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## The view from Havana: Chilean exiles in Cuba and early resistance to Chile's dictatorship, 1973-1977

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***The view from Havana:  
Chilean Exiles in Cuba and Early Resistance to Chile's Dictatorship, 1973-1977***

Two days after the Chilean military coup on 11 September 1973, the first left-wing Chilean exiles reached Cuba. By mid-1974, over a thousand had arrived.<sup>1</sup> There, they received accommodation, food, healthcare, and work. However, the trauma of leaving Chile and seeing their country's democratic *Unidad Popular* (UP) government and its president, Salvador Allende, overthrown was enormous. As Beatriz Allende – Salvador Allende's daughter, a Chilean Socialist Party militant, and the first exile to arrive in Cuba – wrote to another Chilean in Mexico, exile was “bitter.”<sup>2</sup>

The Chileans that arrived in Cuba shared this bitterness with over 200,000 other political exiles forced to flee Chile after the coup.<sup>3</sup> Dispersed around the world, they not only had to deal with loss and uncertainty regarding their own futures, but also devastating news from Chile of the dictatorship's repression. Within six months, 80,000 people had been arrested and 160,000 had lost their jobs.<sup>4</sup> Over the course of more than sixteen years in power, the regime killed over 3,000 Chileans and tortured more than 40,000.<sup>5</sup> Although many of those who managed to get asylum initially believed that exile would be temporary, it soon transpired that this was wrong.

Unable to foresee what lay ahead, those arriving in Havana in late 1973 and early 1974 focused on surviving and coming to terms with defeat. For many, this involved intense personal reflection of the past: what had gone wrong, why the UP had failed, and who was to blame. This was also true at a party level. For the left-wing parties in the UP government – the Communist Party (PCCH) the Socialist Party (PS), the Christian Left (MAPU), and the Radical Party (PR) – and for the Chilean far Left party outside the UP, the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), what followed was a period of profound

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<sup>1</sup> Numbers range from 1,300-1,400 by mid-1974. Report, Laura Brown, Subcommittee to Chile Solidarity Committee, “Meeting in Cuba with Beatriz Allende and other rep's [sic] of UP resistance outside Chile,” 14 May 1974, Folder 47, Box 35, Collection 132: “Communist Party of the United States of America,” Tamiment Library, New York, USA [Hereafter: 47/35/132/TAM]; Letter, Tati (Beatriz Allende) to Pillayo, 30 August 1974, Archivo Beatriz Allende, Private Collection, Havana, Cuba [Hereafter: ABA]. In 1975, the Cubans referred to “more than 1,500” Chilean exiles. See Cable, Amembassy Caracas to SecState, 23 October 1975, State Department Central Foreign Policy Files (1973-1977), National Archives and Records Administration, Access to Archival Databases: <http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-description.jsp?s=4073> [Hereafter: CFP/DOS].

<sup>2</sup> Letter, Tati to Jaime (Toha), 2 July 1975, ABA.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas C. Wright and Rody Onate, “Chilean Political Exile,” in *Exile and the Politics of Exclusion in the Americas*, ed. Luis Roniger, James N. Green, and Pablo Yankelevich (Eastbourne; Portland, Or: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), 145.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth M. Roberts, *Deepening Democracy? The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 94.

<sup>5</sup> “Chile Recognises 9,800 More Victims of Pinochet's Rule,” BBC, 18 August 2011: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-14584095>.

questioning, recrimination, and adaptation at the same time as fighting for survival. As two psychologists describe, the initial phase of Chilean exile was shaped by “the trauma of departure, a feeling of loss and of pain characterized by a deep wound. And guilt.”<sup>6</sup>

One way of dealing with these feelings was to channel them into fighting back. Indeed, the impulse to engage in political, revolutionary action against the Junta was strong. As leaders or members of Chilean left-wing parties, many exiles had served in the UP government and dedicated their lives to revolutionary change. Now, political commitments served to overcome “numbness.”<sup>7</sup> The party, one Chilean recalled, became more central than ever: “militancy was the refuge and support” that allowed them to survive the “enormous loneliness of exile.”<sup>8</sup> As a friend of Beatriz’s in exile wrote, the key was to “kill time and the imagination” and give “meaning” to life beyond “anguish of feeling far away and impotent.”<sup>9</sup> This need to do something was widespread: exiles are “‘survivors,’ but to continue surviving they need to reproduce spaces that imitate the world they have lost,” psychologists Vásquez-Bronfman and Araújo argue. Political parties provided this framework; relationships between exiles were not conceived as being “between compatriots” but “militants.”<sup>10</sup>

For left-wing militants, and particularly those on the far Left influenced by ideas of self-sacrifice associated with Latin America’s guerrilla decade, the risks of fighting the dictatorship were part of a commitment to revolutionary change. A belief in socialism (of one form or another) and a desire to help comrades back home drove them to enlist in resistance efforts. “I have to try and help in some way,” one exile living in Britain wrote to Beatriz, “not only as a result of conviction but also moral imperative. The ghosts of comrades...of your father, of so many people with so much hope that believed in us and that live, suffer and fight in Chile make it a moral obligation that can not be ignored.”<sup>11</sup> Another Chilean in Cuba recalled his sense of duty to his party: “To be a Socialist...meant proudly carrying a bag of duties...We had to demonstrate to Cuba, to

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<sup>6</sup> Ana Vásquez-Bronfman and Ana Maria Araújo, *La maldición de Ulises: repercusiones psicológicas del exilio* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Sudamericana, 1990), 30–31, 208; Roniger, Green, and Yankelevich, *Exile & the Politics of Exclusion*, 151.

<sup>7</sup> Ariel Dorfman, *Feeding on Dreams: Confessions of an Unrepentant Exile* (Boston: Mariner Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 22.

<sup>8</sup> Luis Jerez Ramírez, *Ilusiones y quebrantos: desde la memoria de un militante socialista* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Forja, 2007), 349.

<sup>9</sup> Letter, Hernán (Sandoval), Paris, to Tati, 7 November 1973, ABA. See also Loreto Rebolledo, *Memorias del desarraigo: testimonios de exilio y retorno de hombres y mujeres de Chile* (Santiago, Chile: Catalonia, 2006), 70.

<sup>10</sup> Vásquez-Bronfman and Araújo, *La maldición de Ulises*, 208.

<sup>11</sup> Letter, Pillayo to Tati, 11 June 1974, ABA.

its revolution and its people that we were dignified followers of the President's [Allende's] example and that we would defeat fascism in Chile and [Latin] America.”<sup>12</sup>

To manage these impulses among Chileans in Cuba and begin coordinating opposition to the dictatorship from abroad, Beatriz established the *Comité Chileno de Solidaridad con la Resistencia Antifascista* in Havana on 8 October 1973. Run by left-wing Chilean exiles in the name of the collective ‘Chilean Left’ and paid for by the Cuban government, this committee played an important role in focusing global opposition to Chile’s dictatorship in the first years after the coup. Until 1977, it was the most important center for solidarity campaigns in the Americas. Together with committees in Rome, Berlin and Moscow, the Comité Chileno in Havana was also a fundamental pillar – if not *the* fundamental pillar – in a global network that exiles established to fight back. Coordinating with other exiles, non-Chilean led solidarity campaigns, sympathetic governments, international organizations, and non-governmental groups, the Comité Chileno helped ensure that left-wing parties survived the first devastating years after the coup. Beatriz managed funds for ‘the resistance’ from Havana. The Comité Chileno’s staff meanwhile helped coordinate a campaign against the Chilean dictatorship at the United Nations. Chilean exiles in Cuba working also published a weekly Bulletin, which, by mid-1975, was distributed to over 400 solidarity committees, key personalities and organizations in the United States and Latin America.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the Comité Chileno, the global solidarity network it was part of, and the state-level Cuban support it received, were central features of early opposition to the dictatorship after 1973.

Until now, however, the Comité Chileno’s role in this first phase of resistance to the dictatorship, and Cuba’s support for it, have received little attention. Beyond passing mention, the view from Havana and the significant role that Cuban-based opposition to the dictatorship played in the mid-1970s has been relatively ignored. It is generally accepted that, like other socialist bloc countries, Cuba offered covert support to the Chilean resistance. Most scholars who have touched on Cuba’s role have pointed to military training for armed resistance in Chile people have assumed that it provided. In many ways this seems logical. We know that Havana provided defensive armed training to Chilean left-wing parties before 1973 and that the Cubans helped train and infiltrate cadres from the PCCH and MIR back into Chile to take part in a new phase of armed

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<sup>12</sup> Email correspondence with Enrique San Martín González, 30 August 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Letter, Tati to Orlando Letelier, 11 June 1975, Document 27, Folder 16, Box 9, Fondo Orlando Letelier, Archivo Nacional, Chile [Hereafter: 27/16/9/FOI].

resistance in the late 1970s and 1980s.<sup>14</sup> However, despite general suppositions, Cuba's response to armed operations in the years immediately after the coup remains ambiguous. The broader significance of Cuba's role, beyond military training, especially in these initial years, has meanwhile been overlooked.

Instead, recent histories of Chilean solidarity campaigns have tended to focus on Western Europe, the Soviet bloc, Canada and the United States.<sup>15</sup> Scholars who have focused on Latin America have not dealt with Cuba and Cuban-based exiles.<sup>16</sup> There has also tended to be a division in historiography between studies of solidarity and exile dealing with culture, gender or human rights on the one hand and political histories of the Chilean Left on the other. Histories of solidarity and exile can therefore sometimes portray solidarity as if it was an end in itself: an apolitical, amorphous concept with no clear objective regardless of the obvious centrality politics had in driving exile-led resistance and broader solidarity campaigns with Chile.

Drawing on new access to private collections, interviews, published testimonies, solidarity archives in Havana and New York, and declassified U.S. government documents, this article brings Cuba and the Comité Chileno squarely back into the picture. Contrary to traditional histories that painted exiles merely as victims and recipients of solidarity, it contributes to recent scholarship that emphasizes Chilean agency in coordinating, managing, and shaping opposition to the dictatorship.<sup>17</sup> By focusing on the exiles who led the Comité Chileno, their priorities, and the effectiveness of strategies pursued by those in Havana, it also sheds light on the political dimensions of solidarity and exile. It provides a new perspective on what solidarity concretely entailed and how resistance (direct and indirect) from exile was conceived. Given the

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<sup>14</sup> Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 233; Alan Angell, "International Support for the Chilean Opposition, 1973-1989: Political Parties and the Role of Exiles," in *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas*, ed. Laurence Whitehead (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 180, 190.

<sup>15</sup> Kim Christiaens, Idesbald Goddeeris, and Magaly Rodríguez García, eds., *European Solidarity with Chile 1970s - 1980s* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014); Margaret Power, "The U.S. Movement in Solidarity with Chile in the 1970s," *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 6 (2009): 46-66; José del Pozo, ed., *Exiliados, emigrados y retornados: chilenos en América y Europa, 1973-2004* (Santiago, Chile: RIL Editores, 2006); Olga Ulianova, "La Nueva Inserción Internacional Del Comunismo Chileno Tras El Golpe Militar," in *Chile Y La Guerra Fría Global*, ed. Tanya Harmer and Alfredo Riquelme Segovia (Santiago, Chile: RIL Editores, 2014); Michal Zourek, *Checoslovaquia Y El Cono Sur 1945-1989: Relaciones Políticas, Económicas Y Culturales Durante La Guerra Fría* (Prague: Editorial Karolinum, Universidad Carolina de Praga, 2014).

<sup>16</sup> Roniger, Green, and Yankelevich, *Exile and the Politics of Exclusion in the Americas*; Jessica Stites Mor, *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* (Madison, Wis.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2013); Claudia Fedora Rojas Mira, "El Exilio Político Chileno: La Casa de Chile En México (1973-1993), Una Experiencia Singular" (Ph.D diss., USACH, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Margaret Power, "The U.S. Movement in Solidarity with Chile"; Patrick William Kelly, "The 1973 Chilean Coup and the Origins of Transnational Human Rights Activism," *Journal of Global History* 8, no. 01 (2013): 165-186.

central role that the Comité Chileno in Havana played in distributing money raised by global solidarity campaigns, it also examines the clandestine supply of funds to the underground resistance in Chile.

Cuba's role in offering support, advice, and opposition to the dictatorship is also examined. The Cubans provided unique revolutionary authority, leadership, and logistical support. Fidel Castro and the head of Cuba's Latin American operations, Manuel Piñeiro, had supported revolutionary movements in the region since 1959. They were respected and trusted, and they had extensive experience in clandestine operations. In the case of Chile, their long-standing relations with Salvador Allende, close ties with Chile's left-wing parties, and active involvement in Chile during the UP government made Havana the obvious place for Chilean exiles to seek help.

Evaluating the success of overt and clandestine solidarity during these first chaotic years of the dictatorship is nevertheless admittedly difficult. There is a lot we still do not know and are unlikely to know due to the nature of covert resistance and the lack of detailed record keeping. Cuba's archives also remain closed. However, by piecing together testimonies of those who survived, private archives, and declassified documents, we can begin to draw significant conclusions about this early phase of opposition to the dictatorship, what characterized it, and what it was able to achieve.

For example, this article argues that the Cubans did not advocate immediate armed insurgency against the dictatorship and were unenthusiastic about training exiles until the situation in Chile improved. However, the Cubans provided pivotal support in other ways. They paid for the Comité Chileno in Havana, facilitated Chilean left-wing party members' travel, communication and money transfers, hosted meetings in Cuba, and helped coordinate international diplomatic campaigns against the dictatorship at the United Nations. Moreover, all Chilean left-wing parties were represented in Havana and had close relations with Fidel Castro, which meant that Cuba played a unique role in supporting 'the Chilean Left' as a whole, compared to other countries and sponsors that favored different parties whose politics corresponded with their own.

What follows also contributes to our understanding of the broader internationalization of Chilean politics after 1973. Surviving the dictatorship and mounting resistance required assistance from governments, parties, and non-governmental organizations. In this respect, Chilean exiles found receptive ears. The Chilean coup sparked sympathy around the world replacing solidarity with previous causes such as Brazil and Vietnam. Whether championing democracy, armed revolution,

Soviet-style communism, Christian Democracy, or human rights, non-Chilean solidarity activists donated time, money and energy to the battle against the dictatorship.

This internationalization of Chilean politics was directly linked to the Chilean Left's actions. Exiles skillfully appealed to different audiences when mobilizing solidarity. The composition of Chilean committees, like the Comité Chile in Havana, was also important in attracting support. The fact that Beatriz Allende – Salvador Allende's daughter and heir apparent – was in charge of the Comité Chileno gave it special status. That she controlled the money raised by solidarity campaigns was also important. Beyond her active role, Chilean left-wing parties represented by the committee were key. Because the majority of parties instructed their leaders to seek asylum after the coup, and because these parties had long-standing ties with analogous parties around the world before it, Chilean exiles received support that their counterparts fleeing the dictatorship in Argentina after 1976, for example, did not.<sup>18</sup> Although the MIR initially instructed its members *not* to seek asylum, it could also count on support from similar revolutionary groups in the Southern Cone, as well as sympathy from the radical Left in Western Europe.

In short, the Chilean Left inserted itself into global networks like never before. In this way, exiles were able to contribute to the development of global ideas beyond their own immediate environment such as the struggle for human rights and against U.S. support for dictatorial regimes. As well as being fought out in Chile itself, the struggle against the dictatorship, and the latter's efforts to eradicate all its opponents, was therefore played out on an international stage.

Even so, an examination of early Chilean exile-led efforts from Havana reveals that strategies of resistance were not neatly defined nor necessarily joined up. Different approaches evolved simultaneously in a flurry of activity aimed simply at responding to what had happened. As one Chilean exile who spent four months in Cuba recalled, "Our political line...was that we had to wage in Chile a battle on all fronts to get rid of the dictatorship: a political battle, an organizational battle, battles of all types, and, if possible, even military...One of the fronts was the diplomatic front, the front of world public opinion, and that front was the one most accessible for those of us in exile."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Pablo Yankelevich, "Exiles and the Argentine Diaspora: Issues and Problems," in *Exile and the Politics of Exclusion*, 209.

<sup>19</sup> Maria Elena Carrera as quoted in Thomas C. Wright and Rody Oñate, *Flight from Chile: Voices of Exile* (Albuquerque, N.M.: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 159.

As a center of exile-led resistance, the Comité Chileno juggled all of these different threads of activity at once. This was not easy. In these first years after the coup, the challenge of overcoming defeat and the repressive power of the military dictatorship in Chile proved immense. Acute internal divisions within and between Chile's left-wing political parties progressively undermined the idea of a collective opposition movement. And, ultimately, none of the strategies Chileans adopted achieved the goal of toppling the Junta, whose power was more consolidated than ever in 1977. Indeed, until local, mass opposition to the dictatorship broke out inside Chile towards the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, exiles were constrained in what they could do. As Beatriz wrote to the Socialist Party's General Secretary, Carlos Altamirano, on 4 October 1977, "solidarity depends to a large extent on developments in Chile and from abroad it is impossible to force it."<sup>20</sup>

Days later, after four years dedicated to the exile-led opposition from Havana, Beatriz committed suicide. Her death was a devastating blow to the Comité Chileno. Having relied largely on her direction, the link to her father, and her status in Cuba, it henceforth lost its centrality as a center of exile-led opposition to the dictatorship. There were also other reasons for its relevance fading in 1977. The Chilean-Mexican run *Casa Chile* in Mexico City, established in September 1974, increasingly took over from the Comité Chileno as the leading center of opposition to the Junta in the Americas from the late-1970s onward. With more regular financial resources, better communication links, and an international reach, it could play a role that the Comité Chileno could not. Following a change in leadership and organization in 1976, which resulted in the Radical Party leader, Hugo Miranda Ramírez directing it, and the formalization of its status in Mexico in 1978 as a "civil association," the Casa Chile could also count on particularly close relations with the Mexican government.<sup>21</sup> Along with the rise of Mexico City as the predominant capital of exile-led solidarity in the Americas, the collective Chilean Left that the Comité Chileno had aspired to represent disintegrated in the late 1970s. In 1979, the UP formally ceased to exist. The PCCH and the MIR adopted new strategies of armed insurgency in Chile from the late 1970s onwards.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, a reformed part of

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<sup>20</sup> Letter, Tati to Altamirano, 4 October 1977, ABA.

<sup>21</sup> Rojas Mira, "El Exilio Político Chileno," 121, 125–26, 133–35, 147.

<sup>22</sup> See Rolando Álvarez, "¿La noche del exilio? Los orígenes de la rebelión popular en el Partido Comunista de Chile" and Julio Pinto Vallejos, "¿Y la historia les dio la razón? El MIR en Dictadura, 1973-1981," in *Su revolución contra nuestra revolución. Vol.1: Izquierdas y derechas en el Chile de Pinochet (1973-1981)*, eds. Verónica Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate, Rolando Álvarez, and Julio Pinto Vallejos (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2006); Victor Figueroa Clark, "The Forgotten History of the Chilean Transition: Armed Resistance Against Pinochet and US Policy toward Chile in the 1980s," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Forthcoming.



PS, having formed in 1979, abandoned Marxism-Leninism and adopted European-style social democracy. The decreasing centrality of the Comité Chileno therefore coincided with the end of the first phase of collective left-wing opposition to the dictatorship, which would subsequently give way to new less centrally coordinated phases, divided by party affiliation and geography.

Rather than dealing with reformulation and resistance in later years, what follows is an account of the first four chaotic and devastating years after the coup when the Comité Chileno's influence and Cuba's centrality in early resistance were at their height. These were bleak years for the Chilean Left. Yet this article argues that exile-led opposition during this period, facilitated by Cuba, laid the seeds for future phases of resistance. For all defeats suffered, the Comité Chileno's activities, with Cuban support, helped Chilean left-wing parties to survive and remain viable so they could re-organize and develop new strategies of opposition in later years. They also had a direct impact on the Junta's international standing. Chilean exiles in Cuba therefore had specific impact on the evolving contours of an ongoing battle for Chile. However, none of this happened automatically. For those arriving in Cuba in 1973, it entailed immense effort and dedication.

## **SUPPORTING THE RESISTANCE**

As her father's heir apparent and a long-time Socialist, it was logical that Beatriz Allende should play a leading role in fighting the dictatorship. It helped that she had personal relations with the Cuban government and could work with it to do so. Her husband since 1970, Luis Fernández Oña, was a Cuban intelligence officer who worked for Manuel Piñero's *Departamento General de Liberación Nacional* at the Ministry of the Interior, the organization that oversaw and managed Cuba's relations with Latin America. Beatriz had first met Oña, Castro and Piñero in Cuba in 1967, when she had visited the island with her father. Subsequently, between 1968 and 1970, with Cuban support, she and two other PS militants established a Chilean branch of the Bolivian *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN) to support survivors of Che Guevara's guerrilla column fleeing Bolivia and helped coordinate a new revolutionary insurgency in that country. Although this had failed by 1970, it meant that Beatriz had spent extensive time in Havana during the late 1960s, receiving covert radio signaling training while also managing relations between the Cuban authorities and ELN members preparing to go to Bolivia. Between 1970 and

1973, during her father's presidency, she had then helped him coordinate relations with Cuba as one of his private secretaries and had visited the island often.<sup>23</sup>

Besides having close ties with Cuba, Beatriz also commanded respect from Chile's different left-wing parties. She had long-since identified with the far Left but had worked with all left-wing parties during her father's presidency and had known many of their leaders since childhood. They also knew that her father respected and trusted her. That she did not hold a formal leadership role in the Socialist Party helped her transcend party differences within it, and straddle relations with all left-wing parties. She was therefore in an ideal position to coordinate resistance to the dictatorship. One of those who worked with her in Cuba remembered that "eighty percent of her attention, day in day out, was centered on the *lucha*."<sup>24</sup> As Beatriz would write to a fellow exile in Mexico, "not to rest a minute and to maximize initiatives that contribute to making the Junta's life difficult is our basic duty."<sup>25</sup>

Beatriz established the Comité Chileno in this context. This was not the first exile-led organization after the coup. Already, on 11 September, a group of Chilean left-wing leaders in Buenos Aires had begun coordinating ways to support their comrades back home. In Moscow, on 13 September 1973, the PCCH leader, Volodia Teitelboim, broadcast what would become a regular program – *Escucha Chile* (Listen Chile) – emitted by Radio Moscow back to Chile for those resisting the dictatorship. At the end of September, left-wing exiles in Europe had also met with democratic leaders in Rome and Helsinki to call for a worldwide solidarity campaign with Chile. The establishment of the Comité Chileno in Havana therefore mirrored these efforts to respond meaningfully to the coup.<sup>26</sup>

What was initially more significant about the establishment of the Comité Chileno in Cuba, however, was that it served as the basis for a mid-October meeting of exiled representatives from the UP's constituent parties and the MIR. During the previous three years, UP parties and the MIR had publically disagreed over strategies for moving Chile's revolutionary process forward. The MIR, together with radical sectors of the PS and MAPU, had advocated moving beyond constitutional restraints, while the

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<sup>23</sup> Tanya Harmer, "Two, Three, Many Revolutions?: Cuba and the Prospects for Revolutionary Change in Latin America, 1967-1975," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45, no. 1 (2013): 67; Harmer, *Allende's Chile*, 52; Gustavo Rodríguez Ostría, *Sin tiempo para las palabras: Teoponte, la otra guerrilla guevarista en Bolivia* (Cochabamba, Bolivia: Grupo Editorial Kipus, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Francisco Fernández Fredes, 8 July 2013, Santiago, Chile.

<sup>25</sup> Letter, Tati to Jaime, 2 July 1975.

<sup>26</sup> Jorge Arrate and Eduardo Rojas, eds., *Memoria de la izquierda chilena: Tomo II, 1970-2000* (Santiago, Chile: Javier Vergara Editor, 2003), 191, 258–59, 261.

PCCH and other sectors of the PS, including Allende, had favored moderation and negotiations with center-left Christian Democrats. After the coup, the MIR's commitment to immediate armed resistance with support from the radical wing of the PS and MAPU then clashed with the PCCH's decision to go underground.<sup>27</sup>

The decision at this meeting in Havana in mid-October 1973 to establish a formal group that would bring all parties together to coordinate opposition to the dictatorship in the name of 'the Chilean Left' was therefore immensely significant. The *Izquierda Chilena en el Exterior*, as it called itself, did not, and could not, dictate strategies to individual parties. It also could not mask the continuing divisions between and within them. But it did hope to provide a unified voice and coordination when it came to dealing with the outside world and promoting solidarity. While exiled PCCH and PS leaderships would set up their own headquarters in Moscow and Berlin respectively, this collective grouping of the Chilean Left chose an office in Rome, named *Chile Democrático*, as its headquarters. In practice, however, it decided on a global division of labor: Rome would coordinate solidarity campaigns in Europe, while the Comité Chileno in Havana would manage relations in the Americas and handle finances. In the years that followed, similar Chilean exile committees were established, including those in Mexico City (Casa Chile), Caracas (Comité de Solidaridad) and Algiers (Algiers Committee). However, all of these committees formed in the name of the Chilean Left by Chileans in the initial years after the coup would ultimately coordinate their activities with Rome or Havana, depending on which was closer.<sup>28</sup>

Although they worked together, the Rome and Havana offices had different characters due to their interactions with hosts and the politics of their members. Both adopted the label of "anti-fascism" to denote and encourage broad-based collective opposition to the dictatorship. Indeed, Fidel Castro had labeled the Junta very quickly as "fascist," referring to evidence of the military's admiration of European-style fascism, and underlining the need for broad-based resistance.<sup>29</sup> Soviet bloc regimes and Western Europeans also emphasized the parallels between "resistance" during World War II and opposition to the Junta. Not only did they want to encourage collective opposition to the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 176, 212.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 270.

<sup>29</sup> Fidel Castro, "Castro Banquet Speech," Hanoi, 13 September 1973; "Fidel Castro Addresses CDR Anniversary Ceremony," Havana, 28 September 1973, Fidel Castro Speech Database, Latin American Network Information Centre: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/cb/cuba/castro.html>

dictatorship, but parallels also resonated well with local populations.<sup>30</sup> The idea of “the resistance” modeled on anti-Nazi campaigns in Europe caught on inside Chile as well, with the capital “R” being painted on walls and public places.<sup>31</sup> However, the goal of constructing an anti-fascist resistance front, including non-left-wing sectors like Chile’s centrist Christian Democrat Party (PDC) was complicated. In Italy, under the label of anti-fascism, Chilean exiles, belonging mostly to the PCCH, MAPU and the moderate sectors of the PS, worked with the Italian Communist Party, which in turn emphasized cooperation with Italian Christian Democrats.<sup>32</sup> Left-wing members of the Chilean PDC who opposed the dictatorship also relocated to Italy and collaborated with Chile Democrático office. However, the mainstream PDC leadership in Santiago rejected appeals to form an anti-fascist front until 1977, refusing to work with the PCCH. In Havana, where links to non-left-wing parties were more tenuous, anti-fascism was conceived more as militant resistance combining Chilean left-wing parties but aiming to support all sectors in Chile opposed to the dictatorship regardless of class and party affiliations. Even in this variation, the idea of anti-fascism was nevertheless contentious, with the first PCCH and PS post-coup declarations from inside Chile embracing the idea and the MIR resisting the notion of working with non-left-wing sectors.<sup>33</sup>

Problematic as the notion of anti-fascism was, it was widely used during these early years of the dictatorship and the Comité Chileno adopted it specifically to call for collective opposition. Run by a Secretariat formed of representatives from seven Chilean left-wing parties, including the MIR, the committee was presided over by an Executive, consisting of Beatriz Allende as General (or Executive) Secretary and, below her, the PS militant and former First Secretary of the Chilean embassy in Havana, Francisco Fernández, as its president.<sup>34</sup> By early 1975, it had twenty-five full time staff, who

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<sup>30</sup> Monica Quirico and Valentine Lomellini, “Italy: The ‘Chilean Lesson’ between the Legacy of the Struggle against Fascism and the Threat of New Authoritarian Shifts” and Yulia Gradszkova, “The Soviet Union: ‘Chile Is in Our Hearts.’ Practices of Solidarity between Propaganda, Curiosity, and Subversion,” in *European Solidarity with Chile*, 249-50, 332.

<sup>31</sup> Arrate and Rojas, *Memoria*, 205.

<sup>32</sup> Alessandro Santoni, “El Partido Comunista Italiano y El Otro ‘Compromeso Storico’: Los Significados Políticos de La Solidaridad Con Chile (1973-1977),” *Historia* 43, no. 2 (2010): 540.

<sup>33</sup> *Memoria*, 201. See also Brian Loveman, “The Political Left in Chile 1973-1990” in *The Latin American Left: From the Fall of Allende to Perestroika*, eds. Barry Carr and Steve Ellner (Boulder/London: Westview Press, 1993), 26; PS Central Committee, “Documento de Marzo,” March 1974: <http://www.socialismo-chileno.org/PS/>

<sup>34</sup> Letter, Pancho (Francisco Fernández) to Guillermo Perez (San José), 6 February 1975, Casa Memorial Salvador Allende, Havana, Cuba [Hereafter: CMSA].

received salaries from the Cuban state-run organization, the *Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos*.<sup>35</sup>

One of the Comité Chileno's first tasks was to look after Chilean exiles in Cuba and provide a channel of communication between them and Cuban authorities. Arriving with very little, exiles needed housing, food, and work. Yet Havana did not have housing complexes immediately available, or ample resources to offer. This led to tensions, with the Comité Chileno forced to mediate. More problematically, as Francisco Fernández recalled, was the tension caused by exiles' demand for training and assistance to return to Chile covertly to take part in an insurgency against the dictatorship.<sup>36</sup> Given the Cubans' armed revolutionary focus in the past, these demands were unsurprising. Allende's former secretary, Patricia Espejo, was responsible for "interviewing" all Chileans who arrived in Havana to ensure the dictatorship was not infiltrating spies and recalled the "majority wanted to train to return to Chile."<sup>37</sup> Francisco Fernández also remembers exiles were "very impatient...they believed it was simply a case of being in Cuba three or four months to receive training and then returning to incorporate themselves into the struggle."<sup>38</sup>

However, what is interesting – and what caused problems between exiles and their hosts – is that, at least in the immediate post-coup years, the Cubans were reticent to coordinate an armed insurgency in Chile. True, in public pronouncements after the coup, Castro referred to a future insurgency against the dictatorship. Chile showed "revolutions are not made with people alone; arms are also needed," he underlined on 28 September, speaking of "the hard and bloody struggle which the Chilean people will have to wage." But he left details vague and warned against hopes of immediate success:

We are absolutely certain that they [the Chilean people] will know how to confront fascism...We are absolutely certain that 11 September was the beginning of a struggle which will end only with the victory of the people. This will not occur immediately. Do not expect miracles in the Chilean situation. The people have been badly beaten and the parties and organizations will have to recover from the fascist blow.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Memorandum, "Materia: Pauta de Accion del Comite para los Meses Futuros", enclosure, Letter, Francisco Fernandez to Arturo Espinoza, Director General, ICAP, 11 March 1975, CMSA.

<sup>36</sup> Fernández interview.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Patricia Espejo, 18 April 2010, Santiago, Chile.

<sup>38</sup> Fernández interview.

<sup>39</sup> "Fidel Castro Addresses CDR Anniversary Ceremony."

It was in this context the Chilean exiles in Havana asked unsuccessfully for Cuba's help. Allende's former director of Chile's Development Agency (CORFO), the Socialist and economist, Jorge Arrate, is one of those who remembered being denied training in Cuba. Based on his performance at a firing range, the Cubans did not see him as a promising guerrilla. To his disappointment, they advised him that his linguistic abilities (English and French) made him more suited to international political work. He subsequently left for Rome to become Director of Chile Democrático.<sup>40</sup>

International observers grasped the Cubans' reluctance to engage in an armed insurgency in Chile. As the British embassy in Havana reported: "Whilst Chile is now clearly relegated to the group of countries in which the armed struggle can be the only policy... [Castro] gave no indication that Cuba intended to swing back to the old Che Guevara line of out-and-out support for the armed struggle."<sup>41</sup> The CIA similarly observed in mid-1974 that Havana's leaders were "not sanguine about the prospects of converting the Chilean exiles into guerrilla fighters." Although they ultimately favored armed revolution against the dictatorship, believed force would be needed, and trained "some exiles... for eventual infiltration into Chile," they were "cautious about the time and place. They feel the Chilean people must first tire of the Junta and its policies."<sup>42</sup>

The fragility of the resistance inside Chile explains this reluctance to commit to an insurgency. The PCCH had prioritized the need to preserve its organization and, where leaders had not been detained as was the case with the Party's General Secretary, Luis Corvalán, it had sent them abroad, leaving a clandestine structure inside the country. By the end of 1973, this structure had established itself. Regular communication between it and those in exile was established with help from East German and Czechoslovakian intelligence services.<sup>43</sup> However, the "interior" PCCH had extremely limited room to maneuver. Leaders were forced to assume four or five different identities and focused on surviving, sharing information censored by the Junta with Party militants, and supporting prisoners and their families.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with Jorge Arrate, 15 July 2013, Santiago, Chile.

<sup>41</sup> Letter, S. J. G. Fingland, British Embassy, Havana, to J. Murray Hunter, Latin America Department, FCO, 11 October 1973, FCO7/2465, The National Archives, UK.

<sup>42</sup> Intelligence Memorandum, CIA, "Anti-Junta Activity Outside Chile," 14 August 1974, CIA Records Search Tool, National Archives, College Park, USA [Hereafter: CREST].

<sup>43</sup> Zourek, *Checoslovaquia Y El Cono Sur*, 265–75.

<sup>44</sup> *Memoria*, 189, 201; Olga Ulianova, "Corvalán for Bukovsky: A Real Exchange of Prisoners during an Imaginary War. The Chilean Dictatorship, the Soviet Union, and US Mediation, 1973–1976," *Cold War History* 14, no. 3 (2014): 316, 318.

Meanwhile, the MIR, the party that initially dismissed exile and committed to immediate armed resistance, suffered serious setbacks from December 1973 as a result of the dictatorship's targeted repression, forcing it to retreat.<sup>45</sup> Although it had launched small, isolated armed campaigns in *poblaciones* and industrial zones in Santiago in the immediate weeks after the coup, these were "precarious."<sup>46</sup> As a member of the MIR explained, "There wasn't much space...to live peacefully even for a single night."<sup>47</sup> Another mirista lamented that, in spite of their readiness to fight, the party's members "knew very little or nothing really about the military problem."<sup>48</sup> By mid-1974, the MIR had lost 40 per cent of its original Political Commission and Central Committee. A year later, after further arrests and disappearances, only 2 members of the Political Commission remained, while 90 per cent of its Central Committee members had been killed, including its Secretary General Miguel Enriquez, who had been killed in a battle with Chilean security forces.<sup>49</sup>

The PS had its own problems adapting to clandestine operations. Almost immediately, its structure inside Chile collapsed. Within six months of the coup, four of the Party's 47-member Central Committee were killed and 12 others were imprisoned. Seven regional political secretaries were also killed and 20 detained.<sup>50</sup> Only ten members of the Central Committee remained operational inside Chile during the first six months but all of these would be detained, killed or go into exile by the mid-1970s.<sup>51</sup> Having escaped Chile, the Party's Secretary General, Carlos Altamirano, appeared in Havana in January 1974 before moving to Berlin, where he set up the headquarters of the external branch of the PS. Communicating with underground PS members back home, and establishing a direct line of hierarchy, was nevertheless difficult. Having traditionally included different ideological tendencies within it and demanded less vertical and organizational discipline than the PCCH, it proved almost impossible for PS to establish a unified internal leadership let alone a clear relationship between PS structures inside and outside Chile. By early 1974, two different underground factions had established themselves: the "Dirección Interna" and the "Coordinadora Nacional de Regionales"

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<sup>45</sup> Pinto Vallejos, "¿Y la historia les dio la razón?" 168–172.

<sup>46</sup> *Memoria*, 180, 182.

<sup>47</sup> Wright and Oñate, *Flight from Chile*, 56.

<sup>48</sup> Pinto Vallejos, "¿Y la historia les dio la razón?" 168.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 172, 177.

<sup>50</sup> "Documento de Marzo."

<sup>51</sup> Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*, 302, n.36.

(CNR), both of which received support from the PS in exile.<sup>52</sup> Thus, as Kenneth Roberts writes, “while Socialist militants were very active in grass-roots social resistance, their work was relatively decentralized and autonomous and often lacked political coordination.”<sup>53</sup>

When it came to communicating with them, the situation was also extremely difficult. In mid-January 1974 Beatriz wrote to Altamirano asking him to select two trusted cadres to undergo communications training to help exiles maintain contact with counterparts in Chile. From her own experience in the late 1960s – and no doubt with Cuban advice – she spelt out the need for urgent training in radio reception, coding, invisible writing, security, photography of documents, and inlays. “Ideally”, she wrote, communication would happen by telegraphy but training would take six months and the Chilean Left did not have time: communications had to be “guaranteed” “immediately” and conducted with “measures of extreme security”.<sup>54</sup> On the eve of the first anniversary of the coup, problems persisted. “From Chile we know little,” she wrote (un-coded) to an exile in Britain, “the news from the PS is contradictory and not very encouraging...the PCCH, it seems, is the most recuperated and finishing its reorganization...The MIR has also received hard blows.”<sup>55</sup> Around the same time, the CIA reported that communication was “only occasional...across borders,” causing serious “problems and frictions” within parties. The “efficiency and alertness of Chilean security forces have made communications between comrades at home and those in exile very difficult and dangerous,” analysts concluded.<sup>56</sup>

Cuba’s reluctance to train large numbers of Chilean exiles to fight for the resistance must be read in this context. When, in June 1974, Fidel Castro invited the PCCH to send a group of cadres to train with Cuba’s armed forces, he did so in response to the Party’s goal of preparing soldiers to eventually serve in the Chilean army after the fall of the dictatorship, not as guerrilla fighters for immediate infiltration into Chile.<sup>57</sup> From mid-1975 Cuba also provided training for selected PS cadres and the MIR but at this stage Castro continued to believe that Chile had “no conditions for civil war.”<sup>58</sup> Indeed, when one exile in Cuba asked Piñeiro for his future prognosis, he was shocked

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<sup>52</sup> Carmelo Furci, *The Crisis of the Chilean Socialist Party (PSCb) in 1979*, Working Papers: 11 (London: University of London Institute of Latin American Studies, 1984), 10.

<sup>53</sup> Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*, 98.

<sup>54</sup> Letter, Tati to Altamirano, 15 January 1974, ABA.

<sup>55</sup> Letter, Tati to Pillayo, 30 August 1974.

<sup>56</sup> Memorandum, “Anti-Junta Activity.”

<sup>57</sup> Ulianova, “La nueva inserción internacional,” 286.

<sup>58</sup> Figueroa Clark, “Forgotten History.” See also, *Memoria*, 279.



to hear Piñero say that the dictatorship would last at least five or ten years; it “was like a jug of cold water,” this exile recalled.<sup>59</sup> As Ulises Estrada, a Cuban intelligence officer, explained decades later, although there were militarily trained PCCH, PS and MIR cadres in Cuba, “we couldn’t send them to Chile because there was no way of entering or of receiving them. The internal resistance movement was very fragile...it was very hard, and if they had gone they would have had to fight against the Junta without the [right] conditions. Morale would have fallen.” In these early years, those that did receive training were therefore stuck in Havana waiting for things to improve. “To create the conditions could take your life,” Estrada recalled, “there were conditions [later]...but at the beginning it was crazy.”<sup>60</sup>

The Cubans therefore encouraged the Comité Chileno to focus on supporting what resistance existed in Chile from afar. The committee’s primary aim was therefore to “boost and develop solidarity with the people’s struggle.” To this end, it pledged “all its resources, energy and creativity to the moral, material and political support.”<sup>61</sup> As a fellow Socialist militant wrote to Beatriz, “While I remain abroad (I hope this is for a very short time), my only objective is to support the interior, in whatever way I can.”<sup>62</sup> Opposing the dictatorship from exile, in other words, meant practicing active solidarity, which involved helping comrades survive, escape repression, maintain or reorganize clandestine party structures, reconnect with their members, and begin mobilizing broad-based opposition. Left-wing underground leaders articulated various priorities in this regard. Having established itself at the beginning of 1974, the PS Dirección Interna’s Central Committee issued a document in March that pointed to an “initial phase” of opposition consisting of “political struggle” that would later provide conditions for a final phase including armed struggle. In this initial phase, the reorganization of a centralized party along Marxist-Leninist lines and “activation of a mass movement” were considered vital. Specifically, the Central Committee called for “political initiatives” to demonstrate that it had not been defeated, give “the masses confidence,” and “confront the dictatorship’s immense ideological and advertising power.” In the wake of the repression and the fragility of party structures these were ambitious priorities. The Central Committee planned to “educate the people to defend themselves from repression,” “agitate all the problems the masses felt,” “convince those who were

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<sup>59</sup> Interview with Oscar Soto Guzmán, 7 July 2005, Madrid, Spain.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Ulises Estrada, 19 April 2011, Havana, Cuba. See also, interview with Juan Carretero, 18 April 2011, Havana, Cuba.

<sup>61</sup> “Estatutos del Comité Chileno,” no date, CMSA.

<sup>62</sup> Letter, Hernán del Canto to Tati, no date, c.November 1975, ABA.

vacillating, denounce traitors,” rebuild Chile’s trade union movement, organize rural communities, channel student and intellectual sectors’ resistance, and attract all those who were discontented with the Junta to a broad Anti-Fascist Front. To do this it recognized the need to guarantee Human Rights, end the state of siege, and restore public freedoms and political rights. And for all these tasks, the Dirección Interna considered solidarity from abroad as being of “primary importance” to help “create the conditions for the political, economic and diplomatic isolation of the military regime”. “This solidarity that the Chilean people recognize and are thankful for, should be sustained and stimulated,” PS underground leaders urged.<sup>63</sup>

Primarily, this job fell on Chilean exiles abroad. The Comité Chileno in Havana paid particular attention to coordinating its efforts with non-Chilean run campaigns and mobilizing their support. As notes on the Comité Chileno made for the US based National Coordinating Centre for Solidarity with Chile underlined:

The committee [Comité Chileno] urges that the main interest of Solidarity Committees be to intensify within each country activities of support, and to use all available media to make the public aware of the situation in Chile. There are 4 fundamental areas of concern, making up 4 demands

1. Stop the murder and torture in Chile
2. Free all political prisoners
3. Guarantee the free passage of all people in embassies who want to leave Chile
4. Stop throwing people out of work...<sup>64</sup>

As well as simply raising awareness, the Comité Chileno focused on raising financial support. While exiles tended to be supported by host governments and affiliated parties, money was deemed particularly important for hiring lawyers for those in prison, supporting clandestine party members, providing assistance with food and accommodation for those who had lost their jobs, and for families of the dead, disappeared, or imprisoned. Accordingly, Chilean left-wing party representatives that met in Havana in October 1973 had agreed that Beatriz should manage a central solidarity fund for Chile from Cuba. True, some money for Chile raised abroad was given directly and separately to different Chilean parties. For example, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the United States gave money directly to the PCCH,<sup>65</sup> and the

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<sup>63</sup> “Documento de Marzo.”

<sup>64</sup> “Notes,” no author, 18 December 1973, 47/35/132/TAM.

<sup>65</sup> Letter, Tati to Jaime, 8 May 1975.

Argentine revolutionary group, the *Ejército Revolucionaria del Pueblo* (ERP), was believed by the CIA to have been handed \$3 million in ransom money directly to the MIR.<sup>66</sup> Non-government organizations such as the World Council of Churches also sent hundreds of thousands of dollars directly to the *Comité para la Cooperación para la Paz* that had been set up by the Church officials in Chile to assist prisoners, refugees, and victims of human rights abuses.<sup>67</sup> However, for the most part, money raised around the world in the name of solidarity between 1974 and 1977– by Chileans and non-Chileans alike – was transferred to a centralized bank account in Havana managed by Beatriz named “CUBALSE-12.”<sup>68</sup> By early 1974, this money arrived in Cuba via a central account in Luxembourg. Monies collected by US solidarity campaigns were also sent to Cuba via Mexico from May 1974 onwards.<sup>69</sup>

Although there is still much to learn about this account, available sources reveal that there was a lot of money to be shared out. “We became a money-generating machine,” one exile who was involved in fundraising remembered years later.<sup>70</sup> This may not have seemed *enough*. Beatriz often wrote about the “bitter sensation” of sending only a “drop of water” compared to what was needed.<sup>71</sup> However, worldwide solidarity campaigns raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, which were then given to the Chilean Left to send back to Chile.

This financial support came from a range of sources. Locally based solidarity committees sold tickets to events or collected individual small donations at the door that soon added up. As one exile in Denmark who was involved in running Chilean music nights and selling empanadas remembered, raising money to send back to Chile was a “number one” priority.<sup>72</sup> Other campaigns were on a larger scale. In the United States the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Workmen of North America union ran a joint campaign in twenty-five cities in 1975 to raise \$50,000 for the “struggle for democracy, against fascism” via what it explicitly called the Chilean Left’s “international office for financial assistance” managed by Beatriz in Cuba. “Funds are needed to defend 6,000 political prisoners,” a flyer for the campaign noted, as well as the “fundamental task of reorganizing popular movements in Chile, for

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<sup>66</sup> Memorandum, “Anti-Junta Activity.”

<sup>67</sup> Patrick William Kelly, “Sovereignty and Salvation: Transnational Human Rights Activism in the Americas in the Long 1970s” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2015), 102–3.

<sup>68</sup> Arrate interview; Brown, “Meeting in Cuba,” letter, Margarita [Tati] to Laura Allende, 11 March 1975, ABA.

<sup>69</sup> Brown “Meeting in Cuba.”

<sup>70</sup> *Flight from Chile*, 157.

<sup>71</sup> Letters, Tati to Pedro, 17 November 1974 and Margarita [Tati] to Laura, 11 March 1975.

<sup>72</sup> Rebolledo, *Memorias del desarraigo*, 73.

the distribution of news and information...”<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, Salvador Allende’s widow was one of many left-wing Chilean leaders who were paid fees for speaking tours (although Beatriz very often wrote her speeches with help from Francisco Fernández at the Comité Chileno).<sup>74</sup>

By early 1974, Chilean diplomats calculated French solidarity campaigns had already raised 1,250,000 francs and the CIA noted West German groups had raised \$50,000 with British groups donating an additional \$35,000.<sup>75</sup> The Swedish Prime Minister, Olaf Palme publicly handed 500,000 coronas (c. \$100,000) raised by workers’ groups to Beatriz for the “resistance” when she visited Stockholm at the end of 1973.<sup>76</sup> According to CIA reports, the Iraqi B’ath party donated \$10,000 to the Chilean Left and the Algerian government gave \$50,000 to a local committee of exiles in Algiers linked to Rome to buy weapons from Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.<sup>77</sup> Although it is difficult to verify these figures, Beatriz’s correspondence proves that the balance for the CUBALSE-12 account remained healthy during the mid-1970s, ranging from \$350,000 (March 1975) to \$507,494 (July 1975), \$80,000 (February 1976) and \$106,060 (October 1977). In 2015, the combined total of these balances would be close to \$5 million.<sup>78</sup> It was an exaggeration but therefore not entirely inaccurate when one Chilean exile wrote, “In Chile we had a thousand times fewer resources when we were in government, than we have abroad as exiles.”<sup>79</sup>

From Havana, Beatriz shared money in the CUBALSE-12 account out among the Chilean Left’s different parties for transfer to clandestine cadres back home. By August 1974, the CIA had a clear understanding of this arrangement, observing that the Cubans and the PCCH had proposed it in February 1974 and calculated shares based on trade union elections before the coup. Both the PS and PCCH were to be allocated 30 per cent with the PR receiving ten per cent and the remainder going to the MIR and two of the other small parties that had made up the UP. After the MIR complained to the

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<sup>73</sup> Flyer, “Fondos Para Un Chile Libre” (translated into Spanish from original), enclosure, Letter, Tati to Altamirano, 5 August 1975, ABA.

<sup>74</sup> Fernández interview.

<sup>75</sup> Oficio, Ambassador Fernando Durán, Chilean embassy, Paris, to Señor Ministro, 22 March 1974, Vol.80: Francia/Oficios Sec.-Conf.-Res./E-R/1974, Archivo General Histórico, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Santiago, Chile [Hereafter: Vol.80: Francia/AMRE]; Memorandum, “Anti-Junta Activity.”

<sup>76</sup> Oficio, Victor Riosco, Chargé d’affaires, Chilean embassy, Stockholm, to Señor Ministro, 28 December 1973, Suecia/Oficios Ord.-Conf./1973/AMRE; Memorandum, “Anti-Junta Activity;” “Enérgica Protesta de Chile Contra la Intervención Sueca,” *El Mercurio*, 20 December 1973.

<sup>77</sup> Memorandum, “Anti-Junta Activity” and Letter, Tati to Carlos (Altamirano), 26 January 1976, ABA.

<sup>78</sup> Letters, Margarita to Laura, 11 March 1975 and Tati to Altamirano, 21 July 1975 and 4 October 1977, ABA. Equivalent figures for 2015 would have been £1,547,058, \$2,199,006, \$334,348 and \$416,198 respectively. See <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>

<sup>79</sup> Letter, Sergio (Potsdam) to Tati, 17 February 1976, ABA.

Cubans, this changed: the MIR joined the PS and PCCH in receiving 30 per cent and the PR and two smaller parties received the rest.<sup>80</sup> The PS' money was also held in a bank account in Cuba managed by Beatriz named SIBONEY-10.<sup>81</sup> In the case of the PS, for which partial records exist, Beatriz sent at least \$200,000 (almost \$1 million in 2015 equivalents) back to Chile between 1974 and 1977 under the Party's instructions.<sup>82</sup>

What happened to this money once it reached Chile and what impact it had is less clear. As expected, Beatriz received confirmation that some of it had been shared out in small amounts between families of clandestine party members and relatives of those detained for food, medical bills, or lawyers.<sup>83</sup> Money also covered costs of accommodation, transport, and false documentation for underground cadres.<sup>84</sup> However, often, the most Beatriz knew was simply that the money had got to Chile, and even then rumors circulated that money was not reaching the right people. "If something worries me," Beatriz wrote to her aunt, Laura Allende, who was exiled in early 1975, "it is hearing that 'money doesn't arrive', 'that inside [Chile] comrades are dying of hunger,' 'that there are still no secure channels to send money,' that 'no one receives anything' and to know that the Party has money in its account although it is not much." Moreover, she regretted that uncertainty, together with what she saw as insufficient gratitude by left-wing parties, was creating "a climate of mistrust" within the global solidarity movement.<sup>85</sup>

Beyond having little control over the money that reached Chile, divisions between and within left-wing parties undermined the idea of solidarity with *the* resistance. For as much as the Chilean Left purported to coordinate solidarity efforts, each party was divided regarding the coup's causes and appropriate strategies of resistance. Dealing with defeat involved first accounting for what had happened, which took up time and energy in these early years. Criticism, self-criticism, and acute recriminations between and within parties ensued. The PCCH blamed "ultraleftists" (i.e. radical sectors of the PS and the MIR) for having provoked the coup and alienated potential support for the UP. Seeing the coup primarily as the result of political failures, it emphasized political resistance had to take precedence. The MIR pointed to the military problem and the UP's "reformism" (the PCCH's in particular) as having caused the coup, thereby

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<sup>80</sup> Memorandum, "Anti-Junta Activity."

<sup>81</sup> Letter, Tati to Armando, 25 August 1976, ABA.

<sup>82</sup> For details of amounts sent back and when, see Letters, Margarita to Laura; Tati to Pedro, 23 October 1974; Tati to Lino, 11 March 1975; Tati to Altamirano, 21 July 1975; and Tati to Altamirano 6 November 1975, ABA.

<sup>83</sup> Letter, Tati to Pedro, 1 September 1974, ABA.

<sup>84</sup> Memorandum, "Anti-Junta Activity"; Ulianova, "La nueva inserción internacional;" Zourek, *Checoslovaquia Y El Cono Sur*, 272.

<sup>85</sup> Letter, Margarita to Laura, 11 March 1975.

advocating armed struggle.<sup>86</sup> In this context, formulating coherent strategies for opposing the dictatorship were understandably difficult. Until 1980, the PCCH opposed closer relations with the MIR and “ultraleftist” armed resistance, while the MIR argued that only armed struggle would overthrow the dictatorship. These disagreements between the PCCH and the MIR translated into arguments related to solidarity campaigns’ emphasis that became “verbally violent.”<sup>87</sup>

The PS, meanwhile, spent the first few years after the coup turning in on itself and criticizing its own position before the coup. Based on how they interpreted the past, different factions disputed the efficacy of armed action, the structure of the party, and future priorities.<sup>88</sup> Differences between cadres inside Chile and those in exile caused a leadership crisis so extreme that the Party split in two at the end of the 1970s. The fact that the external PS leadership continued to support both underground PS factions in Chile until 1976, sending them both money, confused the picture.<sup>89</sup> As the exiled PS leader in Berlin, Rolando Calderón, wrote to the Party’s representative in Havana, “It will not be possible to overthrow the fascist Junta without unity.”<sup>90</sup> The Cubans also emphasized unity for resistance efforts. At a speech to commemorate the founding of the PS in 1975, Piñeiro stated categorically that the Party had to “achieve unity in leading the struggle.” If an “anti-fascist front is centered on the cohesion of the parties of the Chilean left,” he added, “the first great goal of the struggle will have been reached.”<sup>91</sup> Yet repeated commitments to work together against the dictatorship either within the PS or on the Chilean Left did not match reality. As Arrate, who managed Chile Democrático, wrote to the Socialist and former diplomat recently exiled after detention on Dawson island, Orlando Letelier, in June 1975, “you cannot imagine how worn out I am after having done this job for nearly two years. Worn out basically by internal discussion and having played the role of mediator that is psychologically destructive.”<sup>92</sup>

Meanwhile, the dictatorship continued its effective targeting of left-wing parties in Chile, which made it difficult for exiles abroad to influence the situation back home. As CIA analysts had observed in August 1974, “The resistance groups [outside Chile] have the capacity to cause the Chilean government considerable difficulty and

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<sup>86</sup> Pinto Vallejos, “¿Y la historia les dio la razón?” 162.

<sup>87</sup> Letter, Arrate to Tati, 4 December 1974, ABA.

<sup>88</sup> Loveman, “The Political Left in Chile,” 26; *Memoria*, 234; Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*, 102–3.

<sup>89</sup> Furci, *Crisis*, 10; Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*, 95–96.

<sup>90</sup> Letter, Rolando Calderón to Julio Benítez, 9 July 1976, ABA.

<sup>91</sup> Manuel Piñeiro, 19 April 1975, in Luis Suárez Salazar, ed., *Manuel Piñeiro: Che Guevara and the Latin American Revolutionary Movements* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 2001), 127.

<sup>92</sup> Letter, Arrate to Letelier, 5 June 1975, 31/16/9/FOL.

embarrassment, but until they develop an internal capability in Chile, they will pose no real threat to the stability of the regime.”<sup>93</sup> “The Chilean authorities are in complete control of the internal situation,” the U.S. State Department observed a year later.<sup>94</sup>

Without support from abroad, the situation inside Chile for clandestine left-wing parties would arguably have been worse. As it was, 1975-77 were desperate, catastrophic years. The PCCH’s clandestine party structure inside Chile survived the longest of all left-wing parties after the coup but was successfully targeted by the military in May and December 1976, forcing retreat and reorganization.<sup>95</sup> Henceforth, as Olga Ulianova writes, its activity in Chile was “practically paralyzed” for months and contact with its leaders in exile became “sporadic, uncertain and limited to minimum informational telegrams.”<sup>96</sup> With the MIR’s pre-1973 leadership decimated by 1975 and surviving members of the Central Committee in exile, *miristas* inside Chile managed to continue resisting the dictatorship, but turned to political and social forms of doing so (i.e., the distribution of clandestine pamphlets, the reproduction of newspapers, graffiti, trade union activity, and cultural or sporting activities).<sup>97</sup>

For the Socialist party, meanwhile, targeted repression in June 1975 spelt increasing difficulties. As Beatriz wrote to Altamirano in July that year, there was new money available in CUBALSE-12, but after the detention and disappearance of the Dirección Interna’s leadership, comprising Exequiel Ponce, Carlos Lorca, and Ricardo Lagos Salinas, the question was who to send it to. Suspending money transfers until she received further instructions, Beatriz urged the PS to improve its strategies: “accumulated hatred should make us more efficient in all areas,” she wrote.<sup>98</sup> By November 1975, she was still urging Altamirano to “work seriously to create a climate of efficiency and trust, so as not to harm our comrades in Chile...the need for money is too drastic.” The Party “needs lots of money to fight,” she wrote, noting that she had recently managed to get a further \$20,000 to Argentina and a total of \$70,000 to Peru for transfer to Chile.<sup>99</sup>

While Beatriz received news that money reached Buenos Aires and Lima, these routes for sending it to Chile were nevertheless progressively “burnt.”<sup>100</sup> In December

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<sup>93</sup> Memorandum, “Anti-Junta Activity.”

<sup>94</sup> Briefing Memorandum, ARA (William D. Rogers) to Henry Kissinger, “Analysis of GOC Action in Barring Scheduled Visit by UN Human Rights Commission Working Group” in Cable, SecState to U.S. Del. Secretary, 10 July 1975, CFP/DOS.

<sup>95</sup> *Memoria*, 238.

<sup>96</sup> Ulianova, “Corvalán for Bukovsky,” 324, 334.

<sup>97</sup> *Memoria*, 259; “¿Y la historia les dio la razón?” 176–77, 180–82.

<sup>98</sup> Letter, Tati to Altamirano, 21 July 1975.

<sup>99</sup> Letter, Tati to Altamirano, 6 November 1975.

<sup>100</sup> Letter, Tati to Orlando, 30 December 1975, 8/17/3/FOL.

1975, for example, the Argentine police seized the \$20,000 that Beatriz had sent from a safety deposit box. When the man looking after this money was arrested, the police revealed they had successfully infiltrated the Chilean network in Argentina responsible for communicating with Chile since April. As a result of mistakes made by those travelling back and forth from Chile and the monitoring of weekly phone calls between Argentina and Europe, the police had detailed information about the networks using Buenos Aires to connect with Santiago. “The policeman – laughing – told me that he even had instructions of how to make contact in Chile written down,” the Chilean arrested later wrote to Beatriz. The Argentine police did not particularly care what the Chileans were up to, they told him, but were acting on the Chilean Junta’s orders. Having been released on the condition that he pay a further \$20,000, the man caught up in the middle of this, lamented the “irresponsibility” of those who had led the police to the money.<sup>101</sup>

Irresponsible or not, Argentina was becoming increasingly unsafe for left-wing exiles and would become even more dangerous after the military coup there in March 1976. The inauguration of a formalized state-sponsored intelligence network between dictatorships in the Southern Cone under the name of Operation Condor in late 1975 also heightened the precarious security of revolutionary groups in the Southern Cone. Even before Operation Condor, the CIA had a good understanding of money transfers across the Andes through “isolated passes,” money being “funneled” through Peru, and the internal dynamics of Chilean left-wing parties.<sup>102</sup> The Chilean military regime also had good intelligence outside the region on broader Chilean-led solidarity efforts and support for clandestine party operations. As early as March 1974, for example, the Chilean ambassador in Paris could count on at least two Chilean informants with access to exile groups. He was able to send handwritten notes from a private French *Comité de Solidaridad* meeting, correspondence between this group, Chile Democrático and the Comité Chileno in Havana, and arrangements for money transfers to Cuba and Beatriz’s overall control of funds back to Santiago.<sup>103</sup> Although we know more about the dictatorship’s repression and Operation Condor in later years, the level of detail that the dictatorship’s representatives abroad were able to gather from informants in this case alone is startling. Its surveillance obviously undermined the efficacy of Chilean left-wing

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<sup>101</sup> Letter, Sergio Barria Perez to Tati, 16 February 1976.

<sup>102</sup> Memorandum, “Anti-Junta Activity.”

<sup>103</sup> Oficio, Durán to Señor Ministro, 22 March 1974.



exiles' opposition to the dictatorship and thwarted momentum when it came to reorganization, recuperation, and greater support for the resistance back home.

It is unclear how much Chilean exiles knew with regards to the dictatorship's infiltration and surveillance of their activities in the early years after the dictatorship. Suspicion and knowledge grew, but the extent of the Junta's reach appears to have been underestimated to begin with. By early 1977, Beatriz was expressing deep frustration at mistakes that had been made. "We cannot continue being such *buevones*...and go down the route of repeating errors, irreparable losses and handing over information that is too valuable for our precarious situation" she urged a fellow exile in Mexico.<sup>104</sup>

For their part, the Cubans were preoccupied with security early on and had been concerned about Chilean left-wing exiles' conduct.<sup>105</sup> They were particularly worried about the risks their Chilean comrades were taking in meeting each other abroad. Having expended considerable resources to fly one Chilean exile from Lima to Havana via Bogota, Zurich, Paris, Prague, and Moscow so his destination would be undetected by Peruvian authorities in early 1974, the Cubans must have been furious when a fellow Chilean spoke openly about his arrival to a Peruvian diplomat in Cuba.<sup>106</sup> Following a series of meetings and phone calls at the Cuban embassy in Paris between exiles a year later that raised suspicions from the French security services – including a meeting between Beatriz and the MIR's leader, Edgardo Enriquez, who would later disappear in Argentina – Cuba's Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodriguez protested. "You know that when it comes to revolutionary principles we have never wavered in putting the fortune of our Revolution in danger for the cause of international solidarity," he wrote, "However, I think that you will understand that there are unnecessary things that can be arranged in other ways. A confrontation with the French government for non-essential reasons [over Cuba's use of its embassy in Paris for obvious revolutionary meetings between far Left Chilean exiles], far from benefiting the Chilean cause, would impede our collaboration with it."<sup>107</sup>

Indeed, in these years following the coup, instead of encouraging armed insurgency and militant actions as might have been expected at the height of the guerrilla decade of the 1960s, the Cubans urged caution and restraint. To be sure, the Comité Chileno acknowledged it was reliant on the Cubans' "generosity" and "militant

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<sup>104</sup> Letter, Tati to Lucho (Luis Maira), 17 February 1977, ABA.

<sup>105</sup> For examples of criticism from other allies, see Zourek, *Checoslovaquia Y El Cono Sur*, 273; Santoni, "El Otro 'Compromesso Storico,'" 533–34.

<sup>106</sup> Jerez Ramirez, *Ilusiones*, 343–45.

<sup>107</sup> Letter, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez to Beatriz, 6 February 1975, ABA.

internationalism.”<sup>108</sup> Cuba’s leaders offered their embassies around the world to exiles in Havana as a means of fast, safe communication, delivering letters by diplomatic pouch. The Cuban delegation at the United Nations also posted letters for Chilean exiles in Cuba using US post boxes.<sup>109</sup> And the choice of Peru as a route for sending money back to Chile was probably at least in part to do with the Cuban embassy there at the time. Cuban diplomats in Lima definitely passed correspondence between Beatriz and exiles based there.<sup>110</sup> However, mostly, the Cubans pressed the Chilean Left to re-group, re-organize, unite, and wait for improved conditions in Chile. They also emphasized international activities to isolate the Junta from abroad, which exiles were already developing. Returning to fight against the dictatorship still remained the ultimate objective for many left-wing exiles. However, in the context of heavy losses and internal divisions between and within parties, the campaign to isolate the Junta internationally proved far less controversial and effective in this early phase of resistance.

## **DIPLOMATIC REVOLUTIONARIES**

The international stage – and the United Nations in particular – has historically been an important battlefield for revolutionaries fighting against superior military forces. Using reports on Human Rights abuses, regular published Bulletins, and international conferences as weapons, exiles aimed to politically, diplomatically, economically, militarily, and culturally isolate the Junta,<sup>111</sup> This, in turn, meant working within international organizations, extensive travel, and disseminating news about Chile as widely as possible.

Left-wing leaders had realized the potential strengths of a diplomatic campaign against the Junta early on. As the exiled Socialist Party Senator, Maria Elena Carrera, wrote to Beatriz two months after the coup, foreign criticism – particularly from Western Europe – was “the only thing that the beasts fear.” By contrast, the military did not appear to care about opinions from the socialist bloc, which they regarded as inevitably hostile and were not reliant on for trade.<sup>112</sup> In Helsinki, in late 1973, Chilean exiles participated in the creation of an International Commission of Enquiry into the Crimes

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<sup>108</sup> “Estatutos del Comité Chileno.”

<sup>109</sup> See letters, Tati to Ricardo (Alarcón), 22 October 1974 and 3 December 1974, ABA; Tati to Lino, 11 March 1975.

<sup>110</sup> Letter, Maria Elena to Tati, 13 February 1974, ABA.

<sup>111</sup> Letter, Tati to Pedro, 17 November 1974.

<sup>112</sup> Letter, Maria Elena to Tati, 12 November 1973, ABA.

of the Military Junta, spearheaded by Scandinavian countries, sponsored by the USSR's World Peace Council, and comprising twenty-seven countries. At subsequent meetings in Copenhagen (1974), Mexico City (1975), Helsinki (1976), this transnational organization placed human rights at the forefront of its concerns when it came to opposing the dictatorship. As Patrick Kelly argues, as well as reflecting on the concrete crisis of human rights in Chile, its depoliticized language also avoided partisan struggles on the Left.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, focusing on human rights combined the twin goals of mobilizing global opposition to the Junta and saving lives. This was effective when it came to campaigns to free political prisoners inside Chile, with the dictatorship increasingly using mass exile as a way of closing down concentration camps that had been criticized.<sup>114</sup> The international solidarity movement, with active involvement of the Comité Chileno, also had an impact on individual cases: for example, helping ensure the release of Carmen Castillo, Miguel Enriquez's partner, arrested in late 1974.<sup>115</sup>

When it came to the campaign against the dictatorship's human rights violations, those working at the Comité Chileno in Havana mostly focused their attention on the United Nations. Specifically, they were able to work through Cuba's delegation in New York, to help promote a resolution condemning the Junta for human rights violations.<sup>116</sup> On 6 November 1974, after intense campaigning, 90 countries voted in favor of the Resolution 3219 that condemned "constant flagrant violations of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms in Chile" against 8 votes with 26 abstentions.<sup>117</sup> Evidence of the significance and strength of this "correlation of forces" was the fact that the United States had been forced to abstain, Beatriz reported.<sup>118</sup>

Chilean exiles celebrated the UN vote as the "hardest blow to the Junta" since the coup. "The Junta's representative was extremely isolated," Beatriz recounted, "he ended up attacking the whole commission, including representatives of western countries."<sup>119</sup> Writing to Arrate in Rome after the vote took place, she argued that it demonstrated the value in an internationally "broad front" against the dictatorship.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Kelly, "The 1973 Chilean Coup," 178–79.

<sup>114</sup> Rebolledo, *Memorias del desarraigo*, 21; Wright and Oñate, "Chilean Political Exile," 147.

<sup>115</sup> Letter, Tati to Ricardo, 22 October 1974.

<sup>116</sup> On Cuba's role, see Memorandum, "Analysis of GOC Action."

<sup>117</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution 3219 (XXIX), "Protection of human rights in Chile," 2278<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting, 6 November 1974: [http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r29\\_en.shtml](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r29_en.shtml); Kelly, "Sovereignty and Salvation," 217–19.

<sup>118</sup> "Informe de Alarcón respecto a la resolución aprobado en la ONU con relación a Chile," 26 October 1974 [sic], ABA.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Letter, Tati to Jorge, 26 October 1974 [sic], ABA; Letter, Tati to Jaime, 2 July 1975.

When Arrate distributed a schedule for solidarity work in 1975, focusing on securing freedom for political prisoners, demanding an end of torture, and the dictatorship's state of siege, he underlined the importance of "work that can be carried out in terms of the United Nations and its agencies."<sup>121</sup>

The written word – in the form of reports, bulletins and secret documents smuggled out of Chile illuminating the dictatorship's methods – became increasingly valuable for this kind of international work and for keeping up the momentum of opposition to the dictatorship. Following Resolution 3219, the UN established a unique Ad Hoc Working Group to investigate human rights in Chile. Alongside non-Chilean human rights activists, the Comité Chileno – with Cuban funds – helped ensure witnesses travelled to Geneva or New York to testify to this Group and collated information for it.<sup>122</sup> In doing so, Kelly argues, Chilean exiles powerfully helped communicate the effects of state-led terror and define a new international human rights agenda.<sup>123</sup> "Acquired experience in diplomatic work," Beatriz wrote to a fellow exile, "indicates that things are greatly facilitated if materials are provided that affirm what is being briefly stated."<sup>124</sup> The Comité Chileno frequently provided Alarcón with information on numbers and names of the detained and disappeared, together with lists of concentration camps and torture centers for his work at the UN. The Cuban delegate also asked for, and received, information on the relationships that existed between the Junta and Apartheid South Africa or Israel, perceiving these to be particularly useful for gaining support in the UN General Assembly. Meanwhile, the Comité Chileno sent written reports on the Junta's female victims to the United Nation's "International Year of the Woman" conference in Mexico in 1975.<sup>125</sup>

In fact, Mexico City increasingly became a key route for the dissemination of information and the location of exile-led solidarity work. Having been established in September 1974, Casa Chile in Mexico City became a key partner for the Comité Chileno. That Mexico was in Latin America, part of a global South force in international affairs, nominally non-aligned, and home to over 3,000 exiles, including Beatriz's mother and sisters, made it particularly attractive as a location for international conferences and Chilean solidarity activities.<sup>126</sup> Paid for by the Mexican government, with an annual

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<sup>121</sup> "Solidarity: Work Program for 1975," enclosure, Letter from Jorge Arrate, Rome, 47/35/132/TAM.

<sup>122</sup> Fernández interview and letter, Arrate to Letelier, 9 June 1975, 42/16/9/FOL.

<sup>123</sup> Kelly, "The 1973 Chilean Coup," 179–180.

<sup>124</sup> Letter, Tati to Jaime, 2 July 1975.

<sup>125</sup> Letters, Tati to Ricardo, 3 December 1974 and 24 June 1975, ABA.

<sup>126</sup> Kelly, "Sovereignty and Salvation," 177; Pozo, *Exiliados, emigrados y retornados*, 196.

budget of nearly \$13,000 dollars by 1978, Casa Chile also had the resources to facilitate diplomatic work.<sup>127</sup> From 1975, the Comité Chileno took advantage of these resources and Mexico's easier communication routes with the outside world than Cuba – particularly in reaching the United States – by outsourcing large printing runs to Mexico of its materials.<sup>128</sup> Primarily, this meant outsourcing the Comité Chileno's Bulletin, *Chile Informativo*, which had constituted one of the principal sources of information about Chile throughout Latin America and the United States since late 1973. As each copy of the Bulletin noted, it represented the Chilean Left based in Havana and collaboration with Cuba's news agency, *Prensa Latina*. Its aim was to distribute information from inside Chile and to coordinate suggestions for resistance work in the exterior.<sup>129</sup> The Bulletin became an important focus of the Comité Chileno's work and the coordinated exile-led resistance efforts between Cuba and Mexico from 1975 onward.

Alongside the topic of human rights, one of the most repeated messages in this Bulletin and the Comité Chileno's reports was the link between the United States – or “imperialism” – and the dictatorship.<sup>130</sup> This narrative – and its dissemination – was considered an important anti-Junta weapon. It aimed to pressure the U.S. government into reducing economic, military, and political support for the Junta. And the climate within Washington was receptive. Already before 1973, congressional investigations into covert intervention against Allende's government had begun. Following the coup, Democratic Senators such as Ted Kennedy, Thomas Harkin, and Frank Church, and Democratic Representative, Michael J. Harrington, had then campaigned to stop US military assistance to the Junta and impose economic sanctions on the grounds of human rights violations.

Beyond distributing information about the United States' intervention in Chile through the Bulletin, Chilean left-wing exiles directly influenced the way in which these congressional efforts played out. In mid-1974, for example, Beatriz had visited Washington to lobby congress. As one legislative staff officer on Capitol Hill reflected, this kind of visit was “eminently useful...Chileans can tell it like it is in a way that North American lobbyists cannot possibly hope to do. And meeting them is also educational for lobbyists who are then armed with convincing arguments when we meet hostile

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<sup>127</sup> Rojas Mira, “El Exilio Político Chileno,” 128.

<sup>128</sup> Convenio, Casa de Chile de Mexico and Comite Chileno, 11 February 1975, CMSA.

<sup>129</sup> *Chile Informativo*, Comité Chileno de Solidaridad con la Resistencia Antifascista La Habana, Cuba.

<sup>130</sup> See for example “El imperio y la junta,” *Chile Informativo*, No.76; Centro de Informaciones, Comite Chileno de Solidaridad con La Resistencia Antifascista, “La Penetracion Imperialista en el Movimiento Sindical Chileno por Alvaro Catalán,” 37/35/132/TAM.

questioning and unsympathetic questions.” The visit served to “reconfirm and re-enthusiasm... friends to take particular note of Chile when it comes to the Foreign Aid Bill” and “present some striking evidence... to uncommitted skeptics.”<sup>131</sup>

From 1975 until 1976, the Chilean Left could also count on Orlando Letelier, whose presence in Washington was pivotal in mobilizing support against the Junta. A PS militant who had worked for the Inter-American Development Bank in the 1960s and been Allende’s ambassador to Washington, he was particularly well connected. As Arrate wrote to him in June 1975, “since your arrival, things have improved noticeably.”<sup>132</sup> Beatriz similarly found it “extremely useful” to be in contact with him, receive information about U.S. domestic politics, and send the Comité’s published materials to him for distribution. As she wrote optimistically in 1975, their combined efforts at the United States and the UN could help overcome the PS’ “tragic” position inside Chile.<sup>133</sup> To this end, Letelier worked closely with Cuba’s representative at the United Nations, Ricardo Alarcón.<sup>134</sup> Beatriz also sent Letelier \$5,000 from the PS’ share of solidarity funds in May 1975 calculated to last five months, and roughly \$1000 a month after this for his solidarity work.<sup>135</sup>

These international campaigns hurt the dictatorship in a way that the fragile resistance in Chile could not. For one, U.S. domestic political pressure reduced military and economic assistance for Chile, damaging U.S.-Chilean bilateral relations in turn. When Chile’s ambassador in Washington unsuccessfully begged the U.S. to vote against the UN resolution condemning human rights violations, this also reflected the regime’s growing isolation.<sup>136</sup> The dictatorship’s refusal to moderate its repression in the face of international pressure did not help. When Pinochet cancelled a UN visit to Chile in 1975 to investigate human rights, State Department officials complained this made “any attempts to assist that country in international fora and congress difficult if not impossible.”<sup>137</sup>

Meanwhile, Chile’s military leaders appear to have been hysterical about international opposition. As one Chilean diplomat put it in October 1974, “the

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<sup>131</sup> Memorandum, Carolyn Deitchman to Beatriz et al., 5 August, 1974, 2/17/9/FOL.

<sup>132</sup> Letter, Arrate to Orlando, 5 June 1975.

<sup>133</sup> Letter, Tati to Orlando, 30 December 1975.

<sup>134</sup> Letter, Cloro to Tati, 12 October 1975, ABA.

<sup>135</sup> Letter, Tati to Orlando, 8 May 1975, 2/2/12/FOL.

<sup>136</sup> Record of Conversation, Heitman (Chilean Ambassador in Washington) and Shlaudeman (US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs), 30 October 1974, Cable, SecState to Amembassy Santiago, 6 November 1974, CFP/DOS.

<sup>137</sup> Memorandum, “Analysis of GOC Action.”

battlefront has moved outside Chile's borders."<sup>138</sup> The military regime also believed it was losing this battle. Ignoring systemic weaknesses of left-wing parties inside Chile and the profound military asymmetry between the Junta and the Chilean Left, the dictatorship considered its opponents to have a more "favorable terrain" on which to operate internationally (i.e. more resources, superior propaganda capabilities, "abundant finance," hegemony within the Third World).<sup>139</sup> As the Chilean ambassador in Washington described, the Junta faced a "psychological war" against it.<sup>140</sup> Quite apart from congressional military sanctions, Washington's refusal to vote against the UN resolution condemning human rights in Chile had "very seriously" undermined Chile's position. Seen from Santiago, the Junta's international position had become very difficult.<sup>141</sup>

Chilean diplomats therefore repeatedly called for a counteroffensive. As Chile's representative at the UN told his U.S. counterpart, Santiago would continue fighting communism even if it had to do so alone.<sup>142</sup> This included hiring prestigious agencies to launch public relations campaigns, the publication of the Junta's very own Bulletin to counter the Comité Chileno's, and bilateral diplomacy to undercut collective action in international forums. The Junta also sent \$5,000 to the Chilean embassy in Sweden shortly after Beatriz's visit in December 1973 for cultural activities to "neutralize" Chile's image and counter "Marxist infiltration" of the press.<sup>143</sup> When it came to human rights, there were apparently no attempts to take concerns at face value. Regarding the issue as a smokescreen for ulterior motives, the dictatorship simply opted for outright denial and counterattacks against the socialist bloc's human rights record.<sup>144</sup>

The number of alarmist strategy papers relating to this counteroffensive confirm the Chilean Left's own perception that it was putting substantial pressure on the Junta through its international strategies. "We are doing very well," Letelier wrote to Beatriz in

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<sup>138</sup> Oficio, Durán to Señor Ministro, 17 October 1974, Vol.80: Francia/AMRE.

<sup>139</sup> Oficios, Durán to Señor Ministro, 11 April 1974, 11 and 12 July 1974, Vol.80: Francia/AMRE; Oficio, Heitman to Señor Ministro, 6 December 1974, EEUU/Oficios Sec.-Res.-Conf/E-R/1974/AMRE; Oficio, Ambassador Raúl Bazán Dávila, DelChile, UN, 16 April 1974, Vol.635: NU/Oficios Res.-Ord./E-R/1974/AMRE; Memorandum, "Apreciación de la Situación Misión Permanente NU 1976," enclosure, Oficio, Ambassador Huerta, DelChile UN, to Señor Ministro, 10 August 1976, Vol.706: NU/Oficios Sec.-Res./E-R/1976/AMRE.

<sup>140</sup> Report, Chilean Embassy, Washington, "Plan de Acción en EE.UU.," no date, c.1975, EEUU/Oficios/1975/AMRE.

<sup>141</sup> Memorandum, "Situación Misión Permanente NU 1976." See also Harmer, "Fractious Allies."

<sup>142</sup> Telex, DelChile UN to Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 18 October 1974, Vol.641: NU/Telex R.451-739/1974/AMRE.

<sup>143</sup> Oficio, Rioseco, to Señor Ministro, 28 December 1973, Suecia/Oficios Ord.-Conf.-Aerogramas.-Telex/1973/AMRE.

<sup>144</sup> "Situación Misión Permanente NU 1976."

March 1976, noting that support for solidarity campaigns had increased in the United States and the Junta's isolation was growing.<sup>145</sup> Unable to defend their human rights record or effectively counter its growing isolation, the dictatorship therefore opted for extreme measures, sanctioning international terrorism as part of Operation Condor from the end of 1975 onward.

Pivotaly, on 21 September 1976, the Junta struck directly at Chilean exile-led opposition by killing Letelier in a car bomb in central Washington D.C. Letelier's death was a devastating blow to the Chilean Left, especially at a time when it was already reeling from the effects of the military's repression within Chile and its surveillance of exile activities abroad.<sup>146</sup> Not only did it remove a key figure in a growing Chilean-led transnational solidarity network spread between Cuba, Mexico, the United States, and the United Nations, but it also revealed the uphill struggle opponents of the regime faced against a fanatical dictatorship bent on murdering its enemies.

Within Chile, the dictatorship meanwhile strove hard to paint exiles like Letelier as "foreign," "anti-Chilean" threats and mobilize support for itself based on a new extreme version of Chilean nationalism that equated citizenship with loyalty to the dictatorship. The connection between Chilean exiles and the socialist bloc, and Cuba in particular, which had been so vital to the continued viability and existence of the Chilean Left in these years after the coup, was also used to great effect by an anti-communist dictatorship that saw itself as waging war on "foreign Marxism." Under the headline "*La Conexión Cubana*," *El Mercurio* published old letters from Beatriz found in Letelier's briefcase and seized by the FBI that discussed the money she was sending him and the dissemination of anti-Junta materials at the UN. Using her location in Havana, the paper claimed she was acting as a Cuban operative and that the "Kremlin's hand was behind Letelier's campaign."<sup>147</sup> In this respect, exile-led solidarity strategies abroad (and particularly those directed from Cuba) could sometimes rebound and undermine the Left's legitimacy inside Chile, providing evidence of concrete left-wing campaigns that counted on socialist countries' support.

Beatriz was one of those who understood this dilemma and grew increasingly disheartened by exiles' ability to change the situation in Chile. For over a year before Letelier's assassination, she had been trying to resign from her position as manager of the Chilean Left's bank accounts. Not only was she concerned with what happened to

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<sup>145</sup> Letter, Orlando to Tati, 29 March 1976, 24/2/12/FOL.

<sup>146</sup> See Letter, Tati to Cloro, 26 October 1976, ABA.

<sup>147</sup> "La Conexión Cubana," *El Mercurio*, 10 March 1977.



money she transferred to Chile, but her correspondence reveals a growing dispute between the Havana and Rome offices related to the latter's failure to keep accurate records of European donations and deposit funds in the Luxembourg account for transfer to Cuba. As she repeatedly told Altamirano, she no longer wanted the Allende name to be associated with these funds if they were not managed responsibly.<sup>148</sup> The bleak situation in Chile by 1977 and the Cubans' refusal to help her train to go back and take part in an armed insurgency despite repeated requests added to her sense of despair that characterized this first, desperate phase of resistance to the dictatorship. When General Augusto Pinochet outlined the future institutionalization of the military regime in July 1977, any remaining hopes of an early end to the dictatorship that existed were crushed. As Beatriz remarked to one of her Chilean friends in Havana in October that year, "with Chile, there is nothing that can be done."<sup>149</sup> Having withdrawn from the Comité Chileno in earlier that year and handed the management of bank accounts over to Francisco Fernández, she committed suicide on 11 October 1977.<sup>150</sup>

Had she waited a year, Beatriz would have had reason to be more optimistic, although the situation was far from positive. In 1978, left-wing parties were encouraged by what they observed as growing local opposition to the dictatorship inside Chile.<sup>151</sup> This was the beginning of mass mobilization in Chile that would grow in the early 1980s and give parties – inside Chile and abroad – oppositional strength. The year 1978 was also the beginning of the MIR's "Operation Retorno" which infiltrated exiles back into Chile to lead an insurgency. Meanwhile, the PS split in two in 1979 and the PCCH veered from political resistance as part of an anti-fascist front to emphasis on "Popular Mass Rebellion" and armed insurgency.

Beatriz's death was therefore one of the events that marked the end of the first phase of resistance to the dictatorship and the beginning of a new one. It also resulted in a change for the Comité Chileno's significance. Francisco Fernández's subsequently left Cuba for Mexico and the committee lost much of its prestige and centrality in the international network of exile-led committees.<sup>152</sup> This also dovetailed with Cuba's own shifting role in opposing the Junta. Beatriz's death ended the personal link between the Chilean exiles and the Cuban authorities born out of loyalty to her father and her own

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<sup>148</sup> Letter, Tati to Altamirano, 5 August 1975.

<sup>149</sup> Interview with Sonia Daza Sepulveda, 18 March 2013, Mexico City.

<sup>150</sup> Fernández interview. It is difficult to know what happened to solidarity funds after Fernández left Cuba. For an overview of financial aid in later years, see Angell, "International Support for the Chilean Opposition," 190–91.

<sup>151</sup> Figueroa Clark, "Forgotten History"; *Memoria*, 254–55.

<sup>152</sup> Fernández interview.

intimate ties going back to the late 1960s. The reformulation of left-wing parties in the second phase of resistance, with some factions shifting towards an emphasis on social democracy and others to renewed attention to armed struggle, also meant that the idea of a collective Left in exile faded. For many Chileans in Western Europe, like those who formed the new social democratic wing of the PS, extended exile led to the reconceptualization of political identities and the downgrading of past Marxist affiliations. With Mexico assuming a greater role in the Americas, and Paris, Rotterdam, and Rome becoming the preferred location for reformulated social democratic sectors of the Left after 1979, the Cuban leadership's relevance as a unique authority and arbiter between all different Chilean left-wing parties also changed. To be sure, contacts with Cuba were maintained, but they were largely conducted at a party level rather than via the Comité Chileno. With the situation in Chile improving as far as locally based opposition to the dictatorship, they also now shifted to the kind of training and clandestine support armed insurgency efforts that the Cubans had denied early on.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

An examination of Chilean left-wing solidarity efforts from Cuba between 1973 and 1977 illustrates the enormity of the task that exiles faced immediately after the coup as well as the sheer intensity of their efforts. This is not to say that these represented coherent strategies or a clear vision for Chile's future. As we have seen, the Chilean Left was profoundly divided, as it had been before 1973, but now with growing intensity. At least for those in charge of the Comité Chileno in Havana that tried to collectively represent these tendencies on the Left and mobilize broad-based opposition to the dictatorship, solidarity in the first years after the coup meant using every available strategy at once.

In charting these different overlapping strategies, this article has sought to shed light on exile-led resistance from Havana, Cuba's role in facilitating this opposition to the dictatorship, and the relationship that it had with global solidarity networks after 1973. As we have seen, there were obviously limits to what Chilean political exiles could do in this first phase. Cuba's reluctance – probably wisely – to send Chileans immediately back home to partake in an armed insurgency meant that more cadres had to oppose the dictatorship from abroad. Yet problems of communication, infiltration by the dictatorship's intelligence services, and the collapse of internal resistance and left-wing party structures inside the country made it immensely difficult for those in exile to make

a difference on the ground in Chile. Internal divisions between and within parties - trying to operate from inside the country as well as from exile – added to these challenges.

While limited in what they achieved, exile-led efforts, like those from Havana carried out by the Comité Chileno with Cuban support, nevertheless provided a platform on which subsequent opposition to the Junta could build. At a direct level, Chilean political parties – represented abroad by exile committees such as the Comité Chileno in Havana – provided the essential conduits for global solidarity activism; a means of translating it into concrete action. Left-wing parties were thus able to remain central to the struggle against the Junta, even if they were increasingly targeted by the dictatorship and fragmented. Although solidarity campaigns would increasingly channel money to Chilean church groups, educational institutions, or civil society organizations in later years, at least in the initial years after the coup, the Chilean Left was the principal recipient of funds in these early years and the framer of opposition. And in this respect, Beatriz's role in managing finances from Cuba, and Cuba's assistance in channeling money back to Chile was important, even if the amount that eventually reached Chile was never perceived as being enough. The Comité Chileno was also able to shape the way in which solidarity was framed through its dissemination of information, and its members' active participation in international campaigns. As Margaret Power has argued, the Chile solidarity movement was “successful...in both symbolic and practical terms. One of the most important markers was its long-term ability to impact public perceptions, influence cultural productions, and affect media coverage of the Pinochet dictatorship.”<sup>153</sup>

Chilean left-wing exiles' cooperation with friendly governments, parties, and non-governmental organizations was thus vital for the increasingly internationalized battle they fought. Overall, from the perspective of Chileans on all sides, the outside world and its interaction with their own ideas, beliefs and agendas therefore mattered a great deal. In this regard, Chile was a special case but not unique. As Cold War conflicts increasingly uprooted peoples around the world, particularly from the Third World, it forced them to seek refuge abroad, devise new means of communicating their ideas and pursuing their political agendas, and find international allies willing to help them. These networks, the internationalization of local struggles, and the fluidity of global interconnections that crisscrossed oceans and national borders therefore became an increasingly common feature of twentieth century global politics. Studying them is imperative if we are to

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<sup>153</sup> Power, “The U.S. Movement in Solidarity with Chile in the 1970s,” 47.

understand the full dimensions of Latin America's history during the late Cold War era. Understanding the view from Havana and early resistance to the Chilean dictatorship helps identify these struggles' means and processes along with the global implications they had, even during periods of profound defeat and readjustment. It also contributes to recovering the broader history of the battle for Chile that began before 1973 and continued throughout the dictatorship until democracy was finally restored in 1990.