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Labour in Chile under the Junta, 1973 - 1979

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Open Letter from CNS to President Pinochet, June 1981.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Unions under Authoritarian Régimes

Both the literature and political experience suggest that under authoritarian régimes (fascist, military, populist), labour unions are generally deeply and negatively affected in their political development. In the case of fascist and military régimes, it is because of the strong repression and control being exercised by the fascist party and/or the State. Typical examples are Germany and Italy between the 1920s and mid-1940s; Spain and Portugal until recently; and Argentina and Brazil during the 1960s in contemporary Latin American history. In the case of populist régimes, control rather than repression is the word which would best describe the State and its Party/Union relationship, with the State actually giving birth to the working class, the unions and the Populist Party - which in turn is supported by the unions, the workers and the middle classes - through forced state industrialisation policies (e.g. Mexico, Brazil - and to some extent Argentina - between the 1930s and 1950s).

The conditions and characteristics of such régimes tend to differ from one to another. 1) Fascist régimes are born in the 'weakest link' of the imperialist chain and developed under the hegemony of a fascist party with huge mass followings in the petty bourgeoisie although controlled from the beginning by financial capital. 2) Military dictatorships develop in countries with a minimum level of industrialised but dependent economies, under the political hegemony of the military - its High Command - and controlled by financial (although dependent) capital. 3) Populist régimes grow under the hegemony of rising (native) capitalist interests. All such régimes rise and fall during periods of deep strains within the imperialist countries, including contradictions between them in the first two cases (the 1920s and 1930s in the European case and the 1960s and 1970s under US-EEC capital-growing competitions in Spain, Portugal and Latin America, leading to a democratisation process; or military coups).

The case of populist régimes, on the other hand, is characterised by a period of lessening of the countries' imperialist links, under a weak or relatively weak development of the working class, with independent native capitalist development processes which actually create or further develop and are supported by the working class. The least typical case is Argentina, where there was already a certain working class base when Perón took over the Labour Ministry and which was a much richer country compared with Cárdenas' Mexico and Vargas' Brazil and could therefore confront to a greater extent the new US world hegemony after the war. This made the Argentine case a strong working

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class based populism, enjoying a relatively independent position vis-à-vis the State.

Three political characteristics of these régimes are of crucial importance to our analysis. First, the different instrument of control being exercised in each of the three types of authoritarianism. While in the fascist and populist situations the party plays a crucial role and therefore the ideological means are the predominant factor, in the case of the military dictatorships, repression is the prevailing form of control. This makes the military dictatorships apparently stronger because of their ability to destroy the old and construct a new social order, but in the long run, much weaker, because of its lack of a soul, consensus and mass following. This aspect is also important when considering the ability of the régimes to corporatise intermediate social forces (private ideological apparatus - i.e. the Church-middle strata and even sectors of the State apparatus, i.e. the Military as an institution). Secondly, the achievements of the radical transformation and reorganisation of the capital accumulation process that each of the régimes managed, as well as the strength of the unions before such régimes controlled State power, is also important. In fact, the capitalist economic development with increased employment rates which took place in some of these régimes, together with the myth of an 'economic miracle' was important in legitimising State rule. Where this was not the case, e.g., Portugal and Argentina in the 1960s, the consequence was a deep radicalisation of the military and the complete hegemony of the communists in the unions or a strong union resistance and the rise of a 'democratic' military leadership (Lanusse). Lastly, the international correlation of forces and the strength of the international union organisations are important in setting the general economic and political conditions for whether or not the régimes arrive at a stabilisation or come to an end. Today there is little world consensus for authoritarian régimes, and many such régimes have come to an end with hardly anybody opposing their downfall. Moreover, international unions have actively criticised such régimes. This was not the case during the inter-war years, during the war and in the cold war period that followed. I have tried to exemplify the economic and political characteristics of these régimes in Table 1.

In the case of Chile, we have a favourable world consensus for democracy at the time of the coup (in particular every sector of the international union movement) supporting widespread democratic and union struggles. Moreover, by 1973 there was in Chile a strong working class with long-established traditions going back to the previous century and a modernising of the economy, but with a low growth rate. Massive unemployment, negative or low investment and growth rates followed after the 1973 coup with a renewed control of the economy by US financial capital and hardly any 'negotiation' of dependent relations (contrary to what Franco, for instance, had done to some extent throughout his rule). These conditions, associated with the inability of the fascists and military who organised the coup to maintain, organise and develop a mass following among the middle sectors (which they did enjoy to some extent before the coup) and the hegemony of the military

Table 1

Characteristics and Party Union State Relationships
in Authoritarian Regimes

	<u>Fascism</u>	<u>Military Dictatorships</u>		<u>Populism (LA)</u>
		<u>Old (Europe)</u>	<u>New (LA)</u>	
Economic and working class expansion	++	+	+ or -	++
Previous working class autonomy and development	+	+ Spain - Port.	+ Arg. - Braz.	-
Hegemony of financial capital	+	+	+	-
Means of control:				
- Repression vs.	-	+	+	--
- Ideology	+	-	-	++
Instrument of control:				
- Party vs.	++	-	--	++
- The Military	--	+	++	--
Role of country within imperialist system		'Weak link' within imperialist chain	Minimum industrialisation level in a dependent economy	Low development and dependent level.
World democratic consensus and strength of international unions when régimes were:				
- Rising	-	-	+	-
- Falling	+	+	+	+
Corporativisation of intermediate social forces	+	-	-	+
Political development of the working class at the fall of régime	-	+	+	+ Arg. - Brazil & Mexico

high command and their style of 'politics' (closely associated with the most imperialised sector of native monopoly capital), make the Chilean régime, when analysed beyond its appearance, basically weak in the middle range and particularly so in the long run. The problem is to what extent have the military in power been able to weaken the union movement structurally and politically, and to what extent they have used the basic weakness of the military régime to maintain a basic structural presence in the country, reorganise, unite and develop alternative propositions which gain mass support within the unions and broader sectors and struggle to achieve such objectives. This question will be answered by analysing the concrete present conditions and struggles of the unions. First we will look at the main features of the unions' pre-coup development and their structural strengths.

B. The Development of the Unions up to 1973²

By September 1973, workers represented almost 80% of the employed population and more than half of all Chileans who were employed were proletarians or productive wage workers of the agriculture, mining, industrial, construction, energy, and water and transport sectors. Out of the total wage and salaried population, as many as 44% were organised into 10,000 unions representing 1,100,000 members. There were three types of union organisations with 300,000 members each: the State employees' 'associations' (which finally achieved legal recognition during the Popular Government); the plant, interplant and national 'professional unions', organising those who fell within the legal category of 'empleados' a privileged stratum, and the 'agricultural unions' which were county-based. Blue collar 'industrial unions' were set up by plants and had 200,000 members. The professional unions were made up of white collar but also some (basically 'skilled') blue collar workers from large and new industrial sectors (power and electricity, petroleum, steel, etc.) and, as the associations and agricultural unions, were allowed to bargain locally or at the national level, a right which plant-based industrial unions did not have formally but developed on a de facto basis since the late 1960s (without leaving aside their more concrete negotiating at the plant level).

By 1971 there were 87 national unions, associations and federations all affiliated to the one single National Union/Council CUT.

Chile's first national strike took place as early as 1890. By 1925 there were already 204,000 manual workers organised into 214 free union councils (as much as 46% of the wage and salaried population) organised into one main national council, FOCH, which was affiliated to the Red International. Another 90,000 workers were organised into legally recognised mutual aid societies. But such unions were almost completely wiped out by the Government repression that followed the enactment of the new labour laws in 1924. These were being prepared since 1919 by both the Liberal and Conservative coalitions, but were never enacted until the military forced parliament to do so. However, it was not until the Popular Front Government (an alliance of radicals, socialists

and communists under the hegemony of the Social Democratic Radicals) that the massive setting up of legal unions did take place and the State- and employer-controlled unions and the collective bargaining system arrived at an institutionalisation and were finally supported by the Government, the Employers and the Unions themselves. A new union council, CTCH, was set up in 1936 after the creation of the Front and soon became formally part of the alliance. CTCH was finally divided and destroyed in 1946-47 because of the following conditions which arose from the Popular Front experiment: a) The contradictory experience of a radical union movement forced suddenly to become controlled by and adapt to a capitalist State and industrialisation process, where the employers got most of the economic benefits (160 in 1945, from a basis of 100 in 1940), while unions had to refrain from their traditional militant striking activities; b) the political infights between communists and socialists on political and clientelistic grounds; and c) the post war repressive pro-US government that followed the 10-year Popular Front experience in 1947. A process of independent reorganising by sectorial unions then took place. Shortly after, the least repressed white collar State and private sector employees' unions (CEPCH and ANEF), together with the Student Federation of the University of Chile (FECH), put forward a unity movement which criss-crossed the economic struggle against government policies and led to the setting up of CUT in 1953. CUT declared independence from governments, the employers, the parties and the international sphere as well as its effective unity policy, set the basis for the socialist-communist FRAP alliance, to be finally set up on strong grounds in 1957. Later, it conditioned the emergence of the broader Unidad Popular alliance and its accommodation with the Christian Democrats to defend the democratic process after an attempted coup in 1969. Shortly after another coup threat, when Allende won the elections, the Christian Democratic Congress representation helped in securing his appointment to office. But after 1962, the relative independent stand of CUT vis-à-vis the parties lost momentum as the left independent stand in Congress (particularly on the unions' own behalf), and at the presidential elections, won mass legitimacy and the objective conditions of having a popularly elected government finally emerged. Thus CUT was a key instrument in securing the election of Allende to the Presidency of the country.

Table 2 indicates the evolution of political tendencies within the United National Union.

Table 2

Political Orientation of CUT Congress Delegates and Votes 1953-72(%)

	1953	1957	1959	1962	1965	1968	1972(1) general	1972(2) blue collar	1972(2) white collar
Communist (CF)	21.3	39.9	44.7	31.1	42.3	45.5	30.9	38	22
Socialist (SF)									
Popular	2.7	-	-	-	-	3.0	0.9	-	-
de Chile	4.2	22.9	28.1	28.4	33.1	21.6	26.4	32	19
Dissidents	8.4	3.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Radicals (RF)	6.3	9.0	4.1	6.2	4.8	8.1	3.9	1	7
MAPU	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.6	7	-
Christian (CD)									
Democrats	6.3	14.7	14.6	17.9	11.9	10.2	26.3	16	41
Anarchists	7.9	2.2	2.0	2.0	-	1.4*	1.8*	1*	-
Trotskyists	0.7	1.3	1.1	0.8	1.0	-	-		
Independent	6.6	-	-	0.5	-	-	-		
Non Classi- fiable and absent	25.6	8.8	5.0	12.9	7.2	9.4	-	-	-

Source: Alan Angell, Partidos Políticos y Movimiento Obrero en Chile (Mexico, Ediciones Era, 1974). p.224.

1) El Mercurio, Santiago, May 1972.

2) Alan Angell Political Mobilization and Class Alliances in Chile, 1970-1973, St. Antony's College, Oxford. p.30.

* MIR

The following is an autocritical analysis by Luís Figueroa, head of CUT during its last 10 years, which can well summarise the political limitations unions confronted regarding political parties. Figueroa was addressing a UP meeting (London, 1975):

In the history of our country, many mistakes have been made (by the parties in their relations with the union movement). The mistake of incorporating the

CTCH to the Popular Front and in having therefore finished it up when the PF was broken up for lacking political unity. We made another error during the UP Government, by carrying CUT to the Government and tightening it up so to speak to the overall **Popular Government alternative** and therefore confronting us with the problem of the division of the class. The Christian Democrats supported the coup because we didn't know how to work with them in the unions. These historic errors are paid for very expensively. For this reason we must defend (our autonomy) with even a greater passion to the one we had before, because there is now a lively experience going on. Aren't we the leaders of the Chilean Labour Movement, the people responsible for what happened? Of course, we cannot avoid responsibility. We didn't know how to maintain our independence... In political life, the correlation of forces of a society changes but the instrument of a class has a historic projection.

C. The Structural Basis of Union Politics

The distribution of Chile's natural resources, of its economy and the cultural characteristics of its workers, set the basis for the unions' national organising strength and independent stand vis-à-vis the State and the Employers. In fact, Chile's main and rich natural resources (minerals, in particular nitrate, copper ore and coal) are distributed within the northern, central and southern regions of the country and since the past century, have led to the development of relatively modern capitalist enterprise with a certain concentration of workers. Next to these centres and the capital city and main port Santiago-Valparaíso region, railroad and port facilities were set up as well as the beginning of a native industry and construction sector (the former two sectors employed by 1907 as much as 18% of the active population) on the basis of mineral exports revenues. This process centred the workers on direct class-to-class conflicts, in particular in the mining areas which were the basis of the country's economy. Under such conditions, miners developed as the leading sector of the union movement, on the basis of their strong bargaining power but found a stubborn resistance from the part of the State and the native and foreign Employers who associated to confront them in bloody repressions in order to keep the mineral boom going. The cyclical character of a mining-based economy and the political repression there pushed many experienced miners into other sectors, spreading their radicalism across the country.

Moreover, Chile's narrow, flat and long territory (3,000 by 200 miles), and the workers' common language and cultural homogeneity set the basis for swift intra-class communications and apart from sectorial, cultural or regionally based struggles. In fact as early as 1890, strikes broke out simultaneously across the country, with workers of different sectors of the economy involved.

The increased industrialisation that took place during and following the Popular Front years was soon controlled by American capital and reaffirmed workers' anti-imperialist traditions and the consciousness that only through the control of Chile's basic resources, industries, commercial, agrarian and financial interests, was the country to arrive at a consistent development, and its recurrent unemployment, low salaries under a soaring historic inflationary process would come to an end. These convictions were made clear in CUT's Congress resolutions (in particular that of 1968, preceding the setting up of the Unidad Popular and its Government). By then a land reform and agrarian unionisation process was under way, which linked CUT to a vital sector of the workers, thus further increasing its national presence throughout the country.

II. THE ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE JUNTA AND THE UNIONS

A. The Overall Economic Policy

Since the coup of September 1973 the military régime has drastically changed the economic policies being pursued not only by the Allende administration but by the different Chilean governments during most of the last 40 years. More than 450 State-owned and controlled enterprises were handed over to the private sector (basically to the same financial capitalist groups which controlled them before 1970).³ However, the military still maintain under State (i.e. their) control the most important sectors of the economy - copper in particular - representing as much as 78% of the assets in the 100 largest firms in Chile.⁴ Almost 30% of the land expropriated by previous governments under the land reform law was given back to private landowners.⁵ The economy was also opened to private and foreign competition by lifting price controls and reducing import barriers from 100% to 10% and exports were encouraged. As a result, non-traditional exports grew from 10% to 30% of the total exports between 1974 and 1978 (although total exports had fallen by 22% during these years).⁶ An aggressive policy of reducing public non-military expenditure, especially 'social' expenditure, wages and salaries was undertaken, which resulted in a decreased inflation rate of 39% by 1979;⁷ a decreased production, especially industrial production;⁸ widespread unemployment, in particular amongst blue collar workers, and a foreign debt twice as high as that of the 1969-1972 period.⁹ All analysts agree that the greatest problem of the Junta's growth model lies in its own internal logic, in its inability to increase fixed capital investments (which have remained at a low 10% to GNP during the 1973-1978 period),¹⁰ and employment. Open unemployment, including the Government unproductive and subsidised Minimum Employment Programme, was over 20% by December 1978 (28% if we consider all those who would like to work).¹¹ Two important efforts to strengthen these policies have been made: in 1975 the 'shock treatment' in public expenditure reductions (under IMF pressure and as a result of increased military expenditure)¹² and in 1978 through the 'Kelly Plan' presented by the Planning Minister; it was based on a scheme aimed at reducing 'labour costs' as a means of attracting primarily foreign investment, in order (supposedly) to increase employment levels.

B. Union Struggles at the Economic Level

Although by 1974 the workers' share of National Income had dropped to almost half of its 1972 level of 63%, and 'labour costs' had been reduced from 32% of total production costs to 20.8% from 1964-65 period by 1977, a 37.5% reduction¹³, real wages and salaries and social security spendings had been systematically creeping up (not considering the 1975 general depression), as Table 3 indicates. It is only within the Government Minimum Employment Programme - PEM - (based on a completely unproductive sector with an income 60% below the official 'minimum salary') that earnings have actually fallen. At the time, an editorial by *El Mercurio* traced the inflation and employment problems back to increased production costs due to higher real wages, which should be stopped, according to that leading Chilean newspaper of the Edwards economic group.

Table 3

Index of Real Wages in Chile 1970-78 (1970=100)

	Mass Income	Real Salaries and Earnings	Real Salaries Earnings in Construction	Real Minimum Earnings	Earnings in the Minimum Employment Programme	Government Social Security Spending
1970	100.0	101.0	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
1971	131.8	125.7	138.8	112.4		170.4
1972	127.8	118.1	160.0	46.4		162.7
1973	56.4	51.8	81.0	33.6		69.6
1974	72.4	68.1	59.4	64.2		78.2
1975	61.2	62.5		64.9	100.0	75.7
1976	70.5	71.0	100.6	71.9	94.8	83.3
1977	84.3	81.7	116.3	84.8	77.2	99.0?
1978		87.2 (July)		85.7 (July)	65.6 (June)	

Calculated by the author on the basis of tables 10,12,15,16,18 in Informe Económico, 1970-78.¹¹ Source: INE (National Institute of Statistics), Santiago, Chile.

It seems that managers were going into supposedly increasing labour costs given the Government's automatic salary readjustments policy and the fierce competition from foreign products. It is under these conditions that one can understand the enforcement of a new economic plan (the Kelly Plan, later partially enforced within Decree Law - DL - 2.200 in June 1978) and political repression (the Government's October 1978 DL ban on almost the entire union structure)

in order to bring about a new capital accumulation dynamic based on private investment, which up to that moment had not yet taken place.¹⁴ Those policies met with a growing national and international opposition (including an AFL-CIO and ORIT boycott threat), which forced the Government to obtain such objectives through other mechanisms, which would apparently comply with union demands: the 1979 Labour Plan. The increase in real earnings and social security spending, and the Government drive to stop it, give a direct indication of the unions' independent stand against the current economic policy. This is further acknowledged if we consider the relationship between general unionisation levels, those unions actively confronting the Government by signing open letters on national problems and the real salaries and earnings index by sectors, as Table 4 indicates.

Table 4

Unionisation by Type of Union and Sector (in thousands, Dec. 1976).
Its Relationship to Unions Active on National Problems, September
1976 and Real Earnings (1977)

	Indus- trial Unions	Profes- sional Unions	Agric. Unions	Associ- ations	Total	%	Unions active on Nat. Problems ²	Real Wage & Salary Index ³ 1970=100
Agriculture	8.4	19.6	282.4		300.4	21	20	133.1 ⁴
Mining	72.3	32.7			105.0	8	3	88.6
Industry	154.9	140.3			295.2	21	58	102.2
Construction	5.4	53.7			59.1	4	6	116.3
Electricity	5.5	10.2			15.7	1	0.3	64.5
Commerce	4.8	96.7			101.5	8		No info.
Transport	4.5	86.4			90.9	7	} 14	No info.
Services	8.8	62.2		316.6	387.6	30		
TOTAL	234.5	491.6 ¹	282.4	316.6	1,355.1 ¹	100	100.3	81.7 ⁵

Source: INE: CUT Technical Commission (projections); ANEF (State Employers Union) and author's calculations.

1) These figures include the professional employers union members self-employed, 55,146.

2) This category indicates all unions over 600 - which have been confronting the Government by means of open letters since 1977, calling for economic and political change in national policies, together with various specific union demands.

3) INE, Cited in Informe Económico 1970-78, Tables 14,15,17.

4) This figure refers to the Minimum Salary Index in Agriculture and is possibly higher than the levels actually reached because the Government reduced payments in cash to 50% and it is the landlord who establishes the cost of the remaining 50% which is paid in kind.

5) This box indicates the overall real salaries and earnings index.

Therefore, it was the workers in sectors with the strongest and reorganised unions who were able to obtain from their employers the periodic salary readjustments decreed by the Government.

Since July 1979, collective bargaining has been reinstated through the Labour Plan and unions in all sectors have increased their wage and salaries beyond the rise in the price index, obtaining a real increase of between 2% and 16% up to January this year, as a study on the matter indicates.¹⁵ However, this study also concludes that earnings have risen according to the market position of each enterprise, and less so compared with the strength and militancy of the unions. This is due to the nature of the collective bargaining system under the Labour Plan legislation, which allows for employers' lock-outs, the temporary recruitment of labour in an enterprise on strike and the 'right' of employers to make the whole work force redundant if after 60 days they have not accepted the last offer put forward by the employers. Astonished by the number of unions which have nonetheless gone on strike, even though workers would exercise little pressure on the employers, the head of the Christian Employers' Association (USEC) concluded that 'workers needed a psychological breakthrough'¹⁶. One way to test the union reorganising hypothesis further is to look at the differentiated levels of employment by industrial sectors where production has been most drastically affected by the general economic measures taken by the Government. This has been done in Table 5 indicating that the sectors which have had a slower degree of employment reductions in relation to reductions in production levels, are textiles, furniture, printing, leather, rubber products, chemicals, non-metallic minerals and the metal-mechanic sectors. On the other hand, the shoemaking, clothing and wool industries have had more rapidly decreasing employment levels than their corresponding reductions (or growth) of production levels.

As Table 6 indicates, these two last sectors have weak unions and all of the most powerful unions were also active in national problems (although they were plant-based), and were located in sectors which have managed to maintain unemployment as low as possible. However, both the rubber and furniture industries have also maintained higher employment levels in relation to parallel reductions in production levels and at the same time their unions have been traditionally weak and have not reorganised to confront national problems. But there are no cases of sectors with strong unions and higher unemployment levels. In both of these previous cases, however, we are talking of very small sectors. and the more general relations that seem to indicate these figures stand, even if we control by capital versus labour intensive or foreign-controlled industries.

Table 5

Index of Manufacturing Industry Production and Employment
in all Sectors where Decrease in Production has Occurred.

Date	23 Textiles SML(3)	24 Shoes & Clothing SM(4)	25 Wood Industry excluding furniture SM	26 Furniture & Wooden furniture SM	28 Printing & Publishing SM	29 Leather Products except shoes SM	30 Rubber Products ML(F)(4)(5)	31 Chemical Production ML(F)	33 Non- Metallic Minerals ML(F)	35 Metal Production except Trans- portation Equipment SM	37 Electrical Appliances & Accessories ML(F)	38 Construc- tion of Trans- portation Material ML(F)												
	P ¹	E ²	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E												
1970	96.0	97.5	104.8	93.9	108.1	64.2	113.4	116.5	109.5	100.8	103.7	82.5	111.0	114.6	120.9	114.9	102.9	94.0	98.6	98.0	99.2	103.1	127.0	120.8
1971	110.1	98.0	118.9	90.8	131.7	63.9	109.1	98.3	173.8	97.3	119.7	77.0	135.5	109.2	144.0	115.3	120.9	88.6	109.1	98.0	113.3	87.7	111.9	107.4
1972	113.1	120.2	123.5	102.0	146.7	60.6	155.6	97.2	126.4	113.9	90.0	77.2	138.8	129.7	150.4	132.4	123.2	98.8	117.8	89.3	104.2	92.8	120.3	102.0
1973	101.5	123.0	117.1	99.9	93.1	55.9	120.8	94.0	96.0	119.5	85.8	84.4	127.5	136.5	147.6	133.8	126.5	108.3	121.4	101.5	89.1	134.5	130.8	99.6
1974	98.3	115.5	105.1	83.0	89.2	52.2	113.7	111.9	64.6	115.2	74.5	84.3	124.7	127.1	129.1	133.2	136.1	112.3	111.0	106.7	105.2	113.9	129.2	93.7
1975	62.4	96.4	86.8	74.0	54.4	40.9	61.8	107.1	55.6	99.7	70.6	77.0	35.8	121.8	79.7	131.7	76.1	105.8	59.7	102.9	75.8	104.2	50.0	87.5
1976	61.5	80.1	74.4	71.2	79.5	32.4	72.2	98.5	57.8	88.8	65.8	78.0	77.2	113.9	87.9	119.1	79.1	81.7	62.9	109.3	65.3	72.3	36.8	82.3

Sources: Production, INE. (Base: Average 1968=100).

Employment, ILO. (Base was 1970=100 but was readjusted to 1968=100).

1) Production = P

2) Employment = E

3) S, M and L = Small, Medium and/or Large Plants are predominant, including K or L, intensive, and Production.

See Antonio León, Redistribución del ingreso, empleo y heterogeneidad productiva en el sector industrial Chileno. Santiago, FLACSO, Documento de Trabajo, October 1977. pp. 16 and 40.

4) These sectors have 2 large plants each (F): Bata - SONCA & CAPECU; General Insa and Firestone. (See Las 91²³).

5) F = Foreign Control (*25%). See Sergio Molina, El proceso de cambio en Chile (Santiago and Mexico, Editorial Universitaria and siglo XXI, 1972). pp. 118-119.

Table 6

Wage and Salaried Workers, Unions, Unionisations and Unions Active
on National Problems in all Industrial Sectors
where a Decrease in Production has occurred

	Salaried Workers (1967)	Union Workers (1968)	% Unionised	Number of Unions (1968)	%	Unions Active on National Problems	%
Textile	45,000	33,329	74	171	21.0	88	31.0
Shoes & Clothing	38,000	12,867	34	123	15.1	9	3.1
Wood Industry	36,000	5,004	17	59	7.2	8	2.8
Furniture	10,000	2,772	28	38	4.6	0	0.0
Printing & Publishing	11,800	5,391	48	60	7.3	14	5.0
Leather	5,500	4,554	83	78	3.4	6	2.1
Rubber	3,500	23	0.8	1	0.1	1	0.4
Chemicals	19,500	9,426	49	101	1.44	60	21.1
Non-Metallic Minerals	16,200	13,811	86	63	7.9	18	6.3
Metal Products	40,500	11,520	29	(89))))
Electrical Appliances	17,300	6,336	44	170 (44)	20.9)	75	26.3
Construction of Transport Metal	32,000	3,036	9	() () (37))))	(*))
	232,300	108,109		814	100	285	97.9

Source: CUT, *op.cit.*, pp.62-65, and author's calculations.

(*) We do not have the means to distinguish among these three sectors.

In such very small sectors (rubber in particular), one or two plants seem to be making up the majority of the industry's employment and therefore we could be tempted to conclude for a whole sector on the basis of one or two plant units (the opposite of the ecological - or in this case, the 'sectorial' fallacy). We obviously need more detailed plant level analysis. However, unions have redeveloped at plant levels during these years, according to union officials I have interviewed and to an ILO report, precisely by negotiating in the first place for minimum employment levels.

C. A New Class Structure Arising in Chile?

Table 7 indicates the structure of Chile's economy and work force at its most dramatic stage during the 1975 shock treatment process. Agriculture had reached by 1977 a 9-10% GDP level, after its own 'shock treatment' of returning to private landowners almost one third of the previously expropriated lands. Mining was by then up to 12%. Construction and Industry had maintained their 1975 depressed levels (2.6% and 20.6%) indicating an economic structure based on mineral, logs and fruit exports. For 1972 the figures for each sector were: 8.5%, 9.2%, 4%, 3% and 26.06%.

Table 7

	<u>Gross Domestic Product</u>					
	<u>Active, Wage and</u>		<u>Salaried Population, 1975 (in thousands)</u>			
	GDP ¹	%	Active ² Population	%	Salaried ² Population	%
Agriculture	2 396.5	5.7	610.3	20	231.9	11.0
Mining	3 546.9	8.4	89.7	3	86.5	4.0
Industry	8 636.4	20.1	528.5	17.6	467.3	22.3
Construction	992.1	2.4	170.3	5.6	129.2	6.0
Electricity	606.0	1.4	26.0	0.9	25.0	1.2
Commerce	13 316.3	32.0	436.0	14.5	210.0	10.0
Transport	1 628.5	7.0	199.7	6.5	160.0	8.0
Services	8 967.9	26.0	939.6	31.3	795.0	38.0
Total	42 091.0	100.0	2999.8	100.0	2104.9	100.0

Sources: 1) ODEPLAN (in Boletín del Banco Central, Feb. 1978).
2) National Employment Survey of INE.

But as previous tables also indicate, the productive sectors of the economy as well as the wage and salaried population, the workers and proletarians, have maintained a key role in the economy, supported by a very high unionisation level throughout the economy.

Among the unemployed in Santiago 61.2% were manual workers, 28.7% were white collar workers and 10.1% were self-employed. There were no unemployed employers.¹⁷ These figures indicate an important reduction of the employed population with real unemployment running at a 28% level - without considering the underemployed and the 10% who have left the country. This has affected especially manual workers. However, whatever the drastic economic changes which are taking place in the economy, wage and salary earners are still the most important single and combined strata in the country.

Table 8

Employed Population by Strata (%)

	Employers	Unpaid	Self	Workers	Employ-	Salaried
	Members	Family	Employed	(A)	ees	(A+B)
					(B)	
Employed Population	61.6	87.1	687.9	1,226.4	961.1	2,187.5
(and %)	2%	3%	23%	41%	32%	73%

Source: INE, 1976.

Among the employees (which is a census and legal category), there are many productive workers (skilled workers) which could raise the proletarian section to as much as 50% of the employed population (considering agriculture, mining, construction, transport, public utilities workers). Moreover, the wage and salaried population had at the moment of the greatest depression in the economy a well established basis throughout the country (Table 9). Nonetheless, the Junta has created a reserve army, which employers are training according to their manpower needs, which they can effectively use to divide the class and the people. We do not find any significant trend in the economy or in the decisions of the ruling bloc to change the present capital accumulation pattern of the country. The development of a mining and agro-business economy and the depression of Chile's traditional productive and service activities, plus the development of an import sector of consumer goods, on the basis of huge unemployment, is and seems to be the pattern that the economy will follow during the years to come, unless the régime itself is changed.

Table 9

Wage and Salaried Population by Regions

<u>Region</u>	I-IV	R.M.	Valparaiso	VI-VII	VIII	IX-X	XI-XII
	North	Santiago	San Antonio	Central	Central-South	Sth.	Ext.Sth
Wage & Salary Earners	9%	39%	11%	12%	13%	14%	2%

Source: INE, 1975.

D. The Unemployed and the 'Unemployed Workers'

Given that the weight of the workers within the employed population has been affected to an important extent, we must pay due attention to the unemployed, in particular those who were employed before the coup and were an integral part of the workers' economic structure. It is here that the workers' movements have actually been weakened in their very support basis. To what extent have they managed to organise and/or maintain their union bonds?

We do not have any indications that workers in the 'Minimum Employment'(PEM) Government unproductive programme for the unemployed, are organised at all. There is only some indication that both the permanently unemployed and the workers who lost their jobs after the coup (unemployed workers) are organised. The first group is based in the different Chilean Counties (municipalidades) and receive 60% of the minimum salary. This over-economic stress seems to be the main reason why PEM workers have not organised. The Government seems to understand this fact and has therefore been consistently reducing their salaries and earnings since 1973. (See Table 3). The permanently unemployed, who during the UP Government reached a level of only 3%, have not organised at all, although they do seem to join the local popular dining rooms set up by the Church in the slums.¹⁸ The unemployed workers have organised a labour exchange system (bolsas de cesantes) in the most important industrial areas of Concepción, Santiago and Valparaíso. In Santiago, they have even formed a 'coordinating body' of such bolsas and have addressed critical letters to the authorities. However, they seem to be very weak. In east Santiago, for example, there are 22 such bolsas, but these comprise only 630 persons of a total unemployed population of about 30,000, and seem to be the most militant among the unemployed.¹⁹

Another point to be made is related to the labour market and its characteristics during these years of a complete free market economy experience. It has been suggested that in broad terms or in specific cases, there are distinct labour markets by type of capital; at least two specific kinds of markets. One supplies the labour for the capital intensive enterprises, is based on the skilled labour force and is less competitive; the other is based on unskilled and semi-skilled workers and supplies the traditional, labour-intensive, enterprises; it is competitive and open.²⁰ Moreover it has been also suggested that such markets under the present situation in Chile, are quite differentiated and segmented; one based on skilled labour having hardly any change at the present, because these enterprises do not suffer the effects of the economic depression which followed the new economic policies; while the other, based on the unskilled and semi-skilled labour force, grew to the utmost. Therefore the policy changes have affected only the traditional sector of the economy.²¹

The information presented in Table 5 indicates that the depression has affected both traditional and modern industrial sectors and, as has been pointed out elsewhere, food products

have almost maintained production levels²² and are based on small-medium size, most of the time labour intensive plants. Moreover, if we compare employment levels before (1972) and after the coup and between the 1977-1978 years in capital intensive enterprises, we find that they have fallen 21%, and another 3.4%. Within textile and metallurgic capital intensive enterprises (which represent about 50% of such enterprises), employment fell by 40% in the 1972-78 period.²³ It seems that in the case of Chile during these years we can hardly speak of differentiated labour markets, one of them being relatively close and the other open. There is, it seems, only one large labour market where we can find an engineer working for some hours as a chewing-gum street salesman, an unskilled worker turning up to do whatever is asked for at the 'Minimum Employment', and a housewife who has just started to look for a job.

The burden of unemployment however, as we have already noted, has fallen upon manual (61.2%) and white collar (28.7%) workers. The professional classes can more easily leave the country.

We must also consider that unemployment in Chile is a shared phenomenon; it is not an individual problem. The unemployed will move into the house of a relative who is employed 'until he finds a job'²⁴ which can take years... This fact as well as our earlier discussion is important in terms of the wider cohesion among different sectors of the employed and unemployed working class. We do not find major breakdowns within the class on these terms, because the economic policies have affected every sector of the labour force and they seem to react correspondingly.

In the open letters signed by the different Union Councils, the problems and interests of the unemployed, including minimum employment, are permanently stressed. In October 1977 a special open letter on the issue was put out by the left wing Federation's 'Coordinator' and the Santiago Unemployed Coordinator.

This fact and the unions' general rejection of the present capital accumulation model being enforced by the Junta and the alternative policies they have permanently advocated, including the protection of State-owned industries, native capital more generally and a new democratic régime and direction of the economy where they demand to play a key participatory role in the running of the economy, indicates a political approach developed by the unions during the years of dictatorial rule, to confront their problems and the country's own development. In an open letter to General Pinochet on May Day, 1977, 126 unions stated:

The historic demand of the union movement has been, is and will be the construction of a democratic régime, based on the capacity of the organised workers, capable of constructing a society where the power, wealth and culture meet in the hands of the majority...

By September of that year, after four years of military

government, 479 unions signed another open letter to Pinochet calling for a new economic and political régime for Chile, and in May and September 1978, the main union bodies called for alternative policies for the country. On May Day, 1979, the four main National Union Bodies (CNS, FUT, Group of Ten and CEPCH), united to confront the régime once again:

We want to say to the Armed Forces...that the revolution that they are carrying out is not on behalf of the majority of the people but for a minority; that it does not serve the poor but the rich. We are not against economic efficiency, nor in favour of 'State Paternalism'. But we support each policy which has been thoroughly studied and applied with a clear understanding of its implication over human beings, not objects or figures... We do not want to forget all the deficiencies that have been found before in our country. But we also do not want to forget what we were able to achieve and conquer and that we have now lost. We do not want to live in the past, but neither do we want a retracted future.

The economy must serve man and not man the economy.

Why must we Chilean workers accept being the victims of an ideological liberal-manchesterian dogmatism, that the Military are by every means trying to impose? ...Chile is by no means a blank page on which any fanatical ideologue can write his experiments with the blood and pain of the whole of the people. Chile has its own history, and a soul, and in it have been written the aspirations of justice, liberty and equality. It can be repressed by force, and unfortunately it has been, by the power of the weapons that the Chilean Nation entrusted to the care of its armed and police forces; but it cannot be silenced within the soul of any just man of good faith...And if the leaders of the workers would accept through cowardice or incapacity this situation, it would be the grass roots of our own movement who would make themselves heard and our sons and daughters who would claim, Justice!!

III. THE LABOUR POLICY OF THE MILITARY JUNTA AND THE UNIONS' RESPONSE.

A. The Junta's Labour Policy

1. The First Period

The first period after the coup is characterised by the massive economic and political terrorising of workers, killings and imprisoning of well known union leaders at different levels of the movement. According to an ex-DINA agent, a special unit for this purpose was set up in the Santiago Tacna garrison.

A well known conservative American union analyst stated, after being in Chile,

a considerable, but unknown, number of labour leaders were shot, particularly in some of the mining areas. In some cases, rank and file workers were shot - as when ten at the San Bernardo railway workshops near Santiago were picked out at random and were executed.²⁵

and we could continue enumerating, in San Antonio, Laja, San José de Maipo, Buin, and many other places. During this period, real salaries and earnings were reduced by an impressive 50% when prices were set free, by December 1973 (from 118.1% to 51.8%. See Table 2).

The Junta attempted during the days of the coup to appease workers by claiming that the Military will not be a return to the past, near or remote. The Armed Forces are part of this noble people and never will betray [them]. Chilean worker, the Armed Forces will respect your rights!' General Leigh promised workers a share in the profits of enterprise.²⁶ At the same time, CUT was banned as well as the (vital for the Junta's ideological objectives) Teachers' Union, SUTE and other specific plant and agricultural unions in some southern provinces. The alternative National Union Council set up by the Christian Democrats to fill the vacuum (supported by left-wing national union leaders), was not at all encouraged by the new Government. Another Decree Law (No. 133) blocked the channelling of union funds received by CUT to any such union council. The most important legislation prior to the 1979 Labour Plan, aiming at finally freezing, infiltrating and controlling all union activities, was Decree Law 198. It became the main policy instrument of the Government's new relationship with the union movement. Published on December 29, 1973, it recognised all unions and union leaders existing at that moment and established that unoccupied positions be filled via the nomination of the older workers of a given union. Likewise, it recognised all National Union Federations, Confederations and their leaders and allowed unions to meet under police supervision, but only for purposes of information. However, this instrument became a vital resource legitimising the reorganisation process of unions at different levels during the following six years. At the economic level, a similar union demobilising policy was undertaken (at union demand) by decreeing, as from 1974, national wage and salary re-adjustments every 3 or 4 months covering all sectors, while at the same time allowing for massive lay-offs as the economy turned again to the rule of the market forces and opened up to foreign competition.

2. The Diaz-Estrada Approach

The first attempt to institutionalise a new union structure and labour relations system was undertaken in 1975 by Labour Minister Nicanor Diaz Estrada, who was subsequently ousted.

It consisted of three main legal proposals:

a) The enterprise social status: The proposal intended to create

enterprise committees in all those which had more than 100 workers (or in some cases, between 25 and 100), consisting of three or more workers depending on the size of the enterprise. This committee had only an information right on the running of the firm by meeting with the manager once a month; it also had a representative within the enterprise board and a system of profit sharing was envisioned.²⁷

b) Blueprint for a New Labour Code: It abolished the previous distinction between obreros and empleados; it established a new union structure, sectorialbased and organised by regional union units; at the plant level, only union delegates were recognised; each region could have more than one union if it represented more than 25% of the region's workers; unions could organise themselves into federations and confederations but could not unite into a national union council. The project also established a system of collective bargaining by sectors - federations and confederations - and limited to an important extent the right to strike in so-called 'strategic' sectors and where the strike affected the economy... Labour referees could intervene over labour disputes.²⁸

c) Project for a Basic Law Reforming the Social Security System: its objective was a greater participation of all workers in such a system, but they could 'delegate their financial functions to cooperatives and other institutions'. The system would be financed by workers, employers and the State, departing from other proposals being put forward (i.e. Leniz a high official of El Mercurio, and ex-Minister of the Economy). It would secure every worker's basic needs and an unemployment bonus amounting to 85% of his income during the previous six months. However, retirement age would be raised to 65 years for men and 60 years for women, in line with European countries (although life expectancy in Chile is much lower).²⁹

Diaz Estrada had an open-door policy towards leaders of national union federations and enjoyed especially good relations with the Group of Ten who had been appointed by the Government to represent Chilean Unions at the annual ILO meetings, where opposition to the Junta had been mounting up. Apart from the strategic Copper Confederation to which he had nominated the most collaborative union leaders, the Labour Ministry had abstained from direct interference in union activities. Moreover, it had accepted a two-month open discussion by the unions across the country on the content of the new proposed labour code, and had openly opposed those who wanted a permanent ban on strike activities, indicating that it was a fundamental union right and insisting that the workers' historic achievements, as declared by the Junta at the moment of the coup, were to be safeguarded. However, the Minister conceded to employers an end to the privilege empleado status. Under heavy union opposition from all sides and confronted by heavy opposition from the more authoritarian sectors of the Government, he was eventually forced to resign in March 1976. Later in 1978, Diaz Estrada, the Air Force representative in the Junta and all except two of their branch Generals were retired.

3. The Purely Authoritarian Policy which also Failed

The new Labour Minister, Fernandez, closed all doors of his

Ministry to the leaders of the union movement, made it clear that strikes would no longer be allowed in Chile, and, on the basis of the Copper Confederation, set up a collaborative National Union, UNTRACH, which, together with the Government-appointed union representative in the State Council, Medina and CEPCH, started representing the Government in the annual ILO meeting and others periodically called by Pinochet. UNTRACH was made up also by parallel, unrepresentative federations created by the Government in sectors where collaboration had been rejected by the union leadership. Fernandez and the Minister of Planning, Kelly, enacted a further three sets of legislation, after those proposed by Diaz-Estrada had been set aside.

a) The Statute for Training and Employment: This was to adapt the workers to the technological progress and change in the economic structure, in accordance with the principles upheld by the Government...and 'change the mentality and attitude of Chileans' in order to arrive at an integration of all individuals and classes. Its purpose was the 'preparation of genuine professional union leaders and not puppets of the political parties'. The Government would finance these programmes to an important extent. The State handed over most of its polytechnics to a Private Development Corporation, directed by all the major sectoral business organisations and assisted them, through the Government National Training and Employment Service created under the new Statute, with 2.5 million dollars in 1977, in training 95,000 people and with a growing sum of money in the years that followed. The object was to give basic training to the unemployed and those seeking their first job.³⁰ Together with these initiatives, the Government started a National Union Training School (which signed a major agreement with a Bavarian Foundation headed by right-wing Christian Democratic leader Herr Strauss), to train union leaders according to the new Government orientation.

b) Decree Law 2,200: Its declared objective was to increase employment levels by attracting new investment. It was a basic reformulation of Vols. I and II of the Labour Code, by which workers were deprived of many rights regarding their employment security and including the right of the employer to terminate a contract unilaterally, without any justifiable reason and, when justifications were found, indemnity would be reduced significantly and affect both union leaders and pregnant women, who up to that moment had been given immunity; enterprise profit sharing would be abolished; labour time would be a minimum of 48 hours per week and overtime would not be fixed in relation to such a limit but in relation to what had been agreed in the labour contract; layoffs would be raised to 10% of the work force per month and a system of apprentice contract would be established for children between 14 and 18 years, who would receive 60% of the minimum wage. Such a system is well coordinated with the technical training policies for those looking for their first job, and the securing of a new, young, cheap, specialised labour force, according to the requirements of specific employers and without working class experiences.³¹

c) The October 1978 Decree Laws (Nos. 2345, 2346, 2347 and 2376): The objectives were to declare illegal the six most political national federations (Mining, Metal, Textile, Construction and

two Peasant Confederations) for having 'a clear Marxist orientation' and being 'against public order and the security of the State'; to ban all organisations which act in union affairs without having legitimate legal registration; to give special power to General Pinochet and the Interior Minister to expel any civil servant without consideration to any previous law restrictions; and to create a new totally plant-based union structure, eliminating all previously existent plant and interplant unions and replacing them by plant workers' unions and prohibiting the right of all non-plant based unions to engage in collective bargaining (i.e. federations) and receive fees from their affiliated unions.³² Vasco Costa, by then Labour Minister, was forced to resign in December 1978 in the face of total opposition from the unions (including UNTRACH) and the threat of an international boycott by the American AFL-CIO and its regional branch, ORIT, with the backing of all other major international union organisations. A new Minister, Piñera, coming from the very heart of the financial community, was sworn in and announced a new 'Labour Plan'.

4. The Labour Plan: an Attempt to Institutionalise a Labour Relations System.

Since 1979, three major sets of legislation have been enacted on the issues more widely demanded by all union sectors (on the basis of the previous general governmental agreement with the AFL-CIO, which had ended the threat of a boycott).

a) Decree Laws 2,544 and 2,545: These allowed for free meetings of unions within their own headquarters, without previous authorisation by the police; this legislation was again rejected because of a majority of unions without offices of their own would be precluded from holding meetings without obtaining such permission. This legislation was again modified, when in April 1978, union demands on this issue were finally accepted. The decrees also gave the 'right' to join and disaffiliate from unions, federations and confederations 'freely' and to pay union fees on a voluntary basis.³³

b) The present so-called 'Labour Plan': The Plan announced in July 1979 granted unions the right to establish new 'workers' unions' without special authorisation (excepting dockers, maritime workers, civil servants and members of the judiciary, parliament, and enterprises associated with the Defence Ministry); to affiliate or not to a union or federation, as well as the right for plant workers to bargain and strike. A union could be set up by plant, on a multi-plant basis or by sectors with a minimum of 10% affiliates; only members of unions would pay dues; unions could be later banned by the initiative of the employers, the Government or union members, if the labour courts decided to do so - these courts were replaced later by civil courts - and collective bargaining could be undertaken only at the plant level, with unions or federations not being allowed to participate as such in the bargaining process, but an 'enterprise workers committee' which, like the employers, would be advised by three persons. Workers would be able to go on strike if 50% of them decided to reject the last offer by the employers, and if after 60 days no agreement had been reached, they must either accept

the employers' last offer or leave their jobs. Employers, in the meantime, would be able to stage a lock-out, or contract new labour to keep the enterprise working; workers would not receive any salary while on strike.³⁴

Once again, the Labour Plan was rejected by all union sectors including UNTRACH (excepting a small sector of it based on the parallel federations which left to form a new Union Council called the National Union of Workers - CNT - with no important union following). The net result of the Plan was that the four main union bodies - not including UNTRACH - finally united for the first time into a national Command for the Defence of Union Rights.

In my understanding, the four stages of Government union policy are the consequence of 1) the growing union reorganisation and opposition; 2) the changing correlation of forces in favour of the authoritarian military sections (those more closely identified with Generals Contreras, ex-head of the DINA, and Pinochet), and the key private monopoly-financial groups; and 3) the external opposition from the international unions and the democratic world community.

The Diaz-Estrada policies reflected the influences of technocrats within the University of Chile's DERTO (ex-INSORA) labour relations school and those of the right-wing Christian Democrat (CD) union specialists, headed by William Thayer (ex-Labour Minister in the Frei administration, member of the Council of State created by Pinochet and of the board of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for a Free Labour Development). In fact his labour proposals in the 1960s (which were implemented only in the countryside and in the sectorial bargaining system that the Frei administration finally allowed) and Thayer's wider views on labour issues, are almost totally incorporated into the 1975 labour legislation.³⁵ This type of orientation has a certain continuity, with the influence of the Spanish Fascist Falange upon the Chilean Falange, which later became the CD Party.³⁶ Thayer became also a member of the special commission which advised Piñera just after he took office, because of his good relations with the AFL-CIO.

The 1975 proposed legislation is the nearest we can find to a fascist type of legislation, based on State-controlled national unions, a relatively effective social security system and an integration of labour and capital at the plant level, under a strong Head of the Plant. The third period demonstrates all the authoritarianism in its openly repressive expression; while the Labour Plan policies seem to indicate a much larger influence of the dominant financial interest. In it, all workers' formal petitions have been legislated upon, while, at the same time, employers can use these for their own purposes, in particular the use of the huge labour market to set workers against unemployed ex-workers. A good example is a Concepción lumber union which had recently voted to go on strike. When they saw that the company (a major exporter) had camped and was feeding 100 unemployed men just in case they actually commenced strike action, the workers decided

against a strike. A further indication of the direct control exercised by these financial groups upon labour policy is the announcement that the Government is planning to legislate, finally, during 1980 on the social security system, whose financial administration would be handed over to precisely such groups. Social Security benefits during the Allende period had risen to above 10% of national income. However, the Labour Plan (with its biased 'economistic' repressive approach) has not been sufficient to put down the plant- and national-based labour unrest which followed its implementation. In February 1980, the Interior Minister announced two new D.L.s (3168 and 3177) providing for the internal deportation of political dissidents and the transformation of political offences into crimes. In particular, the legislation followed the public and well publicised celebration by the national union Command of CUT's 27th anniversary...

B. The Unions' Response

1. Reorganisation by Plant, Strata and Type of Union

The September 1973 coup was followed by a wave of economic and political repression; but shortly after, union activities re-emerged. According to an ILO report on union freedom in Chile written at the end of 1974,

Many union leaders were eliminated by death, execution, imprisonment, dismissals from jobs or union positions; were not allowed to continue fulfilling their duties, were exiled or disappeared.

The ILO report also concludes:

However, one third of the union bodies were occupied by leaders elected during the previous administration; 50% had a mixed representation and just less than 20% were newly appointed officials.

Therefore, between 50% and 75% of the plant level union officials had remained in office and a smaller proportion in the case of union federation (sectorial) leaders.

Generally speaking, but not in every case, union meetings can be held, and depending on each case, a representative of the (police) authorities is present, although this is less frequent today than during the first 4 months after the change of régime.

The unions, apart from presenting the employers with individual demands and cases, also discuss in many plants, on an informal basis, more general labour issues, obtaining in many such cases, some benefits, including salaries. At a national level, different federations and confederations

have the opportunity to meet Ministers in order to discuss with them the problems affecting workers within their sectors. However, other important organisations believe that these relations are ineffective, because of the general attitude of the authorities.

The Commission has established that many base organisations - with the exception of certain sectors - continue to exercise some activities in particular on social welfare and in relation to the every day life of the plants. ³⁷

Our interviews also indicate, in accordance with the ILO report, that unions have been active at the plant and other basic union units throughout the period previous to the reinstatement of collective bargaining. The main issues on which they did so were the employment problem and the recognition of the union as such. Unions overwhelmingly used D.L. 198 for their own benefit, although since 1977, once they were reorganised, they have systematically asked for its repeal. The way by which they achieved this during the first period after the coup, was by becoming active on behalf of their members on the key employment problem, which was a vital issue during the first years (as still is the case today). They re-emerged playing a concrete role vis-à-vis the employers and the Government and got the backing of their rank-and-file members as they achieved some concrete results within the limitations of the new political situation that had been created.

The search for a minimum employment level was achieved by developing workers' cohesion, away from intra-class competition: In many cases union leaders' legitimacy re-emerged after the coup by proposing massive workers' holidays during certain days in the month and therefore reducing the total number of workers laid off, all of them sharing at the same time the lowest salaries which resulted from a reduced working month. Later the unions could engage in unofficial and informal bargaining activities on salary readjustments by again making use for their own advantage of the periodic salary readjustments decreed by the Government. But, as we have seen, it was those sectors which managed to reorganise themselves to a greater degree that achieved a better implementation of these salary readjustments and maintained the lowest possible unemployment rates. Moreover there is a direct relationship between the most reorganised sectors and the repression of individual unions and sectorial federations (Table 12). In fact, the six federations outlawed together with their plant based unions (two peasant unions, mining, construction, textile and metal), are in fact the most reorganised sectors, and the most proletarian sectors of the union movement. But the repressive October 1978 measures affect more generally the whole of the union movement and indicate the extent to which all of it had re-emerged and bargained, with the support of the National Federations and National Co-ordinating Councils.

Qualitative analysis on reorganisation by plant size (which

unfortunately cannot be fully tested because we lack the data on the size of many plant unions signing national petitions) tend to indicate that large and medium-sized firms are over-represented, a fact which is consistent with the information in Table 6. On the other hand, as Table 10 indicates, manual versus white collar workers are represented in general and in particular among those sectors which are more politically reorganised.

Table 10

Unionisation by Strata

	No. of Members	%	No. of Unions*	%	% Active on National Problems
Manual Workers	476,000	36.6	3,214	48.7	} 80%
White Collar Workers	182,000	14	1,462	22.1	
Peasants ¹	300,400	23	1,200	18.2	
Civil Servants (including SUTE)	316,600	24.3	257	3.9	- - - } 20%
Mixed Unions	29,500		472	7.1	
Self-Employed	55,100	2.1	697		
*TOTAL	1,304,400	100%	6,600	100%	100%

Only civil servants' Associations free unions are considered in these figures.

Source: ANEF, June 1977.

1) INE, 1977.

Table 11 indicates the over-representation of both peasant and industrial unions, in particular the latter, facts which are related to the conclusions we have drawn from the previous Table. It also indicates the strength of legal unions during periods of repression, making it easier for them to reorganise, perhaps both because of the previous tighter cohesion of these unions as well as the greater legal facilities at their disposal in their fight to obtain union recognition. This Table also indicates the capacity of even non-legally registered 'free' unions to reorganise under such difficult conditions.

Table 11

Organisation and Activity on National Problems
by Type of Unions. December 1977.

	Number of Unions	Number of Unions Active on National Problems	%
1. Professional workers' Unions	3,401 ¹	213	35.2
2. Industrial Unions	1,829 ¹	203	32.0
3. Peasant Unions	1,200 ²	94	15.6
4. Associations, Union groupings, Committees, <u>Uniones</u> , and other 'free' Unions	2,000 ³	95	15.7
TOTAL	9,430⁴	605	98.5

Sources: 1) ANEF, December 1977 (all ANEF information is based on official data of the Ministry of Labour Statistics).

2) Calculated by the author on the basis of ANEF and INE figures.

3) INSORA, Trayectoria y estructura del Movimiento Sindical Chileno (by Jorge Barria), Santiago, 1963.

4) This figure does not include more than 75 National Union Federations (see F. Zapata, Federaciones y sindicatos en el sindicalismo chileno, International Institute for Labour Studies, Geneva, 1970, pp. 5-8.

Our information indicates that, after a period of very difficult conditions and as unions were reorganising and acquiring a national presence, even within the Government-controlled media, the problems that workers were experiencing at the economic level, further pushed them to reorganise. In many cases, unions have been keeping their organisations going for more than two years after their plant went bankrupt. The reorganisation of free unions is thus consistent with the Government ban and threat of imprisonment of leaders speaking on their behalf.

Minority influence

Retired	Industry & Commerce (White Collar)	Banking Copper Auto & Electronics	Hotels & Restaurants Sugar Mills	Copper Dockers Metallurgy Miners State Construction Ministry	Copper CEPCH (3 National Union Officials) Leather & Shoes Health Retired Laboratories
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State Parallelism & or Intervention
 Railroads
 Copper
 Dockers
 Construction

1.1.1. and 2.2.2. (%)	5%	28%	7%	4%	56%
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Source: Public statements signed by the different Union Councils and Federations published in the media.

- 1) This column includes unions signing petitions when both Councils have made joint statements, but signing with neither of the 2 when these Councils sign separate statements.
 - 2) These percentages were calculated by adding the amounts of unions signing public statements with each council and dividing them by the total number of unions which have signed petitions on national issues.
- Arrows indicate change in affiliation.

(*) Banned (October 1978) but active.

2. The Federational-Sectorial Level Reorganisation

The National Union Councils, which would later be known as the National Union Co-ordinating Committee (CNS) and Group of Ten, emerged just after the coup and the dissolution by an early Junta decree of the CUT, grouping basically what were (or became, in the case of the second group), the National Federations led by pro-UP and pro-CD union leaders.

The Group of Ten acquired an important degree of stability during the most repressive stages, by supporting the Government's policies for almost a year and representing it in the ILO annual meetings (it acquired for this reason the nickname of Ginebrinos). Military officers in key Government positions (Bonilla at the Ministry of the Interior and Diaz-Estrada in the Labour Ministry) were supporting them. But soon, as the CD party's strategy of a quick return to a controlled democratic government under their leadership, (once the left had been 'wiped out') failed, their union leaders started to move, with the party, towards the opposition and publishing critical open letters on the Junta's union policies.³⁸ As they began to be attacked more thoroughly by the Government because of these stands, they began to establish links with the AFL-CIO American Union, as a means of protection against eventually following the same fate as the Army officers who had been backing them. The Americans had been eagerly looking for such a base within the Chilean Union Movement (as they historically, but without success, had always tried),³⁹ and were therefore quite willing to come up with all the support that was necessary. That move caused the CEPCH to leave the Group and develop its historical 'independence' vis-à-vis political in-fighting with international intervention in this case, and restored to its even more traditional, strictly 'union problems' and a struggle on behalf of the white collar workers whom they represent.⁴⁰

UNTRACH was Government-sponsored and based on the Government-controlled Copper Confederation; but on the occasion of the October 1978 decree law and finally after the Labour Plan it totally abandoned the Government.

FUT was set up under the sponsorship of the Regional Christian Democratic Unions - CLAT - and expresses a more left-leaning union orientation than that of the Group of Ten.

All National Union Councils have usually united as from 1978 to confront the Government on Labour Day and when new labour legislation has been enacted. In July 1979, four of them, with the tacit support of UNTRACH, formed the Command for the Defence of Union Rights to oppose the Labour Plan.

Although union federations from different sectors tended to fluctuate in the past from one union group to another, as the arrows in Table 12 indicate, and therefore a union sector's affiliation with a group could be more conjunctal than structural (permanent), there seem however to be some more general underlying factors accounting for such affiliations. In general terms, the

newest sectors, those which have a weak economic base and are made up of weak unions, and those penetrated to a greater extent by the State, tend to be more associated with moderate union bodies; as opposed to the federations with more class experience, stronger, and which have traditionally confronted private and foreign monopoly capital supported by the State.

There are some main characteristics associated with this latter category of unions (C-U-S).

A) they represent the most 'proletarian' (versus white collar and/or non-productive) union sectors, which provides them with a strong class identification;

B) they are all sectors and unions developed more than forty years ago (except for the agricultural unions, which, although existent since before the 1920s, did not massively develop until the mid-1960s), and in some cases (miners) going back to the 19th century. Therefore they carry with them radical experiences of various kinds (including those of repression and reorganisation at different times);

C) they work for private capital, controlled mainly by foreign or native monopoly capitalists which in many cases are also foreign-controlled or work for large landowners.⁴¹ They have, therefore, been exposed to a direct class-to-class confrontation with key economic interests at stake. Their experience with the State has been one of repression and bureaucratic control, except on two occasions when they enjoyed the backing of the State in their demands (but to a different extent in each case, the Popular Front and Popular Government);

D) they are within sectors of the economy that produce vital exports (mining in particular) and products for internal consumption. This fact could have given them a strong bargaining power as well as the basis for developing 'national' perspectives to analyse the country's key problems and solutions (e.g., where to invest foreign exchange resulting from exports; the internal production of food, clothing, shelter, etc., for the people);

E) the enterprises where these unions are set are spread all over the country but at the same time concentrated in vital regions of the country, Arica and Antofagasta in the North, Santiago and Valparaíso in the Centre, and Concepción and Arauco in the South; and in the case of the construction and peasant unions, virtually in every corner of the country. Once again this fact reinforces the previous point, strengthening their national political perspective, and the feeling that the overall solution to the country's problems is intertwined with the solution of their own problems and that these solutions cannot be resolved without the participation of the working class itself, and, moreover, with the working class playing the leading role;

F) finally, these are the union sectors with the strongest historical articulation with the working class parties. This fact should be important, not only in maintaining their ideological strength and ability to comprehend the country's problems and solutions, but also important in organisational terms.

The fact that many of these unions are based on many large

and medium-sized plants and the intra-class experience and better organisational skills associated with it, adds one more element to the political development conditions associated with these unions. Moreover, the fact that these sectors are based on industrial unions of large or medium-sized plants and the legislation control on such unions, such as the frequency of union elections, strengthens in the case of Chile almost ideal conditions for highly democratic union structures, as many authors have pointed out, including a high turnover of the leadership, level of participation and a rank-and-file identification with the leadership, as well as a 'militant' dedication to union affairs with hardly any union 'corruption'. It also seems that the nature of the electoral process in these unions made it easier for a close party-union articulation and in this case, the working class parties.⁴² Most important of all, the fact that these industrial unions are plant-based transforms them into virtually 'workers councils'-type organisations, including a system of union delegates by factory sections and departments.

3. Union Development at the Regional Level

By the late 1960s as compared with the past, the northern region had decreased its relative union importance, representing now 16% of unionised workers, with Santiago-Valparaíso carrying as much as 56% and Concepción still with a 13% unionisation figure. Magallanes, the extreme south, had also decreased to a 1% share of these figures. The rest of the country accounted already for 14% of workers' union members.⁴³ But in the final years of the Frei period and especially during the Allende government, more significant changes (although within the trends of the 40-year period that followed the mid-1920s) were to take place.

In fact, as Table 13 indicates, the northern area has again decreased its importance within the country's union structure; unionisation in Santiago and Valparaíso has apparently grown significantly, and the Concepción region has maintained its share, as is the case with the extreme south and the rest of the country. But the Concepción region - where the concentration of the mining, steel, industrial, lumber and paper mill plants in a relatively small area, on the basis of both an old (Lota, Coronel, Curanilahue) and the most modern industrial proletariat of Chile (Talcahuano, Lirquen, Tomé) are located - represents as much as 26% of the political unions and the rest of the country 16% (which should be even higher if we consider the agrarian provinces of Bio-Bio and Ñuble within the VIII-Concepción Region) and Magallanes 2%. Still, almost half of the politically active unions are in the Capital-Port area, and as much as 65% of the unions and 50% of the Chilean workers. The reason why Santiago has such a large share of the union movement must be not only related to the concentration of industries, services and commerce there, but also (as is the case with Valparaíso and San Antonio) because of the importance of the agricultural workers in these areas (20% of the agricultural workers' unions and members were concentrated there by July 1968).⁴⁴ This is an indication of the unprecedented ability of the peasant leadership - who signed the open letters - to

Table 13

Unionisation by Regions and Salaried Population
including Region Size, Key Products and Unions Active on National Problems

<u>Region</u>	<u>Miles²</u>	<u>Key Products</u>	<u>Salaried¹</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Unioni- sation²</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>% Unions Active National Problems</u>
I-IV North (Arica-Acon.)	1,200 X 100	Mining	322,600	9	159,600	12	12%
R. M. (Stgo)	30 X 50	All Sectors	1,237,100	39	718,100	56	40%
V. Valparaíso- San Antonio	30 X 50	Ind./Trans.	361,400	11	121,000	9	7%
VI-VII (Ctral.) (O'H-Lin.)	300 X 100	Agriculture	376,800	12	64,100	5	10%
VIII Ctral. Sth. (N-Bio-Bio)	80 X 100	Min./Ind. Agriculture	384,900	13	141,500	11	26%
IX-X South (Mall-Chiloe)	300 X 100	Agriculture	441,900	14	71,100	6	6%
XI-XII Ext.Sth. (Aysen-Magall.)	1,000 X 100	Agriculture Petroleum	64,200	2	11,200	1	2%
TOTAL	3,000 X 100		2,188,680	100	1,286,600	100	100%

1) INE 1975

2) ANEF 1977. ANEF figures did not include agricultural workers' and public employees' organisations. I have included these sectors in my calculations, and added them to the ANEF figures. They are approximate estimates only.

reorganise themselves. However, no stable and strong regional organisations have yet developed; it is the local and plant unions and the National Federations and Councils which express the main political and organic activities of the Chilean Union Movement; as they always have!

The new strong military-administrative regionalisation of the country (See Table 13, first column), and strict control of all activities, are both a limitation for the development of regional union organisations because of the greater regional control over unions they imply as well as a driving force in the organic development in that direction in order to express there, the political alternative they are searching for at the national level.

IV. PARTY/UNION RELATIONS

The political orientation of the five parties with the main union following (CP, SP, CD, MAPU-O.C., RP) regarding the importance of supporting union reorganisation immediately after the coup (as opposed to the organisation of resistance committees advocated by MIR, MAPU and other parties with a smaller union following), was important in the rebuilding of the unions and in the rearticulation of these parties with them. In fact, their first priority was the rebuilding of the unions, whatever the limitations were, just as they had done on previous and similar occasions (in particular the CP) and clearly established, in the case of the three Marxist parties, the importance of distinguishing the party clandestine apparatus from the more open mass, legal (or at least not illegal) union movement. Under such conditions, which implied looser articulations with the unions, there was bound to be a more autonomous (perhaps unwanted by the parties) class/party relationship away from the orthodox articulation in which unions became the transmission belt between the parties and the mass of workers. As a result, there have been three main direction centres of the union movement: CNS, the American AFL-CIO, and the Government, with the latter being, on the whole, unsuccessful, but the Americans somehow more successful than during their post-war divisionist policies.

We cannot identify CNS with the orientations of any single party's union commission. In fact CP and SP parties have been badly disorganised internally by the repression at certain points in time - especially so the SP - but throughout this period CNS have continued to follow their previous union policies and taken up new and creative initiatives. It is also true that all parties within the CNS - including the CD - have experienced union political cadres. But this fact speaks very highly of the parties' previous development and the ability of their union leaders to maintain their policies (mostly the pro-UP leaders), even though their links with the party are weak or non-existent at times.

However, we must not draw easy conclusions from this fact, such as that unions and union leaders have reorganised and developed politically by themselves during these years. During the

first two years in the case of the SP, the first three years of the CP, and throughout the period MAPU-O.C. (and to a lesser extent the CD and the RP) have maintained basic levels of articulation with the unions. If this articulation has been uneven in the case of each one of them it is because of the differentiated levels of repression they have gone through and their clandestine organisational abilities.

The early re-emergence of the federations in the first place cannot be understood without the parties being relatively successful in resisting repression - in the case of SP and CP, a very fierce and bloody one! When the Junta was successful during a period in its attempts to disarticulate these two parties' relations with the unions, the international isolation of the Junta created by the UP in the exterior, international solidarity and the Church role within Chile, meant important reductions on internal repression because it did somehow neutralise to an important extent the Junta's ability to repress union leaders in the way they were previously accustomed to do. In fact, CNS union leaders who were detained, went from the headquarters of DINA (secret police) directly into occupying their legal union representations and very few of them could be expelled from the country, which was generally the case with freed political party prisoners. Moreover, our information indicates that the party clandestine apparatus played a crucial role in the federation and local union reorganisation, especially in key working class districts and federations. In no other way can one completely account for the fact that 605 unions were active on national problems by early 1977, especially if we consider the plant and local nature of the strongest and more working-class based 'industrial' and rural unions.

Party officials active in Chile were proud to report, for example, how in 1975 the political orientations for an open meeting in the Province had reached the local union via party structure before the national federations' leaders brought this same orientation to the local union leaders. The respect for some 'party-people' has undoubtedly grown during these years. Allende set the example on September 11. Many CUT leaders became key party underground cadres after the coup, as was the case with Victor Diaz and Exequiel Ponce, the heads of the CP and SP. Nicolas López, Jaime Donato and others, all of them 'disappeared prisoners' today. In the case of the CD union leaders, the 'pro-unity' sectors of the unions have at times prevailed and the party's relationship with the 'pro-Americans' in the Group of Ten has been at times rather critical.

Two further points should be stressed. First, the exact forms of party-union articulation. CUT became, after the coup, the clandestine co-ordination of the Union Commissions and Departments of the parties represented in the union movement which by now is called the Union Political Committee. It was at the federations, co-ordinations and Union Councils inter-co-ordination, and then at the Command for the Defence of Union Rights that the real CUT was located. On one occasion, when the Ginebrinos and the pro-UP Federation leaders met during the early period that followed the

coup and some of the later leaders were worried because CUT had no real presence at that moment, someone mentioned (and all agreed) that they were in fact the real CUT! One must also consider the role of key local-union-party-articulations and their role at the regional and sectorial-federation-level. The Junta understood this fact when it outlawed both the six CNS federations and also their local unions.

Secondly, I would like to stress the new developments in the inter-party relations within the union movement and that of the unions with the party. One cannot understand the political role played by FOCH and particularly that of CUT and the process which led to its reunification, only on the basis of a party 'supra-leadership', which is so many times mistakenly stressed, within a certain 'party chauvinistic' tradition.

The influence of union leaders on the parties (in some more than others), on the basis of their own and direct class experience with the State and the employers has now become more certain.

A. Parties and Unions

Political parties have reacted generally to the party/union articulation problem according to their previously prevailing orientation and practices:

The CP, which has traditionally had a party-led relationship and strong Union Commission directed by the Political Bureau, stated (in response to a CUT E.C.1977 document): 'for us Communists the concept of union autonomy and independence is referred primarily to its traditional enemies.' Furthermore, 'we do not believe that autonomy, and mechanical, non-dialectical independence with the political parties which have an influence on the unions, is the key condition for the unity of the unions.'⁴⁵

The SP, on the contrary, believes that the instrumentalisation of the unions by the parties has arrived at a final crisis during the present dictatorial circumstances: 'Political parties have led unions to undermine their own strength and means to fight for their needs, when they impose their own criteria over them. Political parties in present-day Chile, and that is how we see it as the Internal Leadership of the Chilean SP, must go out to support workers' struggles'. They believe that political parties have a role to play in their own sphere; 'unions must defend the material interests of workers, and their organisations... They therefore limit union struggle to their immediate interests. However, they called (after the October 1978 union ban and reorganisation) for the construction of 'clandestine union nuclei from the grass-roots which structure themselves until they set up a great CUT' (!). Thus the non-involvement in politics they advocated by then is contradicted by their subsequent (and unrealistic) call upon the unions to develop as clandestine organisations, which cannot but be very political.⁴⁶ The split Altamirano faction did not yet, by mid-1980, have an opinion on this matter.⁴⁷

MAPU-O.C., on the other hand, calls upon its different organisational levels clearly to distinguish the party clandestine apparatus and party influenced mass organisations. This is because 'the most important and the most essential lesson that we have learned in these years of struggle is that there is no mass work (of the party) which cannot be directed to the masses unless we do this through the (re)construction of open mass organisations, formal or informal but legal'.⁴⁸ The opinions which rise from within the union movement 'must enrich the struggle and secure the objectives' set out by the party(ies). This orientation reflects a flexibility to adapt to the new realities, but still the predominance of the party in its articulation with the union. At the same time, it is in accordance with the party's strong union commission and ability to overcome repression and restructure itself and help in the restructuring of its union following, as opposed to the SP traditional experience of loose party/union articulation and the great difficulties it has found under the Junta in arriving at a minimum level of union articulation and in receiving a union feedback experience in order to best orient its union work and platforms. But this is also due, and primarily so, to the much wider repression the SP has gone through, compared to, say, MAPU-O.C. and even more so to the RP or CD.

The Radical Party's weak union department is counterbalanced by the sectorial representation of the union leaders within the party. Thus they have been not only more autonomous, but also, given the present circumstances, influential on the party's orientation. This has nonetheless implied that like the SP and CD, RP union leaders have tended to spread throughout the main five union councils.

Christian Democratic union leaders are clearly the most autonomously articulated compared with the other parties and have now managed to determine on their own, the party union policy. The CD party leadership has evolved since 1977 towards a political orientation and opposition to the dictatorship in accordance with the progressive union leaders' demand for unions and other social organisations to play the most important role in developing a new democratic anti-dictatorial consensus.⁴⁹ (However, this opposition role has changed towards a critical accommodation with the regime, after the September 1980 Pinochet-organised plebiscite on a new Constitution).

It appears that the conditions in greater depth that determine the present party orientations on their relationships with the unions are basically: 1) their previous historic articulation and views on the subject; 2) the intensity of the repression that they have gone through during these years; 3) their organisational abilities to (re)link up with their union basis; 4) their specific union bases (on the whole parties have tended to remain there); 5) parties international links.

On the whole, there seems to be developing today a new party-class articulation, provided by the new circumstances but one which is not yet assimilated within the 'theoretical framework' of

the parties, still influenced by the transmission belt approach. In fact, more particularly CNS has acted (in the absence of a free national press and while party activities are banned) as a CUT and as Party mass leadership at the same time and has been recognised as such by the masses which they directly influence or the whole mass movement when signing common petitions with other national union bodies. Since August 1979, the united command has been increasingly undertaking such a role. Unions are today the only ones with the ability to organise demonstrations and analyse the country's problems in the open, appear in the press and confront the Government on all kinds of issues which are at the very basis of the economic the overall political model of the Junta, and they have done so. This fact can be seen, particularly, in the unions' open letters.

B. Unions and Parties

In May 1977 the 'union coordinator' (which would later be known as CNS) analysed the party/union articulation problem in the following way: 'in the past our union movement was forced by party politics to take party stands in order to struggle for power. It is necessary to recognise this historic fact today if we do not want to go back to such a situation. We must learn from our errors!' However, it later turned to the capitalist system in its inability to solve in a just and efficient way the real needs of working people being satisfied as a reason why they also searched for party influenced unions. It indicated different views on the subject which are present within CNS. Two years later in their 1979 May Day open letter, the four main union bodies stated:

Political parties must understand that they are expected to modernise their approach, to democratise their internal structures and undergo a deep spiritual and intellectual renewal of their leadership, that will allow the emergence of a new behaviour, a new style in making politics. A renewed democracy demands renewed parties and parties' leaders. This is a very profound sentiment among Chilean workers and towards that end we invite Chilean political parties to undertake their great responsibilities without letting the Chilean people down.

The opinion of the CUT E.C. (where the five parties with the main union influence are represented) on the subject in 1977 (and which the CP criticised), is that the autonomy and independence of the union movement with respect to political parties must be a more real one. It is the fundamental condition for arriving at the unity of the unions. The same orientation had been put forward some months earlier, by CUT E.C. member Eduardo Rojas of MAPU-O.C. He believed that there had been an historic exhaustion of a certain kind of party/union relation, and called for the overcoming of past experiences (in particular those of the UP Government) and the development of a new relationship based on: the recognition of the specificity of union political action;

the intra-union ideological struggle under the principle of union unity; the development of a new union language which would meet both an amplitude and tradition criteria; the development of a more scientific comprehension of the sociological characteristics of the union organisation; a greater unity of the working class parties; and the construction of a union structure which would guarantee union democracy.⁵⁰ This same orientation was put forward by Carlos Morales, leader of the UOC peasant confederation. He called in Chile upon unions to develop an independent and autonomous relation with political parties. 'No party has the right to impose its ideology even if it is strong and predominant because, in the end, workers will impose their class ideology.'⁵¹ In the same way, another leader of UOC, Raúl Aravena, called upon the national union leadership to 'put forward first the interests of the workers and not those of the political parties in order to give a real content (which so far nobody has done) to a democratic social project which will respond to the problems felt by workers and give comprehensible orientation so that all the workers take up an active role in making that new system prevail.'⁵²

A similar orientation was put forward by Manuel Bustos, head of the CNS and a progressive CD leader, when he stated that under the conditions of the Labour Plan, 'workers must unite in order to give a political response'. The solution to workers' problems was not to be found 'within the enterprise, but in sufficiently strong initiatives which will persuade the military against the economic groups'.⁵³ Federico Mujica, leader of the white collar workers' CEPCH, believes that political orientations 'played an historic and positive role, but that the present situation requires the subordination of such orientation for a tactical and strategic unity of the unions in order to attack unemployment, low salaries, and the problem of economic dictatorship'. Without realising it, perhaps, he is actually calling, like the others, for a stronger political development of the unions. He even calls, for that matter, upon unions to develop alliances with other social forces and collaboration with the political parties.⁵⁴ Clotario Blest, the CUT President during its first 10 years, believes that unions should define their political perspective by seeking a future union-based Congress.⁵⁵ Rios and the Group of Ten more generally follow in a more direct way the UP-DC orientation of a party-controlled democracy with stable majorities, and he advocates that unions should be recognised and respected in their corporatist (non-political) interests as intermediate institutions between the State and the worker.

At the grass roots level one can also recognise clear-cut orientations advocating that unions make a political stand against the present situation, that is, among the leaders of modern enterprises such as metallurgical or tyre workers - CTI, CORESA, INSA - but less so in the case of women workers of the more traditional Scala textile enterprise, who have recently been on strike.⁵⁶

There has still not developed among the Chilean labour movement a style of direction, by which mass leaders are supported in their jobs by the party and are neither left on their own nor

are under constant control. However, we believe there are both the objective historical conditions within the union movement and the specific conditions of the present circumstances in Chile, that can, in fact, crystallise a new autonomous party/class articulation and that, whether the parties like it or not, is actually taking place. The result is a wider political development of union leaders and yet (or rather as a consequence) they become more 'autonomous', as was the case in the early days of FOCH. Today, however, the stage in which this takes place is a different and superior one.

Many union leaders seem to have developed autonomously articulated relations with parties, need to develop even more so, pressed by the present circumstances which force them to look for a political answer to their problems, and seem also well decided to never return again to the previous relationship they had developed with the parties. In 1975, Luis Figueroa at the UP leadership meeting in London stated:

The CUT is not an organisation which is a base of the UP...If the UP wants to meet with its union committees it may do so. But that is not the CUT... One thing is the political loyalty one has to one's party, to an ideology, and another thing is an instrument of the unity of the class at union level...We want to state this very clearly. This does not mean that this (CUT) is a 100% autonomous organisation that is run with its own head. No. It is run with a political head, through its militants, but as an institution, it must be an institution that really functions by its own stand, with its own head and with its own political line which is elaborated by consensus. We agree on establishing a co-ordination with the UP and tomorrow we will agree to discuss with the CD and establish a co-ordination with them...We work in that direction...I don't know if I have been sufficiently clear. That is the position that we have in relation to these problems and we want you to understand us. We, as militants of a party, respond each one to his party; however, as an Institution, we respond to the class.

V. UNION RELATIONS AT THE SOCIO-POLITICAL LEVEL

Union political relations go beyond political parties. We will analyse those which have been established with the most important social and political institutions and their significance in the unions' search for a new democratic order for Chilean society.

A. Employers, the Old Petty Bourgeoisie and the Unions.

1. The Employers' Policies.

Employers have consistently supported the Junta's economic and labour policies. When General Leigh was ousted together with 90% of the Air Force Generals in 1978, after advocating an alternative economic and political system for the country, General Pinochet summoned to his office the heads of all the national employers federations and received assurances of their support. Apart from the protest of ASIMET (the Employers' Metallurgical Association), after the Government left the Andean Pact and the mild opposition put forward by some of the sectorial federations most affected by the end of the import substitution era (such as the textile committee), we can hardly find any systematic opposition or breakaway employers' organisation from the official employers' organisations stand in strongly supporting the Government and for that matter, for the present Chilean Regime. The satisfaction of the main industrial interests when the Labour Plan was finally enforced was immediate. Gerardo Zegers of ASIMET declared to El Mercurio after meeting with General Pinochet, 'the Labour Plan is consistent with the economic policy of this Government. We are convinced that a market economy is the way by which the country progresses and the Labour Plan is consistent with it'. El Mercurio itself gave its approval for the Plan, indicating that it had 'enormous advantages'. One of these advantages, according to Darroch, head of the industrial employers association, SOFOFA, is his often expressed assertion that collective bargaining should be plant-based.

The Government won the support of even small industrial, construction and commercial Chambers, by offering, against union protests, an end to the construction federation and its transformation into a labour exchange system, as well as an end to the 5.5 day work in the commercial sector.

The military, internal and foreign monopoly capitalist interests alliance's ability to gain consensus over the whole of the capitalist strata is based and is due to the consistent policy of reducing and keeping down workers' salaries and on the other hand it is due to their ability to win employers over ideologically to the political principles of monetarism and of the free market economy.

However, there is a small and deviant sector of industrial employers which has broken away from such a wide consensus. They represent intermediate, non-foreign linked industrial interests such as Saez, Fluxa and others (something approaching the existence of an 'internal bourgeoisie'), which have been completely subordinated economically by the military, the few private financial capital groups, and foreign financial interests. They have openly called for a return to political (and 'economic industrial') democracy. It seems that they feel strong enough, vis-à-vis small capitalist interests, to confront the Government and yet they see no future whatsoever in their ability, under the present economic

circumstances, to maintain or expand their share in the wealth being created. Their political orientation is coincidental with that advocated by the CD party and the military dissidents. To some extent a small group of Christian Employers (USEC) shares those views.

2. The Self-Employed.

It is only among the old petty bourgeoisie (or self-employed workers) organisations, in which some small employers participate, that we find any kind of more coherent opposition to Government policies resembling those put forward by the unions. A so-called 'Small and Medium Enterprises Confederation' has been set up under the leadership of the organisers of the gremios which fought against the Allende Government; it has called upon other organisations to set up a Command for the Defence of the gremios to oppose the Labour Plan, which would end union activities and other Government policies. Vilarin, the main spokesman and head of the truck-owners' union, declared that 'with this legislation (the Labour Plan) I believe that 95% of all Chileans will be against the Government, some from the opposition, others as divergents and some as dissenters. We are in a divergent position.' He has also strongly criticised the Government economic policy which makes the rich richer and the poor poorer; the Government has since attempted to break up his union into owners of more and of less than two trucks, which he has resisted by calling up a national meeting of his unions and gained their support. Similarly, taxi owners have staged a mass demonstration against Government policies restricting their circulation within the capital city, demanding the right to work. 'We shall fight to the last and will not let ourselves be pushed down. We will accept no more humiliations. All of us, united in one single block, shall overcome this unjust situation.' Jara, their leader, believes, like Vilarin, that the wheel gremio is united in order to fight back as they did under Allende. Vilarin openly supported (as he did in July 1973) the copper workers' strike at El Teniente in January 1980.⁵⁷

As is the case with the employers, small producers also respond on political but opposite terms, to their objective interests, affected by an extremely monopolised, contracted and non-expanding economy. However, in the case of the latter, because they do not employ workers whom they can exploit, or only very few, (and probably coming from their own relatives and friends), they are forced into unemployment or to work below subsistence level and therefore to confront the Government.

3. Union Reaction to Employers and the Self-Employed.

Although unions have called for the protection of national capital and small producers in particular in their actual labour demands, before or since the Labour Plan, they have nonetheless demanded a 50% wage rise for all workers, regardless of company size. They have also attacked the economic labour policies because these serve, in their words, 'the interests of the bosses'. However, in the case of the self-employed, the national unified union Command

has recently, in January 1980, come out in support of the truck and taxi owners, but not before having refreshed their memories regarding those who in 1973 praised you and presented you as the most exemplary representatives of patriotism (and) are now persecuting, destroying and condemning you to a life style which, thanks to your own work, you had managed to overcome many years ago'.

Unions have thus responded to their own objective interests when confronting the employers. But regarding their old petty bourgeois political enemies, who are now themselves equally unable to reproduce their labour force and are thus forced into confronting the Government, they have offered them their support. This is consistent with the unions' objective non-conflicting interests regarding this stratum, both at the economic and political level. It is also consistent with their own traditions on the matter (the Ranquil Peasant Union Confederation, for example, organises within its ranks, small farm producers and indigenous communities) and their anti-employers and more general pro-Socialist orientations. Are unions in a position to develop also concrete alliances with sections of capital, beyond the rhetorical and the general policy level? Under the present circumstances, it is doubtful, because there does not seem to be any section of workers which have at least at this stage overcome the subsistence level. Under such conditions it is difficult for them to engage in the actual practice of forming alliances with sections of capital which even if subordinated to monopoly capital, are objectively exploiting workers beyond the level they can feed themselves and their families.

4. The Professional Classes and the Unions.

a) The Government and the Professional Colegios

This section of the modern petty bourgeoisie participated in the mass uprising against the Popular Government and as Allende explained to the country on the day of the coup, 'in order to defend the privileges that they enjoyed under the capitalist society'. Ironically, it was not the UP Government which undermined and ended those privileges of academic professionals after the coup. Similar actions were taken within the State apparatus. In February 1980, the Government again carried out another 'cleaning up' operation among the University progressive academics who had since emerged there. Another key sector for the ideological control of the country by the military, the teachers, saw their union federation, SUTE, banned together with CUT immediately after the coup and replaced by a more respectful colegio, which developed little if any life of its own. Educational 'coordinating' bodies have since emerged into the open and have produced wide platforms against Government educational policies, while using at the same time the colegio as a forum. Physicians have reacted critically to the Government reorganisation and intentions to dismantle the Social Health Service, which provided them with a secure job, professional advancement and training. Young physicians have been even more militant and on one occasion took over the colegio headquarters

to protest against their unemployment. Since then they have formally organised to demand their right to work and criticised more generally Government policies. As a consequence, the Government replaced the Education and Health Ministers by more moderate officials. Lawyers have managed to oust well known extreme right-wingers from the colegio's board and resisted the removal of progressive members accused of using the profession for political objectives. A group of such lawyers who have been active on behalf of the unions' legal defence have formed a union of lawyers and joined CNS. Engineers have protested the lack of investments and architects have rejected the nomination by the Government of board members whom they had not proposed, and thus not abiding by a system which the Government itself had established after banning the right to free election of their representatives. Since then different colegios of engineers, architects and civil constructors have formed a defence committee to protect their rights. Journalists, who have been the most militant sector among the professionals, have rejected the Government's ban on their right to elect their representatives and to discuss and elaborate their own platforms during their recent convention. They have established a 'freedom of the press' committee, and ousted conservative representatives from it, while calling upon the Government to allow for the return of the exiled journalists.

The council of professional colegios, CUPROCE, set up during the October 1972 gremios strike, has strongly collaborated with the employers' federations, especially in the Development Corporation set up to retrain the unemployed and the young in order to develop a trained industrial reserve army which could effectively replace any sector of workers on strike or otherwise. The Government has organised an 'arbitrary corps' of 25 members, formed by economists and lawyers. Most of them are university professors who support the régime. The Corporation settles labour disputes in sectors where strikes are banned. The colegios have organised their own Confederation, which the Government does not recognise. Recently, through D.L. 2516, professionals have been formally stripped of their right to fix minimum and maximum fees for their services and of their right to allow only their registered members to work for the State. Forced as part of the highly skilled labour force into the labour market, the confederation has declared a 'long-lasting war' on the Government.⁵⁸ In 1981, the colegios have been finally banned altogether and are now being ruled by a 'professionals' Labour Plan.

Many of the most prestigious social sciences institutions have reorganised themselves since the coup outside the University and the control of the Government (CIEPLAN, FLACSO) and new ones have emerged, such as VECTOR and the Academy of Christian Humanism. The most important of these is the Academia or the Cardinals' University as it is known, which has organised on a workshop basis many of the social science academics who previously formed such University Institutes and Departments, including many ex-Chancellors and Deans. In 1979 it signed an agreement with FLACSO, after the Government withdrew support for it within UNESCO.

b) The Unions' Relations with the Professionals

Union federations first came into the open by holding seminars with progressive professionals on the basis of which they organised their first platforms. Labour lawyers then started to play an increasing role as union activities became more persistent. Recently, professionals have become more important in existing union activities, as advisers in the newly emerging official collective bargaining system, which allows and promotes such an advisory role for professionals. Even more important, on political grounds, is the development of union technical committees, particularly within CNS and some of its federations. In these bodies, a fluent relationship between union leaders and progressive professionals has developed, under union direction. Such committees have produced the most important alternative socio-economic and political propositions (i.e. the union open letters) for the workers and the country's development yet proposed in Chile. An even more interesting development has taken place between one of the most active of the new progressive social scientists' academic and research institutions, VECTOR, and the most important proletarian federation, the metallurgical FENSIMET. An agreement was signed last year by which VECTOR engages in open research in the sector while advising the sectorial unions and their plant affiliates on all kinds of socio-economic and policy aspects, including collective bargaining and training courses which have reached 200 union leaders this far.⁵⁹

As in the case of the productive petty bourgeoisie, the objective interests of professionals and workers at large tend to become increasingly coincidental, as both their organisations confront the government on an independent stand. This opens up a wide perspective for their mutual interorganisational relationships which are now just starting to develop. For the professionals it implies an important source of support in their struggle, from a strong ally, and a relationship with a consistent class which can project their diffused interests into politically significant alternatives. For the union, a source of enlightenment by which they can better systematise their general technical and humanistic class comprehension which can be transformed into concrete sectorial, regional and national alternative development platforms. It also becomes another path for the unions to advance in their social legitimacy and penetration into wider social sectors. In a more immediate respect it could mean a concrete way for unions and professionals to start coming out from the defensive political position, in which the Government has so far placed them, by starting to propose concrete and mobilising alternatives. The attitude of political parties to this new union relationship is most important, because they can help to promote it or look upon the relationship with apprehension, inhibit it, while fearing 'the contamination of the class by petty bourgeoisie ideology'.

B. The Military and the Unions

1. Military Interests and Contradictions

Military interests are met to the extent that their members are provided with sufficient arms, supported in their consumption demands and the country's external and internal defence is secured. General Pinochet has been able to deliver in substantial quantities military defence means and those for the personal consumption needs at all levels of the military ranks. Internal defence has been secured by means of 'policing' the military (and equalising the police and the military roles within the country and their status within the Junta) and by extending the apparatus of the State into every corner of the country (by means of regionalising Chile and reproducing within its twelve regions a ministerial Cabinet set-up similar to that which exists at the national level). Each region was organised in accordance with the previously existing internal organisation of the military throughout the country and was put under the command of the highest military authority. It was a practical application of the National Security Doctrine, which sets as the first priority of the military the struggle against Marxist, atheist, oriental civilisations and, therefore, the enemy within. General Pinochet's recent book interview makes this clear on the very first page.⁶⁰

The Government of General Pinochet, as the many contradictions which he has faced throughout these years indicate, has found a permanent opposition within its ranks. Nonetheless, the contradictions have never been strong enough to challenge his rule. The source of such opposition is not in line with military ranks or the army in particular. More generally it has to do with a) the existence of a parallel organisation within the armed forces and the police, such as the secret police and the personal kind of rule Pinochet has enforced (as distinct from the more institutional Argentinian, Brazilian, and Uruguayan experiences); b) the police kind of role now charged to the military and which contradicts its traditional professional role as the country's external defence forces (an orientation still predominant in the Chilean War Academy), as well as the external security problem as such. This problem is derived both from the external contradictions which result from the internal problem (due to the international isolation of the régime) and the difficult external situation with its three neighbouring countries and, up to 1980, even with the US. Since last year these have somehow relaxed because the Pope's mediation, the invasion of Afghanistan and the election of Reagan as President of the US have diminished the tensions of the Government with Argentina and reaffirmed fluent relations with the United States (which were never undermined at the intermilitary level). However, the problem still exists, as was demonstrated in the South East Asian countries' unwillingness to receive General Pinochet after his first stop in Fiji when he was met with a strong mass protest.

Pinochet's rule over the military is based primarily on the transformation of the military institution into the key capital

accumulating section of the country for the sake of military and personnel needs. The secret police (which has been weakened in its role of controlling the population since the banning of DINA and its transformation into CNI, but not in its internal controlling role within the military) on the one hand and the propagation of the National Security Doctrine (NSD) within the military high ranks (Pinochet in fact created a special military NSD Superior School), are the two other mechanisms he uses to keep a strong grip on his rule over the military.⁶¹ In this respect, the primary political role of the military in Chile is not as the party of the bourgeoisie, as it has been called but in the first place, as the party of the military themselves. The military have capital accumulation interests of their own by controlling through the State the most important sectors of the economy and therefore their interest in the labour problem is not accidental but vital (State enterprises are not allowed to go on strike). The present head of the Cabinet, for example, was the man Pinochet first elected to solve the labour problem, after union incorporation mechanisms were dismissed in 1976. The Government thus declared 1979 the year of the Labour Plan and 1980 the year of the Social Security Reform.

2. The Union Response to the Military

A special meeting of the Military High Command (including all the generals of the four branches) with General Pinochet a few days before the October Union banning and the November 2, 1978 final date for the negotiations with Argentina decided these anti-labour measures for national security reasons (e.g. ban the 'internal enemy' in order to confront, then, the 'external' one). The question is: Would this have happened if the unions and the UP parties had previously called for the workers' independent decision to defend the country's territory if invaded (and only if), irrespective of which course of action the Government decided to take it seems doubtful. The point to be made here is that parties and unions were just not taking into consideration the military correlation of forces (as the UP Government also and dramatically showed). Just a few weeks before this happened, CNS leaders had called for the overthrow of the Pinochet Government.⁶² How? With the Masses! Unarmed masses can well overthrow a Government, as Iran has so astonishingly demonstrated (and this could well be the case in Chile), but it is necessary to have in any case, and even more so in such an alternative, a military strategy and programme. None of that was present in any sector of the Left during the presidency of Allende, nor it is today. This has been a historical problem of the Chilean labour movement and unions had nothing that resembled such a strategy: the Ibañez or Alessandri Government would fall as a consequence of a massive general, non-ending strike, or the Government (and power) would be won by elections. And the military? No reasonable answer was given to this problem.

In the open letters of May 1979, the main four National Councils dedicated a special section to the military. The letter confronts them, shows them what they have made out of the

country, how they have repressed the people and made them hungry and calls upon them to understand before it is too late (not forgetting to mention the Iranian example) that they must stop making this revolution for the rich and go back to the barracks. No doubt this is a step forward. Again this was repeated in January 1980 by the Command of Union Bodies. But again, is this enough? If they actually went back to the barracks, would they stay there?

The problem we are interested in dealing with here, is that unions have not yet developed any consistent relations with the military. This is well associated, with the still relative underdevelopment of regional union structures compared with the importance of the Military State set-up in that sphere and the lack of systematic treatment of the problem of the military by the unions. They have engaged in ideological confrontations with them. But is that sufficient and the most important aspect to be considered today? Considering the military interests at stake, it is difficult to believe that a purely ideological confrontation with them will have any strong effect. The fact that workers were politically and militarily defeated in 1973 and have since been repressed systematically on economic and political grounds by the military, does not allow for unions to have any kind of influence over them. At the present time, the military do not have any respect for workers. It seems that the dynamics of a relationship which would have any kind of effect should be that of mass confrontation/respect/relations/ideological influence. Such a process would be particularly effective within regions and sectors where military interests are more directly at stake (as in the case of the Chuquicamata 1978 strike). At the same time, the kind of economic and political alternatives that unions propose for the country is most important, if such relations were to be established on a more permanent basis. In this respect to advocate under present circumstances their return to the barracks and to a parliamentary régime seems no solution for facing a realistic democratic transition in Chile. It would imply turning political decisions to disarticulated parties in Santiago, while leaving the rest of the country potentially in military hands. At the same time the military have shown (on comparative terms, of course!) a more open attitude towards unions than towards the Marxist parties and the party system generally. Bustos believes in an accommodation with the unions on the part of the military, if unions are strong enough to confront them. Rojas believes that unions could actually play a role within the democratic tendencies which will eventually emerge there, precisely because of the military's greater willingness to relate with unions rather than with political parties.⁶³ What becomes apparent is that on this crucial matter, unions have not sufficiently thought 'with their own heads' about the solution to a subject of such great importance. The only concrete alternative proposition is that put forward by Blest, which calls for a union-based Congress. It is propositions like this (which would include 95% of the employed population, if the self-employed are considered) that democratic sections of the military would probably look into, because it would put them into direct contact and relations across the country, with an 'alive' social force, and secure a more stable and less insecure democratic transition process for this military section.

However, the point of the matter is that the contradictions that General Pinochet's rule gives rise to within the military do not seem sufficient to produce any significant political change. It is only to the extent that a challenge develops from within the civil society, which makes the rule of the military increasingly more difficult and the country 'ungovernable' for them, that any kind of relations and influence of the unions over the military can start developing. But in order that unions may play a part in this process, their organisational and ideological development ought to be significantly furthered. Perhaps in this respect, for example, the word 'Command', which has military connotations, should be abandoned by the united Council at this early stage (following the example of the Valparaíso workers with their regional body, which they preferred to call 'Movement', and were able to set up, after the Concepción Command was banned upon the announcement of its formation).

C. Unions and the Church

1. The new Church Relations with the Unions.

The radicalisation of many active and leading Catholics; the failure of the Frei administration, which the Catholic Church had so fully supported; their 'democratic' experience with the Allende Government; the continuous loss of spiritual support among the Catholic Chilean masses throughout the Allende and the final years of the Frei administrations; and the conflicting experience with the present régime since the very start⁶⁴; all have had an impact on the Church response to the unions. Moreover, the rising movement of peasants and slum dwellers which was the sector of the people's movement where the Church has been most involved during the past 15 years, and the fact that the political hegemony within that movement was on the part of the unions, further conditioned the Church's response to the unions. One cannot find diffuse and undetermined statements regarding the unions any more from the most progressive and leading sectors of the Church in Chile. Cardinal Silva made this clear when declaring

Workers organisations and their own associations - the only means workers have to make themselves heard - must be trusted. Their proposals must be stimulated, the eventual criticisms must be received with an open mind, their right to disagree must be respected theoretically and practically, and their patriotism taken as sincere as well as their will to accept sacrifices, once they have been heard.⁶⁵

The people's search for Church backing of their economic and political problems as well as the religious uprising that followed since the coup has had a significant effect upon the Church. As a consequence, in their relation with the union movement, they have stood for: a united union movement; a secure

influence among the workers at large; a non-violent transition to democracy' in particular the unions' methods of response to Government policies and against party political control and sectarianism; although they have openly expressed their opinion for a multi-party based democratic political system and a 'nationalist' economic policy. In the words of the Chilean Cardinal, the social mission of the Church is to achieve

a more humane quality of life; a more equal distribution of goods and opportunities; a fraternal relationship; to be considered a responsible person and acting man in history, capable of freely participating in politics, unions etc., options and in the election of Governments; to participate in the production process and share the advances of modern science and technology and also have access to the Society's cultural production and dignified recreation .⁶⁶

Monsignor Alfonso Baeza, head of the Santiago Vicaria de la Pastoral Obrera, presented one of the documents, The Rights of the Workers, with the following introduction: 'We shall not discuss human rights from an abstract and a historical perspective, but rather within a specific and profound historical one: the perspective of the working class and the workers' movement. To undertake issues in such a way is our very mission in the Vicaria de la Pastoral Obrera.⁶⁷ After the May Day repressions in 1979 he denounced together with the Bishops of Santiago what had happened and stated: 'But these death signs go hand in hand with signs of life and hope. There has been an enormous solidarity with those jailed and their families. The unity of the workers and their leaders has strengthened. Many have realised more clearly the just cause behind workers' aspirations and the meaning of an institutionalised injustice'.⁶⁸

Since the Labour Plan was announced, the Bishops have directed pastoral letters, to the peasants and to the workers' organisations, which are strongly critical of the Plan. They call upon the workers to defend their organisation and to struggle and promise to continue supporting them. Even though the Vicaria de la Solidaridad, which worked in the slums, has been sharply reduced after the September 1980 plebiscite, the Vicaria de la Pastoral Obrera has actually increased its activities.

2. The Attitudes of the Unions.

The response of the union leaders to the Church has been a positive one including the fear and respect of those who have been supporting the Government. Their best relations are with the CNS and they have supported them in every respect since the very beginning. At first some of the CNS leadership was particularly worried about their relations with the Church - especially those sectors which had never related with it - afraid of the movement losing its 'class independence'. That is the reason why autonomous May Day meetings have always been held, although increasingly

workers and leaders have been attending public Mass at the Cathedral at noon or in the afternoon on that day. The attitude changed as the more suspicious leaders realised that the priests have nothing special hiding 'under the robe' for them to fear, as the rural workers' unions already knew. In fact their association has been mutually beneficial. For the unions, an immense support and a channel to gain a wider societal consensus for their policies; for the Church, a wide forum to influence by becoming 'the voice of those without a voice', as the Cardinal has often put it. The relationship seems to be a longstanding one and with mutual effects. The Church has not only linked with the people through the campaign for the disappeared prisoners, for the return of the exiled and for popular dining-rooms in the slums, but with organised labour; for the unions, a strong humanistic-progressive influence that will surely have an important ideological impact on them.

Perhaps the influence of the Church during these years of repression in Chile has been more important for the unions' drive for reorganisation than the role played by political parties generally. The Church is now playing a crucial role in the unions' effort to build up regional union councils. But most important of all, the alliance with the Church is already beginning to open up union relations with broad middle sectors of society and a general social legitimacy of great importance for their democratic struggle.

D. Unions' International Relations.

Chilean unions enjoy a vast international appeal, because of their radical-democratic tradition and the wide forum gained by the Frei, Allende and present administrations (although for very different reasons).

Under the political conditions created by the Junta, including the unions' weakened relationships with political parties and the unions' lack of access to the State (Government, and Parliament), international unions have become a most important support for union struggles in Chile. This support is expressed in the following way: 1) The international isolation of the Junta's régime due to the pressure of country unions on their governments and parties, and by the condemnation of the régime by international unions at international forums, in particular the ILO annual Conference. This in turn has implied that within Chile a wider political space has opened for the struggle of the unions. 2) The financial assistance for party and union activities in the country. 3) The political support for specific union activities, in particular on May Day, when unions have counted on the valuable participation in Chile of union leaders from different countries. It has both increased union mobilisation in Chile and decreased the intensity and extension of the repression.

However, three main and interacting problems have derived from the Chilean unions' increased international relations and

dependence on foreign assistance: 1) Problems which have arisen from political party activities within the unions. 2) Those which have been created by the influence of international unions themselves. 3) And those which develop from the unions' own problems within Chile.

In general terms, international unions tend to reproduce in their activities in Chile the divisions which exist at the international level. However, such activities turn actually into divisions within the Chilean unions to the extent that the behaviour of Chilean parties and unions sets an objective basis for such activities to find fertile ground in which to develop.

1. The Problems Originated by the Parties

The weakening of party relations with the unions and the banning of the CUT that followed the coup increased the dispersion of the union leadership, particularly among CD, RP and SP union leaders. This was an objective basis for international unions to act upon. In fact a union meeting held in Lima in 1977 under an ICFTU branch (official or unofficial) sponsorship with union representatives from those three political orientations, discussed the setting up of a different internal/external channelling of funds mechanism to the existing CUT External Committee (E.C.). If successful, it would have implied a wider split inside and outside Chile to the one existing at that moment based primarily on the Group of Ten and its links with ORIT and the AFL-CIO. At the same time, the split that occurred within the SP in 1979 increased once again that possibility. One SP faction (Altamirano) which was not recognised at an equal level to the other faction in CUT E.C., started direct links with ICFTU; ICFTU withdrew its assistance to the CP union representation and only invited SP, RP and CD union officials to its Congress held in Madrid. Would all this have happened without the SP split having taken place and, most important, without the kind of handling of the problem which both factions and other parties undertook? I doubt it.

There are three main conditions leading to party-based divisionist tendencies within the unions: a) C.P. 'hegemony'; b) the SP, RP and CD political and/or organic dispersion we have analysed above; and c) the lack of consensus within the CD leadership for the union unity principle.

However, the 1977 Lima meeting and the AFL-CIO leadership call in 1978 for an anti-communist union alliance between UNTRACH and the Group of Ten in 1978, resulted in the construction of the unified Command in 1979 and in CUT E.C. being asked to represent such command before the ILO annual meeting in 1980. This implies that Chilean unions gained wide (the widest possible) relations with international unions and at the same time regained or maintained their historic unity inside and outside Chile. But the stability of such a unity was weak. In April 1981, the Group of Ten has been finally organised as a separate Confederation. The

basic union factors accounting for the pro-unity tendencies are: a) the geographical (the long, narrow, flat aspect of the country, the good communication facilities and dispersion of natural resources) and cultural characteristics (homogeneity) of the country and its workers which demand the centralisation of political activities such as those developed by the unions; b) the 'memories' of the negative experiences associated with union dispersion; c) the general flexibility that the experienced Chilean political parties show in the inter-party political bargaining process within the union movement, given the wider consensus among the political forces for unity and the fear of being called upon as divisionists; d) the fact that the strongest political forces within the unions, and the most widely recognised union leaders are precisely those who take the most consistent pro-unity stand.

2. The Reproduction within Chile of International Unions' Divisions.

Within Chile, the Group of Ten has relations primarily with the AFL-CIO; FUT with CLAT, the Latin American Christian Unions. CEPCH and UNTRACH have no formal international links and CNS with the ICFTU and all other international union bodies including the regional Latin American ICFTU affiliate with ORIT but not with its AFL-CIO affiliate. This picture contrasts sharply with the previous relative isolation from the international union forum of the Chilean unions, except for the regional and international branches of Marxist unions. There are two basic problems which international unions have not yet overcome in their relations with Chile. First, the lack of understanding on the part of Marxist unions that Chilean unions are not and will not be in the future (if they insist on remaining united) a 'classist' union movement in the sense that their orientations will be according to Marxist-Leninist ideology. Secondly, the resistance on the part of the other international union bodies to accepting a united union movement in Chile with broad but uncommitted links with international unions. The fruitful international experience during the most significant part of the Chilean union history has helped in starting to overcome such problems.

3. Unions' Own Limitations Regarding the Unity Problems.

The experience of organising competing union bodies in Chile after the coup and the development of international links on ideological grounds, particularly FUT and the Group of Ten, indicated the limitations of such an approach and the need for a united union front to stand up to the rule of the Junta. In the case of CNS, it indicated a different but similar problem. The fact that their unions receive the ICFTU funds via CUT E.C. (i.e. party mechanisms) has prevented them in the past from actually administering such resources which were actually being used, at least during the first years after the coup, for party organising purposes. This was particularly the case with the CD more progressive union sectors which were all within CNS. Since then,

such a pattern has tended to change after wide union criticisms of the parties. But still, in both experiences, the outcome has been a strong reinforcement of ideological and party influences within the Chilean unions, which has limited their own and more autonomous political development and unity.

Chilean unions were achieving once again their historic unity while widening their international links and support, which was becoming a most important factor in the material support and legitimacy for their struggle in the country. However, such new international relations did not fully mature, a basic objective for unions if they are to count on such a relationship to further their struggle within Chile. Ultimately, it will depend on unions' unity drives and interests being able to impose themselves on international and, especially, on Chilean party political competition.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The restructuring of Chilean society by an authoritarian military régime affected the social basis of the workers in every strata, and in the country at large (including their capacity to reproduce their labour force), and their organisations. The policies of the Junta, hegemonised by the military and native and foreign financial capital, tends to limit the union struggle to the plant level and inhibit their political expression at the national level.

Union resistance, their reorganisation into council-type unions, in every corner of society, the assistance of the working class parties, their traditions of independence from the State and Employers and of struggle, the assistance of the Catholic Church, international union organisations and of progressive members of liberal professions, have secured their slow but real and consistent reorganisation and opened the path for an alliance with the middle sectors of the petty bourgeoisie.

Presently, unions are undergoing a double struggle, for survival on organisational terms at different levels and in order to further their economic demands, increased structuring of their organisations according to present legislation and economic subsistence; but at the same time they are searching for a new social project, indicating the extent to which they constitute a key social organisation in the development of the country's future.

Unions have even advanced to a greater extent than the working class parties some of the elements of a new social project. In fact the parties have had important limitations for their development. Their role vis-à-vis the unions was clear up to 1973, when they played a key role of class representation within the State and up to 1976, they have helped the unions in their drive to reorganise themselves. But after that, they have tried a policy of control more than assisting them in their concrete problems and struggles, by means of their external financial assistance to the unions. This has at the same time limited the

process of union unity. Such a party role is increasingly less accepted by the unions especially within their social basis.

On the other hand, the pressures from the grass roots which have strongly emerged after the publication of the Labour Plan has forced unions to become increasingly a mass political leadership at the same time that their relationship with political parties becomes more difficult; in fact political parties are less exposed to such pressures and are thus less confronted with the need to renew their policies and style of doing politics according to the new conditions of present day Chile. But if both organisations can overcome present obstacles, they will no doubt be able to play a key role in the development of the country's future.

NOTES

1. See Nicos Poulantzas, Fascismo y Dictadura (México, Siglo XXI, 1970); La Crise des Dictatures. Portugal, Grèce, Espagne (Paris, François Maspero, 1975); Fernando H. Cardoso y Enzo Faletto, Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina (México, Siglo XXI, 1969); Fernando H. Cardoso, Autoritarismo e Democratização (Rio, Paz e Terra, 1975) and various articles on the 'Bureaucratic Authoritarian State' by Guillermo O'Donnell published by CEDES in Buenos Aires. Gonzalo Falabella, 'Labour under Authoritarian Regimes: the Chilean Union Movement, 1973-79; unpublished D.Phil. Dissertation, University of Sussex, 1980.
2. This section is based on the various books and articles by Alan Angell, Manuel Barrera, Jorge Barria, Francisco Zapata, and the author.
3. Fernando Dahse, Mapa de la Extrema Riqueza (Santiago, Aconcagua, 1979).
4. US Embassy Santiago, Chile, Economic Trends Report (January 1979).
5. Antonio Cassese, Study of the Impact of Foreign Economic Aid Assistance on Respect for Human Rights in Chile. (New York, UN Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, 31st Session, August 1978). p.3.
6. See Ricardo Ffrench-Davis, Exportaciones e industrialización en un modelo ortodoxo: Chile, 1973-1978 (Santiago, CIEPLAN, mimeo, Marzo, 1978). p.12, cuadro 4. Main increases in non-traditional exports are accounted for by fruits and logs. The trees in both sectors were, however, planted during previous administrations.
7. Government spending in health and housing decreased from \$960.1 m. to \$288.2 m. between 1971 and 1978. On the other hand participation of the salaried population in the nation's income fell from 62.5% in 1972 to 38.30% in 1977. After the coup, the Government increased the inflation rate from a wholesale price index of 103.73 in August 1973 to 1,147.1% by December 1973. See Study of the Impact.
8. GNP reached, by 1975, the equivalent of the 1966 level and has still not reached the 1971 and 1972 levels (ODEPLAN, in Pablo Román, El modelo económico de la Junta y algunos aspectos de la distribución del ingreso. Institute of Social Studies The Hague, Dec. 1973), p.97. Industrial production fell from

- 26.1% of GNP in 1972 to 20.6% in 1977 and construction from 4.3% to 2.6%. (Armando Arancibia, 1973-1978: La via chilena a la pauperización y a la dependencia, p.71. The industrial production index, on a 1968=100 basis, was 92.4% in 1977 compared with 121.2% in 1972. Study of the Impact, p.10. Table 4.
9. Latin American Economic Report (LAER) Vol.II, no.8. London, p.63.
 10. Exportaciones, p.30.
 11. Depto. Economía, Universidad de Chile, Desocupación en el Gran Santiago en el segundo semestre de 1978, and Arzobispado de Santiago, International Symposium on the Dignity of Man, his Rights and Obligations in Today's World. Informe Económico. 1970-1978, p.7. Cuadro 5.
 12. Military expenditure rose from 9% - 10% in the 1970-1973 period to over 20% (21.9% in 1978) in the 1975-1978 period. Study of the Impact, p.8. Table 2.
 13. Humberto Vega, interview in Solidaridad (Santiago, 8.5.78) cited in Hugo Fazio, Mercado de capitales y concentración financiera. Mimeo, Dec. 1978.
 14. Raúl Gonzalez Flores, The Dissolution of the Chilean Unions after Five Years of Military Rule: A First Analysis. Mimeo, 1978. Effective foreign investments since the coup added up to \$45 m. by 1976 and \$19 m. during 1977. No more than \$40 m. and \$70 m. were expected to come in during the 1978 and 1979 periods, according to the Chilean authorities. Banco Central and ODEPLAN, in 1973-1978, p.102. However, investment in the money market has added up to \$200 m. a month. By December 1979, total foreign debt was over 8.500 m. See Sergio Bitar, Libertad económica y dictadura política, LASA, April, 1979, USA.
 15. The study was made by VECTOR. See Hoy, Santiago, 13-19.2.1980, pp. 25-27.
 16. Ibid., p. 27-28.
 17. Universidad de Chile, Departamento de Economía, Taller de Coyuntura Económica. Santiago, June 1978.
 18. See P. Frias, Cesantia y estrategias de supervivencia, Santiago, FLACSO, Documento de Trabajo, julio 1977.
 19. Tape recorded interview by Angélica Gimpel with leaders of the east Santiago bolsas, May 1978.

20. See Victor Tokman, 'Income Distribution, Technology and Employment in Developing Countries: An Application for Ecuador,' Journal of Development Economics 2 (1975), pp. 49-80, and various articles cited in M.H. Tavares, Desenvolvimento capitalista e ação sindical. Movimientos Laborales CLACSO y el Colegio de Mexico.
21. See Alejandro Foxley and Oscar Muñoz, 'Políticas de empleo en economías heterogeneas', Revista Paraguaya de Sociología no. 38 (Enero-Abril 1977), pp. 81-100.
22. Jackie Roddick, Labour and the New Authoritarianism in Argentina and Chile, CEDLA, Amsterdam, December 1978, p.17.
23. Calculated by the author on the basis of Mapa de la extrema riqueza, and Las 91 (Santiago, Ed. Barco de Papel, 1972).
24. Cesantia.
25. Robert Alexander, The Tragedy of Chile (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1978), pp. 427-428.
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27. Arzobispado de Santiago, Vicaría de la Pastoral Obrera, Algunos aspectos de la realidad sindical en Chile a diciembre de 1977. Santiago, Documento de Trabajo no. 5., n.d.
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29. Arzobispado de Santiago V.P.O., Consideraciones sobre el D.L. 2.200, D.T. no.8., n.d.
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33. El Mercurio, Santiago, 29 Feb., 1979.
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37. OIT, La situación sindical en Chile (Ginebra, Ed. provisional OIT, 1975), pp. 122-124.

38. See an excellent chronology of Union events up to December 1977, Chile Monitor, Nos. 26-27, London, Spring, 1978, pp. 25-36.
39. See Serafino Romualdi, President and Peons, Recollections of a Labour Ambassador to Latin America (New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1967), pp. 322-340.
40. See Alan Angell, Partidos políticos y movimiento obrero en Chile (México, Era, 1974), pp. 162-166, and Trayectoria, pp. 15-17.
41. The textile sector had 22 out of the 91 basic enterprises of the Chilean economy and the metal-mechanic-electronic industries (all within the FEMET Federation just banned), another 20 enterprises, both accounting for almost 50% of the '91'. See Las 91, pp.59-154; 192-200.
42. Partidos políticos,
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54. Ibid.
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