other institutions.

An example of the widespread control is the requirement that schools make up an annual report for the armed forces, listing all students' names, addresses and parents' occupations. Teachers also are watched.

"The teacher who has leftist tendencies has to keep quiet," said a secondary school instructor. "Before, they taught socialism; you could see a lot of it in the textbooks..."

"Students went to the streets all the time, the leftists, the rightists, everyone."

"Now, no. There is more order and more respect. And better work. They study more now."