

International Commission of
Enquiry into the Crimes
of the Military Junta in Chile

Fifth Session; Algiers, January 27-29, 1978

PRESS RELEASE

30 January 1978

Yesterday the 5th session of the International Commission of Enquiry into the Crimes of the Military Junta in Chile (the International Chile Commission) concluded its proceedings in Algiers.

The meeting was attended by representatives from 40 countries, covering many walks of life and a broad cross-section of political affiliations.

The International Commission heard a great number of Chilean witnesses and observers who have recently visited Chile, examined reports presented by experts from different countries, films taken by hidden cameras at the end of 1977, tape records and other documentary evidence presented to the Commission.

The Commission studied many aspects of the institutionalized system of terror and violence operating in Chile.

On the continued disappearance of persons detained by the authorities it was estimated that at least 2000 people have vanished entirely. There are strong grounds for believing that a large number of them have been murdered by agents of the secret police or the armed forces.

In addition the Commission found that in spite of the Junta's denials several hundreds of people are still held in detention for political reasons.

The notorious DINA - the secret police - had merely been replaced by the CNI (National Centre for Information), which carried out the same functions but had indeed developed some new methods of intimidation and repression.

Economic, social and cultural rights of the Chilean people were being flagrantly violated.

The Junta had impudently ignored the virtually unanimous protests of the international community and had taken a negative stand to fact-finding missions. It had refused to permit the Ad Hoc Working Group established by the UN Commission on Human Rights to enter Chile and to conduct on-the-spot investigations.

The Commission condemned in this context the refusal of the Junta authorities to accord an entry permit to the Secretary-General of the Commission - Hans-Göran Franck - who arrived in Santiago on January 16, 1978 and was not allowed to visit Chile.

In response to international pressure, the Junta had concocted the idea of the fraudulent referendum of January 1978, which broke almost every rule of democratically conducted elections.

In view of these and many other considerations the Commission adopted, on January 29, a Concluding Statement, the conclusions and demands of which read as follows:

1. The International Commission demands that all disappeared persons who are still alive shall immediately be brought before a body designated by the United Nations, receive rapid medical aid and be released. A complete accounting should be made of all disappeared persons who have been murdered or died in prison. The inadmissible practice of secret arrests and the disappearance of detainees must be brought to an end.
2. The Commission reiterates with great emphasis its demands for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners including those sentenced by the extraordinary military tribunals. All political prisoners must be released without exception.
3. All those who have practiced torture, committed murder or other brutal crimes must be punished. The register of Junta criminals should be kept up to date.
4. All people illegally exiled from Chile by the unconstitutional military Junta should be allowed to return to their country.
5. The military Junta must be isolated by appropriate political and economic means.
6. The UN resolutions should be carried out in full, including the rendering of all possible humanitarian, legal and financial aid to those who are arrested or who are forced to leave the country as well as to their relatives. The Commission urges

Governments to continue to extend their refugee programmes, in co-operation with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and to grant all necessary visas.

7. One of the most urgent tasks for world public opinion is to stop the influx of foreign loans which has already exceeded 1000 million dollars and has helped the Junta remain in power. Governments should vote against any proposal for loans to Chile by international financial institutions. Governments should also take steps to discourage private lending institutions from making loans to Chile. Foreign investments in Chile should also be discouraged by governmental measures.

8. Effective measures should be taken by international and national organizations, trade unions, and the international movement of solidarity to prevent the sale and delivery of armament, aircraft and other technical equipment intended for the military and police forces of the Junta.

9. The Commission calls on national and international trade union organizations to intensify their solidarity with the Chilean working population in their struggle for the most fundamental economic and social rights. Trade unions should continue to concentrate on boycott activities primarily directed against Chilean ships and other means of transportation.

10. The Commission considers it to be of paramount importance to continue to collect evidence exposing the crimes of the military Junta and expresses its support for the Ad Hoc Working Group of the UN Human Rights Commission. The Commission will provide the Working Group with relevant material and evidence; and it urges the Group to extend its investigations to cover the kidnapping of Chilean citizens in Argentina and their illegal refoulement to Chile, examples of which were cited before the Commission.

11. The Commission appeals to all national and international organizations, to Governments, and to all individuals to strengthen their efforts in support of the struggle for the freedom and human rights of the Chilean people.

12. The Commission states its firm determination to continue its work in support of the Chilean people and its struggle to restore freedom and democracy.