

(Temuco)

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IV, 20

A FABRICATED "ASSAULT" AND SEVEN MURDERS IN TEMUCO

On the morning of November eleventh, the President of the Junta, General Pinochet, celebrating two months of tyranny at the campaign altar of the Escuela Militar announced that on the previous night, during the curfew hours, a heavily armed band of 15 extremists had attacked the powder magazine of the Regiment stationed at Temuco. The attack, he indicated, had been repulsed: seven of the attackers had died and eight had fled. There had been no injuries to personnel of the regiment; nor had there been damages to installations. In the newspapers the next day, the item was adorned by false attribution of party affiliation to the alleged attackers: some were alleged to be members of MIR, some of the Socialist Party and others, of the Communist Party.

What was behind the lie that was announced to the world at that altar, as a solemn mass was about to begin? The cold blooded assassination, without benefit of trial or charges, of seven communist activists in Temuco. All of them had been prisoners, and their wives had made desperate attempts to save them during the period from the fifth to the tenth of November. They were: P.J. Mardones Jofre, 26 years old, of the Communist Youth Organization, Amador F. Montero Mosquera, Juan A. Chavez Rivas, Juan C. Ruiz Mansilla, Victor Hugo Valenzuela and Alberto Molena Ruiz. The last named, 56 years old, was listed in the official communique as the leader of the assault. This man had lost his right arm, from the shoulder, in a mine accident at Lota years before.

As on so many other occasions, the authorities lied cynically. It is difficult to believe that fifteen men could have approached a regimental barracks during the curfew and that eight should have escaped the alleged military confrontation alive. It is impossible to believe that a 56 year old man, with no right arm could have been carrying arms. And it is absolutely impossible that these men could have assaulted a regimental installation, in which at the very moment of the presumed attack they were prisoners, and in the worst possible physical condition, after horrible tortures. False political affiliations were attributed to these men, after they were murdered, to lend more credence to the official story of the assault, for it is commonly known that communists do not participate in isolated actions of this sort. The lie of the dictatorship clears the way for the murder of another eight persons, to be identified as the imaginary fugitives of the phantom assault. In the first days, it was announced that "the fugitives are surrounded." Later this was denied, and there was no more news on the subject.

Five days beforehand, on the fifth of November, six persons were shot for the crime of "treason": Jose M. Larcant Garay; Francisco del C. Abendano Borquez; Jose A. Barria; Oscar Arismendi Medina; Mario C. Torres Velasquez; and Jose L. Selmer Klener. (From the newspaper La Tercera, 6 November, page 2).