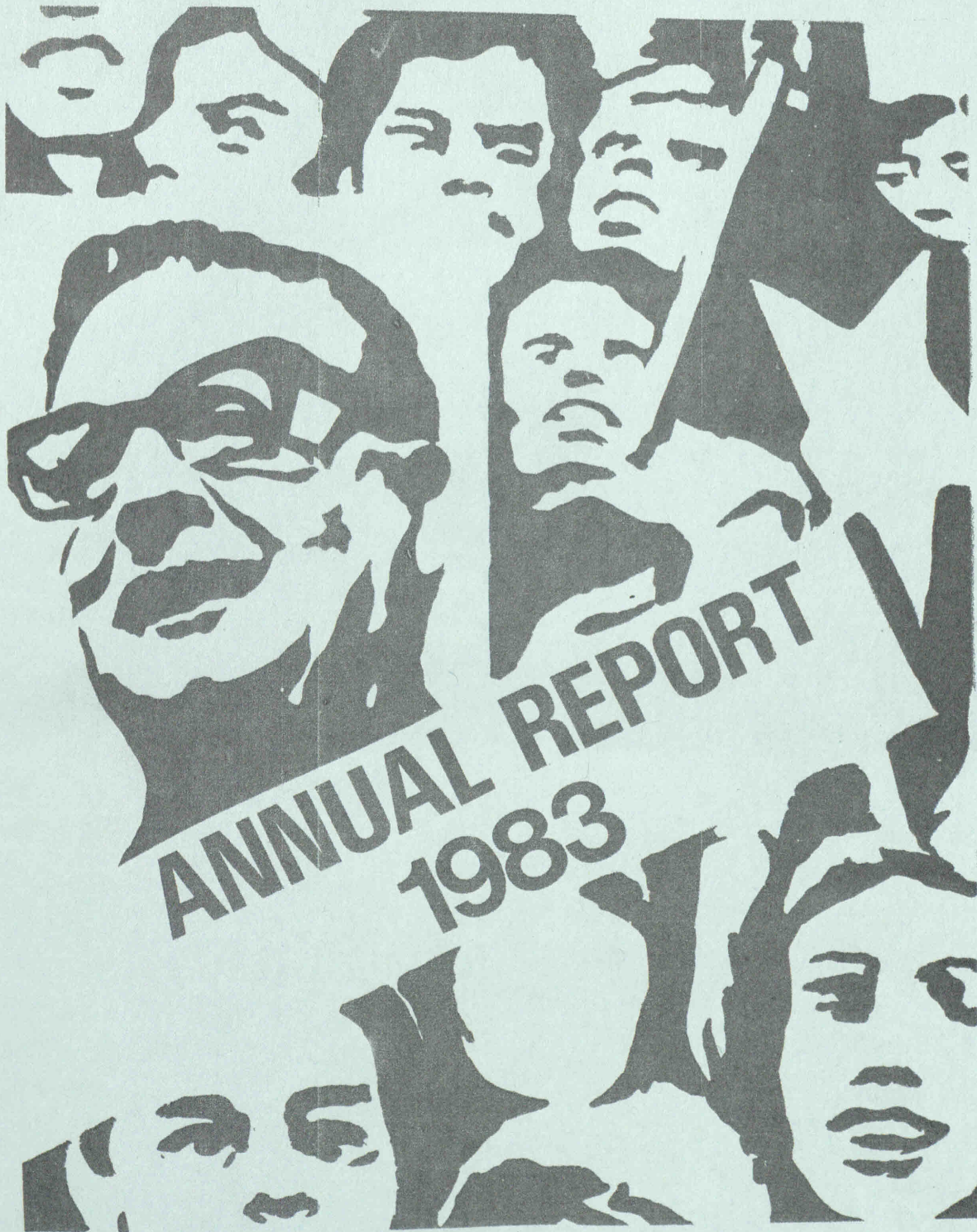


Chile: the tide has turned



★ Chile
Solidarity
Campaign

INTRODUCTION

'History is ours for it is made by the people'.

That statement from Allende's last speech came dramatically to life in 1983, as the Chilean people broke the bonds of fear and seized the centre of the stage.

One year ago, the rumblings of discontent were becoming louder - but few could have predicted the dramatic upsurge of popular protest, that brought millions of Chileans into action and pushed Pinochet to the brink of defeat.

The continued collapse of the economy, with further drops in output, more bankruptcies and unemployment, drops in living standards and deeper debt, eroded further Pinochet's traditional support. At the same time the growing desperation of the poor and working classes inspired new, daring and imaginative forms of resistance.

The year began with the long and bitter strike at Colbun-Machicura; its eventual success inspired new trade union unity and combativity, leading to the wide support for the demonstrations of March 24th; the May Day protests and the first National Day of Protest on May 11th. It ended with a demonstration of 500,000 people in Santiago, followed by waves of smaller protests by the unemployed, for higher payments; by women in the first major women-only event; and by workers against the new copper laws; and Pinochet's New Year message to the nation was greeted by noisy protests up and down the country.

Pinochet still clings to power, guarded by the army and secret police, but his isolation deepens. Massive repression - at worst, the sending of 18,000 troops into Santiago to kill 31 people - has not quelled the rebellion; erratic interventions and U-turns have not softened the economic crisis; and the frequent dissolution and reformation of cabinets has not averted growing political crisis - only in December Miguel Schweitzer, former Ambassador to London, resigned as Foreign Minister, unable to continue justifying the junta's policy to the world.

Tory support for Pinochet has not diminished - though it may be expressed more cautiously - while even the United States has been more forthright in condemning repression and calling for a real return to democracy.

In its Tenth Year of solidarity, CSC achieved an unprecedented degree of publicity for its work, with a very successful programme of public events. As the struggle against fascism nears its climax in Chile, the work of cutting the Tory lifeline and strengthening support for the popular rebellion must not be allowed to diminish.

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MAIN EVENTS IN CHILE IN 1983

January

On the 7th the strike at the building of the Colbun-Machicura hydroelectric plant at Linares, south of Santiago. The strike was over wages, conditions and job security. On the 8th Andres Galanakis, a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party/24th Congress, was shot and arrested. The IMF agreed a \$900 million loan to ease the payments crisis on 10th. The conditions were said to include a cut in government expenditure of 10-12%. The following day the much-vaunted 'Commission on the Return of Exiles' was disbanded by Pinochet, without having done very much.

February

The ex-US Ambassador to Chile, Davis, began suing the makers of the film 'Missing' for \$150 million for 'damage to his reputation'. In February too it became clear that Chile's attempts to get the US Congressional arms embargo lifted had failed, with many articles appearing in the US Press about the deterioration of Chile's human rights record adding to the pressure. On February 10th Rolf Luders began his world tour of banking centres in an attempt to secure rescheduling of the country's \$18 billion debt.

March

The IMF insisted on stricter conditions for rescheduling Chile's debt, after a faster than planned growth in money supply and decline in foreign reserves. These new terms included controls on dollar transactions for traders and travellers, a sharp increase in luxury taxes, and faster devaluation of the peso. The fall in the value of the peso already registered had led to a drop in the value of exportable profits for foreign investors; hence companies like Blue Circle cement were de-investing, adding to the decline of industry. On 11th March Pinochet issues a warning to those who 'tried to forget' the years of 'Marxism', and return to 'political chaos'. At the same time he expelled two Irish Roman Catholic priests who had been involved in community self-help projects, accusing them of 'politics'.

The Colbun-Machicura strike, which had become the focus of resistance all over the country, drawing material and moral support from all kinds of organisations, as well as important solidarity from French workers against the French HQ of the firm involved, reached a successful conclusion, with most of the workers demands being met. This proved a great inspiration to the opposition. On March 24th simultaneous demonstrations called by the left wing parties in Santiago, Valparaiso, Concepcion and Linares drew bigger crowds than expected. On the same day precision bomb attacks cut the water supply to the richer parts of Santiago. In all over 200 people were arrested, many of them being sent to the old camp at Pisagua in the desert north. The crowds showed remarkable endurance, resisting water cannon, dispersing and reforming elsewhere. An open letter, signed by ex-politicians, called on the armed forces to restore democracy, and announced steps toward the formation of a multipartidaria. Pinochet promised a new crackdown on 29th; 'This is a warning, not a threat, and it includes those who promote human rights', he said.

April

There were more and more signs of widespread popular discontent, now reaching the middle classes, especially over economic issues, but with democratic and human rights demands also prominent. This was accompanied by gradual steps towards trade union unity, and among centre-right political circles by discussions and manoeuvring in which representatives of the United States were believed to be taking part.

May

May Day was marked by large demonstrations in all major towns and cities. In Santiago the march was attacked by plain clothes men believed to be members of the army or CNI, while uniformed police stood by. John Barnes, secretary of the Chile Committee for Human Rights, was detained and threatened by CNI men. There were later attempts to force him out of the country which he resisted, drawing a lot of publicity to his visit, and to the closeness of the British and Chilean Governments.

The Copper Miners (CTC) called for a General Strike on May 11th; on the 6th, the Government responded with threats to union leaders who supported the strike, and offers of minor concessions. On the 9th army units with tanks etc occupied mining areas and surrounded the CTC headquarters. The strike for the 11th was called off but the CTC called for a Day of National Protest instead. This found a wide resonance.

The First Day of Protest saw go-slows and 'silent working' in the factories; boycotts of schools and of work canteens; traffic hold-ups; student occupations; the beating of pots and pans (Caceroleras) and the extinguishing of all lights at 8pm; barricades and street festivities. Both the organisers and the regime were amazed at the size of the response. Two people were killed by the police, one of them a 15 year old boy. The funerals of these two on 13th became spontaneous demonstrations. The juntas response was to order massive swoops through shanty towns in Santiago, Valparaiso and Concepcion, involving army units on a scale unknown since the coup. Thousands of males were detained, mostly for a few hours but some were gaoled for longer.

A new trade union grouping was founded, the National Workers' Command (CNT), which included the CTC, CNS, FUT, UDT and CEPCH. It called for Days of Protest on or near the 11th of every month. Legal threats against the leaders of the CNT were met by the promise of extensive solidarity action.

France reacted to the wave of arrests by withdrawing its ambassador from Santiago for 'consultation'. Chile replied by withdrawing its ambassador from Paris. On 18th the Amnesty International report on Chile was published, saying that it was 'beyond reasonable doubt that the use of torture has been a constant feature of the security force's practice during the last nine years.'

June

The second day of protest on 14th was even bigger than the first; hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in different ways all over the country. There were every effective boycotts of schools, offices, shops and transport throughout the day. Running battles between students and security forces took place in the centre of Santiago. Barricades were erected in shanty towns and the police were virtually debarred from entering large areas. The junta claimed it was a 'normal day' although 4 people were killed and 1,351 arrested, some of them being sent to Pisagua. Rodolfo Seguel, President of the CTC, was arrested. This provoked a strike by some miners, which the junta followed by arresting 11 more and sacking hundreds.

A general strike was called for June 23rd; but many union leaders all over the country were arrested, and there was a very effective media censorship which blotted out all news of the strike. Although there was a good response in some areas, with much transport halted, the strike was called off on the 26th without having become 'general'. Pinochet warned that no more protests would be tolerated, and threatened those who called them with expulsion or gaol.

July

The third day of protest on July 12th was even more successful than the first two, despite many efforts to suppress it. There were street demonstrations in Santiago, Valparaiso and Concepcion, and clashes between students and police. Schools and shops were boycotted, and there was a reported 80% drop in takings in shops. The curfew imposed from 8pm until midnight was broken, with caceroleras from 7pm, barricades etc. Prisoners banged their cell bars with spoons. Christian Democrat leaders arrested on 11th were released. In a display of growing independence from the junta, the supreme court ruled the protest legal. It was reported in Chile that U.S. strategy was now to bind together a coalition of centre and right groups and leaders to prevent any rapprochement of the CD and Communist Parties. U.S. Ambassador James Theberge said the U.S. 'supports the restoration of a full fledged stable democracy in Chile.'

August

The Democratic Alliance, a centre-right political coalition, was set up, centred on the Christian Democrats but including the Republican Right, social democrats, and sections of the socialist party. On 11th Pinochet reshuffled his cabinet, dropping many military men and introducing Sergio Onofre Jarpa, former founder of Chile's Nazi Party, as Interior Minister, with the promise of 'reforms'. This was not in time to affect the Day of Protest, also on 11th. Eighteen thousand troops were sent in to Santiago with orders to shoot at protesters. Thirty-one people, including children, were shot dead, and many more injured, both by bullets and beatings. After this talks began between Gabriel Valdes, leader of the CD Party, and Jarpa, leading to the lifting of the state of siege and the legalisation of a rally called by the Alliance on 4th September. But the talks broke down within a month as it became clear that the reforms were on paper only, and that the whole idea of the talks had been to defuse the opposition before the world's press arrived for the 'Tenth Anniversary' in September. General Urzua, military governor of

Santiago, was shot dead with his driver and bodyguard. There was widespread speculation that this was the work of right-wing provocateurs.

September

Despite the talks, and massive security precautions, massive and prolonged protests did take place starting on 8th but continuing over the weekend especially in shanty towns, with many areas 'no-go' for the police. Pinochet's celebrations were severely marred as a result, with media attention focussed on the discontent. Ten more people were killed, some for refusing to take part in pro-junta celebrations, despite the offer of financial inducements. The formation of a new left-wing coalition, the Democratic Popular Movement, (MDP) was announced with the issuing of a manifesto just before 11th. The MDP included the Almeyda wing of the Socialist Party, the Communists, the MIR, the Radicals and some smaller groups. The talks between the Alliance and the junta were broken off when it became clear to the latter that they were a fraud, and that they were in danger of losing credibility in the people's eyes.

October

The Alliance called a demonstration on 11th, but then withdrew. It went ahead with MDP support, and some 70,000 joined in the biggest march since the coup. The platform included representatives of the Socialists, Communists and PRODEN, but not the Alliance. Police used violence to break it up at the end, and two people were killed, but protests went on for two more days. The repression was however much less severe than in August and it was clear that the junta felt it could not afford the adverse publicity involved. On 26th a new law was decreed, making the organisation of illegal demonstrations liable to exile or gaol. Seguel retorted that no law could prevent the workers and people from continuing their struggle for democracy. A further day of protest took place on 27th, with actions in several cities, but less extensive than previous ones. Boycotts and partial strikes reduced activity in central Santiago, while crowds led by Seguel marched on the Moneda Palace, chanting anti-Pinochet slogans. Barricades surrounded shanty-towns and blocked main roads. Students with stones and petrol bombs fought police for hours on central streets. At least twelve people were injured by gunfire, and about 150 injured. In Concepcion, 18,000 people attended a rally addressed by Valdes. A new centre-left formation, the Socialist Block, appeared with a manifesto, claiming the allegiance of parts of the Socialist Party, MAPU, MAPU-OC, the Christian Left, and the Socialist Convergence.

November

On 11th Sebastian Avelledo, unable to discover the fate of his children who had been abducted by the CNI, set fire to himself in the main square of Concepcion and died, but not before his children had been released. A legal rally in Santiago on 18th filled the Parque O'Higgins with a crowd estimated at 500,000. In an impressive display of unity no party banners were carried, only the national flag. A main focus of the rally was the demand for the disbandment of the CNI. Church groups joined in this demand, and the Court of Appeal called for the release of a shanty-town leader from a secret prison. It went on to say that the CNI had no legal right to arrest people and then detain them in secret places. Six people were arrested and charged with the assassination of Gen. Urzua, and were committed to face the 'War Tribunal', a sort of military court with no legal safeguards and the right to impose the death penalty without appeal. After protest inside Chile and world-wide, the Supreme Court postponed the tribunal until further investigation. The price of copper had fallen below 70c a pound, well below the estimated price of 82c, leading to new taxes to make up the shortfall in government revenue. It was speculated that this might also impede the purchase of major weapons systems from abroad.

December

In the climax of two weeks of protest, thousand of PEM and POJH (a scheme for 'heads of households') workers marched demanding a 35% increase in pay on Dec. 6th. Church groups including priests and nuns demonstrated against a secret CNI torture centre, leading the government to say that this proved it was no longer secret. An international rally of Christian Democrat parties was held in Santiago, with 60 parties represented; it issued a strong call for democracy in Chile. On 13 there was a union-led demonstration against the new Mining Law, which came into force on 14th. This law allows foreign capital to buy up to 20% of Chile's copper and mineral reserves, and opens the way to complete foreign penetration and control of the country's major resource, which until then was still in state hands.

A major trade union and opposition rally on 19th, with 7,000 people in Santiago's Caupolican Theatre, heard Manuel Bustos of the CNS call for a General Strike early in the new year. This call subsequently won the support of the CNT and other groups. Jarpa announced a new law to be implemented in 1984, giving limited legal status to some political parties. But this would require the parties each to submit a list of 200,000 members, and to win at least 10% of the vote in any (unspecified) election. On the same day three members of the Socialist Party/24th Congress were arrested and charged with possessing arms; one of them, Galanakis, was arrested almost a year ago and badly treated. News rapidly emerged that two including Galanakis were being badly tortured. The first major women-only event took place on Dec. 29th, with a packed rally again at the Caupolican spilling over into a march by 10,000 women demanding an end to the junta. Nearly every women's organisation was represented.

Pinochet's New Year's Day message to the nation was greeted by caceroleras, hooting car horns, firecrackers etc, despite his ploy of broadcasting it an hour later than advertised.

DEVELOPMENTS IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA IN 83

Central America

Successive U.S. attempts to get the Salvadorean army on to the offensive against the FMLN have floundered, and the end of the year saw the guerrillas stronger than ever and attacking the most heavily defended targets in the country. Meanwhile the political crisis has continued, with the projected 'elections' unlikely to produce a more credible government. In the absence of any human rights improvement the US Congress has tried to limit US military aid, but in December Kissinger recommended a massive increase in such aid, with the good doctor saying, in a style reminiscent of Chile, 'it would be absurd to allow a country to be taken over by Marxist Leninists in the name of human rights'.

Throughout the year the invasion of Nicaragua by CIA controlled 'Contras' has escalated, and as the US militarisation of Honduras grew, so did the threat of direct invasion, especially after the invasion of Grenada in October. Astute diplomacy by the Sandinistas seemed to have temporarily averted this threat, but sabotage attacks continue to impede economic reconstruction, although popular morale and support for the revolution remained high.

A coup toppled Rios Montt in Guatemala and replaced him by a Government even closer to the US and just as bloodthirsty, with a level of repression unequalled anywhere in Latin America, and continued reports of massacres of the Indian population.

The 'Contadora' plan for peace in Central America gained support amongst Latin American countries but was obstructed at every turn by the US. It remained an important campaigning point for solidarity groups.

South America

Argentina's return to democracy, and the investigation into those responsible for the 'disappearances' was the most positive development, which could only encourage the democratic movement in Chile. In the short time between taking office and the end of the year the Alfonsin regime had taken important steps towards curbing the power of the military, and guaranteeing civil liberties. In Uruguay the military dictatorship now faced a mass opposition movement which had organised Days of Protest on the Chilean model, right down to details like the pots and pans. There were plans for a General Strike in January and it seemed likely that Uruguay would follow Argentina in the near future.

A democratic government with some progressive policies remained in Bolivia, but it was facing clashes with the trade union movement over economic policy; as well as a number of political crises. In Peru a worsening economic crisis had radicalised the poor, and led to sweeping gains by the left in local elections. The Maoist Sendero Luminoso guerrillas had extended their efforts, and the unrestrained military campaign against them was causing hundreds of civilian deaths and the threat of another military coup. Brazil's 'partial democracy' had faced a debt crisis, and mass resistance against the IMF imposed cuts in living standards. In places this had resulted in looting and civil disobedience, and the Chamber of Deputies had at first refused to approve the policy. A compromise agreement had eventually been arrived at. Brazil had now become one of the world's largest arms exporters and was now supplying much equipment to Chile.

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST TORY AND U.S. POLICY TOWARDS CHILE

On February 10th Rolf Luders, Chilean Finance Minister, arrived in London for talks at the Orion Bank with bankers to whom Chile is indebted; to be met with a very successful emergency picket, handing out leaflets pointing out Chile's appalling human rights record, and the poor results of monetarist policies.

After it was revealed on local TV that Luton airport was being used to ship military equipment to Chile, and that the Chilean Air Force was renting part of a warehouse there, local CSC supporters mounted a picket of the airport on Feb, 12th, which got a lot of local coverage. The Campaign discovered that junta member and head of the air force, General Matthei, was visiting London from 12 to 19th Feb, and mounted a picket of the Ambassador's residence on 19th, where a reception for Matthei was caught by surprise. Matthei's visit included a trip to RAF Dunsfold to see Jaguar jet fighters. Matthei's visit and the protests got good coverage on ITN.

In March the British Government finally answered Parliamentary Questions about the sale of Canberra and Hawker Hunter jets to Chile - although news of their arrival in Chile had appeared in 'El Mercurio' in December. Considerable protest from trade unions, MPs and others was generated about the increasingly close military links with Chile.

Two officers of the Campaign secured shareholders tickets for the IIT AGM held in the Barbican on May 11th, and took the opportunity to ask questions about IIT's activities in Chile, much to the discomfiture of Rand V. Araskóg, the IIT President.

In the run-up to the General Election in June, CSC strove to publicise and contrast party policies towards Chile. Another member of the junta, Admiral Merino, made a secret visit to London in June. CSC protested in advance at his visit, with a large² and voluble picket at Downing Street on 15th June; and after his arrival with a picket of the Chilean Naval Mission on 22nd. This was followed by the 24 hour vigil at the Embassy (see next section) and on 24th members of the Campaign tagged on to a ceremony in Belgrave Square, at which a minor member of the royal family layed a wreath on the statue of Simon Bolivar, whose bicentenary it was; and layed an 'alternative wreath', in memory of those who were still fighting for freedom in Latin² America. All these actions were accompanied by letters of protest from trade unions, MPs and others, and got varying degrees of press coverage, normally in the left press but sometimes in the Guardian, Times etc. as well.

The planned participation of a Chilean Air Force representative in the RAF Benevolent Air Tattoo (at Greenham Common !) was the focus of protest too; and on the weekend of the Tattoo members of the Campaign joined peace groups and others in a protest at the gates of the base; leaflets containing a CSC statement were put on hundreds of car windscreens inside the base.

Throughout August and into September, CSC supported the daily picket of the US Embassy organised by NICA (No Intervention in Central America) to draw attention to the threat to Nicaragua.

As the struggle in Chile intensified through August and September, so CSC had more and more opportunities to write articles or contribute to articles in many journals, and were able to use them to point out the important role that Britain now played in relation to Chile. In September the plans to sell HMS Antrim were revealed - a County class guided missile destroyer like the 'Norfolk' already sold, but modernised with Exocet missiles. Plans to sell Jaguar jets and possibly even aircraft carrier HMS Hermes were also mentioned. CSC responded with a rapid letter that was distributed to hundreds of delegates at the Liberal Assembly in September, and with a picket at the Tory Conference in Blackpool in October. This attracted considerable interest from delegates, some of whom presumably thought that leaflets headed 'Don't sell HMS Antrim' were part of a campaign against navy cuts. On the same day a picket was held at the office of the Defence Sales Organisation Office in London.

In October and November CSC members and officers of the Campaign helped organise emergency protests against the invasion of Grenada. At the same time urgent actions were sent out calling for pressure on the British Government to support the retention of the UN Special Rapporteur when the vote came up in December. At the end of November a delegation was organised to the Foreign Office which also took up the question of the UN vote (see next section for further details of delegation)

Campaigning against British and US policy (Continued)

On 23rd December - just before Christmas - a picket was held at Downing Street, involving one CSC officer dressed as Pinochet receiving a (model) Jaguar jet from a CCHR officer dressed as Santa Claus but wearing a Thatcher mask. Hundreds of leaflets were given out to bemused passers-by. The protest was visually effective and got a photograph in City Limits.

SUPPORT FOR THE RESISTANCE IN CHILE

The anniversary of the assassination of Tucapel Jimenez was marked by a well-attended picket at the Embassy. Trade Union representation was especially good, with three national TUs represented. In the evening CSC supported a celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of C.U.T., held in the FTAT premises. It was very successful with over 100 people.

On March 14th CSC supported a Chile Democratico picket of the Embassy, on the anniversary of the introduction of the new constitution.

The first National Day of Protest was marked by a CSC/Chile Democratico picket of the Embassy, which was also protesting at the visit of Caceres (Luders having been sacked) in Briatin. Shortly afterwards CSC organised protests to Chile concerning the arrest of hundreds of people during May 11th.

The day of the planned general strike, June 23rd, was marked by a 24 hour vigil at the Embassy, which was very successful in publicity terms and which demonstrated anew mood of combativity amongst the Chileans exiled in Britain. Radio and TV coverage was gained, as well as press reports. During the vigil CSC received news of a Press Conference being given by the new Chilean Ambassador to London, Orrego. The CSC Secretary together with Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn gatecrashed the press conference, and read out a statement about repression in Chile. This gained far more coverage than anything Sr. Orrego had to say.

Similar protests were held for the Days of Protest on July 12th and August 11th. The latter was followed by urgent action appeals to generate protests against the mass killing on that day, and calling on the British Government to issue a strong protest, which Britain has still not done.

The National Demonstration on September 11th is covered elsewhere.

On October 6th a very successful meeting was held with a British journalist who had just returned from Chile, giving eyewitness accounts of events there. Points stressed were the degree of anger and militancy of the shanty-towns; the signs of rebirth of the left political parties; the closeness of British diplomatic staff with junta members; and the need for direct support for the struggles.

Protests about the War Tribunal in Chile were sent by many TUs and others, and there is no doubt that external pressure helped postpone it. When the CSC delegation, including Frank Dobson, MP, Nick Blake of the Haldane Society, Jim Murphy of the Labour Party and a representative of Chile Democratico, arrived at the Foreign Office, news of the postponement was already out; issues raised included British Government support for the Right of Return; and as a result of the visit two exiles were re-granted permission to enter Chile. Also in November the Campaign began a re-appraisal of the Direct Links work. Much work had gone into it, and many union branches had sent letters asking for links to organisations in Chile; but the response had been disappointing, for many reasons, not least of which was the new situation in Chile, which meant that most activists in Chile would have their hands full and not be able to reply to letters from Britain. At the same time the problems of exiles in Britain wishing - and legally able - to return to Chile came to the fore. Assisting activists to return and be active in social movements was seen as a useful form of direct support for the struggle, and easier to organise. From this time the Campaign began to look at ways of doing this.

On December 16th a joint meeting was held with with solidarity committees on Kenya and the Phillipines, on the question of cultural repression and resistance in the three countries; very interesting discussion resulted from the contributions.

At the end of December news came of the arrest of three Socialist Party/24th Congress leaders; CSC appealed for urgent protests from trade unions and a number of telegrams were sent, both to the Ambassador and to Chile.

WORK WITH THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN

Nineteen-eighty-three saw the trade unions in Britain on the defensive, and with many domestic pre-occupations; but the Campaign continued to maintain a high profile with them. The movement as a whole saw a great setback with the Tory victory in the General Election, but again CSC had taken the opportunity to strengthen work with the Labour Party both inside and outside Parliament.

CSC was represented in different ways at the conferences of NALGO, CPSA, POEU and the NUM. Campaign speakers addressed many trade union branch meetings during the year, gaining as a result several new affiliations. A dozen Labour Party meetings were also spoken to about the Campaign, with a similar success in terms of affiliations. In addition several student groups and meetings of other organisations held meetings on Chile with CSC representatives. The Secretary spoke to a meeting of several hundred organised by the Durham Mechanics Society.

Hector Cuevas, President of the Construction Workers' Union in Chile, who was expelled in December 1982, visited Britain in April for a trade union tour. He met with the PLP Chile group, the TUC International Department, the UCATT Executive, Bob Wright of AUEW, Alex Kitson of the T&GWU, Liverpool Trades Council and a variety of Chilean groups. He was interviewed by the Guardian, Morning Star, Labour Weekly and Tribune.

In September former Labour Minister in Allende's Government, Mireya Baltra, visited Britain at CSC's invitation. She was the main speaker at 'Viva' on Sept. 4th; at the fringe meeting at the TUC on Sep. 6th, chaired by Alex Kitson, and jointly organised by CSC and the CRS Political Committee; at a public meeting and civic reception at Sheffield, at a seminar on Sep. 10th and at the national demonstration. In addition she was interviewed by the Financial Times, the Morning Star and New Worker.

At the Labour Party Conference in Brighton CSC had three inputs; as part of the CRS Political Committee-organised International Social on Sunday 2nd Oct.; in a joint RACS Political Committee-ELSSOC-CSC fringe meeting which attracted 35 people; and in the CSC social, to which over 200 people came, and which was addressed by Judith Hart and Jeremy Corbyn MPs, and enteratined by Latin American musicians.

After the General Election the Secretary had made approaches to a number of Labour MPs, including former Chile Group members, that it would be useful to set up a PLP Latin America group. This idea bore fruition in November, when such a group was set up with the support of some 50 MPs. In December it held the first of a series of meetings to which solidarity and human rights groups were invited, and to which CSC gave its views as to what the group should do on Chile - including countering the pro-junta speeches of the Tory MPs who went on a visit to Chile in December, paid by the Chilean Government; campaigning against arms sales and other forms of aid to the junta; and giving consideration to the idea of a delegation to Chile in 1984. All these suggestions met with a positive response and bode well for future work with the group.

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CONCERT TOURS; SEPTEMBER FESTIVAL; SEPTEMBER DEMONSTRATION

Quilapayun Tour April/May

The Quilapayun tour was successful in gaining audiences in places where there had not been a CSC concert recently or ever; but not sufficiently for it to be a financial success. It opened in Portsmouth with a concert organised by Portsmouth CSC. About 600 people attended and Brian Davey, secretary of the Portsmouth CSC, made the collection speech. The audience was very enthusiastic and demanded several encores. On May Day they played in London's Dominion Theatre with the Celtic folk group 'the Boys of the Lough'. The audience of 1,800 responded well to the music and gave a collection of £700 in response to Alex Kitson's speech.

In Bristol the local Chile Democratico group organised a concert in the University to which about 500 came; some local artists played also and again the response was enthusiastic. In the last concert, in Sheffield's City Hall, about 600 people heard Roy Bailey and Quilapayun, and Davis Stead of the Latin American Solidarity Front spoke about the projects that SLASF was helping in Chile. Thanks are due to all those whose hard work contributed to the concerts and especially to the T&GWU for their invaluable aid.

Inti Illimani Tour September

Inti Illimani were the main attraction at the September 3rd Festival for Chile, the GLC-backed event on the South Bank. In the afternoon, the Purcell Room was about 74% full for a concert with Daniel Viglietti, Roy Bailey, Leon Rosselson, Frankie Armstrong and the Co-operation Singers. Two-thousand five-hundred people packed out the Royal Festival Hall in the evening to hear Inti, John Williams and Daniel Viglietti, assisted by Peggy Ashcroft, Susan Fleetwood and Joe Melia. The audience was enthusiastic despite problems with the sound system; Neil Kinnock gave the collection speech and over £1,000 was given.

Throughout the day a large area was given over to stalls and exhibitions from all the different Latin American human rights and solidarity groups; and local Latin American artists performed in this 'festival area' during the day. All the groups reported that this had been very successful; and CSC stalls alone on the day had gross takings of about £3,000.

The rest of the tour went very well; in Bristol 1,700 people nearly filled the Colston Hall, and Ron Nethercott of the Bristol T&GWU spoke between Frankie Armstrong and the group; in Edinburgh the concert, at 10.30pm, was part of the Festival Fringe; 780 people packed the Assembly Rooms to hear the group, and local MP Ron Brown made the speech. On 7th Leeds Town Hall was filled with 2,000 who again heard Inti, this time with Holly Near; Barry Pepper of Radio Leeds introduced the artists, and Derek Fatchett MP spoke.

The final concert was in Cambridge on Sept. 8th, which was also the National Day of Protest in Chile. Inti Illimani and Holly Near generated a powerful atmosphere in the Guildhall, packed with 700 people. As the concert began the first news of the demonstrations and the first deaths began to arrive. The Chairperson of Cambridge CSC spoke, and the concert included readings from Neruda and Allende with dramatic sound effects.

Again many thanks were due to all helpers; to Tony Dykes, chief steward on 3rd; to the T&GWU for their help in both London and Bristol; and to Anne Cartwright, Steve Cartwright and Lindsay Hay who were in charge of the tour outside London.

September Festival

The Festival from 3rd to 10th September, including the Festival for Chile on 3rd, was backed by the GLC and organised by CSC in conjunction with other Latin American groups. It included a week's series of films at the NFT called 'Cinema of Combat' which included 'The Battle of Chile'; two new documentaries on Latin American radical film-making, and films from Nicaragua, Columbia etc. Most of these sold out.

On Sunday 4th CCHR and Chile Democratico organised 'Viva', with Cuban ballet dancers, Nola Rae a mime artist; and Holly Near; in the 560 seater Bloomsbury Theatre, it sold out very quickly, and was very successful, although the venue was not nearly large

enough. On 6th about 50 people attended a discussion about military co-operation between Latin American dictatorships, the U.S.A. and Israel. A human rights seminar on 8th, with representatives of several international human rights organisations, attracted about 150 people. The Caribbean evening on 9th in the Manning Hall, University of London, was packed out with over 600 people. Benjamin Zephaniah, several steel bands and Steel n'Skin entertained, and the British rock group 'New Model' performed several numbers including their single 'Chilean Warning'.

On the 10th was the 'Festival of Latin America Culture in Resistance', which was again an event in itself; hundreds of people came to Imperial College during the day to see films and videos, mime and theatre, take part in painting and discussions, look at exhibitions, and in the evening hundreds more came to see 'Yolcumba Ita' from El Salvador and Los Awatinas from Bolivia.

Throughout the week a real atmosphere of a festival built up; the whole was more than the sum of the parts. People were asking - what the next event was. Prior coverage in City Limits and the Morning Star was good; but there were disappointingly few reviews of the Festival afterwards.

National Demonstration September 11th

Despite appalling weather about 7,000 gathered from all parts of the country (including Scotland, Swansea and Middlesbrough) to march from Clerkenwell Green to Trafalgar Square in the National Demonstration organised by CSC with the El Salvador and Nicaragua Solidarity Campaigns. The march was very colourful and lively and included many banners of Latin American groups, local CSC and ELSSOC groups, and many banners from the Chilean community. A number of national trade union banners were there but the number of TU branches and Labour Party banners was disappointing. There were stewarding problems, particularly with the behaviour of the RCP contingent, but this did not seriously affect the running or the impression created by the march.

In Trafalgar Square, the new banner 'Viva Chile' made by John Dugger was hanging on the plinth. This banner itself had received much coverage beforehand. The crowd waited in the rain to hear Judith Hart, Mireya Baltra, Salvador Moncada, Gordon McLennan, Jeremy Corbyn and Ken Livingstone speak. The collection made about £700. The demonstration got good coverage on BBC TV news, on Radio 4, Capital and LBC radios, and in the Guardian, Times and Left press. This co-incided with much coverage of events in Chile itself.

LOCAL COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

The upsurge of opposition in Chile in 1983 helped to revive the activity of local CSC groups throughout Britain, and even the setting up of new groups, especially in colleges. At the same time, there is an overlapping membership of CSC and other Latin American groups, and CSC activists are often also El Salvador campaigners.

Much work by local CSC groups goes unreported, even to the National office. For this reason much of what follows is just a rough guide to local CSC activity. It is also true that much local activity has been in support of nationally organised events - for example, the concerts all depended on support from local groups for publicity, stewards etc. Local groups also played a crucial role in mobilising for the demonstration, and also generate much of the volume of protest in response to Urgent Actions. Special mention should be made of the work of the North London Committee, whose members play a vital support role to the National Office.

Northampton CSC continues to send money to union organisations in Chile, and to publicise events in Chile through the local labour movement. Several cultural events were put on in 1983. Manchester CSC campaigned on behalf of Osvaldo Bustos, who 'disappeared' in Chile in 1982, and subsequently became a political prisoner. Other activities included a showing of 'Missing', a public meeting with Jon Barnes, a concert with a local group and a public meeting/social in December. In addition publicity and coaches were organised for the Leeds concert and the demonstration.

Local Committee Activity (continued)

Stirling opened the year with a slide show; had a speaker and exhibition as part of the City's May Day Festival; organised a sell-out showing of 'Missing'; raised £600 in a sponsored walk in June; and more money in a flag day in August; organised transport to the Inti concert in Edinburgh, and to the September demonstration in London; held a public meeting with John Barnes and Phil O'Brien in October, and had 70 to its AGM in November. The year ended with a solidarity Xmas party; in addition local labour movement donations to childrens' kitchens in Calama were continued.

In Stafford a new Latin American Committee was set up which included some work on Chile. Portsmouth CSC activities in addition to the Quilpayun concert in April included protests at the naval base against the sale of warships to Chile, letters to local papers, resolutions through the students union of the Polytechnic and a week of action on Chile from Nov. 27th to Dec. 3rd.

Sheffield Latin American Solidarity Front kept up a high level of work, with regular bulletins and activities. These included a public meeting with Julio Vial; support to Radio Liberacion; Chilean input to International Women's Day; a caravan in the city centre in May, leading up to the Quilapayun concert; the passing of a declaration on Chile by the Trades Council in June, and by the City Council in September; a meeting with Mireya Baltra on Sep. 8th, street collections and another caravan in the week leading up to the 11th, when coaches were sent to the demonstration in London; a social with local Chilean musicians and The Mysterons on Sep. 16th, and a Day School on Chile on Dec. 10th. Throughout the year urgent actions on arrests and other acts of repression were pressed, and adoptions of political prisoners. Close contact with local labour movement organisations was maintained.

In Harlow the local Council agreed to change the name of one of the central avenues to ALLENDE AVENUE.

Leeds committees in University and Town kept up a lot of activity. In early 1983 there were meetings on Central America, Grenada, one addressed by Julio Vial and a social evening on 26th Feb. Leeds University had a week of action in April, and supported the Quilapayun concert in Sheffield. Both committees worked hard for the Inti Illimani concert in September, and organised coaches to the demonstration. Also in September a local paper in Leeds revealed the training of Chilean naval personnel in Britain. John Barnes spoke at a meeting in September and in November there was a showing of 'The Battle of Chile' Part 3. The groups also organised meetings and support for the demonstration against the invasion of Grenada.

OTHER ACTIVITIES : Educational, Fund-Raising and Materials

Poster Exhibition

An enormous collection of over 300 posters produced in solidarity with Chile from all over the world was received on loan from the GDR solidarity committee in January, and over 200 examples were displayed in the TUC Headquarters, Congress House, for nearly three weeks, attracting much favorable comment. This was despite earlier problems over the TUC's presentation of the collection, linking it to a set of Polish Solidarnosc posters, in a way that directly compared the situation in the two countries. Parts of the exhibition were later displayed outside London, and the whole set was later returned to the GDR to be forwarded to the Casa Chile in Mexico in time for September.

Student Work

CSC produced, jointly with ELSSOC and the NUS, a folder aimed at students, explaining the need for solidarity with Latin America. This was distributed through student unions and Latin American groups, and to several union conferences, and made a number of new affiliations. CSC joined in organising a day-school on 'Education and Repression in Chile', looking at the consequences of monetarism for education. A book, 'Education and Repression', was published by World University Services at the same time.

Materials

A great deal of publicity surrounded the publication of Joan Jara's book, 'Victor - An Unfinished Song', and CSC helped to organise its launch on Sep. 3rd, before the Inti concert. The book has sold very well and over 400 have been sold through the Campaign. The Latin American Bureau book, 'Chile - the Pinochet Decade' was also launched in September, and has been another valuable resource - which made the 'Alternative Best Seller' lists.

A new badge was produced 'Chile - Ten Years of Resistance', which sold over 2,000 through the year; and a new poster, with the quote from Allende's last speech 'History is Ours, for it is made by the People'. Over 500 of these were sold. In addition various materials donated by the GDR committee and other groups in Britain were sold.

Stalls were held at many events, especially concerts of Latin American music in London, and at major outdoor events like the People's March for Jobs Festival, Marx with Sparx and the CND demo on Oct. 22nd.

Patchwork Cards

Five thousand new sets of patchwork greetings cards were produced, the previous 1982 sets having sold out by September. Of these five thousand, almost four thousand sets were sold by the end of the year. This was almost equal to the previous years achievement although starting several weeks later. Thanks are due to all the volunteers who helped to fold, collate and pack the cards.

Richard Lyon's 530 mile bike ride

At the 1983 AGM it was announced that Richard Lyon, an individual member of some years, was planning to cycle from Carlisle to London to raise money for the Campaign. In the event he set off from Carlisle at the end of August, and pedalled through Darlington, Leeds, Liverpool, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Coventry Watford and on to the Royal Festival Hall in London on Sep. 3rd. He was supported by local CSC supporters, and considerable publicity was gained in local media. Much of the money sponsored was a long time coming but eventually over £1,100 was raised. Much thanks to Richard for this inspiring effort.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership at the end of 1983 is given below, with the 1982 figure in brackets. The total number of affiliates at the end of 1983 was 659, compared to 680 at the end of 1982.

		New	
National Trade Unions.....	33	(33)	0 Local committee contacts
Trades Councils.....	39	(45)	0 95 (130)
Union branches & Districts.....	136	(153)	8 New affiliates total
Student Unions.....	34	(35)	6 92 (67)
Individuals.....	240	(212)	67
Constituency Lab. Parties.....	97	(109)	12
Other political parties etc.....	48	(61)	2
Abroad.....	32	(32)	5

These figures reflect the growing interest in Latin America amongst the public, set against the increasing difficulty of gaining and keeping affiliates from trade union organisations, under increasing financial pressure and sought after by many more international campaigns; and also the fact that there has been no major drive to win new trade union affiliations.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The EC has continued to meet on the first Tuesday of each month (with some exceptions for special circumstances), and met altogether 11 times, with an average attendance of 12.

CHILE COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

1983 was one of the most intense years for the Committee. The strong emergence of political opposition to Pinochet has been accompanied by a sharp increase in the level of repression, clearly demonstrated by the soaring number of cases of torture, mass arrest, arbitrary killings etc. CCHR has attempted to echo events in Chile and has reacted to each situation, especially in relation to repression during the National Days of Protest. Examples of major aspects of the work of the last year are as follows:

Immediate Response to repression

After the shooting dead of over 30 people on the 4th Day of Protest, CCHR approached the Labour Party which sent a message condemning the junta's actions; the Liberal Party sent a letter to Pinochet and the Liberal International made representations to the UN Secretary General. Over a thousand 'Urgent Actions' were distributed calling for protests to the regime. In the light of the intensifying repression from May 83 onwards, CCHR organised an open letter from MPs, bishops, cultural personalities, trade unionists etc to Sir Geoffrey Howe calling on the British Government to intervene. Every MP was mailed on the situation in Chile and asked to urge the British Government to take a firm stance on human rights in Chile.

Delegations

In August CCHR led a delegation with Judith Hart MP to meet the Minister at the Foreign Office, Baroness Young, to push the British government to make public statements and representations to the Pinochet regime about the level of repression. This got wide publicity in Britain - BBC World Tonight, LBC Radio and D. Telegraph - and on Radio Chilena. October saw a Parliamentary Human Rights delegation to the New Chilean Ambassador in which CCHR took part, which raised a number of issues. And in January 1984, there was a delegation to the FO again to see Baroness Young about Britain's abstention in the UN General Assembly vote on human rights in Chile.

CCHR Trip to Chile

From April to June the CCHR Secretary was in Chile, saw the May Day events and the first Day of Protest on May 11th, and met with representatives of human rights organisations, trade unions, the church, the banned political parties, and popular organisations such as shanty-town dwellers. Following his return he has given many talks to local Chile committees, student groups, church groups, Labour Party branches etc.

UK/Chile Relations

In view of the unwillingness of the British government to make clear its opposition to the violation of human rights in Chile, work in this area has been a central component of work this year. CCHR campaigned hard against the visit to Britain of several members of the Chilean government, including General Matthei in March and Admiral Merino in June. Both campaigns received wide publicity. In the case of Matthei, his visit coincided with the expulsion of several Irish priests from Chile, and CCHR managed to arrange a TV appearance for one of them, and several press articles.

Political Prisoners

After a long promotion drive, nearly all of Chile's political prisoners are now adopted under the CCHR's adoption scheme. However, it is important for the prisoners to have more than one adopter, so the promotion will continue. Likewise CCHR's Urgent Action network has expanded and many more organisations have been writing letters of protest on human rights violations. Some of the most important Actions have been against attempts by the military government to try people under War Tribunals. CCHR is now organising a mass petition against the use of torture, and has also had a big campaign for

Pedro Fernandez Lembach, a political prisoner, and for the first time in recent years a visa has been granted for him to come as an exile to Britain. He is still in jail however.

The Disappeared

Along with the British section of the Federation of Relatives of Disappeared Prisoners, and other groups, CCHR organised an International Week for the Disappeared in Latin America. This included a mass petition to the British Government and a week of activities in May. Pressure was also brought to bear on the government in the case of disappeared Anglo-Chilean William Beausire.

Education

CCHR took part with other groups in two conferences, 'Monetarism and Education' and 'Option for the Poor' on Liberation theology. CCHR has written numerous articles for different publications, and a chapter in the LAB book 'The Pinochet DEcade'. The book, 'Education and Repression: Chile' was also published with the World University Service.

CHILE DEMOCRATICO REPORT

Chile Democratico, set up in August 82, has continued to consolidate its role in unifying all Chilean exiles in Britain, and grant aid from the GLC and Third World First has enabled it to make a more useful contribution in such areas as:-

Counselling and Information

CD has expanded its services, covering the following areas; Legal, especially refugee status, visas etc; Housing; Health - including a Chilean health group running fortnightly sessions in N. London; Employment, including legal rights at work, and advice on setting up workshops and small businesses; and most importantly, a monthly CD bulletin, with information about events in Chile, solidarity activities in Britain, and social and cultural activities.

Cultural

The Chilean community has been very successful in keeping alive cultural traditions and passing them on to its children as well as to the Latin American and wider audiences. These include:-

Editing and showing a video of 'Violeta de Nuestra America', participation in the September Festival, presenting a theatre group, 'El Telon' direct from Chile in Brixton in July; and setting up regular workshops in music and dance, literature, theatre and video, handicraft, design and plastic arts. There have been seminars on cultural work in Chile, A Festival of Sport was organised in the Sobell Centre in Islington in August. The Youth Committee has tackled issues relating to the adaptation into a new society without forgetting the cultural identity of the Chilean community.

Womens' Projects

Chilean women face most strongly the conflicting cultural patterns which press on Chilean children, as well as some of the biggest problems of isolation. To counter this Saturday schools have been set up in N and S. London, where the mothers can learn English, and the Children Spanish, Chilean history and culture.

Return

The new political situation, and the publication of the 'lists' in Chile (however problematic) have sharpened the desire of many Chileans to return. CD is helping in providing information and advice on the politico-legal aspects of return, and jointly with CSC, CCHR, WUS and the British Refugee Council is exploring ways of aiding return financially; most exiles here have little money, and need money to return, to ship home their belongings, and to subsist for an initial period until they can become self-sufficient. CD is investigating both short-term payments to individuals and families and the possibility of funding for employment projects in Chile. This will become a greater part of CD's work in 1984.