

A Green Light for The Junta?

By Tom Wicker

Ana de Los Angeles Gonzales Gonzales is an indomitable Chilean woman whose husband, two sons and pregnant daughter-in-law have disappeared into the murky depths of the repression practiced by General Pinochet's ruling junta. To her demands for news of their whereabouts, the junta's answer is always the same: They are not under arrest, there is no order for their arrest and none for their detention.

Gabriela Bravo's husband, formerly a Socialist deputy, was seen being arrested by 40 Government agents over two years ago in downtown Santiago. Since then, the only word of him has been from a released political prisoner, who had seen him being tortured and beaten.

The husband of Ulda Ortiz Alvarido, a trade union leader, has simply disappeared; although he is known to have been arrested by the junta more than three years ago.

These three women have been recently in the United States, telling their stories in Washington, at the United Nations, to anyone who will listen. What will happen to them when they return to Chile, as they intend to do, remains to be seen; but their personal anguish lends reality to the continuing tragedy of Chile under the Pinochet regime.

That anguish is in ironic counterpoint to the testimony of Mark L. Schneider, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, who told a House subcommittee this week that the Carter Administration's human rights policy had led to the release of "some political prisoners" in more than a dozen countries, including Chile.

The Chilean women's experiences also underlined a study by a special U.N. committee, which reported this week that harassment, arrests, torture and other violations of human rights were continuing in that unhappy country, but on a somewhat reduced scale.

The three women and their missing husbands and kin are also a living reproach to General Pinochet's most recent defiance of the U.N. This followed a hunger strike in Santiago last June by 26 relatives of persons who had disappeared in Chile. The strike ended only when General Pinochet agreed to provide Secretary General Kurt Waldheim with information on the strikers' relatives within 90 days.

The "information" provided on Sept. 23 was this statement (roughly translated): "The persons whose alleged disappearance is denounced are not presently under detention by any security organism in the territory of the Republic." This bland claim was made in the face of countless documents from witnesses testifying to the arrest of the "disappeared" persons.

In fact, Amnesty International has documented the disappearance of more than 1,500 people in Chile. The Vicariate of Solidarity of the Roman Catholic Church in Santiago claims to have airtight evidence—the testimony of at least two witnesses—for the arrest or detention of each of 568 persons by the junta, and good evidence—one witness each—for the arrest or detention of 1,200 more.

The U.N. committee report pointed out, however, that the "disappeared" person tactic is not being used so much anymore; instead, more people are being arrested and held for 48 hours, tortured, beaten and scared out of whatever they were doing to annoy or threaten the junta. Enough of the persons so intimidated are now among the one million Chileans in exile (about a tenth of the population) for word of the new tactic to get about.

The committee also reported evidence that violations of human rights were becoming institutionalized under General Pinochet; but the short-term

IN THE NATION

arrest tactic is further evidence of the junta's flexibility in repression. After Terence A. Todman, the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, visited Chile in August, for example, the junta announced the dissolution of DINA, the dreaded security police. But Eugenio Velasco, a lawyer and diplomat expelled from Chile in 1976, has pointed out in an article in *The New York Times* that the law establishing DINA's replacement, the National Information Center, was almost a replica of the law that had established DINA.

That piece of duplicity may have been in Mr. Todman's mind when he reportedly promised the three Chilean women this week that the United States would support whatever steps Secretary General Waldheim may take in response to General Pinochet's contemptuous "report" of Sept. 23. U.N. sources say Mr. Waldheim is considering another effort to send a U.N. mission to Chile to investigate the human rights situation there. The junta has never yet allowed such a mission to enter the country, but if Washington put on the pressure this time, that might make a difference.

If, however, Mr. Waldheim, the U.S. and the international human rights movement do nothing more than denounce the junta's Sept. 23 statement, they will give General Pinochet a green light for more repression.



Gina Frenkel

PHILADELPHIA—We are no longer parents of children who attend public schools.

Indeed, we have been glibly telling our friends this month that this promises to be a banner year for interesting dinner tables at our house. The battle with manners and the turbulent onset of adolescence have been replaced by the visage of our non-Roman Catholic Lucy crossing herself while her brother Marshall tells how moving he has found silent meeting at his Quaker school.

While it's had its hilarious moments, our children's Mass and Meeting has been more painful than interesting. Their two new situations represent for us the discarding of embattled convictions hard won and long held. Public, urban education was one of our values. It was what we thought about our children's education.

Our response to the social disarray of the sixties had been to pledge our-

When Iron-Clad Conviction Rusts Out

By Donnan B. Runkel

selves and our children to a life far less isolated than that we'd known as rural and suburban children. If the next generation was to be able to cope with themselves and their problems, it would be a lot easier if they knew each other, our reasoning went.

Talk about poverty — our children would know it, feel it, live with it. Talk about most any race or religion — it was down the street from where they lived. Talk about learning — our children would learn firsthand the skill of survival. While this particular skill often translated into the ability to get to school with one's lunch still intact, we nonetheless espoused that as a worthy daily goal.

In the meantime, we became very visible parents at each of their schools.

We built a playground; volunteered to tutor, raise money, give away books, recruit teachers, organize career days, run for the school board. Urban education became an identity for us. And we were pretty smug about it.

The cocktail circuit became a challenge, for there was invariably a ripple about the latest act of violence at a city school. Or had we heard that another couple had had to withdraw their children because they had been informed that the city schools couldn't meet their special needs?

Conviction! We were unalterably convinced that our children would ultimately be far more special than any others because of experiences they

were amassing in everyday school life.

While we celebrated our convictions, however, some subtle and alarming changes were taking place in our children. Their foremost challenge each day was not the math test or remembering lines for a play—it was getting to school safely and returning home each day, their personal flank in order. School for them was not a place of happy relationships (except with teachers), but a place of threats, perceived or real. They were the "rich" kids, a fact we had difficulty fathoming.

So, upon moving to a new city, we exercised an option we'd eschewed for so long by entering them in schools that were close at hand (no more bus-stop problems), had reasonably small

communities, and appeared to have decent educational programs. Our seventh-grader got the Quaker school because two Quaker school tuitions, for many long years, seemed to threaten our slim hold on economic viability. And the local parish school was two blocks away, while the public school was three neighborhoods away.

While both their schools have some of the same demographics as their previous ones, their attitudes toward them are enormously different. They like going. They have friends. They do not worry about being safe.

We feel bad that not everyone can buy our peace of mind about their safety. And feel worse about our eroded conviction. And lost identity.

Donnan B. Runkel describes herself as "an organizer." At this moment, she's organizing the Pennsylvania Governor's Conference on Libraries and Information Services.

M.D. (Mutual Distrust)—A Plea for a Cure

By Richard M. Restak

Recently, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Joseph Califano, apologized to 446 United States physicians erroneously identified earlier as having received in 1975 more than \$100,000 from Medicare: "I regret any inconvenience to physicians whose records were incorrectly reported in our original list."

More important than the admission of an unfortunate and presumably preventable error, however, is the confusion that still surrounds the purpose such identification was intended to serve.

A physician who puts in 60 to 80 hours a week in a ghetto clinic or in a practice limited largely to the elderly may be a compassionate, overworked humanitarian or, alternately, he may be the crassest money-monger. Both individuals are likely to appear among physicians listed as collecting more than \$100,000 a year from Medicare. The crucial question is, how can a list of earnings alone help the rest of us distinguish the dedicated practitioner from the rip-off artist?

Earned-income figures, in the absence of other supportive data, are simply meaningless. What services were performed? Who performed them? Were the services and the charges appropriate? Is there any reason to doubt that the Medicare billings were legitimate? These are only a few in a long series of important questions that the public has a right to have answered. Little light can be shed on these questions by the release of raw income figures alone without at least some explanation of what they mean.

Stated at its simplest, the official H.E.W. position in releasing the figures seems to have been that since physicians treating Medicare patients are paid with public funds, their incomes should be on the public record. It's difficult to reasonably disagree with such a proposition. But as with many issues in a civilized society, the spirit of the law is often almost as important as the letter, or, to put it another way, force doesn't necessarily eliminate the need for diplomacy.

Along with the income figures—the correct figures, of course—it might have been thoughtful to remind the rest of us that, just as we're trusting people over 30 again, we might also at least entertain the possibility that anyone with earnings in six figures isn't necessarily a crook.

Medicare and Medicaid are apparently fraught with abuses, and the Secretary is to be commended for his sincere attempts to do something

about them. But lists of physician incomes seem an inadequate and unfair way of accomplishing the goal of eliminating abuses. This is particularly true since there is reason to believe some physicians have been personally harmed by the release of erroneous information.

But there are reasons, other than the regrettable errors, why the release of income information, without some cautionary explanation, was unfortunate. Personal income involves some very complicated social issues about who does what in our society and what they should be paid for doing it. Is \$100,000 a year excessive for a heart surgeon compared—to take an example not entirely arbitrary—to \$500,000 for a corporation lawyer? Such questions are not easy to answer, involving as they do complicated value judgments.

In addition, it seems reasonable to assume that Mr. Califano, whose authority on health care renders him, at least in a sense, the Ultimate Physician, should be interested in seeking cooperation, not confrontation, in dealings with the nation's physicians.

Earlier this year in a provocative and, I am told by a special assistant to the President, "unauthorized" speech to the American Medical Association, Secretary Califano presented the nation's doctors with a "with you or without you" choice that alienated even some of the most progressive and socially responsible.

After the speech one doctor humorously quipped that the proper response by the medical Establishment might be to award Mr. Califano an honorary M.D. degree and hope for the best. A perhaps more insightful colleague suggested that the same purpose could be served by having the Secretary spending a few afternoons one week watching how a Medicare clinic actually works.

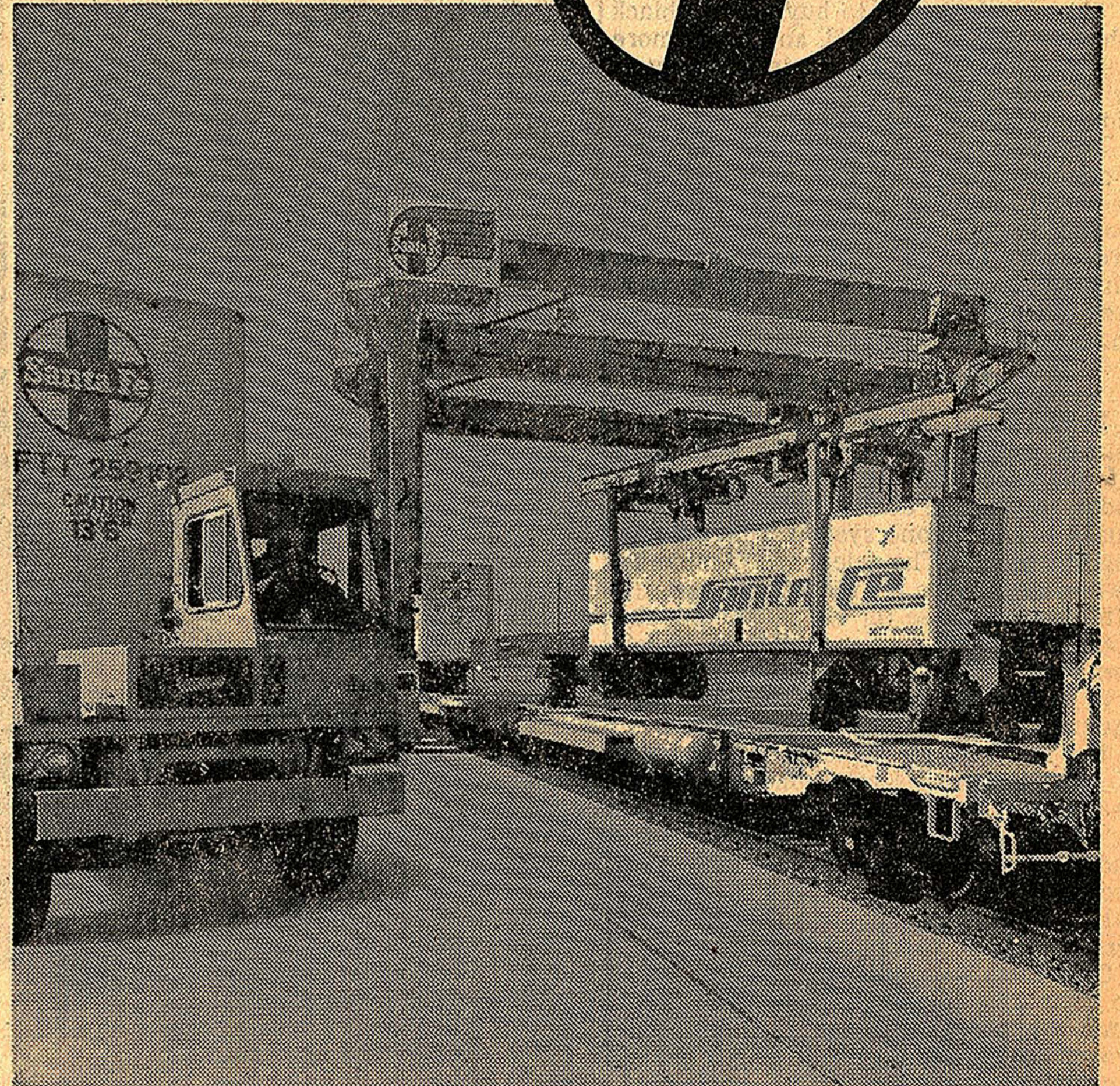
Even putting the best face on it, however, Secretary Califano's actions have contributed to an already supercharged atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicion toward each other's motives on the parts of physicians and Government health officials. This comes at a particularly unfortunate time, considering the difficult days that lie ahead when both groups and, one hopes, the public as well, will be required to work together toward fashioning a model health-care system that will work for us all.

Richard M. Restak, M.D., is author of "Premeditated Man: Bioethics and the Control of Future Human Life."

Energy-saving transportation is a part of Santa Fe's progressive operation and we do more—



Santa Fe PLUS



Energy-saving transportation and energy-producing resources are plus factors contributing to the strength and growth of the Santa Fe. Piggy-Back rail service is setting all-time records and unit trainloads of coal are increasing in number to meet the needs for fuel saving methods of transportation.

Our energy-producing resources group are pumping over 45,000 barrels of oil a day and over 400 million tons of coal is being developed in New Mexico.

Santa Fe is doing all of this plus operating a busy truck line, pipelines, lumber production, land development and construction.

For information about Santa Fe rail service in New York, call:
M. M. Benya Manager-Sales & Service
M. Govic District Sales Manager
330 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017 • Phone: (212) 953-1320

Piggy-Back is fast, also an important fuel-saving service made possible through energy-efficient rail operations.