

**ORGANIZING COERCION IN AUTHORITARIAN CHILE**

by

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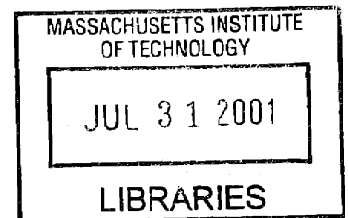
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## ABSTRACT

Coercion is at the center of politics, yet how it is organized has remained poorly understood. This dissertation analyzes how the Chilean military regime (1973-90) organized coercion, focusing especially on two major shifts during the period of most institutional flux, from 1973-78. Available explanations for the shifts fail to account for the magnitude of organizational changes. As an alternative, this dissertation provides a typology of coercion, based on measurements of how well principals monitor agents' operations and performance. Principals can monitor from within their own organization (internal monitoring), or from information sources outside their direct control (external monitoring). Measuring levels of internal and external monitoring, using various criteria for the breadth and depth of information, yields a matrix with types that are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive. The four basic types are blind, bureaucratic, transparent, and hide and seek coercion. There are tradeoffs to each type of coercion, which can prompt principals to shift from one to another. In Chile, measurements of internal and external monitoring before and after each of the two major shifts, alongside counterfactual analysis and tests of the competing available explanations, reveal that the regime in each case grappled with organizing coercion as a discrete problem of governance. In 1974 the regime created a powerful secret police to better coordinate coercion through higher internal monitoring. The police resolved many organizational problems but failed to increase internal monitoring substantially. Moreover, it created a series of new problems as it began to run amok. In 1977-78 it was replaced by another institution, which increased internal monitoring, a shift that also coincided with an increase in external monitoring. In each case, the regime's choices were influenced by, but not reducible to, broader political dynamics such as power struggles and efforts to institutionalize the regime. Secondary literature is used to analyze three other cases (Argentina, East Germany, and South Africa), that organized coercion differently than Chile. In all cases, the framework provided accounts for the variation in the organization of coercion.

Thesis Supervisor: Joshua Cohen  
Title: Professor of Political Science and Philosophy

To my parents and to the memory of Bandi and Klari.

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## ACRONYMS

ACHA	<i>Alianza Chilena Anticomunista</i>	Chilean Anti-Communist Alliance
ANC	African National Congress	(SAF)
APDH	<i>Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos</i>	Permanent Assembly of Human Rights (ARG)
BIM	<i>Brigada de Inteligencia Metropolitana</i>	Metropolitan Intelligence Brigade (CHI)
CC	<i>Comando Conjunto</i>	Joint Command (CHI)
CChDH	<i>Comisión Chilena de Derechos Humanos</i>	Chilean Human Rights Commission
CNI	<i>Central Nacional de Informaciones</i>	National Information Center (CHI)
CNRR	<i>Corporación Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación</i>	National Reparation and Reconciliation Corporation (CHI)
COAJ	<i>Comité Asesor de la Junta de Gobierno</i>	Junta Assistant Committee (CHI)
CONADEP	<i>Comisión Nacional Sobre la Desaparición de Personas</i>	National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (ARG)
COPACHI	<i>Comité por la Paz en Chile (Comité Pro Paz)</i>	Committee for Peace in Chile
D.L.	<i>Decreto Ley</i>	Decree Law (CHI)
D.O.	<i>Diario Oficial</i>	(CHI)
DICAR	<i>Dirección de Inteligencia de Carabineros</i>	Carabineros Intelligence Directorate (CHI)
DICOMCAR	<i>Dirección de Comunicaciones de Carabineros</i>	Carabineros Communications Directorate (CHI)

DINA	<i>Dirección Nacional de Informaciones</i>	National Information Directorate (CHI)
EM	External monitoring	
ERP	<i>Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo</i>	People's Revolutionary Army (ARG)
FPMR	<i>Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez</i>	Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (CHI)
GAP	<i>Grupo de Amigos del Presidente</i>	President's Group of Friends (CHI)
GDR	German Democratic Republic	
GI	<i>Geheime Informatoren</i>	Secret informants (GDR)
IC	<i>Izquierda Cristiana</i>	Christian Left (CHI)
IM	Internal monitoring	
IM	<i>Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter</i>	Unofficial colleague (informer) (GDR)
IR	<i>Informe Rettig</i>	Rettig Report (CHI)
MAPU	<i>Movimiento de Acción Popular Unida</i>	United Popular Action Movement (CHI)
MIR	<i>Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria</i>	Revolutionary Left Movement (CHI)
NP	National Party	(SAF)
PC	<i>Partido Comunista</i>	Communist Party (CHI)
PDC	<i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano</i>	Christian Democratic Party (CHI)
PJ	<i>Partido Justicialista</i>	Peronist Party (ARG)
PR	<i>Partido Radical</i>	Radical Party (CHI and ARG)
PS	<i>Partido Socialista</i>	Socialist Party (CHI)

SADF	South African Defense Force	
SAP	South African Police	
SED	<i>Sozialistische Einheitspartei auf Deutschland</i>	Socialist Unity Party of Germany (GDR)
SICAR	<i>Servicio de Inteligencia de Carabineros</i>	Carabineros Intelligence Service (CHI)
SIDE	<i>Servicio de Inteligencia del Estado</i>	State Intelligence Service (CHI)
SIFA	<i>Servicio de Inteligencia de la Fuerza Aérea</i>	Air Force Intelligence Service (CHI)
SIM	<i>Servicio de Inteligencia Militar</i>	Military Intelligence Service (CHI)
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission	(SAF)
UP	<i>Unidad Popular</i>	Popular Unity (CHI)
ZK	<i>Zentralkomitee</i>	Central Committee (GDR)



**NOTE**

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Spanish to English are mine.

Also, the report of the *Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation* (1993) is the English translation of the *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación* (1991), popularly known as the *Informe Rettig*. I have drawn from both versions. References to the English version are in English, and to the Spanish version in Spanish.

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That responsibility is of course mine alone, but I have been fortunate to work in a community of peers who have helped me make the final product far stronger than it would have been otherwise.

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## INTRODUCTION

Over three quarters of a century ago Max Weber pointed out that the institutions of coercion are at the center of politics (Weber 1946 (1918)), yet to this day we lack a systematic way to compare institutional variation in the organization of coercion. This omission imposes an especially serious handicap in the study of authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian rulers tend to use coercive force much more freely to pursue their goals, unconstrained by the checks and balances of democracy. Authoritarian coercion is rarely regarded as having its own internal logic and dynamics. We commonly speak of places like the Soviet Union under Stalin or Haiti under the Duvaliers as if in each case the army or the police were run according to the personal power, will, or ideology of the leader. Another common assumption is that some cases are just too different to compare. Institutions like the Nazi Gestapo and the Rwandan *Interahamwe* are rarely spoken about in the same sentence. Both assumptions pre-empt efforts at systematic comparison.

This dissertation is motivated by the conviction that we can do better. Indeed there is urgency to doing so, and not simply for the sake of better comparison. Notwithstanding conspicuous celebrations about the “end of history” (Fukuyama 1989; Fukuyama 1992), or the latest “wave” of democracy (Huntington 1991), authoritarian regimes have been by far the most successful and common sorts of regimes in history. Moreover, events in places such as China, Russia, Belarus, Venezuela, Peru, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Iran and Pakistan, among many others, indicate that authoritarianism shows no sign of going into history’s dustbin any time soon (Diamond 2000). Understanding how they work, therefore, remains important. Put simply, the better we understand how these regimes organize such a central aspect of their politics as coercion, the better the tools and institutions we will be able to develop to deal with them, and the more likely we are to relegate them at last to the dustbin of history.

Coercion under authoritarian regimes is often shrouded in secrecy, but peering behind the shroud reveals wide variation in how rulers in these regimes organize coercion. In some cases, they construct highly bureaucratized hierarchical institutions (such as a secret police) with the power to gather information on all aspects of the state and citizens’ lives. In others they rely on a varied and decentralized set of agents, such as independent task forces or death squads, which operate with a great deal of autonomy, and over whose activities rulers often have little direct knowledge. In some cases executives monopolize power by repressing all alternative sources of power in the other branches of government as well as in society at large. In others at least some forms of alternative power sources are tolerated, for instance in the other branches of the state, and the coercive institutions operate under accordingly greater constraints. And last, in some cases the ways of organizing coercion remain relatively stable, while other cases they fluctuate widely as different institutions come and go. What underlies these variations over time and between authoritarian regimes? How do authoritarian regimes organize coercion?

This dissertation addresses these questions primarily through an in-depth case

study of the organization of coercion in one authoritarian regime. The military dictatorship in Chile (1973-1990) presents an ideal case to analyze the organization of coercion. I focus especially on the first five years (1973-78), the period of greatest institutional flux with the most lasting impact. During this time, coercion was organized in three different ways. When the armed forces overthrew the Allende government in a violent coup in September 1973, they took complete control of the country within days, if not hours, and promised to root out the “Marxist cancer” from the Chilean body politic (Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 36). The Junta declared a state of siege, imposed strict curfews, and over the following months and years carried out thousands of arrests, tortures, executions, and disappearances. Tens of thousands went into exile, meetings of more than a few people were banned, and the new regime closed down virtually every independent institution in the country, from the Congress to political parties to the opposition press.

During this time, all four branches of the armed forces carried out coercion, from arrests to summary executions. By 1974, however, the application and organization of coercion shifted dramatically. Coercion came under tighter central control under a single secret police agency that was given broad powers not only to carry out its own operations, but also to oversee those of the other branches of the military and police. Fewer people were killed or imprisoned, and the victims came from a much narrower political background. Less than five years after the coup, between 1977 and 1978, a second shift took place. The Junta replaced its notorious secret police with a different organization that operated under greater restraint. Even fewer people, from a narrower range, were killed or arbitrarily arrested. Although violent suppression of opposition groups continued until the end of the regime in 1990, after 1978 the regime carried out coercion under greater constraints, and new actors made use of increasing possibilities to contest the regime’s coercive practices. What lies behind these shifts? How was coercion organized during the different phases of the Pinochet dictatorship?

A fundamental advantage to focusing on a single in-depth case study is the ability to trace the process of how one factor or mechanism evolves and shapes outcomes over time (Russett 1974; Abbott 1992; Bennett 1997; Ragin 1997). Stated in broadest terms, this dissertation shows how the key actors during each of the periods I discuss faced a distinct set of problems with respect to the organization of coercion, and how they addressed these by drawing on a limited set of organizational alternatives, which I will outline below. The tradeoffs involved in the various alternatives meant that in most cases, the principal actors managed to address one set of problems but at the same time create a series of new ones. In other words, a single case study such as this can show how the problem of organizing coercion operates as a mechanism, with distinct causes and consequences over discrete periods of time.<sup>1</sup>

Another important benefit of a single case study is to serve as a test for the large body of already accumulated knowledge about the particular case (Eckstein 1975; Ragin 1997; Mahoney 1999b). There has been a great deal written about the military regime in Chile and about its main historical turning points, including the creation some of its major coercive institutions. My aim in this dissertation is not to contribute another history of the regime, nor to document the discovery of a source of previously untapped

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<sup>1</sup> On mechanisms, see Bennett(1999), Hedström and Swedberg (1998), and Tilly (2000a; 2000b).

data. I focus primarily on one five-year period of significant institutional flux; and while I present a large amount of empirical material, much of it new (including archival material and interviews with key decision makers), a lot of it is drawn from sources that are already known.

Instead, primarily by tests of alternative hypotheses and counterfactual analysis, this dissertation makes inferences about the causes behind the differences and shifts in the organization of coercion. The authoritarian regime in Chile is a case most analysts assume can be satisfactorily explained by existing arguments, such as international pressures, factionalism within the regime, or personal power accumulation by Pinochet. But these arguments have not been subjected to a systematic test. In some cases, others' hypotheses do a reasonable job of explaining some aspects of the organization of coercion, or the shift from one period to another, but they fall short in other aspects. Also, although I will attempt to convince the reader that my own explanations are powerful – that they can explain more elements and outcomes than others can – I will show that they also have limitations. They do a better job in some cases than in others.

Through the use of counterfactual analysis,<sup>2</sup> I argue that in some cases moderate changes in the organization of coercion could have taken the Chilean regime down very different paths. Consideration of various alternatives and tradeoffs in the organization of coercion during a formative period of the Chilean dictatorship enriches our understanding of the causes and consequences of the alternatives that were adopted.

One hazard of a single case study is the danger of focusing on a mechanism that may be highly significant in one case but not in others (Lieberson 1992; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994).<sup>3</sup> The organization of coercion in Chile is no doubt a fascinating topic in its own right. But this dissertation will largely fail if it does not convince the reader that the problem exists in other cases beyond Chile, and that the building blocks I use to analyze the Chilean case can be applied elsewhere.

I have taken several steps to avert this hazard. Most importantly, the dissertation is grounded in a theoretical framework, which I present in Chapter 1, built around categories that are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive (Mahoney 1999a: 1157). There is a limited set of organizational options that are clearly distinct from one another, and all conceivable cases can be plotted as having more of one or less of another. Thus we can compare and contrast the organization of coercion across different periods and cases.

The theoretical starting point for this framework is the observation that no ruler can rule alone. Ruling involves delegation of some sort, which in turn requires rulers to monitor the operations and behavior of their agents. A ruler needs to gather information to assess agents' behavior and to evaluate whether it conforms to his goals. Rulers can choose to gather information from within their own organization through such mechanisms as reports or databases; from outside information sources such as the press, the courts, or watchdog groups; or through some combination of the two. I call the first strategy internal and the second external monitoring. Plotting degrees of internal and external monitoring along vertical and horizontal axes (using criteria such as the quality and frequency of reporting) yields a readily measurable typology of the different

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<sup>2</sup> For various perspectives on counterfactual analysis, see Lebow (2001), Tetlock and Belkin (1996), and Stalnaker (1996).

<sup>3</sup> This is the “external validity” problem (see Kirk and Miller 1986: 9-52; Kritzer 1996).



organizational options, which we can use to analyze the organization of coercion across different cases.<sup>4</sup>

There are costs and benefits to different monitoring choices. For example, reliance on only one overarching internal monitoring source makes rulers vulnerable to the problem of monitoring the monitor. By contrast, external monitoring requires rulers to accept limitations on their power, by tolerating the activities of other groups and institutions outside the executive that may or may not support the ruler. The costs and benefits of different monitoring options can prompt rulers to shift from one to another and back again.

The bulk of the thesis (Chapters 2 through 7) relies on this framework to analyze the development of the organization of coercion in Chile after the 1973 coup. Chapter 2 provides historical background to the organization of coercion after the coup. It describes breakdowns in hierarchy, ideological conflicts inside the military prior to the coup, as well as the confusion over which powers the Junta had taken as a result of the coup. Chapter 3 shows that even though the military took over the country quickly and with overwhelming force, during the first several months after the coup the measured levels of internal and external monitoring indicated organizational problems. Not surprisingly, given the extent to which the armed forces used executive power to control the state and the country, there was a low level of external monitoring of state coercion. More of a surprise, given the long-standing traditions of military discipline and hierarchy, is the absence of a high level of internal monitoring.

The new military regime ran into trouble when the different branches of the armed forces failed to coordinate their activities in crucial areas. Often one branch did not know what the other was doing, or which prisoners were being held where. Even inside the army, the largest and most powerful branch, officers disagreed on such key issues as whether they were in a state of war. In some places local commanders took a hard line against opponents and prisoners, while in others they adhered to strict codes of conduct. These led to divisive internal fights over how to apply coercion, made all the more threatening amid growing international pressure against the new regime over its many human rights violations.

By early 1974, Chapters 4 and 5 show, the organization and application of coercion shifted dramatically. Coercion came under tighter central control under a single new agency, the *Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional* (DINA), which operated until 1977. The DINA was given broad powers not only to carry out its own operations, but also to oversee those of the other branches of the military and the police. Under the DINA, coercion was applied more consistently according to the regime's goals. Fewer people were targeted, and assassinations were carried out in a much more strategically secretive manner. The DINA carried out hundreds of "disappearances," which permitted the regime to claim plausible deniability for the human rights violations.

A close analysis of internal monitoring under the DINA, however, reveals only a slight increase. The DINA centralized functions and was given broad powers, but did not achieve very high levels of internal monitoring. As it grew in power and as its operations broadened in scope (extending to acts of international terrorism in South and North

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<sup>4</sup> The framework thus permits nominal and ordinal comparisons, which can be used to build systematic historical narratives (Mahoney 1999a).

America, as well as in Europe), the DINA ran amok. Policing the police became an increasingly urgent problem for the regime.

External monitoring increased somewhat during this time, making the DINA's excesses all the more apparent. Groups of human rights lawyers working under the protection of the Church presented hundreds of *recursos de amparo*<sup>5</sup> for those who had been detained by the regime. Even though the courts ignored the overwhelming majority of these petitions, all the information collected by human rights groups on each of the cases – gathered from witness accounts and from former prisoners – formed the basis for what increasingly became the most systematic record of the regime's coercive activities. Observers inside Chile and abroad relied on this information to report on human rights violations and to pressure the regime.

Chapter 6 analyzes a second shift in the organization of coercion, which took place from 1977-78. In 1977 the DINA was replaced by a different institution, the *Central Nacional de Informaciones* (CNI). At first the old DINA team also led the CNI. But in 1978 this team fell from power, restrictions on civil liberties were relaxed, and the CNI adopted a new *modus operandi*. It came under tighter central control and worked under stricter civilian supervision inside the regime.

This shift is commonly explained as a response to international pressures (especially from the U.S., now pursuing a more aggressive human rights policy under Jimmy Carter), or as a result of the push by soft-liners to institutionalize the regime, or both. However, an analysis of the organization of coercion suggests a more complex set of factors. The broad political-level factors such as the changing balance of power among international or domestic actors, or the push to institutionalize the regime, at best explain *why* the regime may have been interested in reorganizing coercion. They fail to provide an adequate account for *how* this reorganization was carried out, or for *which direction* it took.

Chapter 7 shows that internal monitoring increased after 1978, as the regime imposed greater constraints on the CNI and supervised its activities more closely. (For example, instead of reporting directly to the President, as the DINA had done, the CNI reported to a civilian Minister of Interior.) More surprisingly, the levels of external monitoring also increased after this time, with new and unexpected consequences. New human rights organizations joined the Church-based groups in monitoring coercion, and in some cases established unprecedented information-sharing networks with the CNI itself.

The framework I have developed synthesizes various competing explanations into a mechanism that explains the different institutional patterns and the shifts from one to another. In each period, the regime leadership and other actors struggled with concrete organizational problems, and tried different solutions. Factors such as international pressure or domestic power struggles among elites may explain some aspects of each shift, such as timing or some of the personnel changes. But these factors fail to account for other aspects, such as increasing links between human rights groups and the coercive institutions themselves.

In the Conclusion I compare the organization of coercion in Chile with three other authoritarian regimes: Argentina during the *Proceso de reorganización nacional* (1976-

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<sup>5</sup> The *recurso de amparo* is a legal instrument akin to habeas corpus. See Chapter 3.

82), East Germany, and South Africa under apartheid. Argentina and East Germany shared similarly low levels of external monitoring, but sharply different levels of internal monitoring: very low in Argentina and very high in East Germany. By contrast, in South Africa, particularly after the Soweto uprisings of the 1970s, the regime displayed a similar level of external monitoring as Chile's did, with some of the same consequences. The judiciary and the media challenged the *apartheid* regime's coercive practices; and the regime at first secretly and later more openly shared information on coercion, and coordinated activities with the opposition.

Because I have focused only on authoritarian regimes, none of these cases displays an especially high level of external monitoring. And because I have focused only on some authoritarian regimes (and on only one case in depth) I have not covered all the possible combinations that varying levels of internal and external monitoring might yield. But as I argue in the Conclusion, there is no reason why the framework could not be applied to a range of other cases, including democratic as well as authoritarian regimes. Indeed, this dissertation provides what is simply the foundation for a more systematic analysis of the variation in the organization of coercion, its causes, and consequences.

## 1. THE COERCION PROBLEM

While there has been a great deal written about various coercive practices in different authoritarian regimes,<sup>6</sup> the *organization* of coercion has not received attention as a discrete problem. Therefore, in the absence of a well-formed literature, in the first section of this chapter I reconstruct alternative hypotheses and approaches from implicit or explicit arguments and assumptions in a range of available literatures, and I analyze their relative strengths and weaknesses. The second section presents an alternative framework to analyze the organization of coercion. Identifying and measuring the tools and conditions for delegation and for monitoring agents' performance yields a matrix of a limited set of organizational alternatives. In the final two sections I analyze the organizational characteristics of the different alternatives, as well as their attendant tradeoffs.

### Alternative hypotheses on coercion

First, a clarification on what this thesis is not. It is not a thesis about why the military or the police take power. Political interventions by the armed forces in many parts of the world during the 1960s and 70s spurred scholarly interest on this problem (Stepan 1971; O'Donnell 1973; Collier 1979; Lowenthal and Fitch 1986). In some cases I refer to these works, but overall this literature is concerned with a much broader problem than what I want to tackle here. Whereas this literature asks why military forces take power, I am concerned with how they deal with one specific problem – organizing coercion – once they have it.

This is also not a thesis about the role of coercion in state-building, a problem most centrally associated with the work of Charles Tilly (Tilly and Ardant 1975; Tilly 1992). Tilly's work has (deservedly) been very influential. However, it focuses on a different level of analysis, namely the effects of coercion on the process of state formation in the long run, and vice-versa ("states make war and war makes states").<sup>7</sup> By contrast, I am concerned with both a narrower and a broader problem. On the one hand, I want to understand how political regimes organize coercive institutions – a political dynamic of far shorter duration than the processes Tilly describes. And on the other, I also want to understand the general organizational alternatives available, their tradeoffs, and consequences.

With this in mind, there are three broad perspectives on the problem of coercion in authoritarian regimes: that changing patterns of coercion are functional to a regime or to the ruler's interest, to the shifting power of ruling subgroups or adversaries, or to a regime's ideological mission. I discuss each one in turn.

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<sup>6</sup> To provide just one example of this vast literature, there is a recent growing literature on "fear" in Latin American societies, a problem rooted partly in coercive practices during authoritarian regimes (Politzer 1985; Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 140-65; Corradi, Weiss Fagen, and Garretón 1992; Graziano 1992; Feitlowitz 1998; Koonings and Kruijt 1999; Méndez, O'Donnell, and Pinheiro 1999).

<sup>7</sup> Tilly's recent work has been more directly concerned with organizational problems (Tilly 2000c).

*Inherent Logic of Authoritarian Regimes*

The first broad perspective is grounded in the differences between authoritarian regimes as systems of government and more open or pluralistic systems. There are several such differences. One is that dictatorships – by definition – have strong leaders in the executive who “dictate” outcomes, unconstrained by the need to negotiate with other branches of the state, or indeed with any other sectors in society (Jackson and Rosberg 1982; Remmer 1991; Chehabi and Linz 1998; Hollander 1999). The organization of coercion from this perspective is thus simply a function of the leader’s will. Rulers get what they want. Whatever organizations are present – for instance a powerful secret police or a set of death squads – must exist because the leader must have wanted to create it.

A different variation of the regime logic idea holds that the exigencies of rule, especially when power is taken by force, mandate distinct patterns of coercion. Machiavelli describes such a pattern when he advises Lorenzo de Médici to be aware that Princes must commit their cruelties well, and must do so early during their rule:

Well committed [cruelties] may be called those (if it possible to use the word well of evil) which are perpetuated once for the need of securing one’s self, and which afterwards are not persisted in, but are exchanged for measures as useful to the subjects as possible. ... Whence it is to be noted, that in taking a state the conqueror must arrange to commit all his cruelties at once, so as not to have to recur to them every day, and so as to be able, by not making fresh changes, to reassure people and win them over by benefiting them. Whoever acts otherwise, either by through timidity or bad counsels, is always obliged to stand with knife in hand, and can never depend on his subjects, because they, owing to continually fresh injuries, are unable to depend on him. For injuries should be done all together, so that being less tasted, they will give less offence. Benefits should be granted little by little, so that they may be better enjoyed....  
(Machiavelli 1950: 35).

There are contemporary echoes of this idea. Friedrich and Brzezinski argue that even where “totalitarian” regimes may come to power without violence, once they reach their full development (after the creation of a totalitarian ideology, movement, and party), they need to use violence to establish hegemony:

The point of time when the totalitarian government emerges may be reasonably fixed and delimited. It is that point at which the leadership sees itself obliged to employ open and legally unadorned violence for maintaining itself, particularly against internal opposition due to ideological dissensions arising from within the movement’s own ranks (Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965 (1956): 369).

Dallin and Breslauer develop this idea further, arguing that “terror” in communist systems progresses through clear historical stages, each one fulfilling a discrete function and setting the stage for the next:

In the period immediately following the seizure of power, especially in relatively poor and underdeveloped countries, a revolutionary regime tends to rely heavily on coercion to consolidate its power, by effectively eliminating actual and potential enemies within the territory under its control and by deterring hostile acts. ... At [a] later stage systematic, purposive terror tends to become a dominant feature of the system: fear becomes an organizing principle of “permanent revolution”.... Here terror comes to serve the two major

objectives of the regime: on the one hand, political control, with the elites striving for a monopoly of the instruments of control, and, on the other, change, with the Communist leadership characteristically attempting to carry out drastic transformations of the society, the economy, and the citizen. ... Over time, however, the relative priority of the two objectives – control and change – tends to shift, and so does the place of political terror relative to other means that can serve the same functions (Dallin and Breslauer 1970: 5-9).

Garretón, referring generally to Latin American authoritarian regimes, also argues that they proceed through distinct stages. At first they need to consolidate their newly-seized power by using force to repress their enemies, while in the latter stages they attempt to institutionalize their vision of society by engaging more directly in different kinds of political negotiations with different interests in society (Garretón 1989: 90-97).

In short, even though the agenda might vary in different cases, coercion tends to follow a timetable that varies according to the requirements of hegemony and the specific goals that rulers want to pursue once in power, as well as their need to build legitimacy.

This view no doubt has merits. Lacking the legitimacy of tradition or charisma, let alone the rule of law, regimes that come to power by force must continuously worry about the balance between hegemony and legitimacy. From this perspective, there is a benefit to what might be called early deterrence, as a way to keep both supporters and opponents in line. The organization of coercion would shift from an initial period where a ruler makes sure to “commit all his cruelties at once,” followed by a more restrained period during which coercion is applied in lighter fashion. Coercion restraint after an initial period would thus be the result not simply of the leader’s whim, but would occur because of an essential logic of governance in such a regime.

The main problem with this kind of explanation, however, is that it is difficult to know a strongman’s will except through his actions, but not all outcomes are necessarily the product of will. Sometimes there are unintended outcomes. For example, rulers often can’t fully control what their agents do. Sometimes their agents do less than desired, other times more, and other times they do quite different things than the ruler intends. There is rarely an automatic or fluid translation of a ruler’s political interest or will into a particular institutional outcome.

Moreover, these theories have not developed robust indicators of will independent of the observed outcomes that pertain to coercion. For example, such indicators would include consistent and sustained observations of a range of intentions and actions that encompass coercion. Thus, attempts to deduce will from outcomes give the latter too much weight as an indicator of the former, meaning that explanations quickly become tautologies. In the same vein, legitimacy crises arise when conflict arises, but not all conflict is about legitimacy. Governments normally run into many kinds of conflicts over their policies, as they attempt to mobilize resources or reconcile different interests. It is difficult to distinguish which is legitimacy conflict and which is simply a more routine sort of conflict that is likely to arise as a normal part of governance.

With regard to early deterrence, Machiavelli is probably right, but his warning serves better as advice than as explanation. Empirically, coercion does not always follow early deterrence. In some of the most important dictatorships of the twentieth century we observed very different patterns. Hitler came to power with very little force and escalated repression as his regime developed. In the Soviet Union and China periods of violence and peace have fluctuated broadly, and repression in Chile, as we will observe,

varied across time and space in ways not predicted by the idea of an inherent regime logic.

### *Balance of Power*

Another possibility is that the organization of coercion varies according to the balance of power among different actors or institutions, including the balance of power between sectors inside the ruling circle. For instance, an explanation for the creation of a given institution such as a secret police force might focus on how the institution served the interest of a particular actor or group.

Just as the balance of power among different sectors of the ruling circle might account for the expansion of the role of coercive institutions, so could it account for restraint in the levels of coercion or in the functions of the coercive institutions. Internal struggles would result in restraint when those with an interest in restraint gain control over those with an interest in higher levels of repression. In other words, when soft-liners win out over hard-liners (Garretón 1983; Arriagada 1986; Garretón 1986; O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986; Huneeus 1987; Malloy and Seligson 1987; Ahumada et al. 1989; Huneeus 2000a).

A different kind of power struggle explanation would focus, more widely, on the tensions between supporters of the regime and the ruler or ruling circles. For instance, regime sympathizers might agree with the basic premise of a strong dictatorship that imposes order and represses its enemies, but prefer a “dictatorship lite” that stays within the bounds of what they view as civilized behavior. In Chile, for example, conservative lawyer Jaime Guzmán, a key civilian advisor to the Junta, argued that he thought the dictatorship was a “wild bucking horse” (*un caballo chúcaro*) that needed to be tamed.<sup>8</sup> Sergio Fernández (the first civilian named to the post of Interior Minister, in 1978), wrote that by the end of the 1970s the “extralimitations on power” during the early years of the dictatorship were a thing of the past, and the regime was on course toward “normalization” (Fernández 1994).

Changes in the organization of coercion might also reflect power struggles between the regime and the opposition sectors in civil society. In some cases, rulers resort to force in the face of opposition unrest, in order to assert political control and restore (or impose) order.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, this is a more concrete explanation than regime logic for the violence military regimes use when they come to power in the first place.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, this view can account for fluctuations in violence. Once a regime is in power, growing opposition activities may result in further escalations of coercion, or in curbing the state's use of violence. For instance, a hard-line regime may opt to turn softer in the

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<sup>8</sup> Juan Pablo Moreno [jpmorex@YAHOO.COM] Sun, 12 Sep 1999 09:02:20 -0700 Chile-H Discussion Regarding the Chilean Social Sciences; <http://listserv.tamu.edu/cgi/wa?A2=ind9909B&L=chile-h&P=R8529>.

<sup>9</sup> Hibbs notes that “in nations where the burdens generated by social mobilization outrun the capabilities of sociopolitical institutions, political elites tend to use repression to as an alternative means of social control” (Hibbs 1973: 181), quoted in Stanley (1996: 15).

<sup>10</sup> A variation of this argument is the *Brumairian* Marxist: in a power struggle stalemate, the conditions are ripe for the takeover by a strong dictator who uses coercion to control and repress everyone (Stepan 1978: 22-23; Carnoy 1984: 52-54; Stanley 1996: 28-31).

face of massive unrest from opposition groups.<sup>11</sup>

Much of the democratization literature has tended to focus on these sorts of struggles. For example, these include the strategic interactions between hard-liners vs. soft-liners inside the regime (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Przeworski 1986), the regime vs. international actors (Keck and Sikkink 1998),<sup>12</sup> domestic actors (Drake and Jaksic 1991), or combinations between all of these (Mainwaring, Valenzuela, and O'Donnell 1992).

This view no doubt has strong merits. It would not be surprising to find evidence of power struggles at all levels behind efforts to restrain coercion, or indeed behind any other major policy shift in dictatorships or in other regimes. However, in practice those who refer to these views tend to neglect to provide measures of an actor's or a group's power that are independent of the outcome of the power struggle itself. It is no doubt difficult to measure a given actor's or group's power independent of an outcome. We tend to observe who is more powerful because in the end they usually win out over the less powerful. But power need not be expressed only through struggles. Indeed, the greatest power may be brought to bear in the prevention of a struggle. Or a struggle, even a victorious one, may be a sign of weakness. Without independent indicators of power, balance of power theory is thin. When winners lose, or when losers win, we are forced to conclude that the strong were weak and the weak were strong. At best, we are always playing catch-up with whatever just happened.<sup>13</sup>

### *Ideology and Mission*

A relatively common explanation for the levels and manner of violence carried out by various authoritarian regimes makes reference to their ideology. Communist regimes are likely to pursue certain kinds of goals and repress certain kinds of enemies, for example, and the same is true for other regimes based on other ideologies (Arendt 1973: 468-79; Aron 1990: 178-91; Rummel 1992; Rummel 1994; Rummel 1996).

I will not discuss all ideological variations in detail, but focus instead on one particular example, which I take to be representative of this sort of argument. Accounts for the levels and kinds of violence in the various military dictatorships in Latin American make reference to their ideology. According to this view, the kinds of attacks against communists and other leftists have their roots in a long history of military anticommunism as well as in counterinsurgency doctrines imported largely from the US.<sup>14</sup> These attacks were expected given the Cold War and the Communist support of anti-American guerrilla movements, the professional influence of the US on Latin

<sup>11</sup> For good accounts of pressures on the Chilean dictatorship "from below", see Drake and Jaksic (1991), Frühling (1992), Oxhorn (1995), and Schneider (1995).

<sup>12</sup> See also Jacoby (Jacoby 1986). For an evaluation of U.S. policies in Chile see Sigmund (Sigmund 1993).

<sup>13</sup> In international relations, balance of power theories have been constructed with far more attention to indicators of power that are independent of the outcomes (see Bull 1965; Morgenthau 1973; Bull 1977).

<sup>14</sup> South American militaries, especially in Argentina and Brazil, were influenced by French counterinsurgency methods developed during the wars in Indonesia and Algeria (Trinquier 1980; Arriagada 1986; Lopez 1986; Loveman and Davies Jr. 1997). In a variation of the ideology of national security argument, Pion-Berlin argues that violence is associated with a rise in monetarism as a form of economic orthodoxy. Monetarism as a policy required repression to ensure political (and hence economic) stability and predictability (Pion-Berlin 1989).



American militaries,<sup>15</sup> and the history of these institutions' anti-communism.

In two representative statements, Weiss Fagen highlights US influence on Latin American military training, and Garretón suggests that the coordinated and comprehensive actions against communists could not have been achieved without the unifying ideology of national security that shifted the military's focus to internal security:

Counterinsurgency doctrines developed logically from the nineteenth-century military ideology brought to the Southern Cone countries of Latin America by way of German military training. ... Latin American leaders also paid keen attention to the French counterinsurgency methods developed in Algeria during the 1950s. ... But, above all, U.S. influence became predominant. Thanks to U.S. military and police assistance and training programs, an entire generation of Latin American military officers were armed, trained, and "professionalized". During the 1960s, following the Cuban Revolution, U.S.-funded training featured counterinsurgency doctrines, and regional collective security arrangements were redirected toward internal security (Weiss Fagen 1992: 42-43).

The goals of this training are systematic indoctrination, standardization of perspectives, and conscious acceptance of the geopolitical and strategic options of the dominant power, that is to say, its legitimation. Such goals cannot be achieved without recourse to a systematic, homogeneous body of thought that provides a vehicle for these options and builds a sense of identity around a historical mission. This body of thought is national security doctrine. One need only consider the similarities in form and content in the versions of national security doctrine guiding various Latin American armed forces to confirm that they are the result of a systematic, internalized indoctrination (Garretón 1989: 73).

This view suggests that countries whose armed forces have been ideologically primed for anticommunism and counterinsurgency are likely to reflect this in practice. For instance, it would predict that operations are likely to become standardized according to the (ideologically defined) counterinsurgency requirements of anti-communism.

But what exactly does it mean for an ideology to be reflected in practice? While ideology may help explain certain aspects of the behavior of coercive institutions, such as its leaders' motivations or the specific groups targeted, it tells us very little about a variety of important organizational questions. Does the ideology of anticommunism and counterinsurgency require specialized units, a more general training and slant across the existing units, or both?<sup>16</sup>

As I argue in chapter two, the ideologies of anticommunism and counterinsurgency were not a seamless and uncontradictory whole. Very often these ideas served more to confuse matters within the armed forces than to give them a clear roadmap of what to do. For instance, in the case of Chile, one major question that remained unanswered when the armed forces took power was the division of labor

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<sup>15</sup> Stepan distinguishes between old and new military professionalism. The former focused military institutions on the dangers posed by external enemies, while the latter focused on internal dangers (Stepan 1986).

<sup>16</sup> The armed forces in Chile and Argentina, for instance, experienced very similar ideological influences (in terms of the ideas of national security, anti-communism, and counterinsurgency). But in each country the military in power adopted radically different organizational practices. Chile created a specialized powerful counterinsurgency unit, while in Argentina each branch of the armed forces practiced this.

between the military and the police. How this question is resolved can have profound effects in the manner in which coercion is applied.<sup>17</sup>

A further problem is that institutions are often influenced by more than one idea. Referring again to the Latin American militaries, while the history of anticommunism and counterinsurgency ideas is well known, it is also possible to mine the histories of these institutions for many *other* influences and ideas that run in very opposite directions. For instance, the Chilean military also has a long history of respecting democracy and the constitution.<sup>18</sup>

A reasonable retort might be that this view does not negate the possibility of competing and sometimes contradictory ideologies. Complex institutions with long histories are not necessarily monolithic, and different ideologies and streams of thought are possible. But while this may be the case, we are left with the question of explaining why one ideology wins out over another. Is it because it is somehow more fundamental as an ideology? Or do certain ideologies win out because of a question of power?

First, determining whether an ideology is more or less fundamental to an institution turns out to be a difficult affair. The only sure-fire way to do it is by looking at outcomes. We know that an ideology is fundamental because it wins out in the end, in the sense that it succeeds in imposing itself as a framework for the institution. But explaining outcomes in terms of ideology, or what people think, is a through-the-looking-glass kind of game that is also fraught with observation biases. People think many things; they often contradict themselves, and sometimes they change their minds. Communism in Eastern Europe was thought to be fundamental. It was very deeply entrenched as an ideology, and enjoyed a high degree of legitimacy (Garton Ash 1990a; Garton Ash 1990b; Maier 1997; Strayer 1998; Baxandall 2000). But its breakdown now suggests that it may not have been so deeply entrenched. Only the outcome tells us, in hindsight, about the ideology. Does the breakdown of Communism mean that it was not fundamental as an ideology? Or that it stopped being fundamental at some point? These are the kinds of questions raised by taking this turn, and it is not clear they lead to fruitful or useful kinds of answers.

We can illustrate the problems with these explanations by reference to an example central to this thesis: Pinochet, the most powerful and important figure during the dictatorship (and arguably the most powerful Chilean president in history), was not overtly anticommunist until the day of the coup. Moreover, many of the less powerful figures were much more overtly motivated by the ideology of anticommunism than Pinochet (Arriagada 1988; Huneeus 1988).

Even though the military ideology hypothesis can no doubt shed light on many of the military's actions, ideology alone is unsatisfactory as an account. Indeed, taken as a whole, the same is true for each of these three hypotheses. None is altogether incorrect.

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<sup>17</sup> The army and the police are trained to apply coercion in different manners, using different weaponry and with different ends. Armies aim to win wars through the total defeat of enemy forces using heavier weaponry. Police forces aim to control violence, with far lighter weaponry (Bayley 1975; Bayley 1985; Marenin 1990; Brewer 1996; Chevigny 1999). The police could, of course, assassinate opponents like the army, but its *modus operandi* is likely to be different. If we want to explain coercion on the ground as an outcome, these differences matter.

<sup>18</sup> Although this should not be exaggerated. The 1891 Civil War pitted the army-supported executive against the navy-supported legislative powers, with the latter emerging victorious. In the 1920s, also, the military took power.

The particular dynamics of authoritarian rule, power struggles, and ideology are surely important aspects of how different regimes organize coercion and of how these organizations evolve over time. But none of these explanations alone appears sufficient.

But besides the methodological problems I have highlighted (such as observation bias and indicators of the particular factors independent of the outcomes), there are two more serious shortcomings with these hypotheses. The first is that each presupposes that the organization of coercion is a by-product of other factors. It is either a function of the historical development of an authoritarian regime, of the struggle for power among various groups and actors, or of the ideology of the military as its leaders pursue various goals and policies. None focuses on coercion itself as a political outcome independent of other historical, strategic, or ideological factors.

The second shortcoming is that all three hypotheses offer what is at best a very rough account of the products of coercion: fluctuations in levels, intensity, or targeting of coercion. None offers a systematic explanation for the variation in the *institutions* of coercion. Even if they can answer some of the important why questions about why certain groups are targeted, or why intensity fluctuates, they can do little to answer the equally important how questions about the implementation of particular goals and strategies. It is not reasonable to assume that rulers or regimes are always able to do what they want efficiently and effectively.

As I have pointed out, in some cases executives build highly centralized organizations, and in other cases coercion is carried out in a far more decentralized fashion. In some cases the coercive organizations operate without any institutional restraints, and in other cases there are at least some forms of checks and balances built in. None of the hypotheses discussed thus far addresses these kinds of basic institutional variations.

By contrast, this dissertation makes two separate but related central claims:

- 1) The principal claim is that coercion does not simply happen as a by-product of other factors, but must, instead, be organized.
- 2) The secondary claim is that authoritarian rulers have a limited set of organizational options, with marked political tradeoffs (costs and benefits).

The organization of coercion, as a result, is an unavoidable problem of governance. Institutional variation in the patterns of coercion results from differences in rulers' choices as they resolve concrete organizational problems in pursuit of their goals and policies. In the following section, I present a framework that more systematically explains these claims.

### **The Coercion Problem**

Dictatorships are political regimes that tend to use coercion much more freely than democratic governments in order to pursue their goals. But organizing coercion presents rulers with a series of dilemmas. Very generally, rulers need to address some of the following questions: How much force to use against enemies and to maintain domestic

order? Which institutions to rely on and how much power to give them? How to ensure that the levels and kinds of coercion do not undermine support for the regime or for its political goals?

No ruler, in other words, rules alone. All rulers must necessarily rely on others to carry out their commands. They must delegate. But delegating to agents or institutions complicates the business of ruling because rulers cannot always directly observe their agents' actions. How do rulers ensure that agents perform in a manner consistent with the ruler's goals? Or that the agents carry out the ruler's goals and not their own? That they do the job at all? When agents operate outside the principals' direct oversight the latter must rely on some sort of information-gathering mechanism to know whether they are doing their job. Agents often have an incentive to withhold information from their superiors. For instance, the agent may wish to withhold information about his qualifications, or about whether he is working as hard as or in the way that the superior wants (Jervis 1976; Wilson 1989: 155; Allison and Zelikow 1999).

Principal-agent theory addresses these problems by analyzing how different incentives and cost-benefit calculations influence actors' choices and shape economic and political outcomes (Alchian and Demsetz 1973; Ross 1973; Calvert, McCubbins, and Weingast 1989; Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991; Krehbiel 1991; Macey 1992; McCubbins and Weingast 1984; Wilson 1989). Wilson points out that agency problems are more likely to appear in political than in economic institutions. First, the output of the agency is likely to be more vague. Instead of producing car parts, for instance, a government agent may be charged with the "welfare" of a given group. Second, government agents are likely to have many principals, sometimes with confusing or contradictory jurisdiction. And third, government agents are likely to have their own political preferences (Wilson 1989).

At first pass, it also seems reasonable to expect that principal-agent problems are more likely to occur in democratic regimes than in dictatorships. The reason is that in a regime with embedded multiple interests, such as a democracy, there is more likely to be a divergence between the interests of the principal and those of the agent. By contrast, a reasonable expectation is that dictatorships, particularly highly centralized ones, might have less trouble carrying out their goals than democracies. Instead of having to account for myriad embedded interests, dictators can simply issue orders in the expectation that they will be followed.

Indeed, that is often one of the key reasons that dictators themselves give to justify taking power: that they are better able than democrats to "get things done." Moreover, the "Big Brother" metaphor is a common shorthand for many dictatorship's powers. They are thought (at least in popular discussion) to be omniscient, to have a system of surveillance that permits them to know everything about anyone.

When scrutinized carefully, however, these conjectures turn out to be less than straightforward. First, it is true that in authoritarian regimes superiors tend to have a relatively greater amount of power over agents' careers and sometimes over their lives. This results in greater incentives to obey orders, to be sure, by imposing stiff penalties for disobeying. But these same penalties also greatly increase the stakes, resulting in greater incentives to hide the mistakes and transgressions that do occur, for fear of far more severe consequences.

And second, the very nature of authoritarianism as a closed regime means that

there are likely to be fewer independent sources – such as free courts, parties, press, or social groups – that can accurately report on agents’ performance and act a feedback mechanism to the ruler. (If these institutions existed, and if they were free, the regime would not be authoritarian.) The absence of accountability mechanisms in authoritarian regimes is likely to multiply principal-agent problems. Dictators may be power-full, in other words, but information-poor.

Orwell got it only partly right. Dictators are indeed obsessed with “knowing” about their agents and citizens, and in extreme cases Big Brother pries into all aspects of citizens’ private lives. But the existence of the dictatorship’s ubiquitous peering gaze need not be a signal of its omnipotence. Instead, this obsession signals the multiple difficulties these regimes face in gathering information.

To sum up, in a system with higher punishments for transgressions there are likely to be more disincentives to accurate reporting. Monitoring agents’ performance is critical, but in authoritarian regimes, accurate monitoring is unlikely. There are good reasons to believe that in these regimes, therefore, gathering information on agents’ performance is likely to be *more* difficult than in more open regimes.

These differences become apparent when we examine how monitoring can occur. McCubbins and Weingast describe two possible monitoring strategies: “police patrols” and “fire alarms” (McCubbins and Weingast 1984). The first refers to a specialized set of agents or agencies created by the ruler for the purpose of monitoring the performance of other administrative agents or agencies. The second refers to reliance on information provided from the population at large, for instance in the form of complaints about a given institution or set of agents. In police patrol monitoring special agents seek out information on agents’ performance. In fire alarm monitoring special agents or institutions may collect and systematize information, but the “eyes and ears” are the population at large who call attention to specific agents’ performance.<sup>19</sup>

I adopt the distinction between these two kinds of monitoring, but assign them different labels. I call police patrols “internal monitoring” and fire alarms “external monitoring.” In my view, these labels better capture an important aspect of the difference between the two kinds of monitoring; namely the different relationship of each to the ruler. Internal monitoring refers to specialized agencies created within the boundaries of the bureaucracy and still under the control of the ruler, while external monitoring relies on information from outside the bureaucracy and outside the ruler’s direct executive control.<sup>20</sup> This can involve a range of institutions, from other branches of the state to groups in society at large that gather and publish information on the operations of the various agents.

The distinction between internal and external monitoring also has a strong resonance in long-standing debates over the merits of internal vs. external review in ensuring police accountability:

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<sup>19</sup> The distinction can also refer to ex-ante vs. ex-post monitoring by the same organization, such as a congressional committee. In police patrol monitoring, members of Congress actively pursue (ex-ante) information on agencies’ performance, while in fire alarm monitoring they wait for information on an agency’s behavior (e.g. a misdeed or a transgression) to reach them from other sources.

<sup>20</sup> Rosberg, in an analysis of the appearance of independent courts under Nasser’s authoritarian regime in Egypt, adopts the same McCubbins and Schwartz framework but with his own terminology. Police patrols are centralized monitors and fire alarms are decentralized monitors (Rosberg 1995).

Internal review involves police oversight of police; commanding officers and administrators investigate the public's complaints of police corruption, abuse, and violence and mete out appropriate discipline. External review typically involves either government-appointed administrators, civilian review boards, or the creation of politically powerful blue-ribbon committees of inquiry (such as in South Africa after the 1976 Soweto riots, Russia after the 1991 coup, and Los Angeles after the Rodney King beating) (Tanner 2000: 116).

The proponents of internal review typically argue that those who are most familiar with the operational details of police work (such as other police officers) are best equipped to carry out investigations. Moreover, supervisors are especially well equipped to mete out punishments to agents in the form of reassignment to undesirable posts, or denial of career advancement. By contrast, proponents of external review point out that outsiders are likely to enjoy greater legitimacy, and the information they gather is likely to be more trustworthy. Officers can find themselves torn when investigating fellow officers, a position that can compromise their investigations (Chevigny 1995: 85-116; Tanner 2000: 116-17).

In the following sections, I describe internal and external monitoring in greater depth, providing criteria to measure their degree. These are proxies at best, and I am only attempting to distinguish broadly between low, medium, and high monitoring levels.<sup>21</sup> Such a distinction is useful to analyze observed differences in institutional organization, and whether these differences correspond to given tradeoffs as well as organizational strategies and choices. In later chapters, I use these criteria to analyze the quality of internal and external monitoring at different points in time in Chile and in other different cases.

### *Internal monitoring*

Principals normally lack constant direct oversight over agents. It is not possible for them to know 100% of their agents' operations 100% of the time. As a result, they need to rely on other ways to gather information on them. Internal monitoring (IM) is one available option. It refers to information gathered from within the principal's same organization. Principals can carry out internal monitoring themselves by personally observing agents' behavior, requesting reports, ensuring compliance with goals, and so on. If the number of agents is relatively small, it may be possible for principals themselves to monitor their operations. But as the number of agents grows, it becomes increasingly difficult for the principal to do this, and it is likely that principals will rely on a special kind of agent – a monitor – to gather information on the other agents' operations. The monitor may be assigned strictly monitoring duties or combine

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<sup>21</sup> I have drawn widely on various contemporary and classic works in political economy and sociology (in the theory of the firm, organization theory, and the sociology of information) in devising these criteria. For both internal and external monitoring, these include Mill (1955 (1859)), Coase (1937), Barnard (1938), Blau (1955), Crozier (1964; 1973), Williamson (1975), Aoki (1984), Crawford and Sobel (1982), Cross and Israelit (2000), Johnson and Libecap (1994), Krehbiel (1991), Sabel (1993), Stinchcombe (1990), Wilson (1989), and of course Weber (1946). The criteria are not faithful applications of any particular work. Instead, I have taken what appeared to be useful concepts and applied them to the problem of the organization of coercion as I have seen fit, and I have devised my own where this seemed appropriate. In the Conclusion I suggest ways to further sharpen these measures for further research.

monitoring and operational duties that resemble those of the other agents. But the main criterion that makes this monitor “internal” is that it remains under the principal’s direct control.

Principals are interested in the breadth and depth of information gathered. A central question is how well the monitor itself is performing: how well it is gathering the information it is supposed to gather. For instance, is the monitor reporting all the relevant cases? Is it reporting them in sufficient depth to allow the principal to make decisions for the purpose of pursuing his goals and implementing his policies? And are the reports regular and accurate?

It is possible to turn these questions into indicators that measure the extent to which a regime adopts internal monitoring of coercion. I have distinguished between two broad kinds of criteria: process and outcome. The first refers to procedural measures of how well the given organization performs, and the second to agents’ behavior that serve as indicators of the quality of monitoring.

For instance, process criteria include how frequently and how well agents report to their superiors on their activities (**IM 1**), as well as how regularly monitors report on agents’ behavior (**IM 2**). An information clearinghouse (**IM 3**), which receives and disseminates regular updates on operations to the relevant parties, also indicates that a ruler is relying on internal monitoring to keep track of agents’ operations.

Internal monitoring is also likely to be higher where the ratio between monitors and agents is higher (**IM 4**). It is reasonable to expect better information overall when more monitors are keeping track of fewer agents than when the situation is reversed. For simplicity, I have designated a ratio of  $<0$  (when the number of coercive agencies exceeds the number of monitoring bodies) as an indicator of low internal quality monitoring, and the reverse ( $>0$ ) as an indicator of high quality internal monitoring.

Outcome criteria include indicators such as how much trust principals have over their agents (**IM 5**), and how well intra- and inter-branch coordination takes place (**IM 6**). If principals do not trust their agents, this is likely to reflect an internal monitoring problem. The same is true when coordination is poor, where it is difficult for the relevant parties to obtain the information necessary to perform their duties. Also, corruption and coercion carried out for personal ends (such as revenge or extortion) are also likely to reflect a low level of internal monitoring, as agents place personal ends over organizational ones (**IM 7**).

For simplicity, I have distinguished very roughly between “low,” “medium,” and “high” internal monitoring, and Table 1 summarizes the list of different criteria that serve as indicators of each:

**Table 1: Internal Monitoring**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
<b><u>PROCESS</u></b>			
1. Internal reporting by agents to superiors on their activities	Reports either non-existent or ad-hoc and unreliable	Reports may be reliable but ad-hoc, or regular but unreliable	Agents deliver regular, detailed and accurate reports on their activities
2. Monitors' briefings on agents' operations to principals	No briefings	Ad-hoc briefings	Regular briefings
3. Information clearinghouse	None	Ad-hoc	Present
4. Number of overseers minus number of agents	< 0	= 0	> 0
<b><u>OUTCOME</u></b>			
5. Principal's self-reported trust in agents	Low	Medium	High
6. Intra- and inter-branch coordination	Poor, frequent delays; relevant parties often lack adequate & timely info	Moderate delays	No delays; parties usually have adequate & timely info to carry out ops
7. Corruption and coercion for personal ends	Frequent	Occasional	Rare



It is important to note that my criteria are different than simple measures of greater or lesser central control. Indeed, internal monitoring can be centralized or decentralized. It is possible for a principal to receive information from a variety of decentralized internal monitors or from a single centralized one. All things being equal, it is likely to be easier and more convenient for a principal to receive information from one centralized source than from many decentralized ones. But there can be significant disadvantages to centralization. For example, reliance on a single source of information can make the principal perilously dependent on a monitor that may be unreliable or put its own interests above those of the principal.

The level of centralization in any particular case can be captured by some of the indicators presented in Table 1. For example, centralization would almost necessarily imply an information clearinghouse that gathers and disseminates information to the relevant parties. Also, centralization is more likely when the total number of monitors (or overseers) remains low. If there is a single overseer, this is likely to reflect a high level of central control. But note, however, that this does not necessarily translate directly into a higher level of internal monitoring. An indicator of the level of monitoring is not the centralization of monitoring per se, but rather the ratio between the number of monitors and the number of agents. A single monitor may have to look after dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of different agents. It is reasonable to expect that having to keep track of a large number of agents is more difficult than having to keep track of a few. In this case, the level of centralization is a handicap to high levels of internal monitoring.

Also, in principle monitoring involves only information gathering, but in practice – particularly as regards coercive institutions – internal monitors can often take on operational functions as well. Secret police forces frequently do more than simply monitor others' operations: they carry out coercive operations of their own. No doubt combining functions can make some problems (such as dependence by the principal on a single monitor) all the more serious. But while many actual internal monitors combine both functions, it is important to separate them analytically.<sup>22</sup>

### *External monitoring*

The second information-gathering mechanism is external monitoring (EM). This involves information that comes from sources outside the direct control of the principal or ruler. One possibility is for the principal himself to gather such information. For example, principals in some cases allow appeals and information from the population at large, through special audiences or other mechanisms.<sup>23</sup> Another possibility is for the other branches of the state outside the executive (such as human rights commissions, ombudsmen, congressional committees, courts, special panels, etc., so long as they remain truly independent) to carry out external monitoring. Or independent groups in

<sup>22</sup> Indeed, this is a standard distinction between analytical and operative functions in intelligence agencies (Smith 1983; Zegart 1999; Rudgers 2000). The problem of who monitors the monitor, discussed later in the chapter, is inherent in internal monitoring as an information gathering strategy only. But it is made all the more significant (high-stakes) when monitoring involves not simply information gathering but coercive operations as well.

<sup>23</sup> For example, Argentine President Juan Perón, and especially his wife Evita, would routinely hold audiences where the people lined up to speak with them directly.

society, including the media and other agencies, could also do this.

As with internal monitoring, principals are concerned about the breadth and depth of information obtained through external monitoring. We may say that external monitoring is likely to be higher where there are more available sources of information on agents' operations, where these sources operate under fewer constraints, and where there are regular and reliable information sharing mechanisms between the executive and outsiders (Rosberg 1995: 41-51).

It is therefore also possible to measure the quality of external monitoring in the same way as internal monitoring. External monitoring is likely to be higher in cases where there is an ombudsman or interlocutor that outsiders can refer to and rely on, than in cases where no such nexus exists (**EM 1**). The interaction need not be formalized. Informal networks between insiders and outsiders indicate the presence of what in effect is information sharing between unofficial interlocutors and outside groups.

External monitoring is also likely to be higher in cases where outsiders have the legal right to obtain regular access to prisoners held by the coercive agency (**EM 2**). Also, a principal's level of trust in outsiders' reports can be an indicator of their quality (**EM 3**). Though this should be measured carefully. Principals may deeply mistrust outside observers' reports about coercive agents but the reports may in fact be accurate and useful. Or principals may claim in public to mistrust reports or agents themselves, while in private (especially if the reports are useful) they behave differently.

The presence of human rights agencies and how freely they are able to operate is an important gauge of external monitoring. The more agencies there are and the more freedom they have to operate, the higher the quality of external monitoring is likely to be (**EM 4**). The same is true with respect to independent media (**EM 5**). The media cannot serve as an external monitor unless they are free from restrictions and executive control.

Also, the other branches of the state can serve as external monitors. With respect to the legislative branch, a signal of high external monitoring would be the presence of standing committees to check the executive's use of coercion (**EM 6**). Ad-hoc (or nonexistent) committees indicate lower levels of external monitoring. By the same token, external monitoring is likely to be higher where the judiciary has full jurisdiction over relevant cases (**EM 7**). In situations where a country's supreme court abdicates jurisdiction over coercive institutions, for instance to the military courts, external monitoring is low.

And last, the quality of external monitoring is likely to be reflected in the quality of its freedom of information laws. The more that outsiders have legally-protected access to inside documentation and information, the more likely they will be able to monitor effectively (**EM 8**).

Table 2 summarizes these criteria:

**Table 2: External Monitoring**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
1. Interlocutor or ombudsman for outside groups	None	Only on ad-hoc basis	Present and accessible full-time
2. Outsiders' access to prisoners	None	Legal but not necessarily granted	Legal and granted
3. Principal's trust in monitor's reports	Low	Medium	High
4. Unofficial human rights agencies	Not present or forced underground	Present, may operate in public, but often repressed	Present, and their rights respected
5. Independent media	Not present	May be present, but not very effective	Present and effective
6. Legislative oversight	None	Ad-hoc	Standing committees
7. Judicial jurisdiction	None	Partial (some cases)	Full (all cases)
8. Freedom of information laws	None	Ad-hoc or ineffective	Broad and effective

Just as internal monitoring can be complicated when a monitor adopts both information-gathering and operational functions, something similar can be observed in external monitoring. Monitors can become political actors, carrying out operations on their own right. These are not necessarily coercive operations (except in some very rare circumstances, for instance, when other branches of the state besides the executive carry out coercion), but other forms of political activity related to coercion. Groups can carry out protests, or mobilize in support of or against the government. This can result in situations where the same group that monitors the executive's use of coercion may also be mobilizing against it. In extreme cases this can involve the use of coercion of its own. In less extreme cases this can implicate the executive's coercive organizations, which may be called upon to patrol a march, or to break up a demonstration by a group that may also be acting as a monitor.

### Variation According to IM and EM

Internal and external monitoring are not mutually exclusive options, and many regimes rely on combinations of both. Each can be considered an axis in the matrix of the organization of coercion. In some cases, coercion is organized with very low IM and EM, and in other cases with higher degrees of one or both.

Regimes that score very high on the IM axis and low on EM are those where the top executive leadership likely has a great deal of information on coercion, but this information is not available outside the executive. There are unlikely to be any strong groups or institutions that oversee the coercive power of the executive and that are independent of it. Executives have de facto and likely de jure monopoly control over the organization of coercion in a given territory in these cases, and can exercise this control unchallenged by other power centers.<sup>24</sup> I have labeled this space "**Bureaucratic coercion**" to denote the monopolization of information at the top of the leadership hierarchy and the fact that this type of coercion is likely to generate myriad reports and paperwork. In this area lie some of the best known examples of strong dictatorship in recent history, such as Nazi Germany, the USSR under Stalin, Iran under Reza Pahlavi (and the *Savak*), and East Germany (a case that I will discuss in the Conclusion).

By contrast, regimes that score low on both IM and EM are those where neither the leadership nor any other groups or institutions are likely to be very informed about the activities of the coercive agents. Where this information is available, it is at best patchy, and ad-hoc. Agents in this case operate with neither internal supervision nor the expectation of accountability to outside groups. For this reason I have labeled this "**Blind coercion**."

Diametrically opposite this space, scoring high on both IM and EM are cases where the executive leadership as well as other institutions and groups are likely to have broad and deep information about the operations of the coercive agents. I have called this "**Transparent coercion**," to denote the fact that coercion here takes place in a fishbowl: where a large number of actors and institutions have a great deal of access to and ability

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<sup>24</sup> There can, of course, be extra-territorial challenges, such as from foreign militaries or from breakaway regions not under the executive's control. These may be significant politically, but they are beyond the scope of this analysis, which focuses on the organization of coercion as it pertains to a given executive within a given territory.

to collect information on all aspects of the executive's use of coercion, from the principal's policies to his agent's actions.

Where the organization of coercion scores high on EM and low on IM, information on the operations of the coercive agents is likely to be widely available to different groups and institutions, but not particularly deep. No one is likely to know very much about the details of the operations themselves, given that there is little or no direct oversight. Indeed, the principals in this case may deliberately not want to exercise very much oversight, for example if the agents are carrying out controversial missions, or ones likely to carry a high political cost. The principal's mechanism to check whether the operations have achieved the desired results in these cases is to learn about their agents only from outsiders' reports, for example in the media. Information on the outcomes of coercion – such as the number and type of people killed – is likely to be readily available. Indeed, coercive agents and external monitoring sources are likely to engage in a type of game: where the former try to hide their actions, and the latter try to find out what happened. I have therefore labeled this “**Hide and seek coercion.**”

Table 3 illustrates the possibilities:

**Table 3**

<b>High IM</b>	Bureaucratic coercion	Transparent coercion
↕		
<b>Low IM</b>	Blind coercion	Hide and seek coercion
	<b>Low EM</b>	<b>High EM</b>
	↔	

To summarize: We can use the criteria in Tables 1 and 2 to measure degrees of IM and EM, and place different cases along the matrix indicated in Table 3. I have labeled what are in essence the main cardinal points of the IM and EM combinations. But by adopting essentially an ordinal scale that measures levels of monitoring, cases can lie anywhere in the matrix, or shift from one place to another.

The reader will notice that the matrix is not only applicable to authoritarian regimes. Any sort of regime – from authoritarian to democratic – can be measured according to internal and external monitoring and placed on this matrix. As the levels of

external monitoring grow, no doubt, the likelihood of authoritarianism diminishes. An authoritarian regime with high levels of external monitoring would almost be a contradiction in terms. Because in this dissertation I focus on the organization of coercion only in authoritarian regimes, the cases I select do not reflect high levels of external monitoring.<sup>25</sup>

Table 4 provides a rough summary of where the various cases discussed in this thesis lie on the matrix (Chile and the three cases discussed in the Conclusion), and suggests other possible cases in brackets:

**Table 4**

High IM  ↕  Low IM	GDR (USSR)	(Singapore)  (Israel)	(U.K. in Northern Ireland)
	Chile 1974-77 Chile 1973	Chile 1978-90 South Africa	(Polyarchies)
Low IM	Argentina	(El Salvador)	(Spain vs. Basques)
	Low EM	↔	High EM

I will explain the categorization of each of the different cases in the empirical chapters. In the Chilean case, the bulk of the analysis will be devoted to measuring monitoring levels in the main periods discussed, and to using these measurements to analyze the reasons for the shift from one way of organizing coercion to another. I build an important part of the toolkit for this analysis in the next section's discussion of the various tradeoffs among different types of monitoring.

### Tradeoffs

Why would a ruler, if given the choice and the possibility of implementing his choice, choose one or the other type of monitoring?

<sup>25</sup> In the Conclusion, I discuss how this matrix may be used to analyze other sorts of regimes, and discuss the problem of the relationship between the organization of coercion and regime type.

Bureaucratic coercion presents the ruler with many obvious advantages. With high internal monitoring scores on all criteria, in this kind of organization leaders trust their agents. Orders are likely to be followed and transgressions are likely to be reported (and punished). Under bureaucratic coercion, organizations act with a unity of purpose. There is a low level of corruption, and a high ability to coordinate activities within the organization's branches or with other institutions. Moreover, because of the low level of external monitoring, a ruler in this kind of organization will not be required to worry about or to negotiate with independent power centers either inside or outside the state.

But there are also costs to bureaucratic coercion. In internal monitoring, as we have seen, principals monitor their agents' performance using only channels from within their own organization. They have two options to do this. Either they gather information themselves, or they delegate the monitoring task to a special agent (the monitor). When organizations are small and there are relatively few agents, it may be possible for principals to carry out internal monitoring themselves. But as organizations grow, it is increasingly likely that principals will rely on specialized monitors. (And states that have the capacity to operate as such are likely to be relatively large and complex organizations.)

This raises a dilemma. In internal monitoring the monitors are still ultimately under the ruler's command and remain dependent for promotions, funding, and perks. As a result, the monitor's own agents have similar incentives and disincentives to report to their superiors (and to the ruler) on their own performance. The principal may designate Agency B to keep track of operations in agency A, but now keeping track of B's operations becomes a problem in its own right. A ruler who becomes suspicious of Agency B may decide to create Agency C to keep track of B. But this does not really resolve the problem, insofar as Agency C also remains dependent on the ruler and retains the same incentives and disincentives. Rulers can layer monitors overtop of monitors, but the effect of this strategy is simply to ratchet the problem up to different levels.<sup>26</sup> This dilemma can be understood as a problem of "monitoring the monitor."

The second cost is the trust-convenience tradeoff. This can be understood as an attempt by the ruler to avoid the monitoring the monitor problem. A ruler that wants to avoid this problem and still retain the advantages of high internal monitoring and low external monitoring could decide not to rely on a specialized monitor. In this scheme, all the monitors (or the combinations of monitors and agents) monitor each other. By definition, this requires a relatively decentralized monitoring mechanism, where the principal receives direct information and reports from many different sources.

But careful scrutiny reveals that this situation does not necessarily resolve the principal's basic problem of ensuring readily available, accurate, and reliable information. It merely replaces the ratcheting problem (of adding layers of monitors in hierarchical fashion) by the problem of having to decide which among the myriad monitors he will now listen to, and figure out how to make sense of the multiple sources. They may have different standards, agendas, ideologies, etc. This is not impossible to do, but it requires more work.

In other words, while it is more convenient to rely only on one trusted source, as

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<sup>26</sup> And this problem is complicated further by the increasing inefficiency in information flow as the number of bureaucratic layers increases (Crozier 1964).

that source attains a monopoly on information its trustworthiness becomes suspect, and the principal's vulnerability increases. By multiplying the number of internal monitors, the overall information available to the principal is likely to be more trustworthy, and the principal is not as vulnerable, but getting it now becomes a highly difficult task. In short, the principal trades convenience for trust.

Increasing the level of external monitoring (for instance by adopting transparent coercion) offers a way out of this dilemma. Instead of having to trust a single monitor, now myriad monitors (the population at large) are empowered as information sources through various kinds of organizations such as the courts, the press, watchdog groups, etc. The principal is still likely to be faced with countless new reports from many different sources. But a high level of external monitoring offers principals a way out of the convenience-trust tradeoff. With high external monitoring, the "who monitors the monitor" problem is avoided, insofar as the external monitors are by definition not under the principal's direct control. Therefore, the principal can afford the convenience of a specialized monitor without the vulnerability that this option imposes in bureaucratic coercion.

Not all the information gathered by external monitors is likely to be accurate. In many cases, for a variety of reasons (from deliberate disinformation to simple mistakes) reports are likely to be inaccurate. Or, in some cases, external monitoring sources are only likely to reflect a portion of the population, with a resulting information bias. But there are two ways to address this problem. One is simply by the quantity of information. The more information there is (the more opportunities there are for people to pull fire alarms), the greater the likelihood of checking errors against other independent accounts. Moreover, the greater the protections in place to be able to deliver accurate reports (e.g. protections against freedom of speech and for witnesses in court), the more incentives there are for more people to report and to provide accurate information (Rosberg 1995).

But this suggests that a high level of external monitoring in transparent coercion presents rulers with a new and different set of problems. Increasing the level of external monitoring requires rulers to accept limitations on their power. Rulers that are already in this area (for example in a polyarchy) may simply assume these costs as a given, and not question them. But a ruler that wants to maximize his own power and minimize the power of other institutions either inside or outside the state would likely try to avoid moving in this direction. With low external monitoring, rulers do not have to negotiate the limits of their coercive agencies with other independent institutions.

Blind coercion, with minimal internal and external monitoring, yields diametrically opposite sorts of tradeoffs. Here, rulers do not need to accept limitations on their power from external sources, but they are also unlikely to receive very much information on their agents' operations from *any* source, internal or external. Why would any ruler choose this?

In some cases rulers may deliberately not want to know what their agents are doing, especially if they are carrying out operations that are politically costly. Indeed, most coercive operations (anything from detentions to killings) arguably fall into this category. Not knowing may be a good option for rulers who do not want to bear the costs of the "dirty work" their agents may be doing.

All things being equal, there are less likely to be strong incentives in blind coercion for coercion to be carried out in secret or to be applied selectively. (The reason



is that agents are likely to have greater incentives to hide their actions as the effectiveness of external monitors grows. More effective external monitoring is also likely to impose costs on broad-based repression and lead to the application of coercion in a much more narrowly-targeted manner.) Rulers that want to operate in this area to reap the benefits of plausible deniability will likely have to take special measures to ensure that coercion is applied more secretly and in a more targeted manner than would otherwise be the case.

Moreover, in blind coercion there are likely to be more difficulties in coordinating inter- and even intra-branch activities, and this may be a severe disadvantage to those rulers or principals for whom such coordination may be important. Also, the likelihood that agents will deviate from their organization's task and engage in corruption and coercion for their own purpose is extremely high in blind coercion. With neither internal nor external monitoring as a check, it is hard to imagine how principals may effectively be able to prevent this, or even to know much about it.

Hide and seek coercion, with low levels of internal and high external monitoring, is as unlikely to occur in authoritarian regimes as Transparent coercion. In this type of organizational pattern, a ruler may deliberately want to have no direct internal knowledge of the details of his agents' operations. He may be interested only in whether or not the task is done, e.g. whether the intended targets are arrested or killed. And this can be provided reasonably effectively by external monitors' reports, for example in the media. But even though hide and seek coercion provides a ruler with more checks (through available external monitoring reports), coordination of agents and agencies in this case may remain difficult.

Thus far I have discussed the four polar combinations of maximum or minimum internal and external monitoring as relatively static alternatives, as specific points that may present different costs and benefits to different rulers, depending on their goals. These costs and benefits may prompt rulers to shift from one to another, but the shifts themselves may also impose additional costs. For example, a ruler who wants to break out of the pitfalls associated with internal monitoring may decide to shift toward external monitoring. While doing so increases the available information, it has costs of its own. External monitoring necessarily requires accepting some new limitations on a ruler's power. It also likely means engaging openly with political foes that in a previously closed regime the ruler could simply have disposed of. While these new constraints pose obvious difficulties for an authoritarian regime, they may also be an opportunity. New groups can benefit a ruler by presenting new possibilities for alliance building and competition.

On the other hand, the shift from high to lower external monitoring is also likely to be extremely costly. It necessarily requires closing down or seriously hobbling independent groups or institutions, which may strongly resist the executive's actions. Shifting outwards along the internal monitoring axis is also likely to impose costs and benefits. For example, creating a strong specialized internal monitoring agency may be difficult in cases where executive power is shared among two or more players. In these cases, the creation of an internal monitor may be extremely costly, insofar as it requires the agreement of the main players, who may need to put aside mutual distrust and fear that the other will use the new institution to his own advantage. By the same token, getting rid of a strong specialized internal monitor is also likely to be costly politically, particularly when other actors have an interest in keeping it.

For all of these reasons, the middle area in the matrix is likely to be where most of the politics in regime transition takes place. To be sure, the shifts to greater or lesser degrees of internal and/or external monitoring are not the only factors likely to matter during regime transition. Other factors, such as the struggle for power among different political actors and institutions, are also important during this time. But the politics of different forms of monitoring in the organization of coercion is a crucial factor that has received relatively little attention in a systematic way.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have presented a framework to understand the organization of coercion, the different costs and benefits of different organizational forms, and of shifts from one to another. The framework can be applied to any kind of regime, although this thesis focuses on authoritarian regimes, where the levels of external monitoring are unlikely to be high. In the subsequent chapters I use this framework analyze the organization of coercion in Chile.

## 2. THE OVERTHROW

The Chilean Armed Forces overthrew the Allende government on the morning of September 11, 1973 with swift and overwhelming force.<sup>27</sup> They launched a massive assault on the La Moneda presidential palace through a combination of air and ground attacks. They closed Congress<sup>28</sup> as well as all other independent political organizations, including the country's main parties.<sup>29</sup> Allende himself held out against the assault in La Moneda with a small group of allies for several hours, but by early afternoon he was dead and much of the palace was reduced to rubble. By this time also hundreds of people, including most of his key Cabinet ministers, were in prison, and scores of others had been summarily executed. All independent media sources, including newspapers as well as radio and television stations that did not support the government, were either closed or taken over.<sup>30</sup> A state of siege was quickly imposed, meetings of more than a handful of people were banned, and strict curfews were enforced.<sup>31</sup> Planning for the coup had been

<sup>27</sup> For an analysis of the political events that led to the coup the classic source remains Valenzuela (1978). See also Garretón (1983; 1989), González (2000), de Vylder (1976), and Sigmund (1977). For analyses of the political history of the Chilean armed forces see Arriagada (1986), and Varas (1987).

<sup>28</sup> The Junta disbanded Congress through Decree Law (D.L.) No. 27, issued September 24. A few days later the Constitutional Tribunal, whose main purpose was to resolve conflicts between the executive and legislative branches of government, was also dissolved. The Junta, in D.L. 50, stated that the tribunal was superfluous given that such conflicts can no longer "occur since Congress is disbanded" (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 58).

<sup>29</sup> The parties that had supported the Allende government mostly went underground after the coup, and all were formally disbanded on October 13, 1973 through Decree Law D.L. 77. D.L. No. 78, issued on October 17, suspended the activities of all other parties, declaring them "in recess" (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 58). D.L. No. 1697 of 1977 banned all political organizations altogether, from the left and right wings (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 58). The State Comptroller's Office (*Contraloría*), remained in operation, but was taken over by the military. The Judiciary was the only branch of the state that remained in operation and allowed, in theory, to remain independent. In the next chapter, I discuss why and how, in practice the judiciary capitulated to the new regime and failed to check its use of coercion. The only independent social institution that was allowed to continue to function was the Church. As we will see in subsequent chapters, the participation of the Church would later prove crucial to the mobilization of the opposition against the regime.

<sup>30</sup> Allende was able to deliver his final address on *Radio Magallanes*, a pro-government station, at 10:00 AM, hours before the station was taken over by military forces. Television channels 9 and 13, belonging to the University of Chile and to the Catholic University, were quickly taken over by the military when they took control of each university. The government-run newspaper *La Nación* was taken over by military forces on the day of the coup. It resumed publication a few weeks later. The Junta closed down the Communist-run newspaper *El Siglo*, the pro-Allende *Puro Chile*, and the Socialist-run *Noticias de Última Hora*. The conservative dailies *El Mercurio* and *La Tercera de la Hora*, long opposed to Allende, continued to publish without interruption. The weekly newsmagazine *Qué Pasa*, run by pro-business interests that supported the coup, continued to publish without interruption. The magazine *Ercilla*, affiliated with the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) managed to continue to publish independently until 1977, when it was bought by a pro-regime business group (Sigmund 1977; González 2000; Huneus 2000a).

<sup>31</sup> The Junta decreed a state of siege on the day of the coup through D.L. 3. D.L. 5, on 22 September 1973, stipulated that the state of siege should be understood as "a state or time of war". The state of siege was

taking place for months, and the armed forces were no doubt helped in their preparations by having previously successfully infiltrated the top leadership of the main left-wing parties.<sup>32</sup> Within days, the large majority of whatever armed resistance remained had been dealt with, and the military's control of the country was nearly total.<sup>33</sup>

This chapter describes the background to the coup, focusing on three factors that shaped the organization of coercion afterward: breakdowns in military hierarchy, contradictory ideology, and confusion over which powers the Junta had taken over after the coup.

### **Breakdowns in Hierarchy**

The 1973 coup took place in the aftermath of a long and divisive struggle within the armed forces over two central issues: whether to get involved in politics at all, and what stance to assume toward the growing influence of Marxism in the country. These struggles had been taking place within the armed forces for decades, but they reached a crisis point with the election of Salvador Allende.

The standard view of the debate regarding the political involvement of the Chilean military casts the "constitutionalists" as those sectors who provided unconditional support for the constitutionally-elected government, and the *golpistas* as those who favored overthrowing the Allende government (Arriagada 1986; Sohr 1989). This is the way in which many key players are usually characterized in Chile (e.g. Generals Prats and Schneider are usually labeled "constitutionalists," as opposed to the *golpista* leaders of the Junta). To that extent, I will use the terms as they are commonly used. But the use of the terms itself is not altogether accurate. Chilean political history and the 1925 constitution did not provide an unambiguously apolitical role for the armed forces.<sup>34</sup> On the one hand the armed forces were supposed to be a "non-deliberative" institution obedient to the executive, but on the other the constitution stipulated that they

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renewed every six months until March 1978, when it was replaced by a "state of emergency" (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 58).

<sup>32</sup> From the War Academy, the Army, had drawn up a plan of action in July 1973 which called for an overthrow of the government on September 14 (Whelan 1993: 450).

<sup>33</sup> Admiral Sergio Huidobro, one of the key coup strategists, later wrote that the armed forces took control over the entire country very quickly. In Santiago, which saw the fiercest resistance, "control over the city was achieved within a matter of hours" (Huidobro 1989: 269).

<sup>34</sup> Although Chile was popularly known as the "Britain" of Latin America because of its ostensibly long and uninterrupted democratic tradition, this reputation is an inaccurate reflection of its history. The early independence years (1810-30) ushered in a period of civil war (1810-14). This was followed by a restoration of Spanish dictatorship through the Lima Viceroy (1814-17), the dictatorship of independence leader General Bernardo O'Higgins (1817-1823), a period of political uncertainty and institutional chaos (1823-30), leading finally to the creation of a the "Portalian state," an authoritarian republic of strong executive rule (1830-91). In the 1891 Civil War, essentially a fight between the executive and legislative branches of government, the army supported the executive while the Navy supported the legislature, which prevailed. From 1891-24 a "Parliamentary Republic" ruled the country, but between 1924-32 the army became involved again in politics, staging coups on two separate occasions and running the country during four months in 1924. The end of this period saw the re-imposition of an executive-led system.

Political involvement made a deep impression on many sectors of the military. As a whole the different branches of the military were happy at the end of this period to return to the barracks. But the events of the 1920s meant that by the 60s and 70s, within living memory of many people there had been a time when the military had been deeply involved in politics (Arriagada 1986; North 1986; Nunn 1994; Nunn 1997).

enjoyed a special role as guardians of the institutional order (Loveman 1993).

By the late 1960s many officers openly discussed politics, challenging both the principle of non-deliberation as well as the military lines of command. In April 1968 80 officers and students of the *Academia de Guerra* (the Army's War Academy) resigned in protest over poor wages, a move that resulted in the downfall of the current Minister of Defense, Juan de Dios Carmona. These tensions continued and in October 1969 retired general Roberto Viaux, in direct challenge to the orders of the top army command, took control of the largest munitions regiment, the "*Tacna*", in protest over the Minister of Defense's wages and retirement policies. This was the most serious crisis and the most serious breach of discipline inside the military since the 1930s. The crisis resulted in the downfall of both the Minister of Defense, the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, and the Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (*Jefe del Estado Mayor de Defensa Nacional*). General René Schneider took over as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, and General Carlos Prats as Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Both had a reputation inside military and civilian circles as strict "constitutionalists" who would put a break on the growing politicization of the armed forces.

In the September 1970 presidential elections the Socialist Party Senator Salvador Allende won a slim plurality among the three contending candidates. In a system without run-off elections, when no one candidate obtained a clear majority Congress by law had to approve the appointment of the president. Because no Marxist candidate had ever obtained a plurality before (though since the 1952 elections Allende had been the perennial "also ran" candidate), the appointment of Allende provoked a serious crisis inside the Christian Democrat-dominated Congress. Rumors of a military coup were widespread. Nixon's Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, privately declared that the US could not simply stand by and let a country turn Marxist due to "the irresponsibility of its own people." The CIA during October 1970 made numerous contacts with various military and paramilitary groups to work out the possibilities of a coup (Sigmund 1977; Hitchens 2001a; Hitchens 2001b). The biggest stumbling block to these plans was General Schneider. According to a US Senate report on the covert activities during this time, since it was not possible to remove Schneider by retirement or resignation, the coup plotters decided to kidnap him (United States Senate 1975b; United States Senate 1975a).<sup>35</sup> On October 22 several cars surrounded Schneider's car. Armed young men approached him and broke the windows in his car. When Schneider reached for his gun, the young men opened fire. Schneider died in the Military Hospital three days later (Prats González 1974: 184-89).<sup>36</sup> On October 24 the Congress confirmed Salvador Allende as President-elect, after reaching an agreement with the Christian Democrats whereby the new Popular Unity (*Unidad Popular*) government, among other guarantees, would promise not to clean house in the army. On October 27 outgoing president

<sup>35</sup> Cited in Arriagada Herrera (1985: 44-45). One of those involved in the plot against Schneider, Enrique Arancibia Clavel, would later become one of the top agents under the DINA. Arancibia went into exile in November 1970, and returned to Chile after the coup. He was arrested in 1996 in Buenos Aires for his role in the assassination in Buenos Aires of Schneider's successor, General Carlos Prats, and his wife Sofia Cuthbert (Juan Pablo Moreno [jpmorex@YAHOO.COM] Thu, 22 Oct 1998 12:16:05 -0700 Chile-H Discussion Regarding the Chilean Social Sciences).

<sup>36</sup> On the U.S., and especially Henry Kissinger's, role in the Schneider assassination, see Hitchens (2001a; 2001b).

Eduardo Frei named General Carlos Prats, next in seniority, as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces.

Apart from the obvious significance of the murder of a Commander-in-Chief, the Schneider assassination signaled an unprecedented breakdown in hierarchy and discipline. The investigations into the crime revealed that several officers, including General Viaux, were behind the attempted kidnapping, which resulted in the assassination of Schneider. Their purpose was to create instability in order to block Allende's appointment as president (Prats González 1974: 190-92).

Prats was a constitutional "loyalist" (in the sense that he did not favor coup plotting), but he did more than any other Commander in Chief to bring the armed forces into overtly political deliberation. Under his command, in order to defuse growing civil-military tensions, Allende invited officers, including Prats himself, to take part in the Cabinet. Also, as Commander in Chief, he repeatedly requested official proclamations from his generals backing a "negotiated" resolution to the deepening political crisis inside the government and the country. In his memoirs he writes that "we were in the paradoxical situation that I myself was living through: we were deliberating (which was forbidden to us constitutionally), but moved only by the patriotic and sincere desire to avoid [a situation such that] not finding a democratic formula [for the resolution of the political crisis] would drag the Institution into a coup" (Prats González 1974: 403).

There was an abortive rogue coup attempt on June 29, 1973, popularly known as the "*tanquetazo*," in reference to the light armored vehicles (*tanquetas*) in the street.<sup>37</sup> One Army unit, led by Colonel Souper, attacked the La Moneda Palace and the Ministry of Defense building, but the attempt quickly broke down when no other units from within the army or the other branches of the armed forces joined the effort. General Prats went in person, automatic rifle in hand, to put a stop to the attempt (Prats González 1974: 403).

After this incident, Admiral Patricio Carvajal, Head of the *Estado Mayor de la Defensa Nacional*<sup>38</sup> (and who would later become a Defense Minister under the military government), proposed the creation of a group of generals and admirals to coordinate the application of the Arms Control Law during the searches and investigations which followed the coup attempt. General Prats approved the creation of this group, with the stipulation that it restrict its activities only to this one task and to keep strictly within the limits of the law. In his memoirs, Prats wrote that such specialized meetings were "unprecedented" in the armed forces because the coordination of policy normally already took place at several levels. Clearly, he thought, the real purpose of these meetings was "deliberation", but he allowed them to take place nonetheless. Disallowing them would have shown a lack of confidence in the generals concerned and would simply have driven such activities underground. He also notes that "because the head of the *Estado Mayor* of the Army, General Pinochet, in whom I had full confidence, took part in all these meetings, he would be in charge of informing me of any deviation from discipline" (Prats González 1974: 403)

The abortive attempt of June 29 and its aftermath revealed not only the obvious discontent with the Allende government but also that in many ways the lines of commands had broken down. Repairing them would prove insurmountable for Prats, and

<sup>37</sup> This event should not be confused with the *Tacnazo*, the uprising led by General Roberto Viaux in in October 1969, mentioned earlier.

<sup>38</sup> The Joint Chiefs of Staff.

this problem would continue to plague Pinochet later on. General Prats offered his resignation to Allende immediately after putting down the attempt. Allende accepted this only by the end of August, after it became clear that Prats had lost the support of an important section of the army. The trigger was an after-effect of the long ongoing truckers' strike. Air Force General Cesar Ruiz Danyau, Commander in Chief of the Air Force as well as Minister of Interior, offered his resignation as Minister to Allende in mid-August after repeated failures to resolve the strike. Allende accepted his resignation as Minister of Transport but insisted also that he resign his post as Air Force Commander in Chief. Ruiz refused and bunkered himself and some troops in two of the Air Force's bases. Eventually Ruiz accepted the resignation, but this provoked a strong reaction against Prats from within sectors of the army who believed that "Prats had conspired with Allende to get rid of Ruiz, and had threatened Ruiz with the full might of the army if he did not resolve the rebellion." Prats asked Pinochet, second in command, to come up with a document through which the top generals would show their full support for Prats. Pinochet failed to secure the required support, and informed Prats that instead, Generals Sepúlveda and Pickering, two key Prats supporters, offered their resignations. Prats writes that at this point, with two pillars of support gone, he saw he had no option left but to resign, which he did on Friday August 24 (Prats González 1974: 480-84).<sup>39</sup>

Allende replaced Prats with the army's second-in-command, General Pinochet. This change in command provoked serious worries among the coup plotters, given that they did not know whether Pinochet would support them. On his first meeting with the generals in the "Group of Fifteen" after the resignation, Pinochet said that "what they've done to my general Prats will be washed with the blood of generals", and asked for their resignations. Generals Arellano, Palacios, and Viveros did not hand in their written resignations and instead began to plot a possible coup for Wednesday August 29, bypassing the Commander in Chief. On Monday August 27 Pinochet put a stop to the plots by announcing that he would not insist on the resignations and by hinting at the possibility of a "military intervention" (Verdugo 1989).

Getting Pinochet on board would facilitate the plans, but they could nevertheless have gone on without him. General Arellano, described as "the singing voice of disenchantment" within the army,<sup>40</sup> visited Pinochet on September 8 to tell him that the

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<sup>39</sup> General Fernando Arancibia, a major during 1973 and brother of Enrique Arancibia (a key DINA agent implicated in the assassinations of Generals Schneider and Prats), stated that "Prats was in the game of the Unidad Popular. He lost touch (*se desentendió*) with the thinking of his own people!" (Arancibia 1995). Prats never understood why his fellow soldiers, who for the most part did not come from the upper classes of Chilean society, would want to defend the interests of a minority of the Chilean population, albeit the minority with the balance of economic power. He asked, in an interview after the coup, "Why are those, whom I know so well, modest products of the middle class, in the service of the Pirañas (sic) or the Edwards?" (Harrington and González 1987: 184). The name "Piraña", for all its evocative power, is most likely a typo or a mistake in transcription, since it is not the name of any prominent Chilean family. Most likely Prats said (or meant) *Piñera*, which, like the Edwards family, is one of the most prominent upper class families.

<sup>40</sup> By Federico Willoughby, a close collaborator of the military government and a coup plotter as a leader of the right-wing armed movement *Patria y Libertad*, quoted in Verdugo (Verdugo 1989: 14). Arellano was a leading anticommunist who had close contacts with the Christian Democratic party, having been *edecán* (aide-de-camp) under the Frei administration. General Oscar Bonilla, later to become the first Minister of Interior under the Junta, was another leading coup plotter, in part thanks to his contacts inside the PDC, having also been *edecán* under Frei.

coup was on its final stages and to offer him a last opportunity to jump on board. He did so only the following day, after further pressures from Air Force Commander in Chief General Gustavo Leigh and Navy Commander Admiral José Toribio Merino (Verdugo 1989: 16).<sup>41</sup>

Pinochet's treason has been the subject of some debate, and his own memoirs contribute to the confusion by rewriting his own history and participation in the preparations of the coup (Pinochet Ugarte 1979). One view suggests that Pinochet should be understood less as a "traitor" than as someone who is "one-hundred percent military".<sup>42</sup> In order to rise within the army, Pinochet learned to follow the currents, to learn 'which way the wind was blowing.' During the Allende government, for instance, in an interview he portrayed himself in a manner far removed from the anti-Marxist crusader he would become less than a year later. A year-end report in the newspaper *La Nación* canvassed the opinions of several of the country's leading personalities on the event they thought the most important during the previous year. Pinochet responded that surely it was the president's trip to the United Nations a few months earlier. The reasons, he argued, were that it meant

... a reiteration of those countries struggling for their development to be heard, understood, and supported by those countries which for many reasons have reached a level of development that allows their people material and emotional welfare; a demonstration that direct contact among governors, no matter their ideologies, produces an effective and wide understanding that benefits those governed; an opening of effective cooperation and support not only with the country visited, but also with international organisms and with numerous nations no matter their ideological differences which so often in history prove to be only transitory; an appreciable reduction of internal tensions which are so damaging to the country's citizens.<sup>43</sup>

Pinochet jumped on board the plans of the coup only at the last minute, calculating, we can speculate, that the days of the Allende government were numbered.<sup>44</sup> Early in the morning of the coup, September 11, 1973, before the identity of the new Junta members was known, Hortensia Bussi, Allende's wife (soon to be widow) was reportedly overcome with worry asking "Where is Augusto?", fearing the worst for a trusted friend.

Pinochet was not only taking part in the coup that morning, but leading the tactical operations and showing a remarkable degree of callousness and disregard for the welfare of the many people who had been taken prisoner, many of whom included former

<sup>41</sup> See also Arellano Iturriaga (1985); and Varas (1979).

<sup>42</sup> Federico Willoughby, quoted in Verdugo (1989: 12).

<sup>43</sup> *La Nación*, 31 December 1972: 6.

<sup>44</sup> Recently declassified U.S. government documents reveal that Pinochet had been in contact with, and paid by, the C.I.A. as far back as 1972. While these documents suggest that Pinochet's involvement in coup plans may have begun earlier than previously thought, the jury is still out. It is possible that the C.I.A. established contacts with Pinochet, but the relationship between these contacts and Pinochet's participation in the plans that actually took place remains unclear. Moreover, even if such contacts had taken place, they would not prove too much, given that most senior officers were likely contacted. It would also be consistent with Pinochet's ability to play many different sectors off against each other (demonstrated once in power) to have maintained contacts with a range of different sectors, including Allende himself. For a list of recently declassified documentation on Chile, see the Chile Documentation Project in the National Security Archive's website ([http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/latin\\_america/chile.htm](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/latin_america/chile.htm)).



colleagues, members of the Allende executive. Recordings of the communications between Pinochet and Vice-Admiral Patricio Carvajal, the Navy's chief operations officer and the second in command during the coup attack,<sup>45</sup> reveal that when Carvajal suggested that the prisoners, who included several former cabinet ministers, for the time being simply be held in custody, Pinochet replied:

All right, but if we keep them we give them time. I think we have to consult with [Air Force Commander General Gustavo] Leigh. My opinion is that we take these gentlemen and we send them by airplane anywhere, and even, during the flight, we can start throwing them outside.<sup>46</sup>

I take this detour on the issue of Pinochet's personality in order to illustrate several points. The first is what might be labeled the 'definition vacuum' at the center of the coup and of the new military government. The man who would become arguably the most powerful figure in Chilean history was very likely a latecomer to the crucible event of his political career – the "Decisive Day", according to the title of the book that gives his own account (Pinochet Ugarte 1979). An analysis of Pinochet's role at this time therefore confounds theories that explain outcomes according to a particular actor's interests: in this case the principal actor was arguably an opportunist still searching for his political interests during the time of the coup. The coup was not a power grab by one man but a highly complex operation by a set of institutions – the Chilean armed forces – ostensibly to carry out what they saw as their constitutional mission to safeguard the country's institutional order. There was no blueprint for this type of action, and neither was there consensus within the armed forces about the purpose of the mission or whether it should be carried out in the first place.

As the preceding discussion illustrates, the coup could also not have taken place without a deep breakdown in military hierarchy. There were tensions and breakdowns (and assassinations) prior to the coup, and the new military hierarchy was not altogether clear. Merino took over the command of the Navy on the day of the coup from Admiral Montero, but he had been one of the key coup instigators and appeared to have the confidence of their top officers. Leigh had been commander of the Air Force prior to the coup, and also appeared to have the confidence of his top staff, who trusted him to protect them in case of a purge by Allende. Pinochet, as we have seen, although he had been the

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<sup>45</sup> The Navy was the institution which most actively pursued the idea of a coup, and it is likely that Carvajal, appointed Defense Chief of Staff in January 1973, was the key instigator. See for example Cavallo Castro et al. (1989: 126). See also Carvajal's memoirs (Carvajal n.d.).

<sup>46</sup> The transcript of these communications was originally published by María Olivia Monckeberg and Fernando Paulsen in *Análisis*, December 24-30, 1985 (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 135). There are various possible ways to interpret these communications. The most radical is that they reveal clear proof that the military as a whole sought to exterminate the opposition right from the beginning of the takeover. This seems a stretch, in my view, given that key actors like Pinochet jumped on board the coup at the last possible moment. A more plausible interpretation is that Pinochet's evident cruelty in these communications is a sign of his relatively weak position within the team that plotted and carried out the coup. Pinochet's tone throughout the exchanges differs sharply from the rest of the commanders. Whereas Carvajal and Leigh, the two principal interlocutors, are models of military professionalism and coolness in battle, Pinochet repeatedly interjects with exaltations about the need to show a firm hand and not give the enemy an inch more than necessary. It might be read as a "more papist than the Pope" tone, in which he tries to ingratiate himself with the officers, like Carvajal, who really represented the center of power at the time. See also Carvajal (n.d.: 87-112).

commander of the army and of the armed forces as a whole, was a latecomer to the plots. He assumed a leading role during the attack essentially because the army was both the largest and the oldest institution within Chile's armed forces.<sup>47</sup> General Mendoza's position within *Carabineros* was not altogether secure, given that he took over the institution jumping over more than a dozen generals who preceded him in seniority (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 21).

The group of generals that took power believed their action to be required by a constitutional mandate for the armed forces to protect the country's institutions. With the coup they essentially defeated those within the military who argued that respecting the constitution meant staying out of politics and backing the elected government. But it would be inaccurate to suggest that the entire military body was of one mind about the coup. Instead, the kinds of tensions that were a precondition to the coup continued to haunt the new military government as it tried to establish control.

### **Anticommunism and Counterinsurgency**

There were tensions within the armed forces not simply over whether to become involved in politics, but over what kind of "war" it should fight in Chile. Should the military simply depose the Allende government in order to call for elections? Or should the coup be a first step toward a more a more widespread and intensive campaign against Marxists? On the day of the coup, Air Force Commander General Gustavo Leigh declared that the armed forces would "struggle against Marxism and extirpate it to the last consequences" from the Chilean body politic (Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 36). What, in practice, did this mean? What kind of campaign did the armed forces intend to carry out against Marxism, and was there agreement on how it would be done?

Once again, notwithstanding the overwhelming use of force employed by the armed forces, there were serious divisions behind the scenes over how to carry out the campaign against Marxism in Chile. The disagreements went beyond differences over tactics against a given enemy. There was disagreement over exactly who the enemy was. In other words, the military was deeply divided over some of the most basic issues that defined it, such as who it purported to defend the country against. (This means, as I argued in the previous chapter, that military ideology is a poor predictor of the patterns of coercion that would come after the coup.) In order to understand these divisions, I focus on three elements of the military's ideology: anti-communism, counterinsurgency, and national security.

First, anticommunism has been at the center of the modern Chilean military's ideology since the end of the nineteenth century. The army traces its institutional roots to

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<sup>47</sup> The Army is also the only institution besides *Carabineros* that has a truly national presence and reach. The Navy and Air Force have bases in only certain areas, seaports and airports, and lack the manpower and infrastructure to cover the entire national territory. While this fact alone does not necessarily guarantee that the Army should assume a leading role in any joint operation, it strongly weighs in its favor. Although *Carabineros* also has the manpower and infrastructure to cover the entire national territory, it lacks the firepower of the Army, and has not always been considered part of the Armed Forces. Indeed, at the time of the coup *Carabineros* was actually under the command of the Minister of Interior, rather than the Ministry of Defense, and was technically not part of the Armed Forces. After the coup its status was changed: it came under the command of the Ministry of Defense and became the fourth branch of the Armed Forces.

reforms carried out in 1885 by Emil Körner, a Prussian army captain and professor at the German *Kriegsakademie*.<sup>48</sup> Harsh discipline and strict respect for hierarchy modernized the Chilean army. But at the same time, the Prussian reforms had two consequences: they eroded the army's traditional respect for civilian authority, and they infused it with a strong sense of anticommunism. Newly professional officers, many of whom trained in Prussia with the imperial guards, came to resent politicians' involvement in military promotions, often tainted with patronage (Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 41). European-trained officers also became much more directly aware of the central debates of the day in Europe, such as the conflicts between the Second International and European national interests prior to the First World War. The Prussian army's strong anticommunism during this time was reflected in the Chilean and Argentine armies.<sup>49</sup> There were growing socialist and anarchist movements in Chile and throughout the southern cone, and the army railed against these as enemies of the fatherland and the national state. The Russian Revolution further heightened these tensions (Arriagada 1986: 183-84).

Anticommunism was openly a central piece of the Chilean military's ideology until 1931. That year marked the end of a period of military polemics and involvement in politics, which included two separate military governments (1924 and 1927-31). In 1931 the military officially "returned to the barracks," and its anticommunism since that time is more difficult to detect openly. Officers during the four decades between 1931 and 1973 did not make political declarations, preferring to adopt a much more neutral stance toward the constitution and accept civilian control as an essential piece of the political order. (This stance was reflected in officers like René Schneider and Carlos Prats, the two commanders-in-chief of the armed forces prior to Pinochet, both of whom opposed the idea of a coup.)<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, anticommunism remained an important aspect of military ideology inside the barracks. For instance, in 1949 former Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces General Indalecio Téllez asked whether military intervention in political affairs might not be justified in some circumstances:

The first duty of the army is the defense of the fatherland. Against whom? Against any enemy that endangers national honor, peace, or integrity. Could the army, invoking its duty not to intervene in the country's internal affairs, allow that the government to fall in the hands of Communism? Does the country have any greater enemy than this? From here we can deduce that when it comes to enemies of the fatherland, the army cannot make distinctions (Téllez 1949: 229-30).

Anticommunism might have remained no more than an ideological preference

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<sup>48</sup> The modern Chilean army has its origins in the post- 1891 Civil War period. The French-influenced republican army supported the losing *Balmacedistas* during the 1891 Civil War, and it was almost completely reconstructed in 1892 by a new, Prussian-oriented army. In this sense the Chilean Army's official slogan - "Siempre vencedor, jamás vencido" ('Always a victor, never vanquished') - is somewhat misleading. If the slogan refers to the old army, it is simply false, since that body was vanquished and replaced by the contemporary military. If the slogan refers to the modern army it is technically true, although misleading in the sense that this body has never actually fought a war. (I am thankful to journalist Juan Pablo Moreno for drawing my attention to this fact.)

<sup>49</sup> In Brazil, Uruguay, and Peru, where reforms had been inspired by the French *armée*, military officers were also influenced by its anticommunism.

<sup>50</sup> See Arriagada (1986: 14), and Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 40-44).

within the military, but it was honed into a much more systematic strategy as a result of the theories of counterinsurgency developed in France and the United States after the second world war. The French fought insurgencies in Indochina (1945-54) and in Algeria (1954-62), and this experience led a generation of officers to radically question traditional methods of warmaking (Ambier 1966). The French theory of counterinsurgency can be summed up as follows:

1. The nuclear balance of power beginning in the 1950s made nuclear war highly improbable. Instead, the most likely kind of war that the West would fight would be a war of insurgency against revolutionary or liberationist movements.
2. A war of insurgency is different than a traditional war. The objective is not the defeat of an opposing army, but rather a moral victory over a given population.
3. International communism was carrying out a global war of insurgency.
4. To defend itself against this, the West must adapt some of the techniques of the enemy, especially propaganda, political indoctrination, and clandestine organization (Ambier 1966: 309-10).<sup>51</sup>

Instead of a war of armies against armies in open battle, counterinsurgency is a war against a more secretive enemy who turns his weaknesses (e.g. the lack of heavy equipment such as artillery, tanks, or aircraft) into relative strengths by operating in areas where traditional armies have trouble going. Insurgents can blend into the local population, for instance, making it extremely difficult to figure out even basic questions like who exactly the enemy is. Information about the organizational makeup of the insurgency, therefore, becomes especially critical in this kind of conflict.

The French theories of counterinsurgency were influential throughout the armed forces of the Southern Cone. The works of Colonel Roger Trinquier, in particular, were widely published. Trinquier argued that every kind of soldier has his “venom”: the anti-aircraft gun stops the pilot and the machinegun stops the infantryman. The main weapon to stop terrorists, he argued, is torture, because that is the best way to obtain information about the terrorist’s organization.<sup>52</sup>

But there are several problems with torture as a military tactic. The first is that, contrary to Trinquier’s assertions, torture is a highly inefficient method of obtaining information. Prisoners may lie in order to stop the punishment, and there may be a flood of information that may ultimately prove useless. Or, knowing that torture and extraction of information is a possibility, insurgents can organize to anticipate it. They can prepare themselves not to “crack”, and can compartmentalize information such that no one agent can reveal all the key secrets.

Apart from its relative usefulness as a weapon, ultimately a much more serious

<sup>51</sup> Also paraphrased in Arriagada (Arriagada 1986: 186).

<sup>52</sup> Trinquier (n.d.: 36-38), cited in Arriagada (1986: 199). See also Trinquier (1976; 1980).

problem of torture as a military tactic is that it is very difficult to use evenly across the military as an institution. Unlike other kinds of attacks and warfare, torture is an activity carried out by one person directly, in secret quarters, against another person who is completely defenseless. Most human beings are usually incapable of causing this kind of sadistic suffering. By contrast, a pilot drops bombs on an “abstract” population, and an infantry man fights against enemies that are as armed as he is. Militaries impel their agents to torture by exaggerating the dangers the victims pose. Instead of a helpless victim, the soldier is conditioned to believe that he faces a dangerous insurgent. No doubt many torturers actually believe this and punish with full conviction. But this kind of person is the exception. In most armies torture is one of the “dirty” tasks that is difficult to get everyone in the institution to carry out as a matter of organizational policy.<sup>53</sup>

Explaining the psychology of torture is beyond the boundaries of this thesis. I bring this up simply to illustrate the following point: A central outcome of the military ideology of counterinsurgency – its concrete application into action – required a kind of activity – torture – that is notoriously difficult to implement as a matter of policy. Torture is a dirty business. The widespread adoption of one of the main weapons in the arsenal of counterinsurgency, in other words, should make it *more* difficult for the military to act in unison. Who carries out the dirty work? How are these operations coordinated with the rest of the institution? Is this the kind of work that needs to be kept secret even from members of your own institution? Torture raises a number of issues that militaries have to resolve, and a resolution becomes extremely urgent as soon as the military takes power.

A further complication is that torture is also one area where the new kind of military work began to overlap with police work (Stepan 1986).<sup>54</sup> Police forces throughout Latin America had carried out torture against criminals, and trying to extract information about criminal organizations is a normal part of police work. But by widening their scope to include activities that had previously been carried out by the police, the military created new problems. Does the military simply adopt a police technique? Who is best suited to carry out these techniques, the police or the military? Does each institution act according to similar parameters? How to coordinate the activities of two institutions that only very rarely have operated in unison?

There are important differences between police work and military work. Police forces employ coercion, sometimes including torture, as a matter of normal daily activities. The actions of the police are a normal part of the functioning of the state, to ensure respect for the law and to capture criminals. The aims of the police forces are not, usually, the outright extermination of criminals. They do not aim to “win” conflicts outright but rather to capture criminals and deter the population from criminality. By

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<sup>53</sup> The recent events in the Balkans – where groups of soldiers went in rampage against civilian populations – might seem to contradict this analysis. However, closer scrutiny reveals that highly trained specialized units committed the worst atrocities, and that many common soldiers either stood aside, or were themselves coerced into committing brutalities. Today, many common soldiers complain about the difficulty of watching while atrocities were being committed. While some of these complaints may be self-serving rationalizations, they are consistent with what we know about this kind of activity. Pace Arendt, such acts lie at the limits of human experience.

<sup>54</sup> See also Chevigny (1999), and Pinheiro (1999).

contrast, militaries employ coercion against other armies in occasional conflicts that are the exception rather than the rule. Their aim is not to defuse conflict but rather to achieve complete victory. In this sense, a technique like torture is not likely to be used in the same manner by the military as by the police. Militaries are much more likely to blur the distinctions between extracting information and outright extermination (Bayley 1975; Bayley 1985; Marenin 1990).

In short, there was a great deal of confusion over exactly what kind of war the military thought it was fighting.<sup>55</sup> The ideological shifts inside the military prior to the coup resulted in a redefinition of their standard roles, blurring an internal long-standing division of labor between the military and the police. Added to all these confusions was the fact that a central coercive practice – torture – was notoriously difficult to monitor. These tensions might have remained debates inside the barracks, but once the armed forces took power they were faced with a series of concrete problems over how to organize coercion that brought these tensions very much to the surface.

### Confusion over powers

The Chilean military did not stage the coup of September 1973 with a clear map of what they intended to do in power once they got it.<sup>56</sup> Other than restoring order and ridding the country of Marxism, there was no blueprint for government. A further source of

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<sup>55</sup> Weiss Fagen argues that blurring the boundaries between military and police work had been taking place long before the coups, as a result of the doctrines of counterinsurgency and national security exported from Western Europe and the United States. She concludes that as a result, “the military overthrew the existing governments largely to permit greater institutional independence and freedom of action than was possible under civilian rule” (Weiss Fagen 1992: 55). But Weiss Fagen’s explanation suffers from the standard problem of functionalist explanations: reading history backwards. Institutional reorganization did take place after the coups, but that does not mean that the coup was carried out in order to implement it. Instead, it is more appropriate to understand the kinds of reorganizations that took place as the result of new regimes that faced discrete, and often unanticipated problems in how to rule, particularly how to organize coercion.

<sup>56</sup> One of the first key decisions confronting the the military was what to do with Allende. The official view, proclaimed by the Junta on the day of the coup, was that Allende committed suicide. Although the opposition to the military dictatorship in Chile long doubted this story, the *Informe Rettig* later confirmed this version of events. The essential basis of this story is the declaration by “Allende’s doctor”, Patricio Guijón, who saw the President’s body soon after General Palacios’ troops stormed the Moneda Palace. Guijón heard shots in Allende’s office, apparently, and went in to find the President holding the AK-47 given to him by Fidel Castro, which he had apparently fired directly under his chin. Former Allende aide Luis Vega recounts a different version of events. Vega had been a legal aide in Minister of Interior and a member of Allende’s security organization, the GAP (*Grupo de Amigos del Presidente*), and maintained numerous contacts inside the government as well as in the military. He recounts that there on the day of the coup the main plan of action, “Plan Hércules”, was led by Pinochet. At the same time, a second plan, “Plan Alfa”, to obtain Allende’s “suicide” was crafted and implemented by Leigh, Merino, and Carvajal, but without the knowledge of Pinochet. (This would explain why during the radio communications between Pinochet and Carvajal, before it became clear that Allende had perished, Pinochet at first ordered that Allende be taken out of the country.) The actual assassination would have been carried out by personnel under the direction of General Ernesto Baeza, soon after the storming of the palace. The key witness to the events, Dr. Enrique Paris, a close aide of Allende’s, died a few days later in the Estadio Nacional. Vega was in prison with Dr. Guijón, whom he describes as a person who is “correct, serene, intelligent, and cultured”, but who was not a Unidad Popular supporter, nor Allende’s “personal physician”, as he has been widely described, nor did he witness Allende’s death first-hand. His entire testimony is based on his having seen the body after the death (Vega n.d.: 283-91).

confusion, besides the breakdowns in hierarchy and confusion over basic goals, was over exactly which powers the military had taken over on the day of the coup. The Junta's first official declaration stated that it had taken over "the Supreme Command of the Nation with the patriotic commitment to restore *chilenidad*, justice and the institutions which were broken ... as a result of the entry of a dogmatic and alienating ideology, inspired in the foreign principles of Marxism-Leninism."<sup>57</sup>

There was no precedent for a military government in Chile. The 1925 Constitution (in force at the time of the coup) provided that the military as an institution is the "guarantor of the institutionality" of the country. But there was no living memory of political involvement by the military forces. Beyond restoring order it was unclear what "guaranteeing the institutionality" of the country actually meant. Moreover, it is unlikely that any broad based agreement over the terms of government took place within the armed forces prior to the coup, particularly when the participation of such a central figure like Pinochet was guaranteed only two days beforehand.

For instance, it was unclear which powers exactly the military had taken over. On September 12, the military *auditores*, the chief legal counsels, were given the task of preparing a constitutional act. Navy Admiral (and lawyer) Rodolfo Vio, the president of the committee of *auditores*, gave the task of coming up with the new document to one of his assistants, Navy Captain Sergio Rillón. According to Rillón, his instructions had been to draft a document which would give the new Junta "total power" (*poder total*) (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 9). Rillón quickly typed a document, the "*Acta de Constitución de la Junta de Gobierno*", which declared that the Junta had taken over the "Supreme Command of the Nation" (*Mando Supremo de la Nación*), in order to "restore the destroyed *chilenidad*, justice and institutionality." The document was adopted with only one correction,<sup>58</sup> and with the addition of two separate articles: one to appoint Pinochet as head of the Junta, and one to guarantee the independence of the Judicial branch.<sup>59</sup>

A commission of constitutional and legal experts, appointed by the Junta in the first weeks after the coup, pointed out the difficulties in defining the exact meaning of the Junta's declaration on the day of the coup that it had taken control of the "Supreme Command of the Nation." Some commissioners suggested, on the basis of Article 60 of the 1925 Constitution, according to which the President was the "Head of State and Supreme Commander of the Nation," that the Junta had only taken control of the presidency, but not the legislature. Even if they granted the legislative power, the commissioners also disagreed over whether it had therefore also assumed the *poder constituyente* to draft a new constitution. The Junta had not demonstrated the intent to rewrite the 1925 Constitution at the time of the coup (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: 14, November 6, 1973). As a response to these doubts, the Junta issued a clarification in the form of a *Decreto Ley* on November 16, 1973 which stated that "the Supreme Command of the Nation includes the Legislative and Executive powers, and as

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<sup>57</sup> D.L. 1, September 11, 1973, "Acta de Constitución de la Junta de Gobierno," *Diario Oficial*, September 18, 1973.

<sup>58</sup> Rillón had written *Ramón* Pinochet instead of *Augusto* (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989).

<sup>59</sup> *Diario Oficial*, 18 September 1973.

a consequence the *Poder Constituyente* which corresponds to these.”<sup>60</sup> In an interview, Rillón later admitted that the original term had been a mistake made out of haste (Barros 1996: 27, n. 15).

A second source of confusion stemmed from the relationship between the military and the former political authorities that supported the coup. Opposition politicians supported the military overthrow of Allende with the understanding that a prompt transfer of power would take place. During the final months of the Allende government, Patricio Aylwin, in particular, played a leading role. As President of the Senate and as the ranking Christian Democrat in the legislature, he was the key opposition figure responsible for leading the negotiation attempts with the Unidad Popular to try to avert the possibility of a coup. All such negotiation attempts failed. To opposition leaders like Aylwin it appeared, *prima facie*, that military should have embraced them as natural allies.

But such an alliance did not materialize. Christian Democrats, led by Senator Patricio Aylwin (who would later be elected president in December 1989), held a meeting with the Junta on October 10, 1973 to discuss what the civilians hoped would be a prompt transfer of power (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: 19). The *Actas de la Junta* of this meeting indicate that the delegation led by “Sr. Alwing” (sic) stressed the Christian Democrats’ marked anticommunism, and its agreement that the “military pronouncement”<sup>61</sup> was a “legitimate defense, in view of the attitude of the forces of [the previous] Government illegally armed.” The delegation, according to the minutes of the meeting, also noted that many Christian Democrats would be willing to cooperate with the Junta “individually”. According to Aylwin, Pinochet during this meeting indicated that the military would be in power for a total of eight months.<sup>62</sup> Not surprisingly, no specific mention of this is found in the minutes of the meeting. Instead, the minutes record, with characteristic ellipsis, the following as the Junta’s reaction to the delegation:

The President and each one of the Members of the Junta de Gobierno make comments in reference to the materials discussed, note the responsibility that this party [the PDC] also has for the chaotic situation in the country, and clearly establish the true principles (*postulados*) that guide [the Junta].... (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: 19).

What went unrecorded was perhaps a clearer indication of the military’s intentions: Aylwin later recounted that Navy Commander José Toribio Merino placed a large revolver on the table during the discussions.<sup>63</sup> No cooperation between the military

<sup>60</sup> D.L. 128, *Diario Oficial*, November 16, 1973.

<sup>61</sup> The Armed Forces have from the very beginning refused to use the word “coup” for the coup of September 11. Instead, they staged a *pronunciamiento militar*, a military as a reaction to the chaos under the *Unidad Popular*.

<sup>62</sup> *La Tercera*, April 8, 1997: 9

<sup>63</sup> See Ahumada et al. (Ahumada et al. 1989: 386). The nature of this meeting has recently become the subject of debate. Journalists reported that according to ex Junta Member and ex *Carabineros* Director General César Mendoza, Aylwin entered the meeting “with a smile that I found surprising, given that there were still shots being heard in the streets.” He said Aylwin simply presented himself and declared that he and the Christian Democrats were thankful to the Junta for having rid the country of the Marxist yoke. Aylwin, on the other hand, recalls that the purpose and nature of the meeting was simply to “clear up the political recess” in the country and to express his party’s preoccupation for the human rights abuses being committed. According to Aylwin, Merino’s revolver was the clearest indicator of the Junta’s intentions.



and the Christian Democrats was established, and no power transfer was discussed again.

A third source of confusion surrounded the appointment of Pinochet as *primus inter pares* within the Junta. Pinochet had played a relatively minor role in the planning of the coup, but as the top military leader in the country he was the natural choice to be appointed Head of the Junta. The intent of this appointment, according to the Junta's original declarations, was to share the leadership equally among all four Junta members on a rotation basis (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 47). In practice, no rotation ever took place. Pinochet assumed the title of "Supreme Commander of the Nation" (D.L. 527) by the end of 1973, and by December 1974 he consolidated his position by having himself appointed President (D.L. 806).<sup>64</sup> As the top military and political figure in the country, Pinochet's concentration of powers was unprecedented in Chilean history (Arriagada 1988; Huneeus 1988).

In the next chapter I measure the levels of internal and external monitoring during this period, and analyze in greater detail the kinds of concrete organizational problems the new government faced as it attempted to organize coercion.

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(See also "Polémica", p. 9). The minutes of the meeting conclude by noting that "The President of the Christian Democracy ended by pleading that any charges against personnel of his party be made known to the Directive [of the PDC] in order to clear it up suitably, given that they realize that there is interest in making them seem appear to have attitudes contrary to those of the government" (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: 19).

<sup>64</sup> December 16, 1974.

### 3. THE TURMOIL (1973)

How was coercion organized during the initial weeks and months after the coup? In this chapter I analyze the organization of coercion during the period of September to December 1973 in greater detail.<sup>65</sup> I measure internal and external monitoring, and discuss the specific problems that the organization of coercion posed for the Junta, as well as some of the ways in which it tried to address these.

In the first section I analyze internal monitoring by reference to two central aspects in the organization of coercion: the handling of prisoners and the practice of executions. I describe the operations of the main institutional mechanisms to deal with the prisoners and executions. In the subsequent section I analyze external monitoring, by discussing the judiciary's reaction to the myriad *recursos de amparo*<sup>66</sup> presented by the new group of human rights lawyers affiliated with the Church during this time. Later, I discuss two of the Junta's principal responses to the problems created by low internal and external monitoring. The first was an attempt in October to impose a more uniformly hard-line policy against prisoners, and the second was a reorganization of the prison camps beginning in November 1973. Neither attempt worked. In the next chapter I discuss how the failures of these reforms set the stage later for a more radical transformation in the organization of coercion, which aimed to increase internal monitoring.

#### Internal monitoring

During the first several months after the coup, all four branches of the armed forces practiced all aspects of coercion, from taking prisoners to carrying out summary executions, although the bulk of these tasks was carried out by the Army and by *Carabineros*.<sup>67</sup> This early period was by far the most violent in terms of the sheer

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<sup>65</sup> The cutoff date of December is to some extent unavoidably arbitrary. The shift from one period to the next was more fluid than this sharp cutoff suggests. But there are enough indicators of a change in the organization of coercion in early 1974 that the December cutoff appears sensible.

<sup>66</sup> The *recurso de amparo* is a legal instrument akin to habeas corpus. "Habeas corpus," notes DerechosChile, "is a legal injunction intended to protect the freedom and personal safety of individuals in custody as well as those who fear an arrest without cause or a threat to their physical security." By contrast, a *recurso de amparo* is a right of citizens to be protected from "unfair arrest." The purpose of the *recurso* "is not necessarily to obtain the person's release [as it is with habeas corpus] but rather to ascertain and assure the physical integrity of the person." Furthermore, a "recurso de amparo preventivo is another remedy which can be sought when a person is subjected to intimidation or surveillance and fears an arrest is imminent. An arrest without a court order is sufficient grounds in and of itself to justify conferring habeas corpus protection, and the law establishes sanctions for illegal arrests" (see <http://www.derechoschile.org/english/habeas.html>).

Before the coup, the *recurso* was primarily used as an internal judicial mechanism, used by appellate courts to review decisions made at the lower level, in order to protect individuals from abuses. After the coup, lawyers representing victims made use of this mechanism in an unprecedented manner, forcing the courts to process *recursos* on behalf of individuals held by organizations outside the judiciary's direct jurisdiction (Barros 1996: 92)

<sup>67</sup> The main reason for the prominence of the Army and *Carabineros* is that these are the only branches of

numbers of victims of the military's repression. Roughly half of all the deaths that occurred during the military regime took place in 1973. This period also witnessed about a third of all detentions, and anywhere from a quarter to three-fifths of all tortures. The victims included people from a wide range of political backgrounds, from the left, to the center, to those without political affiliation, and even including some whom had been opponents of the Allende government. This was by far the broadest range targeted during the course of the regime (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: Ch. II; Padilla Ballesteros 1995: 45-66). And although many prisoners were held (and killed) in secret, most were kept in highly public places like the country's main sports stadiums and hastily improvised concentration camps.

Also, during this time the new Junta quickly achieved almost complete control of the entire country. Throughout, the previous civilian authorities in the various provinces and regions either were forcibly deposed or, in many cases, peacefully handed power to military officers. The ranking officer in each area took political and administrative command.

Notwithstanding the level of violence and the speed with which the military took control, the measured levels of internal monitoring during this time were surprisingly low. The results are summarized in Table 1.

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the armed forces with an institutional presence throughout the country. The Navy and Air Force have bases far less widespread. The Navy assumed control of public order in the province of Valparaíso (where it has its main headquarters), and the Air Force in the province of *Llanquihue*, where it has a strong presence. The rest of the county was effectively under the control of the Army and *Carabineros* (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 107-09).

**Table 1: Internal Monitoring September-December 1973**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
<u>PROCESS</u>			
1. Internal reporting by agents to superiors on their activities		X	
2. Monitors' briefings on agents' operations to principals		X	
3. Information clearinghouse		X	
4. Number of overseers minus number of agents	X		
<u>OUTCOME</u>			
5. Principal's trust in agents		X	
6. Intra- and inter-branch coordination		X	
7. Corruption and coercion for personal ends		X	

To start, the Junta made use of Article 75 of the Code of Military Justice (*Código de Justicia Militar*) to delegate broad powers to local division commanders. This included not only administrative powers, but also the power to carry out military tribunals and to pass sentence (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 131). There were few established procedures and there was a great deal of variation in the application of coercion. Some local commanders took a harder line than others did. In some places commanders imposed strict discipline, while in others (especially in more remote regions) local police and soldiers were less constrained and could enact personal revenge.

As a result, there was a great deal of variation in terms of how prisoners were treated. Some sectors of the military took a decidedly hard-line stance in the belief that they were fighting a war against a serious and well-armed enemy. General Alejandro Medina, whose duty as leader of the Black Beret squadron within the army was to conduct house-to-house raids through working-class neighborhoods, defended hard-line measures by stating that “No one likes to have his house raided. But if there are rats inside, you accept that someone comes in and gets them out.”<sup>68</sup> But not all sectors within the military shared this view. In the provinces, in particular, where there had not been the same types of resistance and sense of war found in Santiago, relations between military commanders and the local authorities from the Allende government often continued in much the same way as before the coup. Where there were prisoners, many local commanders adhered strictly to military procedure in terms of treatment and due legal process for the military tribunals.

In these circumstances, the level of internal reports by agents to superiors was likely in the middle range. There was no doubt a great deal of reporting, and the Junta appears to have had a reasonably good idea of broad patterns such as the number of prisoners and casualties. But the great variation in the administration of coercion during this time suggests that reporting on many aspects of coercion was patchy, ad-hoc, and in many cases unreliable. As a result, I have coded **IM 1 = Medium**.

Also, during this period each service essentially carried out its own internal monitoring, but there was no specialized overarching monitor for all the services. The number of agents exceeded the number of monitors or overseers (**IM 4 = Low**). First, the *Informe Rettig* reports that the Commission could not “determine exactly what role was played by the different intelligence services of the armed forces and police in the provinces during this period or how that role was coordinated with that of the officers [in charge]” (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 131). While this could mean that the various intelligence agencies reported accurately and consistently on their branches’ operations, this appears unlikely. The reason is that internal reporting was not the mandate of the intelligence services. (Reporting on enemy activities was.) As a result, also, I have coded the monitors’ reporting to their superiors as reflective of medium levels of internal monitoring, given the chaotic situation and the lack of clarity over division of powers (**IM 2 = Medium**).

The principal clearinghouse for information about prisoners was the *Servicio*

<sup>68</sup> Cited in Constable and Valenzuela (Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 20). Medina believed that “the country was in a state of war at least until November 1973.” His combat souvenir is a beret that received a bullet hole through it while he was wearing it. “I am alive,” he said in characteristic bluster, “thanks to those dummies’ bad aim” (Medina Lois 1995).

*Nacional de Detenidos* (SENDET). Indeed, the SENDET was usually the first place where relatives of those who had been detained looked for information (often without success). But there are several reasons why the SENDET failed to act as a comprehensive clearinghouse.

The most important is that it only dealt with the status of prisoners, and coercion did not amount simply to holding prisoners. The SENDET could provide no information on the scores of victims who for example had been rounded up and summarily executed. (In many rural areas, for example, local commanders permitted such summary operations.) Also, the SENDET lacked the power to carry out independent investigations. It depended essentially on self-reports by the different branches on how many prisoners they held, and on their status. Victims' relatives reported repeated frustrations during this time in their failure to get accurate information on their relatives' whereabouts. Consequently, I have coded **IM 3 = Medium**.

With respect to the outcome criteria, the available evidence suggests that at the very top, and notwithstanding official proclamations, the various Junta members (the principals) deeply mistrusted one another. The confusion over powers and the division of labor between the various branches created a situation that could be exploited. In subsequent chapters I will document the struggles between Pinochet and the rest of the Junta members over the extent of his power accumulation. Although each Junta member probably trusted his own services' reports, there is little evidence of cross-branch trust. I have split the difference and coded this as reflective of a medium level of internal monitoring (**IM 5 = Medium**).

With respect to coordination of activities, I have coded this also as medium (**IM 6 = Medium**). In many ways, of course, there was a great deal of coordination. The four branches had acted in unison to overthrow the Allende government, and notwithstanding their deep internal divisions and confusions, were coordinating their actions to run the government. But it is difficult to isolate a single coercive modus operandi during this time that applied to all branches.

The military issued "*bandos*," official public announcements with the character of edicts,<sup>69</sup> with lists of names of people it was looking for. In many cases, these persons presented themselves to *Carabineros* or army bases voluntarily. Sometimes they were released but oftentimes they were detained on the spot.<sup>70</sup> The country's two main police forces, *Carabineros de Chile* and *Investigaciones de Chile*,<sup>71</sup> also carried out searches,

<sup>69</sup> The best description and analysis of the political and legal aspects of the *bandos* is Manuel Antonio, Roberto, and Carmen Garretón Merino (Garretón Merino, Garretón Merino, and Garretón Merino 1998).

<sup>70</sup> During the first couple of weeks in particular, before the extent of the repression became clear, many people believed that the military was simply "restoring order" after deposing the Allende government. Although it seems remarkable in retrospect, at that time many thought that their best chances for survival lay in cooperating fully with the new authorities, even to the point of voluntarily presenting themselves when their name showed up on a list or in a bando.

<sup>71</sup> Both institutions operate throughout the country, often with considerable overlap, even though they are sharply distinct. *Carabineros* is a uniformed police force. When it was created in 1927 it formed part of the armed forces, on par with the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and under the control of the Ministry of Defence. President Alessandri changed its status in 1960, placing it under the control of the Interior Ministry and removing its parity with the other branches of the military. With the coup, the Junta (which included *Carabineros* General Cesar Mendoza, who took over the command of the institution during the coup jumping over 17 senior officers) restored *Carabineros*' status on a par with the other branches of the armed forces. *Investigaciones* is a civilian police force, and has always been under the control of the

for instance within the shantytowns of Santiago, once the victim's identity and whereabouts had been established. Houses and offices were ransacked in search for people and information. In other cases, the police would respond to tip-offs by neighbors or coworkers about people with a known affiliation to the Allende government, membership in one of the left-wing parties, or who had occupied high positions in trade unions or state enterprises.

Sometimes *Carabineros* would act in coordination with the other branches of the armed forces, such as the army and the air force, to carry out more massive search and detention raids in particular poblaciones, for instance to search for supposed weapons caches. Typically, all the men would be rounded up and detained in a local field or guarded compound, a smaller group within this would be selected and carried out to a military or police center, where they would be kept for several hours or even days. During this time there would be questioning, rough beatings, and tortures. The majority of these prisoners were subsequently released, and the remainder would be either detained or taken to isolated spots, usually on the outskirts of Santiago, and executed. The bodies would usually be taken to the morgues, or in some cases hastily dumped in fields, ditches or even in Santiago's Mapocho River (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 38, 109-11).

Moreover, as suggested earlier, in many cases coercion was not carried out strictly for the political purposes dictated by the Junta. While there is little evidence of personal corruption, in parts of the countryside, especially, many summary executions were carried out in revenge for local disputes (**IM 7 = Medium**).<sup>72</sup> When agents acted in their own interests, the problems in the coordination and monitoring mechanisms did not prevent actions that were contrary to the interests of the principal.

### **External monitoring**

As Table 2 shows, most basic external monitoring mechanisms were essentially shut down. The opposition press was shut down (**EM 5 = Low**), Congress was disbanded (**EM 6 = Low**), and there were no freedom of information laws through which outsiders could request details about the Executive's operations (**EM 8 = Low**). Nevertheless, some sources of external monitoring remained, and I examine these in this section.

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Ministry of Interior (Frühling, Portales, and Varas 1982; Maldonado 1990; Mery Figueroa 1996).

<sup>72</sup> In November 1978 the bodies of one local massacre, in the town of Lonquén, near Santiago, were found. The victims were local farmers without political affiliation. *Carabineros* agents killed them shortly after the coup for what most likely appears to have been a local dispute (Pacheco 1979; Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 238-40).

**Table 2: External Monitoring September-December 1973**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
1. Interlocutor or ombudsman for outside groups		X	
2. Outsiders' access to prisoners		X	
3. Principal's trust in monitor's reports	X		
4. Unofficial human rights agencies		X	
5. Independent media	X		
6. Legislative oversight	X		
7. Judicial jurisdiction	X		
8. Freedom of information laws	X		



While the military sought to maximize its discretion regarding coercion, with respect to some kinds of prisoners outsiders were able to achieve a measure of control and oversight (**EM 2 = Medium**).

Detention centers were set up in army, navy, and air force bases, as well as in *Carabineros* and *Investigaciones* stations and jails.<sup>73</sup> The bulk of these centers were in Santiago and Valparaíso (Chile's second-largest city), but there were numerous other locations throughout the country. *Carabineros* stations (*Comisarias*) were normally a transit point toward other more permanent detention centers, in military bases or other more hastily improvised centers. Images of the scores of prisoners in the sports stadiums (in particular the *Estadio Nacional*) traveled the world. Family members would gather outside these centers in their attempts to obtain updates on their relatives' whereabouts.

Although the pattern of detention varied across regions and across the different armed forces branches, the Servicio Nacional de Detenidos (SENDET) served as a tool to provide a measure of external monitoring. As we saw earlier, it largely failed to act as a comprehensive clearinghouse of information on all aspects of the organization of coercion. To that extent, it did not provide the new regime with a significant source of internal monitoring. But as a mechanism for external monitoring, however, it served as a link to outsiders (**EM 1 = Medium**). Relatives could sometimes through the SENDET obtain some information on their relative's whereabouts. Indeed, with all its limitations the SENDET was the only link outsiders had to the coercive forces.

Typically, a detention would proceed through several stages. After an arrest, a victim would be held incommunicado for an undetermined period of time. This first stage was by far the most dangerous, during which the bulk of the assassinations and tortures were bound to take place. Prisoners were kept in secret for as long as the authorities determined that they needed to. Afterward, if the person was still alive, he (or she) could be simply released. Or, more likely, he could be placed in one of the many long-term detention camps that began to appear during this period. Under this status, a higher degree of external monitoring was possible. The Red Cross monitored the detention centers such as the *Estadio Nacional*, as did various other national and international organizations. It was possible for relatives to visit prisoners, and to deliver food and clothing.<sup>74</sup>

Even though the judiciary was allowed to remain independent by the military, it failed to pose much of a challenge to the Junta's exercise of power with regard to coercion (**EM 7 = Low**). The Junta also moved to deliberately constrain the judiciary's jurisdiction with regard to coercion.

In October 1977 the Junta modified the Code of Military Justice to allow the delegation of all authority to local field commanders, including heading the courts of military justice (*Consejos de Guerra*) and passing sentences. Shortly after the first *Consejos de Guerra* began operations, lawyers began to present *recursos de queja* in complaint of irregularities. In November the Supreme Court ruled that it lacked jurisdiction over the military courts, setting a precedent that would be followed for much

<sup>73</sup> *Investigaciones de Chile* is the civilian police force, which is not part of the armed forces. It has always been under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior.

<sup>74</sup> My father was a political prisoner during this time, and I experienced much of this first-hand. I have also conducted informal interviews with many former prisoners at different points in time.

of the regime (Barros 1996: 78).<sup>75</sup>

Chilean military courts prior to the coup had jurisdiction not only over military personnel, but also over civilians. After the coup, the jurisdiction of the military courts was expanded such that the majority of cases having to do with state coercion came before the military and not the civilian courts.<sup>76</sup>

This also set in motion a pattern that would be repeated throughout the regime. Lawyers acting on behalf of victims and their relatives began increasingly to present their cases in front of the courts. They made use of the *recurso de amparo*, and during the course of the regime, thousands of *recursos* were filed with the courts. The overwhelming majority went unheeded (Frühling 2000: ??).

The courts would typically request information on the case from the Executive. But given the military's and the Executive's extensive jurisdiction under the state of siege, the court had little power to pursue the request. The Minister of Interior, for example, might declare that the person had been "arrested pursuant to faculties conferred by the state of siege," and this was enough for the court to put an end to the *recurso* (Barros 1996: 86).

In short, there were severe restrictions on the extent to which the judiciary could make use of its independence to oversee the Executive's use of coercion. Some of these limitations were self-imposed,<sup>77</sup> some were imposed by the new regime itself as it sought to implement coercion with a maximum degree of discretion. But for these reasons, with respect to judicial jurisdiction the level of external monitoring was low.

Nevertheless, one consequence of the opposition's strategy to pursue the *recursos de amparo* was the gradual development of an increasingly larger and systematic database. Information gathered on the coercive operations served as an important nexus for the opposition and to mobilize resources against the regime (**EM 4 = Medium**). Organizations as varied as Amnesty International and the Organization of American States made use of this information as the basis for numerous reports on human rights violations in the country. While these reports posed problems for the regime, which denounced them as Communist propaganda, there is no evidence that the principals (the Junta) had any direct confidence in their validity during this period (**EM 3 = Low**). (Over time, however, as we will see in later chapters, this record would become the best source of information on the regime's coercive operations, with sometimes surprising consequences.)

## Monitoring problems

<sup>75</sup> The independence of the military courts became entrenched into the 1980 Constitution ([www.derechoschile.org](http://www.derechoschile.org)). Gonzalo Prieto, the first Justice Minister under the Junta, suggested at the time that the Court's "self-limitation" may have been a calculated "hedging to avoid sharing responsibility for the military court abuses and infractions during the emergency" (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: 12, 15 April 1974, 9-12), cited in Barros (1996: 80).

<sup>76</sup> The jurisdiction of military courts also grew as a result of legislation specifying a series of new political crimes that the military courts were mandated to enforce. These new crimes included, among others, membership in a political party (D.L. 77), "political disobedience" and clandestine entry into the country (D.L. 81), and adherence to doctrines "propagating violence" (Law 18.314) ([http://www.derechoschile.com/Arcaematicas/legal/dlgolpehtml/indexdlesp\\_1.html](http://www.derechoschile.com/Arcaematicas/legal/dlgolpehtml/indexdlesp_1.html)).

<sup>77</sup> Hilbink argues that the judiciary's rigid hierarchy and its "extreme legalism" contributed to its capitulation to the new regime (Hilbink 1999).

The pattern of coercion just described posed several problems for the Junta. First, the visibility of the prisoners in places such as the *Estadio Nacional* became problematic. The regime faced a great deal of international pressure for its massive human rights violations, and for its treatment of political prisoners.

In November 1973 the *Estadio Nacional* was closed as a prison camp, and the bulk of the prisoners were transferred to Chacabuco, an abandoned mining town in the Atacama Desert. This served the purpose of removing the prisoners from the glare of the international press based in Santiago, and to show an improvement in the treatment of prisoners.<sup>78</sup> By contrast to the *Estadio Nacional*, in Chacabuco prisoners were allowed far greater freedom and autonomy.

With respect to internal monitoring, a serious crisis took place a few weeks after the coup, once it became clear that not all military units were adopting a uniform policy versus prisoners and the enemy. The *Informe Rettig* points out that the Junta at this time decided that many of the commanders in the provinces were being too “soft” with their prisoners, perhaps because they had not faced the same levels of resistance found in Santiago. They feared that such a policy might create the conditions for the reorganization of the opposition (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 121).

During October General Sergio Arellano Stark, one of the leading instigators of the coup within the army, who had taken part in the raid on the Moneda palace, led a mission to the southern and northern regions in the country. The mission visited every key military regiment, especially those where prisoners had been taken. Pinochet himself had ordered the mission. Its official purpose was to empower Arellano to “look over” prisoners’ trials currently underway.<sup>79</sup> Its real aim, we can surmise, was to “speed up” these trials and to impose a more hard line throughout the military. From the perspective of internal monitoring, the mission would have had several purposes. It would have served as a check on local commanders’ operations by a monitor personally appointed by Pinochet. And it would have been an attempt to impose a more uniform policy of coercion, which would have made monitoring future operations easier.

The mission arrived in the Talca regiment, in the southern part of the country, on October 30, 1973. Lt. Col. Efraín Jaña was commander of the regiment at that time. Upon Arellano’s arrival, Jaña reported that the regiment was “without news”. The subsequent dialogue is transcribed below:

SA: “What do you mean, no news? How many casualties?”

EJ: “There are no casualties nor trials, general. The only problem we had, and which might have been avoided with timely orders, has already been resolved. The former regional governor [*intendente*] was tried and shot.”

SA: “Don’t you know we are in a war!”

EJ: “I don’t know what war you are talking about, general” (Verdugo 1989: 27-28).<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> The other purpose appears to have been to allow the *Estadio Nacional* to be used as a soccer stadium for a World Cup qualifying match (Various interviews with former Chacabuco prisoners).

<sup>79</sup> Sergio Arellano Iturriaga, Arellano Stark’s son, confirms that in October 1973 his father had received the “order to look over various trials (*procesos*) underway in the provinces.” See Arellano Iturriaga (1985: 62), cited in Ahumada et al. (1989: 368).

<sup>80</sup> Jaña also noted that despite the difference in rank, he could talk to Arellano in this tone (“... more timely orders”, “I don’t know what war you are talking about...”) because Arellano at one point had been his

Arellano reproached Jaña for having urged the population of Talca toward peace and reconciliation, to put aside divisions and to come to the aid of the military government. Jaña notes that “afterwards I understood it: I was calling for civil-military friendship at a time when this did not fit with the plans from above, precisely when it was necessary to exacerbate the military fury against the Left using the so-called *Plan Zeta*. But Talca did not fit with the plan. Everything was very quiet, just when many prisoners and trials were needed, to accuse them for *Plan Zeta*” (Verdugo 1989: 29).

Arellano’s mission had already been to other regiments prior to Talca. Between October 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, Arellano’s mission went through La Serena, Copiapó, Antofagasta, and Calama. In most of these places the local commanders had taken prisoners and were in the process of holding trials. As Arellano’s mission passed through the regiments, dozens of prisoners who were awaiting trial were executed, mostly without the knowledge of the local commander. Typically, Arellano’s team would remove prisoners from the detention centers to take them to “interrogations” in a different camp. The prisoners would be summarily executed in an isolated spot. The bodies were later given to the local morgue and in most cases the military issued an official declaration that the officers in charge had applied the “Law of Escape” (*Ley de fuga*), which allowed for the shooting of prisoners who tried to escape.<sup>81</sup>

Although Arellano’s mission took place with direct orders from Pinochet, it often did so bypassing standard military lines of command. On most occasions his men would order the removal of prisoners without the knowledge of the local commander, or directly bypass his authority, showing official documentation from Pinochet empowering Arellano to look into the trials in process.

General Lagos, commander of the Antofagasta regiment, on October 20, 1973, challenged Arellano regarding the crimes his men had committed the previous night. Arellano responded by showing him a letter from Pinochet, officially putting him in charge of looking into and speeding up the trials of the men in his regiment as well as others. Lagos states that had Arellano shown him this documentation at the outset, he would have had no choice but to comply and to give the order to all the men under his command to follow Arellano’s orders in these matters.<sup>82</sup>

Lagos warned Arellano that he would “give account” of the incident to Pinochet, who was landing in Antofagasta that same afternoon. When Pinochet arrived Lagos explained to him the crimes which had been committed without his knowledge in Antofagasta and Calama, the regiments under his authority, and asked Pinochet to relieve him of his command. Pinochet, according to Lagos, expressed deep concern over the issue and stated that while he could not accept Lagos’ resignation immediately, he would do his best to accommodate by transferring him to a different unit. On February 1974 Lagos was transferred to Santiago, and in October of that year he was sent into

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student. Jaña also recounts his experiences on film in Ancelovici (Ancelovici 1990).

<sup>81</sup> Arellano himself has maintained that he is innocent of the crimes attributed to him and that other officers who traveled with him (specifically, Army Col. Sergio Arredondo) acted without his knowledge. Apart from the fact that this version clearly contradicts the military’s official statements regarding the deaths, it is also belied by numerous other declarations by witnesses and participants.

<sup>82</sup> See also Ahumada et al. (1989: 357-60, 370, n. 53). Lagos’ sworn testimony is reproduced in *APSI*, No. 188, December 14-28, 1987.

retirement.<sup>83</sup>

On October 22, Arellano and his mission<sup>84</sup> arrived in Arica, Chile's northernmost city, next to the Peruvian border. Their putative purpose was to look into the trials under way in the Rancagua regiment, at that time under the command of General Odlanier Mena (who would later assume control of the CNI after the exit of Manuel Contreras). Here the same procedure took place – Arellano asked to review the trials, showing direct orders from Pinochet – but Mena stated that he had already put Arica's chief prosecutor, Humberto Retamal, in charge of these procedures. Consequently, it would be inappropriate to reveal any information regarding these trials, including the number of prisoners held or their names, since that task was already assigned to someone else. Arellano did not insist and, according to Mena, accepted the explanation that all procedures were being followed properly. As Arellano and his men left, one of them, Lt. Armando Fernández Larios, said to Mena “despite the explanation you gave to General Arellano, we will still approach the jail to see how things are going.” Mena at this point told Larios to remember that while they were in his regiment they were under surveillance, and that if they did approach the prisoners without his permission, the regiment's personnel had orders to have them arrested. Mena states that he made this decision “because, through the same sources that had announced to me Arellano's itinerary, I knew the results [his mission] had produced in the other regiments.”<sup>85</sup>

Arellano's mission is an important turning point in the early history of the dictatorship. It indicates deep tensions inside the military hierarchy and the government over how to treat prisoners and, indeed, over the nature of the military regime as a whole. Other than the question of simply bypassing the normal lines of command, there was the more serious problem that many commanders did not believe that the kind of hard line Arellano sought to enforce was either necessary or in the best interest of the new government. Instead, many, like Lt. Col. Jaña, had until that point believed that the new government would try to build support among the population by encouraging dialogue and reconciliation.

The Arellano mission is often seen as an example of the brutality of the new military regime. The *Informe Rettig* points out that

... this trip to the North, with its official and extraordinary character, with the highest authority – originating in the Commander in Chief – that backed it up, with its aftermath of astonishing extra-legal executions, and with its blatant impunity, could not fail to give the officers of the Armed Forces and Carabineros (Fuerzas Armadas y de Orden) one clear signal: that there was only

<sup>83</sup> Recently, new information has surfaced linking Pinochet to the crimes. Lagos reported to Pinochet on all the deaths that had taken place under his command. These were divided into the ones for which he was directly responsible and those (the majority) for which Arellano was responsible. Pinochet refused to sign this document, suggesting that Lagos simply lump all the deaths together in one column, which would essentially have meant that on paper he would take primary responsibility. Lagos did not do this, and kept the original report, with Pinochet's corrections on the margins. In January 2001 he presented this document to Chilean Judge Juan Guzmán, who is carrying out the investigation into the Arellano case (González 2001).

<sup>84</sup> The mission included major Pedro Espinoza, Marcelo Moren, and Lieutenant Armando Fernández Larios, all of whom would later become key DINA agents. Espinoza is currently serving a sentence, along with Manuel Contreras, for the assassination of Orlando Letelier, a crime in which Larios is also implicated.

<sup>85</sup> General (ret.) Odlanier Mena, interview, *La Tercera*, 12 March 1998.

one command and that it would have to be carried out ruthlessly (*duramente*) (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 123).<sup>86</sup>

The mission no doubt exemplified a new hard line. But while dozens of prisoners were killed, what is most striking besides the impunity of the killings is the fact that well after the coup there was so much internal resistance from within the army itself to this kind of coercion. In a previous passage, the same *Informe Rettig* notes the power of local commanders regarding the application of coercion:

Especially during the first period, what took place in each Region in terms of control of public order and violations of human rights had substantial differences which depended, to an important degree, on the different local conditions and on the attitude of each of the Zone Commanders (*Jefes de Zona*). In this way, in some places the highest authorities of the deposed government were advised, even by telephone, to turn themselves in to the new authorities; while in others there was a rigid and far-reaching control of public order from the very first days (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 109, emphasis mine).

There is very little available first-hand information on the debates inside the ruling circles over the differences in how coercion was applied. We can only speculate and infer from the available sources about the causes and effects of these differences, and the tensions these might have produced. There are no specific references to the Arellano mission in the *Actas* of the Junta, and only the vaguest references to the more general problem of the uneven coercion as applied by different local commanders. On October 8 the minutes record a discussion over the worry that very few heavy weapons (*armas largas*) had been found, given that “there is certainty that there must be buried or circulating at least five or ten thousand more.”<sup>87</sup> The same meeting also notes a resolution to convene the War Council (*Consejo de Guerra*) and the *Tribunal de Cargos* to look into the trials against the main people charged with the “chaos that the country is suffering” (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: No. 14).

The overall picture that emerges about the application of coercion during this time is thus not that of a tightly controlled and well-organized policy. Some key commanders, such as General Mena (in charge of arguably the most strategically important military post in Chile, in Arica, next to the tense Peruvian border),<sup>88</sup> resisted the adoption of a hard line. But there were clearly forces pushing for this inside the military leadership.

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<sup>86</sup> See also Verdugo (1989).

<sup>87</sup> This reflects what was surely an exaggerated estimation prior to the coup of the size and strength of the opposition that the military would face once it took power. Even if the military was wrong about how well armed an opposition it would have to fight, the fears themselves were real. Barros argues that “... the verbal violence of the months preceding the coup, with calls for a revolutionary resolution to the crisis, or, at a minimum, the armed defense of the government in the event of a coup, distorted military estimations of expected armed resistance. The fraudulence and irresponsibility of this revolutionary grandstanding was exposed on 11 September 1973 as the armed forces rapidly controlled the internal security situation and demonstrated the military preparedness of the Left to be negligible” (Barros 1996: 95).

<sup>88</sup> A little-understood and poorly documented episode in the dictatorship’s history is the very real danger of war that existed with Peru during the mid-1970s. The border tensions with Argentina in the late 70s led to more public clashes, ending with papal mediation. The tensions with Peru remained secretive, but no less threatening to the new regime. Future research once military archives are opened (certainly not in the near term) will map out the extent of the threats and the manner in which it affected decision making on both sides of the border.

Was the Arellano mission a success? It depends. If the goal of the mission was to assert the authority of central command, then the mission is a partial success. If nothing else, the mission sent a clear and unambiguous signal to the commanders in the field about the direction the central command was taking.

One problem is that the direction might have been quite a different one. Instead of pushing commanders to take a harder line, surely central command could have asserted its authority with a very different mission, where softer line officers tried to bring hard line commanders in line. As I argued above, there is nothing in the nature of the regime as the product of Chilean military ideology or as a function of the fact that it is an authoritarian regime that required a move to a hard line at this particular time.

Therefore, if the goal of the mission was to implement a harder line against the growing number of prisoners, I would argue that it must be judged a qualified failure. The reason is that apart from the message that the mission might have sent, there was no systematic shift in coercion. The garrison commanders remained in place, at least in the near future.<sup>89</sup> Some sectors of the military took a hard line against prisoners, while others continued to be puzzled about the extent of the “war” the military was fighting. Compared to the shift in coercion that took place when the DINA began operations full-scale (which I will discuss in the next chapter), after the Arellano mission the changes were negligible.

In order to evaluate the importance of the mission in historical context, we need to keep in mind the connections between the mission and the DINA. Future research into now-closed military archives will better reveal the relationships between the men in the mission (such as Fernández Larrios, Moren Brito, and Pedro Espinoza), and Col. Contreras at the time of the mission. They all went on to play important roles in the DINA after it was formally organized. But we do not know whether and in what capacity they operated as part of what at that time was the Comisión DINA, and if they formed part of the mission because of their DINA membership. Given the growing prominence of Contreras, and given the importance of the mission coming from the center, it is likely that these men had contact with the DINA during this time.

What possible interest might the nascent DINA have had in this mission? As I will show in the next chapters, the DINA became an agency for the systematic extermination of key sectors of the left, particularly through the practice of the disappearances. The *Informe Rettig* notes that during this first period in 1973 there were a great many disappearances, but the practice was not as systematic as it would later become. Instead, it “was a manner of hiding or covering up the crimes which had been committed, rather than the result of actions subject to a tight central control which sought to eliminate certain categories of persons” (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 22-23).

Therefore, if the goal of the mission was to test the possibility of carrying out a campaign of counter insurgency against the Left, the answer must have been “not through regular military channels.” In this light, the mission can be judged a relative success. By revealing the points of resistance, it showed the members of the DINA that if a campaign of counter insurgency were to occur, it would have to take place *outside* regular military

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<sup>89</sup> General Joaquín Lagos, for instance, was removed from his command in Antofagasta several months later, in February 1974, by which time the DINA was already in full operation (Ahumada et al. 1989: 360).

channels.

These goals – to assert central command, to implement a hard line, and to test the possibility of counter insurgency – are not mutually contradictory, and indeed they may have been held by different sectors of the military leadership. It is perfectly consistent, for instance, for Pinochet to have devised a mission to assert his command, and for Contreras, if he had anything to do with the mission, to have seen it as a testing ground for his aims. (Even if Contreras had no prior connection to the mission, it would still have served his purposes afterward by revealing the resistance to counterinsurgency within the regular channels.)

José Zalaquett notes that a working hypothesis in the *Comisión Verdad y Reconciliación* (of which he was a member) was that Pinochet needed to stage “his own” military victory, given that he had been a latecomer to the coup. He jumped on board at the last possible minute, and was appointed head of the Junta strictly because of a formality. As head of the Army, the largest unit within the armed forces, he was the most obvious choice for the post. But the real victors in the coup had been Navy Admiral Merino and Air Force Commander Leigh, who had taken part in the coup plots from the beginning. Even though Pinochet was head of the Junta, neither Merino nor Leigh deferred to him as a matter of course. For all purposes they considered him an equal. In order to assert his authority, therefore, Pinochet needed to build his own separate power base. From this perspective, Pinochet’s ambitions intersected perfectly with those of Contreras, who wanted to stage a war of counter-insurgency. Contreras essentially convinced Pinochet that he could deliver him a victory in “his” war, and allow him to reap its benefits (Zalaquett 1996). The view of Pinochet as essentially an equal to Leigh and Merino is backed up by Barros’ analysis of the “collegial” relationship among the members of the Junta, where neither Merino nor Leigh were willing to allow Pinochet to accumulate too much power.<sup>90</sup>

In short, the mission can be seen as an attempt to ensure a more uniform application of coercion according to a harder line from within the pre-existing military channels. No new organizations or institutions were created to try to assert the new directive. And from this perspective, the mission can be judged a success insofar as it revealed to the top military command (namely Pinochet) that a harder line within the pre-existing channels would face a great deal of resistance.

As the next chapter will show, however, the lessons learned from the failure of the Arellano mission opened the way for a radically different, and far more comprehensive and severe, organizational shift.

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<sup>90</sup> Barros argues that the 1980 Constitution was essentially a mechanism to regulate power relationships among the Junta members. It was not a vehicle for the accumulation of power by Pinochet (Barros 1996). (For a full discussion of Barros’ analysis, see Chapters 6 and 7.)



#### 4. THE CREATION OF THE DINA (1973-1974)

At the beginning of 1974 there was a marked shift in how the military regime organized and practiced coercion. Large numbers of people were killed during the first several months after the coup, but by early 1974 the number of victims decreased sharply. Moreover, human rights workers speaking to victims' relatives noticed a new modus operandi of coercion. Previously, large numbers of people very broadly targeted had been rounded up in military and police operations, and either detained or summarily executed. By early 1974, the military and police stopped practicing large-scale and broadly targeted sweep operations. Instead, fewer victims were taken, and repression was much more selectively targeted toward members of far-left wing groups. Moreover, information about those who were detained during this time became increasingly rare. Indeed, human rights workers began to notice that while the number of people imprisoned and killed decreased, the new detainees were taken to new and secretive locales inside and outside Santiago. Their fate inside these places was most often difficult or impossible to trace.

At the same time, observers noticed a new coercive organization whose agents, in civilian clothing and unmarked cars, would round up people and detain them in a variety of new locations. The National Intelligence Directorate (*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*, DINA) would not receive official status until June 1974, but its detentions became apparent several months before. As the DINA became increasingly active, it took over the bulk of operations from the other branches of the armed forces. And as it did so, it imposed a radically new pattern of coercion. Fewer people were killed, but the victims came from a much narrower range of political opponents. Moreover, prisoners were no longer held in large detention centers, where they could be attended to by national and international humanitarian aid organizations like the Red Cross. Increasingly, they were taken to smaller, more secretive locations. They were almost always brutally tortured, and many simply disappeared. While disappearances had been carried out before, during the first several months after the coup, under the DINA the disappearances became a much more systematic and deliberate tool of coercion. What explains the rise of the DINA, and the resulting shift in how the military government organized and applied coercion? Why was there a shift at all?

Analysts and observers generally refer to variations on the three basic arguments I outlined in Chapter 2 to explain the DINA. The first sees it as a natural progression in the evolution of the regime; the second as a tool for Pinochet's power consolidation; and the third as the principal mechanism for its director, Colonel Manuel Contreras, to wage an ideologically-driven war of counterinsurgency. I will show that while each of these accounts explains partial aspects of the DINA's creation and operation, they leave crucial questions unanswered. A more comprehensive explanation for the DINA follows from the discussion of organizational logic that I have presented in the previous chapters. The DINA was not simply a vehicle for Pinochet or Contreras' ambitions. And neither was it a necessary or a natural development in the evolution of the regime. Indeed, the DINA came about despite the serious objections to it from within key sectors of the military

leadership, including members of the Junta. As we shall see, they had good reason to reject this development because it decreased their own power. The DINA's creation, in other words, is puzzling from a pure balance of power perspective, which cannot answer why powerful actors would willingly act against their own self-interest and constrain their power. Any account for the DINA has to explain why, however reluctantly, these sectors might have agreed to what essentially amounted to the creation of a powerful secret police beyond their control, run by men who mostly they did not trust.

### **The standard explanations**

The first common account is that the DINA was a natural evolution in the history of military regime, the second that it was a tool for Pinochet's power accumulation, and the third that it served as the main institutional vehicle for Colonel Manuel Contreras to wage a campaign of counterinsurgency. These strands are complementary, and are often interwoven in accounts of the history and evolution of the regime.

An excellent example of the natural evolution view is Elías Padilla Ballesteros' description of the two periods of "forced disappearance":

In analyzing the cases it is possible to see clearly that the practice of forced disappearance in Chile can be divided into two periods.

The first corresponds to the year 1973, when this practice is begun. There are many cases of executions where the bodies are later hidden, but without a prior intent to use this practice for other purposes. The authors of this practice are primarily agents of the Army and Carabineros.

In the second period, disappearances are carried out according to a central plan by the security services. They act according to prior information on the victim targeted. In many cases the prisoner is tortured with the aim of providing information to implicate other people, to be able to detain them and to continue the cycle. In some cases the annihilation of the prisoner and the hiding of his body are the result of previous planning. ...

We conclude, on the basis of the total number of cases studied, that forced disappearance of persons in Chile, beginning in 1973 and until the end of the military regime, was a repressive method practiced by agents of the state. Its purpose was to annihilate the victims and to generate terror in the community (Padilla Ballesteros 1995: 68-69).

The main – arguably the only – evidence in favor of this view is that there was an evolution in the way the military regime practiced coercion. Fewer people were killed and different groups of people were targeted over time. The regime at first targeted coercion broadly, though it focused especially on the Socialists, and later targeted other left wing groups such as the MIR and the Communists more deliberately.

The second common argument is that the DINA was a tool for Pinochet's consolidation of power. Arriagada describes how Pinochet consolidated power. He writes that at first,

... power seemed so evenly balanced among the commanders in chief that they apparently believed that the presidency of the junta (sic.) would rotate at brief intervals. Pinochet told the press, "the Junta works as a single entity. I was elected [President of the Junta] because I am the oldest.... But I will not be the

only President of the Junta; after a while, Admiral Merino will be, then General Leigh, and so on. I am not an ambitious man; I would not want to be a usurper of power (Arriagada 1986: 9).

Despite this initial division of powers, during "the months of late 1974 and early 1975 ... the structure of the military regime changed rapidly":

General Pinochet, the Commander in Chief of the Army, continued to increase his power. The first and most substantial change in the power structure came with the promulgation of the Statute of the Governing Junta (*Estatuto de la Junta de Gobierno*). This document reiterated that executive power rested in the Military Junta and that exercise of that power was assigned to the President of the Junta. But this statute did not recognize the junta's prerogative to designate the President. ... The statement signified that executive power had been placed in the hands of General Pinochet, who did not have a fixed term and could not be dismissed by the other members of the junta (Arriagada 1986: 15-16).

Remmer also subscribes to the same view as Arriagada regarding Pinochet's power consolidation, pointing out the importance of the DINA in helping him achieve this:

Even more important to the consolidation of Pinochet's control over the military was the creation in mid-1974 of a centralized military intelligence agency, the Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia (DINA). Although DINA originally drew personnel from all three services and was destined to achieve greater intelligence coordination among them, under the leadership of Manuel Contreras it reported directly to Pinochet rather than to the junta. DINA's powers were enormous. It operated virtually without restraint, both inside and outside of Chile, repressing dissenters and eliminating leading opposition figures, including General Prats. DINA thereby played a vital role in the consolidation of Pinochet's control over the army and predominance over the other service chiefs. The myth of military unity, which discouraged outsiders from seeking allies within the military, helped to preserve the autonomy of decision makers, and bolstered Pinochet's authority, also owed much to the DINA (Remmer 1991: 129).<sup>91</sup>

The main pieces of evidence in favor of the Pinochet power consolidation view are the following:

1. Pinochet centralized power in way unprecedented in Chilean history, and also by contrast to other contemporary authoritarian regimes in Latin America,<sup>92</sup>

<sup>91</sup> O'Shaughnessy adopts another version of this argument: "General Augusto Pinochet's of overwhelming force to propel him and his comrades-in-arms into full control of the country was followed by the formulation of a medium-term strategy which would destroy any challenge to his own rule from inside or outside the country. His strategy was to a large extent planned by his former pupil Colonel Manuel Contreras Sepulveda, known to his intimates as 'Mamo'. Apart from his wife and his mother Contreras was to be the person who had the most influence on Pinochet. ... With the coup, Pinochet and his co-conspirators had undoubtedly stolen the initiative. There was no real organized resistance to the new regime in Chile. At home, the Junta had less to worry about from its political enemies than from opponents and rivals within the armed forces in particular the army. Similarly, outside the country the danger to his position came less from foreign enemies than from Chileans who might set up a government-in-exile. ... The instrument chosen to deal with rivals within the armed forces and the exile community was the Directorate of National Intelligence, the DINA." (O'Shaughnessy 2000: 64-65).

<sup>92</sup> In Argentina, by contrast, the Junta members maintained a rotating the presidency.

2. Although the DINA technically depended on the Junta, it answered in practice only to Pinochet;
3. Pinochet and Contreras were, at least at first, exceptionally close allies,<sup>93</sup> and
4. The DINA appears to have used its power to help Pinochet's allies and hurt his enemies within the ruling circles.

The third common argument to explain the DINA is that it was a vehicle for Manuel Contreras, its director, to pursue a war of counterinsurgency against left-wing opponents. The *Informe Rettig* describes the group that later formed the DINA as "remarkably coherent in ideology and action" (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 59). The group never expressed its ideology, but the Commissioners write that it can be deduced "from their behavior and from the influence they received from outside the country" (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 60). These influences include the counterinsurgency doctrines developed continent-wide as a response to the threats presented by Che Guevara-inspired "*focos*" insurrection. All counterinsurgency efforts in Latin America include the following common ideological framework:

1. Deep anti-communism;
2. The idea that guerrilla war is a full-scale war;
3. The conviction that the entire continent should be involved in a response to international communism; and
4. Because guerrillas do not respect the basic laws and morality of war, effective counterinsurgency should not do so either (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 59-60).

The main evidence in favor of this view is Contreras himself. By all accounts, he was a well known and ideologically committed anticommunist and counterinsurgency expert prior to the coup (Constable and Valenzuela 1991; Salazar Salvo 1995). He used the DINA to carry out a war of counterinsurgency against leftists. Moreover, he did so not only inside Chile, but took the lead in organizing a continent-wide counterinsurgency campaign (*Operación Condor*).

Also, supporting all these views is the fact that the bulk of the military leadership did think it was acting in a time of war, and was therefore likely to act accordingly. During the Allende government the military, steeped in National Security Doctrine ideas, had been primed to believe that the Marxists were armed and dangerous, that there was a serious national security threat (Arriagada 1986; Varas 1987; Loveman 1999). Their fears were magnified by the isolation of the armed forces from the rest of society, and by the all-too-evident mobilization and calls to arms of the revolutionary left such as the MIR (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 56). In other

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<sup>93</sup> See, for example Salazar Salvo (1995).

words, there were good reasons for the military to see its mission not merely as to depose a government, but to wage a campaign against well-armed groups that posed a direct threat to national security. Contreras' plans, in this sense, fit within the broad overall conceptual framework that the military was already operating with, even if he pushed them beyond what they probably were originally contemplating.

The power and ideology views, moreover, support each other, insofar as Pinochet and Contreras were natural partners. Contreras had been Pinochet's pupil at the Army's War Academy. Also, the power view can explain why Pinochet would want to place the DINA under his direct control, in order to use it as an instrument to consolidate power inside the ruling circle. Also, even though many within the top military leadership were critical of the DINA, and feared its creation, the fusion of powers was an important factor in its creation. Pinochet was head of the army, and became head of the military, head of the Junta, and later supreme commander of the Nation (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 64).

Even though these views can explain various aspects of the creation of the DINA, they also suffer from serious weaknesses. One glaring problem is that the timing of the DINA's creation is not what the power consolidation argument would predict. The DINA was approved and began operations (in late 1973 and early 1974) *prior* to the time when Pinochet consolidated his position as the center of power in Chile (in mid to late 1974). Moreover, the scope of the DINA's operations is also different from that expected by the power consolidation view. If Pinochet did amass such sweeping powers, and if the DINA did serve his interests in this way, we would expect the DINA to have had a far *more* prominent role than it did. In fact, the DINA never achieved complete monopoly of coercion. Other intelligence and security services continued to operate, and there were power struggles between these and the DINA. The DINA failed to completely monopolize coercion and to neutralize Pinochet's enemies within the regime.<sup>94</sup>

Moreover, none of these views explains why a separate institution outside the military hierarchy was created. It would have been possible to carry out a counterinsurgency campaign, or to consolidate power, within the confines of the preexisting institutions.<sup>95</sup> The creation of a new institution, separate from the preexisting military hierarchy, is a major task for any solid account because of the major costs that it imposed. The DINA broke sharply military hierarchy. It was led by a Colonel who, because of his position, had far more *de facto* power than any general.

Nor can these views explain the central shift in the *modus operandi* imposed by the DINA: the drop in the number of victims, and the increasing recourse to disappearances as the central *modus operandi*. It would have been possible to carry out a war of counterinsurgency and for Pinochet to consolidate power with coercion carried out largely as before: large numbers of people imprisoned and killed in relative openness, without resorting to disappearances as a systematic tool of coercion. In fact, terror carried out in the open might have been a useful tool of power consolidation, as it was for personalistic dictators elsewhere.

There are deeper problems with all three accounts. One is that the DINA and the disappearances it carried out were not the only option available to the regime. As we will

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<sup>94</sup> Pinochet's main enemy – Air Force commander General Gustavo Leigh – fell from power after the DINA was replaced by the CNI, and his fall was not really a result of actions by the intelligence community.

<sup>95</sup> Such as the Argentines did (see the discussion of the Argentine case in the Conclusion).

see below, other sectors within the military proposed other plans to change the pattern of coercion. An account of a natural evolution in the pattern of coercion during the military regime leaves little room for remaining tensions and clashes over the precise details and applications of coercion among different sectors of the military and the government.

Another problem is that during the period when the DINA began operations (at least as early as November 1973), all decisions inside the Junta were made unanimously, with each of the four Junta members having only one vote.<sup>96</sup> In other words, even though Pinochet would later manage to centralize power, at the time when the DINA was created and permitted to operate, he was still only *primus inter pares* within the Junta. (And that only by virtue of his position as head of the largest branch of the military, rather than his personal charisma, skill, fame, public popularity, or leading role in the coup -- none of which he could claim.) He did not have the power simply to impose his will on the other Junta members.<sup>97</sup> Any explanation for the DINA must take account of this fact, and explain why the rest of the Junta would agree to its creation.

This raises the following questions: First, why would the other Junta members have agreed to the creation of an institution whose sole purpose was ostensibly to help Pinochet consolidate power? There were deep tensions between Pinochet and the other leaders (especially Air Force commander Gustavo Leigh), and they were suspicious of his ambitions.

Second, why would the leaders of the other branches of the armed forces agree to the creation of an institution *outside* the military chain of command? The DINA was a military institution, but it lay outside the formal hierarchy of the armed forces. Moreover, each branch of the armed forces *already* had an intelligence department.<sup>98</sup> The creation of a new overarching intelligence organization threatened to usurp the functions of the pre-existing institutions and embroil all of them in potentially divisive rivalries. The DINA was also not dependent on the other branches of the armed forces, but technically directly on the Junta (though in practice it only answered to Pinochet). This independence meant that Contreras, a colonel, became more powerful than most generals. It is possible that the leadership of the armed forces may have believed that it was better to place the DINA under a lower-ranking officer. But this would be yet a further signal of the potential threat that the officers understood an organization of such magnitude might pose. In retrospect, Contreras' lower rank did not prevent him from accumulating power, given that the DINA as an institution lay outside the main military structure. Why would the Chilean armed forces, with a deep respect for military hierarchy, agree to such a state of affairs as a central part of their government?

And third, why would they agree to the creation of the DINA when there were other options? I will discuss some of these below. Contrary to the assumption behind each version of the standard explanation, the DINA was not the only alternative available

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<sup>96</sup> Although the Junta's power over legislation was reduced later in the regime, the unanimity rule was never dropped (1996; Barros 2001).

<sup>97</sup> The unanimity rule was essential to preserving the equal balance of power inside the junta, and indeed to cobbling together the coup coalition in the first place.

<sup>98</sup> The Army had the Servicio de Inteligencia Militar (SIM), the Air Force the Servicio de Inteligencia de la Fuerza Aerea (SIFA), the Navy the Servicio de Inteligencia Naval (SIN), and the Servicio de Inteligencia de Carabineros (SICAR). For information on each of these organizations, see [http://www.derechoschile.com/Areastematicas/Lugares\\_de\\_detencion/agesp\\_1.html](http://www.derechoschile.com/Areastematicas/Lugares_de_detencion/agesp_1.html).

to the Junta leadership. Others were available. It would have been possible to set up a coordinating committee across the separate intelligence services, for example, or to impose a more uniform coercion policy directed from within the Junta itself. What did the DINA offer, in short, that the others did not?

None of these questions can be satisfactorily answered according to the standard accounts of the DINA. In this chapter I present an alternative explanation for the creation of the DINA that better answers these questions. Indeed, it depends on an understanding of the relatively equal balance of power among the four Junta members during the early months after the coup, and on a consideration of the relative merits of different options available.

### **The DINA as a response to the coercion problem**

The DINA was neither a natural nor an obvious development in the evolution of the regime, nor was it simply a tool for Pinochet to accumulate power and for Contreras to wage a counterinsurgency campaign. It would not have come about had it not also plausibly promised to address the organizational problems analyzed in Chapter Four. The pattern of coercion during the first several months after the coup, resulted in a large number of casualties, with coercion applied in a relatively uneven and public manner. The Junta faced a great deal of political pressure, especially at the international level, for the grave violations of human rights. Attempts to address the problem from within the pre-existing channels (such as the Arellano mission and the Leigh plans) did not succeed. It is in this context of institutional uncertainty and flux that the creation of the DINA must be placed.

Another alternative besides the Arellano mission floated at this time was to put the Allende leadership on trial. Indeed, part of the international pressure against the regime had to do with the arbitrariness of the detentions and the war tribunals. General Leigh, in particular, supported such a plan. It was never adopted, however, because the Junta could not find an adequate legal mechanism to carry it through. Instead, the Junta adopted a series of legal ruses to appear to be acting in a more orderly manner, while at the same time expanding its emergency powers (Barros 1996: 105-110).

Setting up the DINA was a new and costly operation for the new military regime. It was an unprecedented experiment for the Chilean military. As we will see below, it meant giving virtual *carte blanche* to an organization outside the normal chains of command, and endowing it with a huge amount of material and personnel resources.

The available evidence that Contreras and Pinochet very likely persuaded the other Junta members that they could better resolve the organizational problems with an organization like the DINA. We know that the Junta recognized these problems as such because of the efforts from inside the Junta to fix them, such as the Arellano mission and Leigh's plan. What the DINA proposed was to take over the bulk of repression and to oversee the rest. (In other words, it would centralize coercion under a single internal monitor.) This level of control would allow it to carry out repression in a much more efficient manner than had been possible during the first period, when all branches of the armed forces carried out almost all aspects of coercion.

This greater efficiency would also allow coherent and consistent application of a new *modus operandi* that would address the problem of the political pressure: the

disappearances. While bodies had been made to disappear from the first days after the coup, the practice was carried out in a haphazard manner, as an attempt to cover up tracks after the fact. By contrast, the DINA applied the policy of disappearances much more evenly and effectively as part of its overall grand design to wage a war of counterinsurgency. Why disappearances? The most likely reason was to allow plausible deniability.

In making this argument I do not altogether dispense with the standard view. Indeed, Pinochet's power ambitions, or Contreras' desire to wage a war of counterinsurgency, are perfectly consistent with my explanation. But by themselves they are insufficient, for the reasons I indicated above. It is impossible to explain the DINA without understanding the organizational changes it proposed in the application of coercion, and why the members of the Junta agreed to allow the DINA to implement its plans.

### **The beginnings of the DINA**

Prior to the coup, each branch of the armed forces had carried out intelligence activities in a decentralized manner through their own specialized intelligence departments. Throughout the 1960s, and particularly during the Allende government, intelligence gathering focused on threats to security posed by internal threats, particularly political leaders and party organizations of the left and far left. Gathering this kind of information became even more urgent for the military once it took power.

Shortly after the coup, Air Force General Nicanor Díaz Estrada was given the task of coordinating the different intelligence agencies belonging to the different branches of the armed forces and *Carabineros*. Díaz Estrada gathered the heads of the four intelligence services: the Army's Servicio de Inteligencia Militar (SIM), the Navy's Servicio de Inteligencia Naval (SIN), the Air Force's Servicio de Inteligencia de la Fuerza Aérea (SIFA), and the *Servicio de Inteligencia de Carabineros* (SICAR) (Derechos Chile n.d.).

At the same time, if not earlier, a secretive group of (mostly army) majors and colonels began intelligence operations from the army's War Academy as the "colonels' committee." Ideologically, the members of this group shared an unusually consistent (for the Chilean military) mix of anticommunism and counterinsurgency (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 59-61). The most prominent among this group was Army Lt. Colonel Manuel Contreras, who argued against Díaz Estrada's plan to coordinate the pre-existing intelligence services. Instead of a coordination committee, he and the rest of the group argued that the pre-existing decentralized intelligence institutions were inadequate for effectively neutralizing the regime's many enemies (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 471-72). Contreras pushed for the creation of a new institution that would centralize the tasks of the existing agencies, and to which they would be subordinate (Derechos Chile n.d.).

By November 1973, even before obtaining full authorization from the intelligence services, the newly created SENDET (discussed in the previous chapter), incorporated this group into its organization, as the "DINA Commission." In the SENDET, the DINA continued to carry out intelligence functions, including interrogation procedures and classifying prisoners. Indeed, Ensalaco points out that "some of the men who later became DINA personnel had been interrogating and classifying the thousands of



prisoners held in the National Stadium and other sites from the very beginning” (Ensalaco 1999: 55).

Colonel Contreras, who was also a former pupil of Pinochet’s in the War Academy, led the DINA. Contreras was a security specialist who had received training on counterinsurgency in Fort Benning, Georgia.<sup>99</sup> The DINA would not gain formal status until June 1974, when the *Diario Oficial* announced its creation. But by December 1973, when Contreras moved the DINA to separate headquarters, he had already begun recruiting staff and setting up new operational centers from which to carry out detentions, interrogations, tortures, and executions.<sup>100</sup>

The minutes of the Junta’s meetings first mention Contreras on November 12, 1973. There are few details of the meeting, but the record reveals: a) that Contreras was seriously lobbying the Junta and the senior military leadership to centralize intelligence operations under a new organization; and b) that the Junta gave at least a provisional go-ahead to Contreras’ proposal at this time, conditional on determining personnel allocation. The minutes read:

Army Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Contreras is received, and he makes a detailed presentation regarding the organization of the National Intelligence Directorate, before the Junta, the Minister of National Defense, and the chief of the Military Academy, and the personnel directors of the four [military] institutions, the director of Investigaciones and director of Army Intelligence. It is accorded that before creating his organization, the personnel directors of the institutions must meet to determine how to obtain the numerous personnel required (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: 33, November 12, 1973).

This was probably not the first time that Contreras spoke to the Junta. It is unlikely that the Junta would have allowed Contreras to address them unless they had already agreed to go ahead with his proposal in some form or other.

Nevertheless, the final sentence suggests resistance to the DINA from within military ranks. Indeed, Contreras’ efforts were opposed by leading officers such as General Bonilla, the Interior Minister, and Colonel (later General) Odlanier Mena, the head of army intelligence (the SIM). Both feared that the new organization was a “Gestapo-in-the-making,” that would usurp many of the pre-existing institutions’ power (Mena 1996; Ensalaco 1999: 56).<sup>101</sup> Given this opposition, resolving to have all the intelligence services meet to determine how to allocate the personnel required by the DINA before approving its creation is very likely a bureaucratic delay tactic or foot dragging.

<sup>99</sup> On Manuel Contreras, see Salazar Salvo (1995).

<sup>100</sup> By and large, the staff came from the different military intelligence organizations, as well as from *Carabineros* and *Investigaciones*, and from civilian right-wing groups such as *Patria y Libertad* (Dinges and Landau 1980; Ahumada et al. 1989: ch. 16; Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: chs. 5, 14). Some of the principal centers were Londres 38, Villa Grimaldi, and the center on José Domingo Cañas street. All would become notorious for carrying out tortures, murders, and disappearances. (For a list and descriptions of the various DINA’s detention centers, see the reports in [http://www.derechoschile.com/Areastematicas/Lugares\\_de\\_detencion/agesp\\_1.html](http://www.derechoschile.com/Areastematicas/Lugares_de_detencion/agesp_1.html)).

<sup>101</sup> The *Informe Rettig* states that observes that although many officers shared the DINA group’s anticommunism and desire to mount an effective campaign of counterinsurgency, “the Commission knows that a good number of officials did not agree with the group, its activities, or its justifications, at least in 1973 and 1974, and expressed their disagreement to their superiors on a number of occasions both orally and in writing” (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 62).

The record of the creation of the DINA is sketchy, but we can assume that placing the DINA under the SENDET was another compromise between the interests of Contreras and those of the officers who feared giving him too much power. Nevertheless, suggests Ensalaco, even this compromise solution “brought Contreras’ dream closer to realization” (Ensalaco 1999: 56).

While the early history of the DINA very likely reflects a series of compromises between competing interests, we still need to answer the crucial question of how Contreras and Pinochet managed to convince skeptical senior officers to allow the DINA to establish operations in the first place. The power struggle view on its own cannot explain this because it presumes that actors will act in their own self-interest to maximize their power. Pinochet would eventually amass a great deal of power, but during this period in 1973 he lacked the means to force his will on the other Junta members. Pinochet and Contreras did not coerce the Junta into accepting the DINA. Notwithstanding their reservations, the Junta members agreed to it.

Until more archives and records of the period surface,<sup>102</sup> we cannot know for certain the precise details of the conversations that took place at different levels over the creation of the DINA. But we can better use the available evidence to infer the most likely reasons why the Junta and the top military leadership allowed the DINA, even when it represented such a serious risk.

The *Informe Rettig* speculates on a number of reasons why the DINA prevailed. These include the following:

1. The DINA operated in secret and many officers were unaware of the true magnitude of its operations.
2. Many skeptics were probably persuaded at least to withhold judgment for a time and see the DINA as a necessary evil in a time of war.
3. Many feared that confronting the existence of the DINA would only draw attention to the problem of human rights violations, which they knew was a major source of international critique.
4. Many officers were found by the Commission to have had insufficient knowledge of the laws and morality of war, which may explain why they paid insufficient attention to the activities of the DINA at the time.
5. The DINA maneuvered inside the military to cut short the careers of those officers deemed to be soft; and this led to fear of dissent inside the ranks.

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<sup>102</sup> A great amount of information on the behind-the-scenes decisionmaking during the dictatorship has come to light recently. The archives of the Junta’s minutes, the only available written record of the history of the Junta’s meetings, represent an invaluable resource that greatly advances our understanding of the Chilean regime. But even these minutes, as the example above shows, often record items only by the most general of references. Little information is available in many cases on the precise nature of the debates among the different actors.

6. And last, the Commission notes that political authority was concentrated to a great extent in the hands of the president. The head of the armed forces became the supreme commander of the nation (D.L. No. 527), an unprecedented concentration of power (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991)

These factors are not altogether incorrect. For instance, it is true that the DINA operated secretly, and it is also very likely true that many officers remained unaware of the full magnitude of its activities and its ultimate plans. But even though many officers were probably caught unaware of the DINA's activities, this description does not apply to some key figures such as Bonilla or Mena.

Moreover, the timing is inaccurate. As we have seen, Pinochet consolidated his position by June 1974, well *after* the DINA had begun operations at the end of 1973. At this time the DINA moved into new headquarters, began to build the physical infrastructure to operate and to hire staff. This could not have been done had the Junta not specifically allocated the DINA the funds it required.

Contreras most likely appealed to the Junta on three areas: uniformity, secrecy, and targeting. First, we know that the different branches of the armed forces were applying coercion in a highly uneven manner. Local commanders had a great deal of discretion over whom to target, how to treat prisoners, and how to implement the War Tribunals. Indeed, the military leadership remained deeply divided over such fundamental issues as to whether or not the new regime was in fact engaged in a war. Moreover, the Arellano mission and the Leigh plans are evidence that the senior military establishment, inside the army as well as the Junta, worried about the uneven implementation of coercion and made efforts to establish a more uniform procedure to target enemies and to deal with prisoners. They likely worried about whether future disagreements over inconsistent policy and implementation would lead to internecine battles. And we also know that these efforts to address the problem largely did not work.

This is the context in which we can deduce that Contreras, with Pinochet's likely support, argued that pursuing trials, in however orderly a manner, was at best a partial response to dealing with the regime's enemies. Trials are not inherently inadequate, but they were the conclusion of a process whose beginning is how to search and find the regime's enemies. Trials were not an adequate centerpiece of an overall coercive policy. Moreover, many of the regime's enemies were already in exile, and there were few prospects of extradition back to Chile, even in the unlikely event that an internationally-accepted legal mechanism could be found.

Instead, a more effective policy in this context would likely have been simply to neutralize the regime's many enemies still at large at home and abroad. A more uniform coercion strategy to better target the most dangerous elements could better be implemented by a single agency rather than by the existing multiplicity of competing agencies. This argument, in the context of the failures of the attempted internal reforms, as well as the increasingly evident costs of not having a uniform policy, must have been a powerful balm against the perfectly sensible worries of those who feared the creation of a "Chilean Gestapo".

Second, uniformly applying coercion would permit a more consistent application

of policies to serve the interests of the regime. In this case, it would be reasonable to expect that a regime facing a great deal of international pressure and rapidly becoming a pariah state, would want to find a way to ease these pressures. Even while denouncing critiques in the United Nations and other major international forums as part of a Moscow-directed conspiracy, neither the Chilean military nor its civilian supporters were ideologically or otherwise prepared to completely isolate themselves internationally.<sup>103</sup> An organization like the DINA could offer the political and military leadership an effective way to neutralize much of the international pressure that resulted from the gross human rights violations.

How? From the very beginning, the operations of the DINA were shrouded in secrecy. Little was known about its staff, or its centers of operations, and disappearances became a normal practice. Disappearances had been carried out during the initial wave of coercion, but far more haphazardly, as various groups and agents sought ways to get rid of bodies. In many cases, observers saw bodies turn up in rivers, or dumped in ditches. Disposing of the evidence during this first period was done on an ad-hoc basis, and not as part of a well-planned or consistently implemented strategy. A great deal of evidence of the Junta's atrocities was plainly available. Bodies turned up in morgues and were found in rivers and ditches, and images of mass detention centers like the Estadio Nacional splashed the headlines of the international media, feeding the growing critiques against the Chilean regime. The disappearances, as a consistently implemented policy by one single organization, would in this context offer the Junta what must have been an attractive refuge from international pressure: plausible deniability.<sup>104</sup> Without the firm evidence of bodies turning up in embarrassing places, the military could plausibly plead ignorance regarding the victims' whereabouts, and deny responsibility for any wrongdoing.

During the months immediately after the coup, as we have seen, the military targeted broad sectors of the population in a somewhat haphazard way. Nevertheless, the group that suffered the most casualties during this time was the Socialist Party (PS). The armed forces, after all, deposed a Socialist president and a Socialist-led government. Most of the Socialist leadership was arrested or sent into exile, as were large numbers of party members. Repression against the PS continued until roughly 1975, but after 1973 the targets shifted. Indeed, the pattern of targeting reveals that in 1974 the *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR) became the primary target, and in 1976 the Communist Party (PC).

We can infer from this pattern that instead of targeting broad sectors of the population in a somewhat haphazard way, the DINA proposed to target specifically only those groups known to pose serious threats to the regime. Doing this would offer the

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<sup>103</sup> The minutes of the Junta's meeting on November 5, 1973, record the Junta's decision to forbid the visits by "unofficial" international organizations such as Amnesty International. The minutes read: "It should be decided whether or not to continue with these veritable inspection reviews, that in the end provide negative results and that are indirectly an intrusion into the country's internal politics. The Junta decides to definitively terminate these visits" (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: No. 28, 5 November 1973). A short time later, on the meeting of November 19, 1973, the Junta approves the designation of US\$1million to "maintain the propaganda campaign abroad, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs" (Honorable Junta de Gobierno 1973-1989: No. 37, 19 November 1973).

<sup>104</sup> This was the conclusion the *Informe Rettig* reached, as well as the hypothesis of many in the human rights community in Chile during the dictatorship (Zalaquett 1996).

regime the following: First, it would avoid unnecessary fallout from repressing people who may not have been particularly harmful to the regime in the first place. And second, it would mean more effectively targeting those groups that the DINA argued were the real enemies. This included the MIR, in particular, as well as the exiled left wing political leadership that had begun to mobilize against the military regime.<sup>105</sup> We now that Contreras exaggerated the dangers posed by the regime's enemies at home and abroad, but this served his political ends: to be awarded increased control and to obtain more material resources.<sup>106</sup>

It should by now have become apparent that the DINA did not simply happen as a natural development in the evolution of the regime, nor did Contreras or Pinochet simply impose it on the military leadership completely against their will. Instead, the Junta allowed the DINA to gain increasingly official status and awarded it increasingly better resources to widen the scale and scope of its operations. Explaining why the Junta would allow the DINA to accumulate power requires moving beyond the standard explanations for the creation of the DINA. As an outcome, it was neither natural nor necessary. The Junta could have chosen to continue to carry out coercion through the pre-existing military channels, without fundamentally altering the institutional topography of the regime and the Chilean military. There would have been costs to doing nothing, undoubtedly, but there were costs, as sectors inside the military and political leadership feared, to permitting the creation of a Chilean Gestapo.

In short, Manuel Contreras proposed to radically reorganize coercion. The DINA would essentially become a centralized internal monitor. It would not only oversee how the other coercive agencies operated, but take over the bulk of operations itself. More narrowly targeted coercion, applied in a more systematically uniform manner, would require higher levels of internal monitoring. And this required the creation of a new institution, when other efforts to increase internal monitoring failed. Internal reforms to the application of coercion had been tried and had failed.

Moreover, we saw in the last chapter that while external monitoring levels were low, some external monitoring – in the form of reports about prisoners and speculation about people killed – made secrecy an attractive alternative. How well did the DINA fulfill its promise? Do the observed measured levels of internal and external monitoring during this period correspond to what this explanation would predict? These questions are addressed in the next chapter.

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<sup>105</sup> As I show below, beginning in 1974 the DINA staged a campaign of extermination against the MIR, the only political organization to have attempted any sort of armed resistance against the dictatorship during this period. And the DINA began to stage a series of international operations that included formal agreements and institutional arrangements with the other military dictatorships in the Southern Cone region to share prisoners and information – an arrangement known as Operacion Cóndor – and missions to assassinate prominent Chilean political leaders in exile.

<sup>106</sup> There was no group, either inside Chile or outside, capable of forcibly deposing the military government. Air Force General Leigh noted subsequently that during this period, the Junta was essentially captive to Contreras' intelligence reports on enemy operations, and had little way of assessing exactly how accurate these were (Varas 1979). Opposition groups were crucial, however, in mobilizing public opinion against the regime, and in blocking access to resources such as international loans, especially after Carter assumed power and pursued a more aggressive human rights agenda.

## 5. THE DINA IN ACTION (1974-1977)

### The DINA takeover

The DINA began operations in late 1973, and it was given final independent status by means of Decree Law No. 521, in June 1974.<sup>107</sup> Article 1 described the DINA as a

... military body of technical professional nature, under the direct command of the Junta. Its mission is to be that of gathering all information from around the nation and from different fields of activity in order to produce the intelligence needed for policy formulation and planning and for the adoption of those measures required for the protection of national security and the development of the country.

Even though the Junta was technically given "direct command" of the DINA, in practice this was not the case. In June 1974, through D.L. 527, Pinochet adopted the new title of "Supreme Commander of the Nation," and by the end of 1974 he officially became President of the Republic.<sup>108</sup> Colonel Contreras reported on a daily basis only to Pinochet, and only indirectly to the Junta. The *Informe Rettig* points out that the DINA removed itself from the scrutiny of the Junta "so as to be protected from investigation or interference" (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 475). The DINA provided the Junta with intelligence to formulate policy on all matters of national interest, within Chile and abroad.

Article 4 of D.L. 521 stipulated that the Director of National Intelligence could obtain, under penalty of law, any "reports or information" from any other state body or employee at any level deemed necessary to carry out his tasks. D.L. 521 also contained three articles (9, 10, and 11) published in an annex of the *Diario Oficial* with limited circulation.<sup>109</sup> Although the contents of the other articles were made public, 9-11

<sup>107</sup> The full text of D.L. 521 can be found in [http://www.derechoschile.com/Areastematicas/legal/cnidinaaley/dina\\_1.html](http://www.derechoschile.com/Areastematicas/legal/cnidinaaley/dina_1.html).

<sup>108</sup> D.L. 521, in June 1974, named Pinochet the "Supreme Commander of the Nation." This essentially ended the principle of a rotating presidency, under which the Junta had at first (through D.L. 1) announced it would operate. Pinochet was not named President because at the time there was profound resistance to this from within the Junta. Naming a President would have meant essentially accepting that the Junta would not simply be a transition regime but would hold power for a long time. This was the source of great conflict inside the Junta, with some members (Leigh) opposed to being in power for a long time. By the end of 1974, however (through D.L. 806), Pinochet did take the title of President of the Republic. But even though this represented the climax of his consolidation of power, it is important to note that Pinochet was not given a key power that civilian Chilean presidents had always enjoyed: the power to designate and remove the heads of the armed forces (Arriagada 1988: 139). The military president of a military government, in other words, lacked the power to interfere in the internal affairs of the other branches of the armed forces. Moreover, neither D.L. 527 nor D.L. 806 did away with the unanimity rule of voting inside the Junta. Even with Pinochet as President, the Junta still retained the unanimity rule, and Pinochet lacked the power to overrule it. This was far less than Pinochet originally wanted, as evidenced by analysis of drafts of proposed versions of D.L. 521 found in the minutes of Pinochet's advisory body, the COAJ. For an informative discussion and analysis of this crucial period in the division of powers between the Junta and the newly-created Presidency, see Barros (1996: 29-39; 2001).

<sup>109</sup> By tradition in Chile, laws do not take effect until they are published in the *Diario Oficial*. Because

effectively remained secret to all but a few top officials.

Human rights observers at the time puzzled over the content of the three secret articles. An important clue of their contents, apart from the results of the DINA's operations, were found in D.L. 1009, published in the *Diario Oficial* on May 8, 1975. Its first article stipulated that

During the state of siege, the specialized organizations that ensure the normal development of national activities and keep the constituted institutional structure, when they proceed – in the exercise of their faculties – to detain preventively those persons presumed guilty of putting the state's national security in danger, will be obliged to give notice of the detention, within forty-eight hours, to the members of the detainees' immediate family (Rojas 1988; Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 83).

Mention of “organizations that ensure the normal development of national activities” includes the DINA, but no mention had been made, prior to this law, of its ability to carry out detentions (Rojas 1988).<sup>110</sup> Observers deduced that at least one of the secret articles must have allowed the DINA to detain prisoners. Later, it was learned that Article 9 had given the DINA wide leeway to coordinate the activities of the other military branches' intelligence services. Article 10 allowed it to detain prisoners, and Article 11 stipulated that the DINA was the legal corporate continuation of the previous DINA Commission (Rojas 1988; Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 472; Zalaquett 1996).

In short, the DINA was an agency with vast powers to carry out intelligence work under the very broad mandate of “the protection of national security and the development of the country.” It could request information from all levels of the state at will, and could carry out raids, arrests, and interrogations as it saw fit throughout the country.<sup>111</sup> According to the *Informe Rettig*, the DINA “... controlled public records; establishing a network of collaborators and informers in government agencies; supervising, approving, and vetoing appointments and the granting of certain government benefits.” Its agents were placed inside the state air and rail agencies, as well as inside the postal and phone services. The DINA was well funded (although its budget remained classified), but also set up its own companies and business partnerships to raise funds (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 473-75).

The DINA set up centers throughout the country, employing thousands of people.<sup>112</sup> A large civilian staff worked at headquarters in administrative and analytical

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Articles 9-11 were intended to be secret, the Junta got around the publication requirement by publishing these in an annex of the *Diario Oficial* with very limited circulation. This is an example of the kind of pressure to properly use formal legal mechanisms that the Comptroller's Office applied on the Junta. The decision to publish the articles likely represents a compromise between the Junta's natural desires for secrecy and the Comptroller's worries that decrees be formally legal.

<sup>110</sup> This book is also found at <http://www.izquierda-unida.es/Publicaciones/LibroRepresionChile/Chile5.htm>.

<sup>111</sup> The only secret police institution in the Southern Cone more powerful than the DINA in terms of scope and depth of activities was Brazil's SNI. Unlike the DINA, the SNI also set up its own intelligence academy, which allowed it to control the state bureaucracy to a far greater extent than the DINA.

<sup>112</sup> The number of people working for the DINA is difficult to determine. By one estimate, by 1977 the DINA likely employed up to 10,000 people directly, with two or three times as many people as paid informants (Collier and Sater 1996: 360). The Vicaría in 1975 stated that according to “indirect information and rumors,” they believed the staff to number between 3,000 and 900 (Vicaría de la

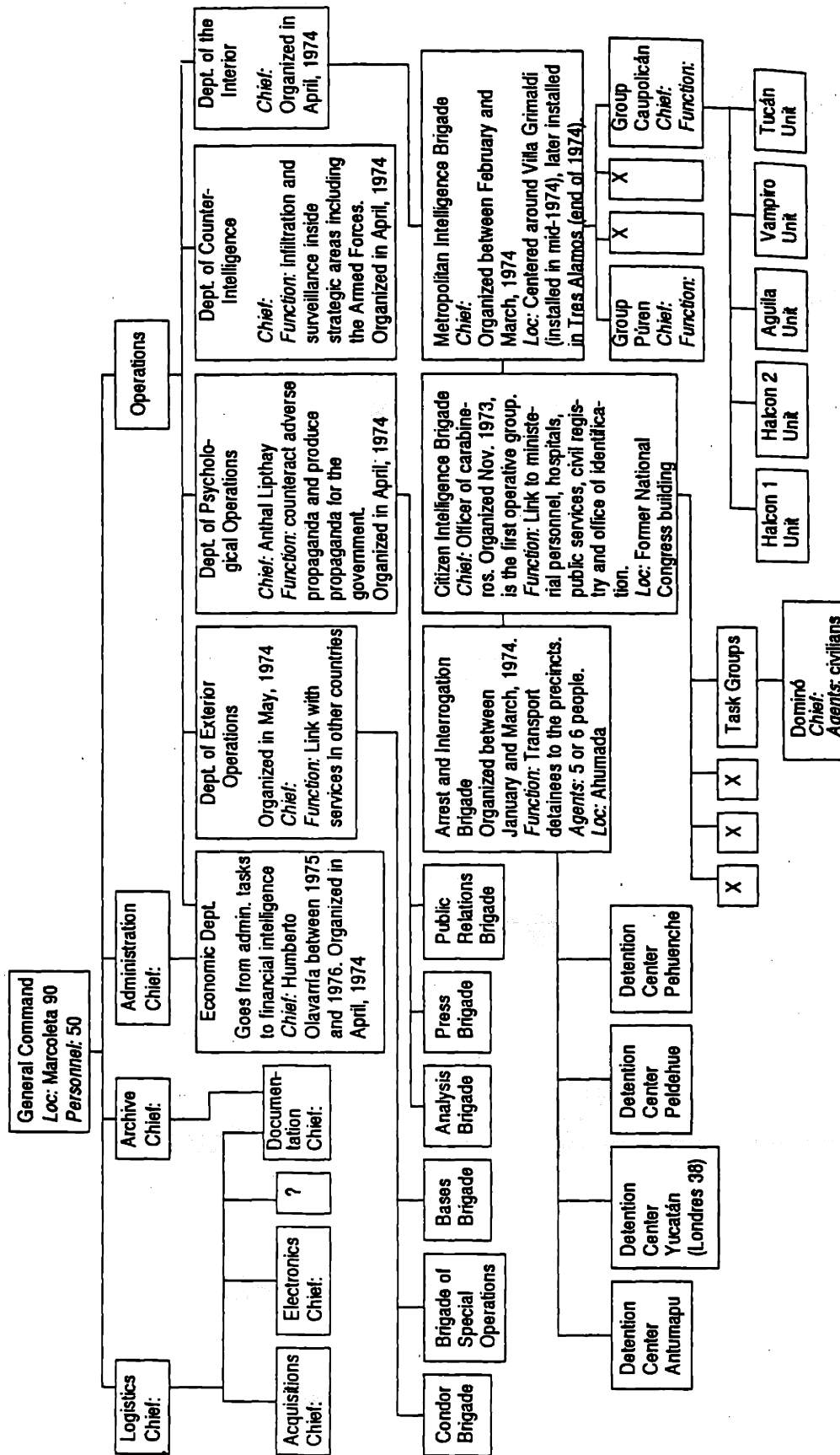
functions, and military personnel were appointed to managerial and operational functions. Military personnel came from all branches of the armed forces as well as *Carabineros*, and civilians came from far-right wing and nationalist groups (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 475).

Figures 1 and 2 (of the DINA's organizational structure during 1974 and 1976-77) show the growth of the DINA and its increasingly complex structure. A comparison of both figures indicates that after the establishment of the central command, "the DINA grew from the bottom up, that is, from the operative to the administrative levels" (Frühling 2000: 507). It was divided roughly into three hierarchical levels: the headquarters, the Metropolitan Intelligence Brigade (BIM), and various groups or task forces. Intelligence and administrative functions were carried out in headquarters, while the BIM and its dependencies handled operations. The BIM consisted of at least four different groups, which included logistics, interrogations, transports, and guards of "Villa Grimaldi," the former country house that served as the principal base of operations for the DINA's agents on the ground. The interrogation division was subdivided into at least four different groups, with names like "*Caupolicán*," "*Lautaro*," and "*Purén*" specialized on targeting different groups. *Caupolicán* was in charge of targeting the MIR, while *Purén* pursued other left-wing political organizations.

Different units were in charge of operations, government services, telecommunications and electronic intelligence, finance, propaganda or "psychological" warfare, economic research, and counterintelligence. Special sections also specialized on operations outside Chile, which will be discussed below.

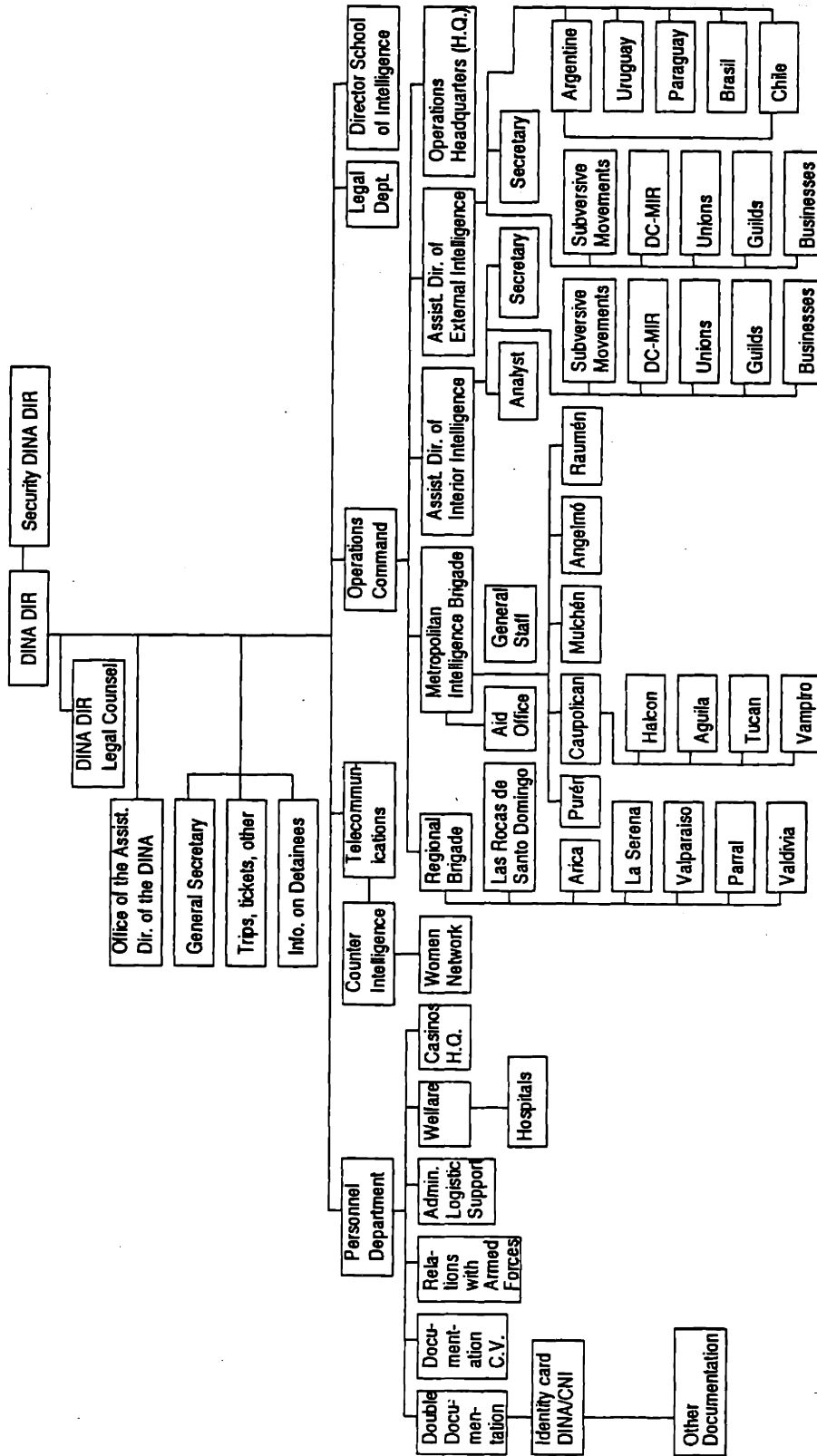


FIGURE 1: THE DINA 1974



Source: (Frühling, 1999: 508)

FIGURE 2: THE DINA 1975-77

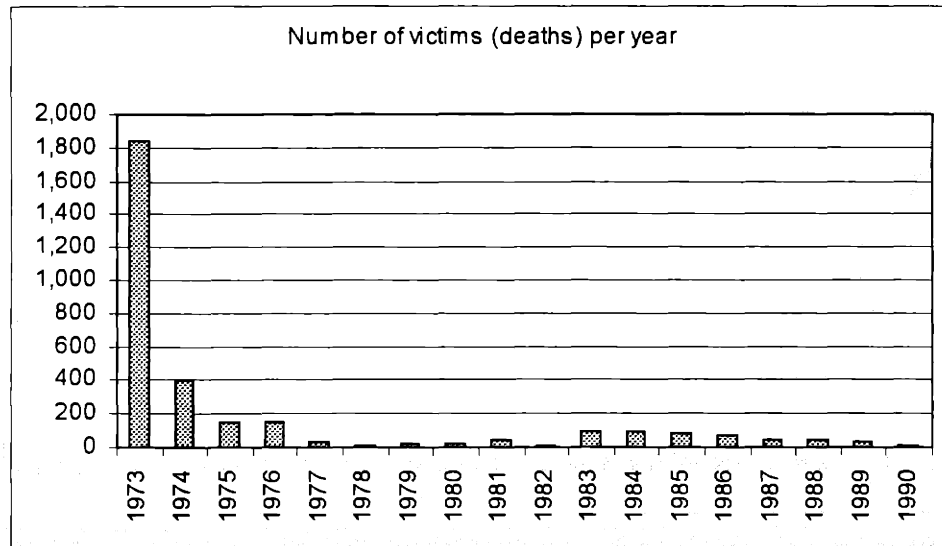


Source: (Frühling, 1999: 509)

### The DINA's operations

A major signal of the shift brought about by the DINA was the sharp drop in the number of people killed, illustrated by the number of fatalities during 1974-77 in following table:

**Table 1**



Source: (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991; Corporación Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación 1996)

Also, as we noted previously, the DINA took over the bulk of coercive activities from the other branches of the armed forces and applied a different modus operandi with regard to those it did target. The following table illustrates this shift, by comparing the number of disappearances during the last four months of 1973 (*P1*) and the period from 1974-89 (*P2*).

**Table 2**

<b>Disappearances by agency per period</b>			
	<i>P1</i>	<i>P2</i>	<i>Total</i>
Army	12	21	146
<i>Carabineros</i>	24	45	293
Joint military & <i>Carabineros</i>	4	2	45
Joint military operations	5	5	59
<i>Carabineros</i> and armed civilians	1	4	31
<i>Investigaciones</i>	1	7	26
Air Force	1	7	18
Navy		2	5
DINA		324	324
SIM		13	13
State or security agents	1	19	30
Joint Command		26	26
CNI		9	9
Foreign armed forces and DINA		15	15
Armed civilians		0	3
Argentine armed forces		25	25
No information available	8	38	125
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>1193</b>

Source: (Padilla Ballesteros 1995: 59)<sup>113</sup>

The Army and *Carabineros* in particular carried out disappearances carried out in 1973. The *Informe Rettig* distinguishes between two forms of disappearances during the early years of the dictatorship:

In the kind of disappearance most common after September 11, 1973, arrests seem to have been made throughout the country by different units of official forces, sometimes accompanied by civilians. These basically consisted of a summary execution or murder of the victim and the disposal of the body (generally by throwing it into a river or burying it secretly) followed by a denial or false stories. (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 36).

<sup>113</sup> There is some disagreement as to the exact number of deaths and disappearances. Two state-sanctioned institutions have carried out investigations into these, by collecting witness accounts and conducting their own independent research. The first was the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation that delivered its report (the *Informe Rettig*) in 1991. The second was its continuation, the National Corporation for Reparations and Reconciliation, whose report was delivered in 1996. The *Informe Rettig* listed 2,298 victims, and the CNRR a further 899, for a grand total of 3,197 victims officially recognized as such. Of these, 1,102 are listed as disappeared, and 2,095 as executed. Padilla Ballesteros, in analyzing the disappearances, uses the state's data, but adopts slightly broader criteria regarding who counts as a victim. The difference between Padilla's total number of disappearances and the state's is nevertheless not particularly significant for our purposes. Padilla counts 1,193 disappeared, against the official state's total of 1,102.

The purpose of the disappearance, in these cases

... was clearly to enable those carrying out the crime to avoid any kind of responsibility. Sometimes it was to hide the abuse the bodies had received either before or after death. But sometimes there was no imaginable reason, as for example, when the remains of those shot by firing squad in Pisagua were not turned over; they may or may not have been sentenced by war tribunals, but the authorities themselves had very openly spoken of the firing squads (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 142).

By contrast to this practice, the DINA generally operated in a much more consistently secretive and systematic manner than the other branches had done until then.

[The second form of] "disappearance" was carried out primarily during the 1974-77 period, mainly but not exclusively, by the DINA. The Commission is convinced that behind most of these cases was a politically motivated and systematically implemented effort to exterminate particular categories of people (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 36).

Prior to the DINA, the most dangerous period for a prisoner was the time immediately after arrest. During this period, prisoners were interrogated and often tortured, and this was the time when they were most likely to be killed.<sup>114</sup> After interrogations, the officers in charge could determine whether to release the prisoner or to hold him longer in case other information came up. Long term prisoners received official status as such, and were listed by the SENDET. Once prisoners received official status, for instance inside the National Stadium or one of the other concentration camps, outsiders could track them, relatives could visit and send them supplies, and relief agencies like the Red Cross could demand to have access and monitor their situation.

The DINA adopted a different pattern of operations, completely bypassing the functions and purpose of the SENDET. Taking fewer prisoners permitted a different and far less bureaucratic sort of treatment. The DINA did not report any details of its prisoners' captivity and no outside contact was allowed. The result was that prisoners simply "disappeared," and relatives and observers had very little information regarding their whereabouts apart from witness accounts of where they might have been taken prisoner. In some cases, prisoners who were released revealed details about the whereabouts of other people they may have seen or had contact with while in captivity.<sup>115</sup> But overall, information about the DINA's operations was relatively hard to obtain.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>114</sup> The great variation in the treatment of prisoners meant that those taken by institutions such as the Air Force's Intelligence Service (SIFA) were far more likely to be severely tortured or summarily executed than those taken by the civilian police force, Investigaciones.

<sup>115</sup> The true extent and purpose of the DINA's operations was not immediately obvious, and many prisoners in places such as the Estadio Chile report that they greeted the DINA's appearance with relief. Instead of having to be interrogated by a multiplicity of institutions (such as Investigaciones, *Carabineros*, the SIM, SICAR, etc.) under the DINA all interrogations would be centralized in one place. Potentially, this meant less time in prison waiting for one's case to move through the various institutions' bureaucracies (Various interviews with former Estadio Chile and Chacabuco prisoners).

<sup>116</sup> Padilla writes that relatives or friends "lack of information on the victims made it impossible to know exactly who carried out the detention. From the beginning of 1974 until August 1977, many testimonies blame security agents and other such groups, when in fact the detentions were carried out, as would be shown later, by DINA agents" (Padilla Ballesteros 1995: 52).

Previously we noted that during the first few months after the coup there was great variation in the treatment of prisoners. In some cases people were rounded up and kept isolated under great duress, for instance in military barracks or detention centers, while in other cases prisoners were allowed many amenities such as regular visits, and freedom to organize their daily lives collectively with other prisoners. The DINA essentially adopted the methods used by the most hard line military organizations. The DINA did not hold large numbers of prisoners in large detention centers such as the Estadio Nacional and Estadio Chile, or in concentration camps such as Chacabuco, Pisagua, or Ritoque. Instead, the DINA kept prisoners in smaller, secretive locations such as Villa Grimaldi or various other locations throughout Santiago and in other parts of the country. Prisoners were often kept in small cells, blindfolded and tied up, subjected to regular tortures, and with little or no contact with others.<sup>117</sup>

The DINA did not simply hold prisoners. As the *Informe Rettig* indicates, it attempted to exterminate whole categories of people. This amounted to an extensive campaign of counterinsurgency against those groups it viewed as most directly threatening to national security. This included not simply the Chilean far left and the leadership in exile, but also left-wing opponents throughout South America, in cooperation with the other authoritarian regimes in the region.

Here again, we can roughly infer the structure of the DINA's plans from the pattern of victims. The following table indicates that during the first period (P1), from September-December 1973, the group with the most number of victims was the Socialist Party.

Technically, the largest category is that for whom there is no firm information as regards their political affiliation. Padilla Ballesteros points out that lack of firm information does not necessarily mean that these were not leftist sympathizers. Most were arrested (and, we can suppose, also executed) by one of the security services. (Though in 73 of the 369 overall cases there is no information as to which organization or group carried out the detention, and in roughly two dozen cases the reasons for their arrest was not directly political, and included criminal activities such as drug trafficking, assault, or theft.) (Padilla Ballesteros 1995 3: 61).

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<sup>117</sup> The large detention centers continued to operate, run mostly by the army and *Carabineros*, though after 1974 few new prisoners were held there. By mid-1975, most of the army-run concentration camps and detention centers were closed, and very few political prisoners remained whose condition it was possible for outsiders to monitor.

**Table 3: Disappearances by political affiliation**

	<i>1973</i>	<i>1974-89</i>	<i>Total</i>
Communist Party (PC)	87	158	245
Socialist Party (PC)	152	74	226
Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR)	53	219	272
Movement of United Popular Action (MAPU)	10	10	20
Radical Party (PR)	9	3	12
Christian Democratic Party (PDC)	5	1	6
Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR)	0	5	5
Christian Left (IC)	2	1	3
Other parties	30	5	35
No information	283	86	369
<b>Total</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>1193</b>

Source: Padilla Ballesteros (1995: 59)

152 Socialists were disappeared during the last four months of 1973, by contrast to ("only") 74 during the remaining seventeen years of the dictatorship (P2). The MIR and the PC suffered comparatively more casualties after 1973, and far more than the Socialists did during either period. And the number of those without declared (or known) political affiliation was far higher before the DINA.

Destroying the MIR became the biggest focus of domestic operations for the DINA in 1974 and 1975. After the coup, the MIR leadership went underground. Unlike the Socialists and the Communists, the MIR had always espoused, and organized for, an armed insurrection.<sup>118</sup> The MIR has its origins in the student movement of the 1960s, strongly influenced by landmark events such as the Cuban revolution, as well as wars in Algeria and Vietnam. It was led by Miguel Enríquez, who embraced armed struggle from the beginning, and who sharply criticized the "traditional left" (the Communists) for believing that

... it is necessary to perfect the [capitalist] regime in order to generate the forces that will destroy it. The MIR, on the other hand, believes that it is necessary ... to implant immediately the bases for the construction of socialism. For them [the Communists] one should not struggle directly against capitalism. For us the fundamental thing is to use violence to propel the working class in the city and the countryside.<sup>119</sup>

In early 1974, an intelligence report pointed out that the MIR, as well as the Communists, remained in operation inside the country. Echoing these conclusions, Pinochet at this time argued that "The Communist Party is intact, and so is the MIR. Only the Socialists were disbanded."<sup>120</sup>

The DINA assassinated Miguel Enríquez in May 1974, one of the few cases of a deliberately public assassination of a high-level opposition political leader (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 52-60; Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993).

In July 1975 the DINA also mounted "*Operación Colombo*" against the MIR. A series of suspicious Argentine newspaper articles reported that 119 Chilean MIR members had killed each other in Argentina in internecine battles while they were ostensibly engaged in terrorist actions against the Chilean regime. The newspapers – "*LEA*" in Argentina and "*O'Dia*" in Brazil – raised suspicions because they were not well known papers. (Indeed they had only published one edition!) Moreover, the victims' names corresponded to persons the human rights community had already listed as disappeared. The opposition thus quickly spotted the entire operation as a DINA montage. In response to the international outcry that followed, Pinochet called the incident an "international plot against Chile" by the (Ahumada et al. 1989: 101-39; Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 153; Padilla Ballesteros 1995: 40-41).

<sup>118</sup> The Chilean Communist party had traditionally rejected violence in the pursuit of revolution. But broke with this policy in 1980, as a result of a shift in doctrine at the International level in response to the rise of authoritarian regimes throughout Latin America.

<sup>119</sup> *Punto Final*, No. 53, April 23, 1968, quoted in Sigmund (1977: 69).

<sup>120</sup> Pinochet (1974), quoted in Cavallo Castro et al. (1989).



**Table 4**

<b>Fatalities Attributed to Acts of State Repression, by Region and Party Affiliation 11 September 1973 - 31 December 1973</b>							
<b>Region</b>	<b>MIR</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>PS</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>N-M</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
1. Tarapacá		2	13	1	8	25	2.1%
2. Antofagasta		10	46	2	8	71	5.9%
3. Atacama		2	11	0	1	19	1.6%
4. Coquimbo		7	4	3	7	22	1.8%
5. Valparaíso		10	12	5	10	41	3.4%
Region Metropolitana (Santiago)	1	54	87	14	318	492	40.8%
6. B. O'Higgins		4	2	0	2	8	0.7%
7. Maule		3	19	2	29	62	5.1%
8. Bío Bío	1	35	34	9	114	208	17.3%
9. Araucanía		21	26	6	55	114	9.5%
10. Los Lagos	2	16	31	5	49	128	10.6%
11. Aysén		2	1	1	6	10	0.8%
12. Magallanes & Ch. Antártica		1	2	0	2	5	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>1205</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Source: (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991; Barros 1996)

## Cóndor

This case was a strong indication that the DINA had begun to mount comprehensive operations not simply inside Chile but far beyond Chile's borders. This included pursuit of its enemies especially in Argentina, but also in Europe and the United States.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, the DINA intended for an integral part of the campaign against Marxism to be carried out beyond Chile's borders. Soon after setting up operations, Contreras convinced the government (essentially, Pinochet) that it was necessary to carry out a counter-insurgency campaign against those people who were acting against the military government from abroad. At the very least the idea was to neutralize Chileans abroad who were seen as possible threats. At best, it was hoped there would be a continent-wide concerted effort to counter the influence of the "Marxist international movement."<sup>122</sup>

In November 1973 Manuel Contreras met with Enrique Arancibia Clavel, a Chilean residing in Buenos Aires who was a fugitive from justice over the assassination of General René Schneider.<sup>123</sup> Other people implicated in the Schneider assassination also became involved at this time in the DINA's operations outside Chile. Some of these were residing in Argentina, and others had carried out sabotage activities against the Allende government in Chile. Immediately after setting up operations in the headquarters taken from the Communist Youth, in December 1973, the DINA established a "Foreign Department" under the command of Major Raúl Eduardo Iturriaga Neumann (González 1991). Like Contreras, Iturriaga Neumann had gone through the US Military School of the Americas training program in Panama. In 1973 he was second in command of the Black Berets battalion. (Today he stands condemned in absentia by an Italian court to 18 years in prison for the attack on Leighton.) (CODEPU -DIT n.d.: 39).

In November 1975 Manuel Contreras organized a meeting of the heads of the principal intelligence institutions in the dictatorships now in place throughout most of the southern cone.<sup>124</sup> The new campaign, known as *Operación Cóndor* and based in

<sup>121</sup> Recently declassified documents have lent weight to previous speculations that the U.S. government knew in detail about Cóndor. The evidence also suggests that American forces to some extent cooperated with the operation (Marquis and Schemo 2000; McSherry 2000; Schemo 2001).

<sup>122</sup> In August 1975 U.S. Ambassador to Chile David Popper cabled the State Department regarding information over Cóndor planned assassinations. He noted that "cooperation among southern cone national intelligence agencies is handled by the Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA), apparently without much reference to anyone else. It is quite possible, even probable, that Pinochet has no knowledge whatever of operation Cóndor, particularly of its more questionable aspects" ([http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/latin\\_america/chile.htm](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/latin_america/chile.htm)).

<sup>123</sup> These details have been recently uncovered in the investigations into the assassination of General Carlos Prats in Buenos Aires (González 1992; CODEPU -DIT n.d.: 38).

<sup>124</sup> A copy of the invitation to the meeting exists in Asunción's "*Archivo del Terror*" (the archives of the Asunción Police Department discovered in 1992). It is dated October 1975 and states that "El Coronel CONTRERAS, ruega al Sr. General BRITES [Chief of Asunción Police], honrarle con su presencia, y si lo estima hacerse acompañar por algunos asesores, ya que espera que esta Reunión pueda ser la base de una excelente coordinación y una mejor accionar en beneficio de la Seguridad Nacional de nuestros respectivos Países." The meeting took place in Santiago from November 25-December 1, 1975. An internal report by Mr. Brites in response to the invitation, also in the archive, suggests that coordination between the Chilean and the Paraguayan intelligence agencies lacked some basic pieces of information. Brites writes: "Sorprende de que no se haya hecho ninguna consulta previa al respecto. La Policía de la Capital no actúa

Santiago, aimed at a coordinated attack against Marxists and at key figures in the opposition to military rule.<sup>125</sup>

Although set up “formally” only in 1975, operations outside Chile had begun before. In September 1974 General Carlos Prats was killed with his wife by a car bomb in Buenos Aires.<sup>126</sup> In October 1975 a gunman in Rome seriously wounded Bernardo Leighton, former Vice President during the Frei administration (1964-70) and a key opposition figure, along with his wife. And in September 1976 Orlando Letelier and his assistant, Ronnie Moffitt, were killed by a car bomb as they approached Washington’s Sheridan Circle.<sup>127</sup> All three attacks shared similar trademarks.<sup>128</sup> Prats and Letelier were killed in almost identical fashion, through a car bomb. Leighton was the victim of a shooting, though subsequent investigations, especially by Italian authorities, have linked many of the perpetrators of the attack to the DINA.

Moreover, all three acts reveal that the DINA set up working relationships with various paramilitary groups outside Chile, including anti-Castro groups in Miami and other right-wing groups throughout South America and in Europe (Blixen 1994; Blixen 1997b; Blixen 1998; Marchak 1999: 112-13).

### Internal and External monitoring

The DINA offered the Junta and the military leadership a plausible way to address the

a nivel nacional.” (Folio 47 DI, Centro de Documentación y Archivo para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, Asunción, Paraguay.)

In a letter to the President of the Republic (Pinochet) dated 16 September 1975, Manuel Contreras requests US\$600,000 to pay for an “increase in DINA personnel affiliated to foreign embassies”. The letter also details that two agents would be assigned to each of the embassies in Peru, Brazil, Argentina, and one in Venezuela, Costa Rica, Belgium, and Italy. Contreras also argues that the money would go toward covering the “additional expenses for the neutralization of the principal adversaries of the [Military] Junta abroad, especially in Mexico, Argentina, Costa Rica, United States, and France, and Italy.” Uruguayan journalist Samuel Blixen, a leading expert on *Operación Cóndor*, obtained this letter during his research in the Paraguayan archives. On January 21, 1999 he presented the letter to Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón in relation to the latter’s ongoing case against Pinochet. See *El País*, 22 January 1999. See also Blixen (Blixen 1994; Blixen 1996; Blixen 1997a; Blixen 1997b; Blixen 1998; Blixen and Bergalli 1998), Calloni (Calloni 1998), and Cuya (Cuya 1996).

Paraguay officially joined the *Operación Condor* in July 1976. For an overview of human rights violations in Paraguay see Simon (1992). For a testimonial account of Paraguay’s role in Operación Cóndor, see Meilinger de Sannemann (1993).

<sup>125</sup> It would ostensibly be implemented in three phases. Phase One covered storage and exchange of information on the enemy. Phase Two included joint operations between Cóndor member countries, and Phase Three aimed at jointly operated teams from member countries that could strike at enemies anywhere in the world. For examples of intelligence exchanges and two-country operations see Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación (1991), CONADEP (1995 (1984)), Meilinger de Sannemann (1993), and Martorell (1999). It is likely that the Letelier assassination was intended as part of Phase Three.

<sup>126</sup> For an in-depth investigative account of the case, see Harrington and González (1987).

<sup>127</sup> FBI agent Robert Scherrer indicated shortly after the assassination that it was very likely a Cóndor operation. His report has recently been declassified and can be found at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB8/ch23-01.htm>.

<sup>128</sup> It is probably not a coincidence that these crimes took place at roughly the same time of year. September 18 is Chile’s Independence Day, September 19 is “Armed Forces Day”, and the entire month of September is known as *el mes de la patria*. National elections traditionally took place on September 4, and the coup took place on September 11. Michael Townley suggested that he received pressure to ensure Letelier be killed during the month of September, for symbolic purpose (Dinges and Landau 1980).

organizational problems in the implementation of coercion during the first months after the coup. The DINA essentially became a centralized internal monitor, and combined monitoring with operational functions. It took over the bulk of coercion from the other branches of the armed forces, and directed the rest.

How well did it accomplish its aims?

*Internal monitoring*

Table 5 shows the levels of IM during the DINA period, from 1974-77. Several of the criteria refer to the relationship between principals and agents. How well informed are principals on agents' activities, and how much trust do they place on them?

**Table 5: Internal Monitoring 1974-1978**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
<b><u>PROCESS</u></b>			
1. Internal reporting by agents to superiors on their activities		X	
2. Monitors' briefings on agents' operations to principals		X	
3. Information clearinghouse			X
4. Number of overseers minus number of agents	X		
<b><u>OUTCOME</u></b>			
5. Principal's self-reported trust in agents		X	
6. Intra- and inter-branch coordination		X	
7. Corruption and coercion for personal ends		X	

Here, the question arises of who exactly the principal is. As we have seen, the DINA was technically dependent on the Junta, but in practice answered only to Pinochet. Moreover, there is some dispute, to this day, about who the head of the DINA exactly was. There is no doubt that Manuel Contreras was the executive head of the organization, and that he ran it from day-to-day, but what about Pinochet? Did his status as President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces mean that he was the head of the DINA? From a principal-agent perspective, how should we understand the complex relationship between the Junta, Pinochet, and Contreras?

I will not presume to come to a final settled answer regarding who was the final principal. Instead, we can use the principal-agent framework to analyze the complexity of the relationship between the Junta, Pinochet, and Contreras. What were the levels of IM for each of these principals?

For Contreras, all available evidence suggests that he had a very firm and tight control over the DINA. We do not yet know the kinds of databases and records the DINA kept on its agents' operations, but we can speculate. First, it is unlikely that such databases, if they exist at all, were as extensive as, for instance, those of the East German *Stasi* or even the KGB in the Soviet Union were. No archives of such magnitude have been found nor, I suspect, are likely to be found. On the other hand, it is likely that some records of some sort were kept. The DINA was a complex hierarchical institution, with extensive operations both inside and outside Chile's borders. It is improbable that this level of coordination could have been achieved without a reasonably sophisticated bureaucracy to coordinate such things as communications and the allocation of resources.

It is also unlikely that such records, if they exist, contain detailed information on the full spectrum of the DINA agents' operations. For instance, it would be highly surprising, given the DINA's well-known propensity for secrecy, to find records of specific tortures applied and assassinations committed.<sup>129</sup> Instead, records would be likely to serve a coordination purpose: to show requisition forms, purchases, calls, letters, and so forth. But overall there is no evidence that he was unaware of what his agents did or that they engaged in actions that he did not know or did not permit. It seems reasonable, in other words, to expect that the levels of reporting of agents to Contreras were quite high.

Moreover, although the evidence is sketchy at best, we can infer from this that he must have had a reasonably high degree of trust in his main agents. This would follow from the fact that he had a great deal of control over how to shape the agency, and that the group that formed the core of the DINA had worked together for some time inside the Army.<sup>130</sup> Familiarity, we can assume, breeds trust.

With regard to Pinochet, the scores would be a little different. If Contreras is the

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<sup>129</sup> A useful contrast may be the archives of Paraguay's Asunción police, uncovered in 1991 and dubbed the "Horror Archives." Coercion in Paraguay during different periods of the Stroessner regime was applied with far less regard for secrecy, and in a far less finely targeted fashion than the DINA. The archives contain detailed information regarding who was responsible for a given prisoner, when interrogations took place and what the results of it were.

<sup>130</sup> Besides Contreras, this group included Armando Fernandez Larios, Miguel Krasnoff Marchenko, and others.

agent and Pinochet is the principal, we can assume that he must have had a great deal of trust in Contreras, for many of the same reasons I suggested above. Pinochet knew Contreras well, as his student in the War Academy. And all indications are that he supported Contreras and lobbied on his behalf to convince the other Junta members to support the creation of the DINA. Moreover, there is no doubt that once the DINA was in operation, Pinochet placed a great deal of trust on Contreras, relying almost exclusively on him and the DINA for intelligence information. By most accounts, Contreras and Pinochet held regular daily briefings. We can only speculate as to the contents of these briefings, but we know that there were regular and frequent opportunities for Pinochet to receive and to request information from Contreras on the DINA's operations.

There is no indication that Pinochet received regular reports directly from mid-level DINA commanders. His knowledge of DINA agents' operations was filtered through Contreras. We do not know how well Contreras reported on the DINA's plans and operations. And indeed, there are some indications that Contreras' reports may have been partial, or inaccurate. This remains a matter of dispute. For instance, while it seems unlikely that the DINA would engage in acts of international terrorism without Pinochet's approval, we do not know exactly how much detailed information Pinochet received on the DINA's operations. Did Pinochet know about and approve all the working relationships that the DINA built with foreign right-wing terrorist and paramilitary groups?<sup>131</sup> Or did he simply give Contreras a virtual *carte blanche* to operate the DINA as he wished so long as it produced results by "neutralizing" the regime's enemies? Although there is a great deal of assertive speculation about it, at this point we do not have the evidence to tell the complete story of the relationship between Pinochet and Contreras, for instance about the level of detail that Pinochet knew of the DINA's operations.<sup>132</sup>

The third extension of this relationship is the Junta. The Junta also relied on Contreras' reports about the DINA's activities. But unlike Pinochet, the Junta does not appear to have had regular and frequent access to Contreras. We can infer that the quality of information and reporting that the Junta received on the DINA's operations was far less than Pinochet. Also, we know that at least one member of the Junta - Air Force Commander Leigh - had profound reservations about the DINA, and that the Air Force's intelligence agency (the SIFA) fostered its own secretive counterinsurgency organization, the *Comando Conjunto* (CC).<sup>133</sup> Leigh also pulled out his men from the DINA when, as he describes it, he saw that they were only given administrative tasks and were not included in the main operational plans (Varas 1979).

<sup>131</sup> For example, the DINA worked closely with Miami-based Cuban right-wing groups in the planning and execution of the Letelier assassination.

<sup>132</sup> The question of how much Pinochet knew often tends to get conflated with the question of his legal and ethical responsibility for the DINA's actions. This is an error. Even if Pinochet knew only vague generalities about the DINA's operations, as its titular head, Armed Forces Chief, and President of the country, he undoubtedly bears legal responsibility for it. The point I am making is not an ethical-legal one but an analytical-historical one. To draw a parallel, evidence about the discussions held by the principals at the Wansee Conference indicates that the details of the "final solution" were sketchy at best. Many would be worked out by experiment on the spot and on the ground. But there is no question about the principals' legal and moral responsibility.

<sup>133</sup> On the *Comando Conjunto*, see González (1984), and González and Contreras (1991).

The Air Force's Intelligence Agency (SIFA) and the CC competed with the DINA on several fronts over counterinsurgency operations. Air Force Colonel Horacio Otaíza, one of the key counterinsurgency leaders in the Air Force affiliated with the Comando Conjunto, and others were convinced that the DINA, and especially Contreras, displayed a high degree of incompetence regarding intelligence (González and Contreras 1991: 35). The SIFA and the Comando Conjunto deployed a highly effective operation against the MIR in 1974, which included arresting almost half of the people who formed the MIR's central committee. The effectiveness of the operation proved deeply embarrassing for the DINA (González and Contreras 1991: 31-32).

The DINA responded harshly to its rival's actions. Colonel Otaíza was killed in an airplane accident under mysterious circumstances on July 31, 1975. The Air Force suspected DINA involvement, and DINA agents, fearing a counterstrike against Contreras, arrested one of the top Comando Conjunto officers and forced the dismissal of another (González and Contreras 1991: 99-100).

The dispute between the DINA and the Comando Conjunto was a serious cleavage inside the regime that threatened to spill over from mere disputes over operations and prisoner control to internecine bloodshed. Inside the Army, also, many sectors resented the DINA's broad powers, though there is less evidence of the kinds of serious clashes that there were with the CC. But overall, these tensions suggested that the level of trust between the Junta and military leadership and the DINA was low, certainly by comparison to Pinochet.

In short, there was a difference in trust and in the levels of self-reported information available between the DINA and the different principals, especially between Contreras and the rest. I have split the difference and coded **IM 1, 5 = Medium**.

This difference is one way to understand the problem of monitoring the monitors: as the difference in information and trust between the given principal (such as the Junta or Pinochet) and the person or agency in charge of monitoring.

With regard to the other internal monitoring criteria, the clashes with the Air Force's SIFA and the Comando Conjunto posed difficulties for the DINA's monitoring of the other coercive agencies. The disputes that flared up (in 1974 and 1975) were essentially resolved by dictate in November 1975 through a secret order from the Ministries of Interior and Defense making the DINA the only organization allowed to detain and question prisoners, and to keep secret detentions centers (González and Contreras 1991: 206).<sup>134</sup> Nevertheless, tensions with the other agencies remained. Briefings on other agents' operations is therefore coded as **IM 2 = Medium**.

The DINA was known to have kept extensive records on others, with informants throughout various state agencies and elsewhere. The people the DINA watched ranged from opposition individuals and groups to members of the regime itself (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation. 1993).<sup>135</sup> I have therefore coded **IM 3 = High**.

Even though the DINA had taken over the bulk of coercion, other coercive agencies remained. And because the DINA was now the principal monitoring agency,

<sup>134</sup> As a result of this order, the Air Force's main detention center, in its Colina Air Base, was dissolved (González and Contreras 1991: 206).

<sup>135</sup> The DINA spied on regime supporters, including Jaime Guzmán, because Contreras believed that the civilians had failed to build a solid base of support for the regime, and hence could not really be trusted (Guzmán Errázuriz 1992; Huneeus 2000b).



the ratio of overseers to agents reflected a low level of internal monitoring (**IM 4 = Low**).

The level of intra- and inter-branch coordination under the DINA was higher than in the previous period, but problems remained (**IM 6 = Medium**). As we have seen, the DINA was given broad authority to direct and coordinate intelligence gathering and security operations across the services. It could request information from any branch of the state, and could direct operations counting on the support not simply of the other branches of the armed forces but the entire state apparatus, including the postal service, telephone company, airline, railway, and so on.

With regard to corruption and common crime (or coercion for personal revenge), the DINA agents do not appear to have acted primarily for personal monetary gain, although there is some evidence of this (**IM 7 = Medium**). The DINA used various companies and financial dealings to finance its operations, but victims were not selected according to their spoils.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, most DINA victims came from modest backgrounds.

We can also infer that internal sanctions for shirking, for not following orders, would have been relatively high inside the DINA. The DINA used its broad powers to advance the careers of allies within the other branches of the armed forces and to curtail those of its enemies, in some cases by simply assassinating them.<sup>137</sup> It is reasonable to expect that internal sanctions within the DINA were at least as severe. The fact that there is little evidence of these sanctions having been applied suggests that the DINA was most likely effective at enforcing discipline within its organization, and that its personnel generally agreed to follow the policies set down by its leadership.

#### *External monitoring*

During the DINA period, the levels of external monitoring remained more or less unchanged from what they had been previously. There is no evidence that the principals placed any more trust in outsiders' reports (**EM 3 = Low**), there was neither legislative nor judicial oversight over coercion (**EM 6, 7 = Low**), and there certainly was nothing close to freedom of information laws (**EM 8 = Low**).

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<sup>136</sup> This is by contrast to Argentina, for example, where one of the more notorious practices was officers' trade in black market in babies born in captivity to imprisoned pregnant women.

<sup>137</sup> General Mena, for example, a prominent critic of the DINA within the army, was made Ambassador to Uruguay soon after the DINA gained official status in June 1974. Others met with a worse fate. General Lutz, a prominent coup leader, mysteriously fell ill and died in October 1974. General Bonilla, a vocal and powerful critic as Minister of Interior (he was described by Pinochet aide Federico Willoughby as "the only man who could have stopped Contreras" (Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 101)) was killed under mysterious circumstances in a helicopter accident in January 1975. The full story of both generals' deaths is still not known, but there is a great deal of speculation about the DINA's and Pinochet's possible role (Constable and Valenzuela 1991)

**Table 6: External Monitoring 1974-1978**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
1. Interlocutor or ombudsman for outside groups	X		
2. Outsiders' access to prisoners		X	
3. Principal's trust in monitor's reports	X		
4. Unofficial human rights agencies		X	
5. Independent media	X		
6. Legislative oversight	X		
7. Judicial jurisdiction	X		
8. Freedom of information laws	X		

The first shift from the previous period was the absence of an interlocutor to outside groups (**EM 1 = Low**). Whereas the SENDET, with all its faults, had served as a nexus of sorts to victims' relatives and outside observers, under the DINA there was no such representation or access. Indeed, the DINA's entire policy of plausible deniability rested on denying such access, and on erecting a formidable barrier between outsiders and the coercive agents. Exemplifying the tone of this policy, Contreras never made public appearances, and newspapers were forced to recycle one or two stock photographs of him.

Related to this was prisoner access. Outsiders continued to have access to the prisoners who had been taken earlier and who were already being held in the major camps such as *Chacabuco*, *Ritoque*, and *Cuatro Alamos*. But as we have seen, the DINA adopted a radically new *modus operandi* with regard to its prisoners. No outsiders were ever allowed access to the DINA's prison camps. As we have seen, these held fewer people and operated in relative secrecy. For this reason, on this criterion the level of EM decreased under the DINA (**EM 2 = Low**).

On the other hand, human rights organizations were becoming increasingly sophisticated (**EM 4 = Medium**). Shortly after the coup, the *Comité Pro Paz* (COPACHI) was formed as an inter-faith organization that included members from all major religions in the country. Lawyers affiliated with COPACHI began to present *recursos de amparo* on behalf of those who had been detained by the security forces. The team of lawyers working with COPACHI grew in size, and presenting the *recursos de amparo* required that they develop increasingly sophisticated archives and databases.

COPACHI staff collected information from witnesses, friends and relatives, and from released prisoners. In doing this, they had few precedents to follow regarding how to set up and operate human rights databases. Peruvian activists, for example, had earlier begun to gather information on "events," such as protests, strikes or specific attacks. While this is one possibility, it did not serve the needs of lawyers working to present *recursos de amparo*. Presenting appeals to the courts on behalf of individual victims required detailed information on individual cases, and not on broadly-gauged human rights "events."<sup>138</sup>

When the DINA began taking prisoners, in early 1974, COPACHI's lawyers responded by presenting more *recursos de amparo*. Overwhelmingly, as we saw in Chapter Four, the courts failed to respond to these.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> There continues to be some dispute within the human rights community around this issue. Roberto Garretón, one of the leading COPACHI lawyers during this time, defends the individual person-based system on the grounds that it prevents counting victims twice. This may happen, for instance, by recording the number of beatings, arrests, and tortures surrounding a given event, because one person can suffer more than one kind of human rights violation. On the other hand, he notes that by counting only individuals, the total number of human rights violations is probably undercounted, in order not to count individuals twice (Garretón Merino 1989; Garretón n.d.). The Human Rights Documentation System International (HURIDOCs) in the 1980s developed a method for coding and recording human rights violations across different cases and contexts, which includes both events and individual-based records (Stormoken 1985); <http://www.huridocs.org>. But this has not been universally adopted. See also <http://www.derechoschile.com/basicos/definiciones/glosfasic1.html>.

<sup>139</sup> Roughly 30 *recursos* were accepted between 1973 and 1978, out of more than 8,000 presented. On why

But an important consequence of presenting these en masse was the gradual accumulation of an increasingly comprehensive and systematic database on the human rights violations in Chile. Indeed, over time this would become the single most important source of information on the coercive history of the regime (Frühling 1984; Frühling 1986).

COPACHI's efforts met with resistance from the regime. In 1975 three of its main lawyers, including former Christian Democrat senator Jaime Castillo Velasco, were forced into exile after protesting the DINA's attack against a large group of MIR members in Argentina. And in December 1975, it was forced to close down.

These were serious setbacks, but they forced a shift in organization and strategy. COPACHI had been a coalition of primarily religious organizations that shared the common goal of providing services for the large number of prisoners and disappeared. The forcible closure of COPACHI showed its membership that they needed to operate under greater institutional protection. The head of the Chilean Catholic Church, Raul Cardenal Silva Henríquez, proposed that the work COPACHI had been carrying out be transferred to the Church itself. In January 1976, less than a month after COPACHI was closed, the Church opened the new *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*, as an integral part of its corporate structure, and with the correspondingly greater protection this afforded the human rights lawyers and workers.<sup>140</sup>

Another effect of the systematic accumulation of information by the human rights community was the appearance of increasingly regular reports on the Chilean situation. COPACHI, and later the *Vicaría*, published monthly reports on the human rights violations, and these circulated widely inside Chile and abroad. The protection afforded by the *Vicaría*, in particular, also drew journalists and others who used its information to publish articles outside the largely pro-regime media.

Also, there was growing discontent with the DINA even in the pro-regime media (*Qué Pasa* magazine) during this time. QP began to publish articles critical of the DINA (especially during 1975-77), suggesting its thuggishness undermined regime support. These critiques grew as there began to be increasing evidence linking the DINA to the September 1976 Letelier assassination, and also after the Contreras began to criticize the *gremialista* groups affiliated with the regime. (Contreras suggested that these groups largely failed to build popular support for the regime.)

The problem for the regime is that while repressing the opposition groups during this time was not especially difficult (e.g. the COPACHI was shut down, other vocal critics were exiled, etc. not to mention the hundreds of disappearances), shutting down *supporters'* media organizations was much more costly. The regime depended on

the Chilean courts largely abdicated their responsibility to protect basic human rights and liberties during the dictatorship, see Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation (1993: 120-26), Garretón Merino (1989), and Hilbink (1999).

<sup>140</sup> The Chilean regime aimed to have good relations with the Church. This was by contrast to a place such as El Salvador, where the Church was far more hostile to the regime, and thus afforded comparatively less protection as a result of more severe backlashes. Also, the Chilean Church, by contrast to the Argentine case, went very far in the protection of human rights. A great deal of responsibility for the Church's position no doubt lies with Cardenal Henríquez. In particular, on his ability to have managed to reconcile the deeply conservative (and pro-Junta) wing of the clergy with the far more liberal wing that devoted itself fully to the human rights cause (Huneucus 1987; Huneucus 1988; Constable and Valenzuela 1991; Silva Henríquez and Cavallo 1991).

political and economic support from civilian right-wing sectors, and these relied on the regime to implement their agenda for political and economic reforms (Huneus 2000b). Shutting down a conservative pro-regime magazine would have seriously compromised the relationship between these sectors and the political leadership.

For these reasons, it is appropriate to score an increase not only in the human rights agencies, but also with regard to independent media (**EM 5 = Medium**).

In sum, the DINA proposed resolving the problems in the organization of coercion by increasing the levels of internal monitoring. Yet, the measured level of internal monitoring under the DINA shows only a slight increase, as regards the DINA's function as an information clearinghouse. Lingering tensions with other coercive agencies, and the DINA's inability to completely monopolize coercion prevented higher internal monitoring.

I have also shown that levels of EM remained relatively constant, with the important exceptions of a decrease with respect to an interlocutor and prisoner access, and an increase regarding human rights groups and the media. In the next section I discuss the consequences of these shifts.

### Consequences

Coercion under the DINA was applied in a far more uniform and consistent manner than before, was far more finely targeted, and applied more secretly. This allowed the military and political leadership to resort to plausible deniability. They did so repeatedly, in response to the disappearances, the Prats and the Letelier assassinations, and the Leighton assassination attempt, and others.<sup>141</sup>

On the other hand, we also observe that the DINA failed to achieve very high internal monitoring, nor did it monopolize coercion. Other coercive institutions remained, in the other branches of the armed forces, operating with varying degrees of independence, even though none matched the DINA in size or scope. The most important of these was the *Comando Conjunto*, directed by the Air Force. In other words, the DINA failed to bring the entire security and intelligence community into line behind a single leader.

It would, of course, have been possible to achieve higher internal monitoring without centralizing coercion under an organization like the DINA. But as we saw, efforts in this direction (such as the Arellano mission) were tried, without success. The DINA's principal mission was to streamline coercion by increasing internal monitoring through centralization.

This is significant, insofar as there remained lingering tensions between the DINA and the other organizations. Competition with the *Comando Conjunto* was at times violent, sectors within the army's intelligence community (such as Mena) never completely accepted the authority of Manuel Contreras, and they retained enough power to be able to pose a threat to his position at a later date.

At the same time, the DINA did amass a huge amount of power. The DINA had no superior or oversight except Pinochet. Even with the remaining rivalries, it largely

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<sup>141</sup> Such as the case of the 119 disappeared MIR members. In November 1975 UN Ambassador Sergio Diez stated that "many of the supposedly disappeared do not legally exist"

directed coercion. And it used its formidable institutional capacity not simply to repress the regime's left-wing enemies and to direct coercion, but also to monitor those sectors it supposed to be the regime's enemies from within the ruling circles. It kept files on civilian supporters of the regime, mistrustful of groups that Contreras feared had failed to build popular support for military rule. This level of intrusion even into supporters' lives provoked deep tensions between leading civilian conservatives and the DINA. In other words, one consequence of the DINA's power is precisely what we would expect to result from a simple increase in the levels of internal monitoring. Namely, the problem of who monitors the monitor. The DINA attained an unprecedented level of power, and controlling the DINA became an important problem in its own right. As I will show in the next chapter, the critiques against the DINA grew rapidly from within the regime's own circles, where increasing numbers of supporters and advisors argued that the DINA was an institution out of control.

As a result, even though the DINA succeeded in addressing some of the problems it was designed to resolve, it failed to do so completely and it created a series of new ones. Indeed, the DINA turned out to combine the worst of both worlds. It had too much and too little power. It made internal enemies who resented its vast powers, but was not able to completely get rid of them.

These lingering internal divisions indicate that while the Junta and the rest of the military leadership may have agreed to the creation of the DINA in 1973, they did not wholeheartedly support it. Pinochet and Contreras did not require their full and unconditional support to establish the DINA in the first place, only their agreement. But the lingering tensions that the DINA was unable to resolve undermined its legitimacy as the prime coercive agency, particularly when some tensions threatened to spill over into violent internecine conflict inside the regime.

At the same time, the DINA's efforts to carry out coercion in secret, and thereby to permit plausible deniability, did not always succeed. An increasingly sophisticated and safeguarded network of human rights lawyers, activists, and journalists, with increasingly comprehensive data and archives undermined them. Every time plausible deniability failed, the pressure on the regime increased. In the next chapter, I analyze the efforts to address the new problems created by the DINA.

## 6. THE BROAD SHIFT (1977-78)

A second shift in the organization of coercion took place from 1977-78. In August 1977, the regime replaced the DINA with a different institution, the *Central Nacional de Informaciones* (CNI). At first, the DINA team also led the CNI, with Contreras and his men still at the helm. But in April 1978 this team fell from power, and their departure coincided with perhaps the most important political and institutional shift during the history of the regime. The CNI adopted a new modus operandi, the number of victims fell sharply in 1978, operations abroad were curtailed, and there were practically no more disappearances during the rest of the regime. For the first time, also, civilians were appointed to the majority of Cabinet positions, including the Interior Minister (the leading Cabinet position). As part of this change, the civilians gained control over the security apparatus led by the new CNI, now placed directly under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior. One of the first measures implemented by the new civilian-led Cabinet was an amnesty for all human rights violations committed between 1973 and 1978. With this measure, the Cabinet announced it was opening a new chapter in Chilean political life, leaving behind the political violence of the past.<sup>142</sup> Restrictions on civil liberties were also relaxed, and new opposition groups appeared. What was behind this shift? Why was there a shift at all, and why did it include such a profound reorganization not simply of coercion, but of the regime in general?

### A cosmetic shift?

A common view regarding the reorganization of coercion in 1977-78 is that the shift from the DINA to the CNI was cosmetic. The CNI was simply a minor institutional change from the previous period; the continuation of the DINA by another name. At best, the regime played a subtle game of smoke and mirrors to appear to be addressing the problem of the human rights violations without changing much of substance. For example, Leslie Bethell suggests that the DINA and the CNI were virtually identical:

General Pinochet's centralization of power owed a great deal to [his] control over the DINA (later renamed the Central Nacional de Informaciones [CNI] in an attempt to introduce some cosmetic changes). ... The newly named CNI essentially performed the same functions as the old DINA.... (Bethell 1993: 187-88).

It is true that the CNI was the DINA's legal successor, and both organizations shared many similarities. A point-by-point comparison of D.L. 521, which created the DINA, and D.L. 1828, which created the CNI, shows them to be extremely similar (Rojas 1988: 36-39). There was also a great deal of continuity between both institutions in terms of personnel and physical infrastructure. A large portion of the DINA's staff continued

<sup>142</sup> In a speech delivered on national television and radio on 15 June 1978, Interior Minister Sergio Fernández declared that the amnesty "constitutes an eloquent testimony of the spirit of national reconciliation that inspires the government ... and [shows] that the most acute stage of the internal emergency that we are living through can today be considered happily over" (transcript in Guzmán archives, 01260, DEH 78.01).

to work under the CNI, and the new organization continued to use many of the DINA's principal bases of operations.<sup>143</sup>

However, despite much continuity between both institutions, the differences were significant. For example, the DINA was an autonomous institution, but the CNI was placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defense, and it reported to the President through the Ministry of Interior. Also, even though much of the DINA staff continued to work in the CNI, former DINA chief Manuel Contreras left precious few files for the new CNI leadership and took most of his trusted staff. In addition, the collaboration of the DINA officers that remained was said to be "meager" (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 194).

At first, also, the CNI was given fewer powers. As noted in previous chapters, one of the three secret articles in D.L. 521 gave the DINA broad powers to carry out detentions. By contrast, the CNI's powers of arrests were more constrained. It enjoyed no secret powers, and it required a court order to carry out detentions (Frühling 2000: 541). Nevertheless, the CNI made use Article 1 of D.L. 1009, which gave it the power to make "preventive detentions" under states of emergency or siege. The CNI carried out thousands of arrests this way.<sup>144</sup> The CNI's powers were expanded in 1984, through the Antiterrorist Law, which allowed it to make arrests without a court order. As will be discussed below, this measure was a reaction to the mass wave of protests unleashed by the opposition in 1983.

The CNI's structure was also different from the DINA's. A general always headed it, and it maintained more bases of operations, throughout a larger part of the country, than its predecessor did.<sup>145</sup> The CNI inherited all the DINA's property, and added several more bases of operations.<sup>146</sup> Available evidence suggests that it maintained a staff of about 2,200, half of whom were military and half civilian personnel (de Luigi 1989: D1; Frühling 2000: 546).

Another significant difference between the DINA and the CNI was the far narrower range of international operations under the latter. Mounting a broad-based international campaign against Marxism had been a central goal for Contreras from early on, and the DINA – and *Operación Cóndor* – were the vehicles he used to achieve this. After Contreras' departure, there is little evidence of *Cóndor* continuing in a comprehensive way (Slack 1996; Zibechi and Pereira 1997; McSherry 2000). For instance, there were no more assassinations or attempts against opposition leaders, such as the Prats, Letelier, and Leighton cases.<sup>147</sup> Instead, international operations under the

<sup>143</sup> These included *Villa Grimaldi* and the building in *Jose Domingo Cañas*, both of which were used as detention and torture centers.

<sup>144</sup> See <http://www.derechoschile.org>.

<sup>145</sup> See <http://www.derechoschile.org>. It is likely that this was a result of the fact that the CNI, unlike the DINA, enjoyed closer working relationships with the different branches of the armed forces, especially the army itself.

<sup>146</sup> Its best known bases of operations in Santiago were its headquarters in Avenida República No. 517, and its detention center in Borgoño No. 1470 (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 640). It also operated out of the DINA's former center in *Villa Grimaldi*.

<sup>147</sup> There is some evidence of informal continuity of some of the networks of cooperation and information sharing established under *Cóndor*, however, for example surrounding the capture and assassination of former DINA agent turned liability Eugenio Berrios. Berrios had escaped to Montevideo to avoid giving testimony against the DINA. His body turned up thirty kilometers from Montevideo on April 13, 1995, and



CNI were restricted to using foreign embassies to infiltrate and spy on organizations in the community of Chilean exiles (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 637-38).

Perhaps the most striking difference between the two organizations is that while the DINA sought to exterminate the opposition, the CNI sought merely to contain it. There was a sharp drop in the number of people killed during the time of the CNI's operations. Torture continued to be practiced, but in a much more targeted fashion (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 168: 627; Frühling 2000: 541). Moreover, there was a sharp drop in the number of disappearances under the CNI. This practice had become the DINA's signature *modus operandi*, with hundreds of disappearances during 1974-77. After 1978, as Table 2 in the previous chapter shows, the number of disappearances dropped sharply to only a handful. During Mena's period as CNI director (1977-80) the *Informe Rettig* notes that the few disappearances that did take place during this time very likely were not attributable to the CNI (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 168).

In terms of the clearest outward signs of how coercion is practiced, in other words, the evidence simply does not support the claim that there was little difference between the DINA and the CNI. The next section considers various alternative explanations for the shift.

### **Explaining the Shift**

There are two broad kinds of explanations offered in the literature for the 1977-78 shift. The first focuses primarily on international factors and pressures against the regime, and the second focuses on domestic factors such as intra-regime power struggles. I discuss each one in turn.

#### *International factors*

Many observers argue that the primary cause of the shift was international pressure against the regime. Human rights violations and acts of international terrorism (such as the Letelier-Moffitt assassination) resulted in demands against the regime, especially from the United States, to get rid of Contreras and the DINA. American officials pressured the Chilean regime as soon as it became clear that the DINA was implicated in Letelier-Moffitt case. Sigmund argues that "U.S. pressure was a major factor in the reorganization of the instruments of repression in Chile. The CNI was an improvement over the DINA, in that it did not resort to disappearance as an instrument of policy" (Sigmund 1993: 129). Moreover, according to Sigmund, U.S. pressure, particularly during the Carter administration in the aftermath of the Letelier case, resulted in the release of most political prisoners in 1976 and 1977 (Sigmund 1993: 129).<sup>148</sup>

Hawkins' review of the minutes of the Junta's meetings reveals a regime deeply concerned about its image abroad, seeking ways "to counter international critics of its

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his assassination was likely the work of former DINA and *Cóndor* operatives (Blixen 1994; Blixen and Bergalli 1998).

<sup>148</sup> The timing of this does not completely support Sigmund's claim, insofar as Carter came into office only in January 1977. As I showed in the previous chapter, a large number of prisoners had already begun to be released as early as 1975.

human rights policies” more than its domestic critics (Hawkins 1996: 83-84). One way the government responded to these pressures was by replacing the DINA, the target of most international critiques, with the CNI (Hawkins 1994). In another variant of this idea, Huneeus argues that “the pressure [resulting from] the Letelier Case,” did not cause the shift directly, but rather was a necessary condition that permitted the implementation of the broader plan for institutional reform. Without U.S. pressure, the plan “would not have been implemented”(Huneeus 2000b).

The timing of the shift certainly coincided with international pressures. U.S. officials were in Chile during the key periods in 1977 and 1978 when the shifts took place. In August 1977, during the visit of Assistant Secretary of State Terence Todman to Santiago, Pinochet announced the replacement of the DINA by the CNI, albeit with Manuel Contreras remaining as CNI director. In February 1978 U.S. investigators into the Letelier assassination presented Chile with Letters Rogatory officially requesting information on the case. The pictures of two DINA agents who had applied for US visas in Paraguay using false passports, and who were linked to the crime, accompanied the request. Their pictures were printed in the American press, and also in Santiago’s conservative and normally pro-Pinochet *El Mercurio*, the first time a DINA link to the Letelier assassination was publicly discussed among pro-government sectors in Chile (Dinges and Landau 1980: Ch. 18; Sigmund 1993: 108-18).

The Carter administration also put heavy pressure on the Chileans to extradite Contreras. The Chilean Supreme Court refused this request,<sup>149</sup> but Michael Townley, the principal DINA agent responsible for implementing the plan, was eventually extradited (Branch and Propper 1983). The Letelier case was specifically exempted from the Amnesty Decree of 1978, and this outcome can be very directly traced to arm-twisting by the Carter administration (Dinges and Landau 1980; Branch and Propper 1983; Sigmund 1993).

Beyond timing and specific outcomes such as the exemption for the Letelier case, however, international pressures alone are a poor explanation for the magnitude of the shift. International pressure against the regime specified both a broader and narrower range of goals than the reforms actually accomplished. On the one hand, there were repeated calls from a wide range of actors – from the UN General assembly to multiple non-governmental organizations – for a return to democracy and full respect for human rights.<sup>150</sup> These pressures continued until the end of the dictatorship, albeit with a hiatus during the early years of the Reagan administration.<sup>151</sup> This is a signal that the reforms of 1978 were about more than a straightforward response to the international community’s concerns and pressure. If general international pressure (for instance from the UN) were the regime’s principal concern, there would have been a much clearer shift in the direction of the rule of law, the respect for human rights, and democracy.

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<sup>149</sup> For an analysis of the judiciary’s continued support of the regime against international pressures, see Hilbink (1999).

<sup>150</sup> These included repeated UN General Assembly resolutions against Chile, as well as numerous calls from various governments, and non-governmental organizations to end the dictatorship and return the country to civilian rule.

<sup>151</sup> Reagan at first was far more sympathetic to the Chilean regime than Carter, for whom human rights had been a major policy agenda. Later on, however, the Reagan administration also began to pressure Chile over the human rights problem (Jacoby 1986).

Notwithstanding the regime's many attempts to convince the international community otherwise, it continued to tighten control over its coercive agencies, to expand their capacities, and to violently repress its enemies. And it would be another twelve years before it transferred power to democratically elected civilian authorities.

On the other hand, the U.S. placed a great deal of pressure on Chile to extradite Contreras and to cooperate with the resolution of the Letelier case. However, the Chilean Supreme Court refused Contreras' extradition, although U.S. pressure did result in the exemption granted in the Amnesty decree for the Letelier case, and in the extradition of Michael Townley. While these are significant results, they are less than what the U.S. wanted.

### *Domestic factors*

A different set of explanations for the shift places more weight on domestic than international factors. In one variant, the reforms were simply part of a long-range plan of "state terrorism." All military and police forces, including the DINA and CNI "this last one being the legal successor of the first," implemented the plan (Padilla Ballesteros 1995: 43).<sup>152</sup> Apart from failing to distinguish the differences among both institutions (which we have seen were significant), this view also presupposes that there was sufficient coherence at the top to implement such a plan from the first days of the regime to the last.<sup>153</sup> I have described in previous chapters the significant tensions and struggles at the top over fundamental issues such as which powers the regime had taken, how they would be divided, and what direction the regime would take. Below I will discuss the continuation of these uncertainties during the period of the shift from the DINA to the CNI. These uncertainties are too important to ignore in the political development of the regime, and they cast serious doubts on explanations that presume an internally coherent and monolithic regime.<sup>154</sup>

We can also dismiss the possibility that the shift came about simply as a reaction to armed opposition activities.<sup>155</sup> The MIR was the principal armed opposition group, and by 1977 the DINA had succeeded in either assassinating or exiling the MIR leadership. The Communists and Socialists were equally in disarray, and none posed a serious threat to the regime. The threats of insurgency increased only *after* the shift, in the 1980s. By this time the MIR regrouped and began a series of clandestine activities in the country, which included kidnappings, bombings, bank robberies, and some high profile assassinations.<sup>156</sup> Moreover, the Communist Party also abandoned its long-

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<sup>152</sup> Padilla incorrectly points out that the Amnesty benefited *both* the DINA and the CNI. As I will show below, the CNI benefited from the Amnesty only for acts committed during a short period – until 1978. No CNI acts after the promulgation of the Amnesty were covered, a lack of legal protection that had profound consequences regarding the application of coercion.

<sup>153</sup> Padilla writes that "various reforms were implemented inside the Armed Forces in order to ensure greater unity and concentration of power in the top command, to permit greater internal cohesion, homogeneity, and a single line of command" (Padilla Ballesteros 1995: 19).

<sup>154</sup> Indeed, the idea that even totalitarian dictatorships are necessarily monolithic was refuted long ago (Moore 1950; Deutsch 1954; Moore 1954; Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965 (1956); Friedrich 1970).

<sup>155</sup> This is not a position taken in the literature. However, it is important to address it because of its currency among the military sectors, who casually refer then and now to the ever present danger of armed opposition during the entire course of the regime.

<sup>156</sup> I discuss some of these activities below.

standing policy of non-violence in 1980 and formed an armed wing, the *Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez* (FPMR), which also began clandestine operations. But none of this was a factor in 1977-78.

A different variant of this view sees the reforms implemented in 1978 as the consolidation of Pinochet's personal power. Remmer argues that Pinochet managed to personalize power and to build a "tyranny" by dividing and ruling. There were differences between the hard-liners and soft-liners (the *duros* and *blandos*), and Pinochet successfully played these sectors off against each other. "Even the organization of repression conformed to this tendency," she writes,

... involving the Central Nacional de Informaciones (formerly DINA), the army, and rival police organizations. At various times certain elements of the governing coalition appeared to have won out at the expense of others; but Pinochet remained above the fray, where he was able to take advantage of divisions and conflicts (Remmer 1991: 137-38).

In another variant, the reforms came about because Pinochet simply made some compromises with the soft-line sectors. For example, Hawkins notes that the shift from the DINA to the CNI marked the rise in influence of soft-liners and the fall from power of the hard-liners, with a corresponding improvement in human rights practices (Hawkins 1994).

Huneus presents a far more nuanced version of this account. He argues that a core group of right-wing civilians gained extraordinary prominence under the new regime, especially after 1978. This was the "*gremialistas*," a group composed of lawyers and economists based at the *Universidad Católica* who previously were involved in student politics and in anti-Allende demonstrations. Their de facto political leader was Jaime Guzmán, a deeply religious disciple of former conservative president Jorge Alessandri (1958-64). Guzmán was critical of the mass movements and mobilizations of the 1960s and 70s, and felt that a radical transformation of the basic Chilean political institutions was necessary in order to prevent Marxism from returning to Chile. He realized that the military government presented the best opportunity to carry out such a transformation, the centerpiece of which would be a new constitution (Huneus 2000b).<sup>157</sup>

Adopting a softer coercive policy was part and parcel of the institutionalization project. The leading pro-*gremialista* magazine, *Qué Pasa*, was generally supportive of the regime but took an increasingly critical stance against the DINA. The break took place in July 1975 after the case of the 119 MIR activists who had ostensibly disappeared in Argentina as a result of internecine fights (described in the previous chapter). *Qué Pasa* noted that the names corresponded to people listed as detained-disappeared, making the DINA's responsibility for the murders all too clear. The magazine argued that such incidents damaged the regime by providing ammunition for its many enemies at home and abroad. Only by creating a clear and stable new political order could the regime put to rest the accusation of running a totalitarian police state (Huneus 2000b; Huneus 2000a: 284-91).

The soft-liner and *gremialista* sectors themselves also present a similar line of argument. Sergio Fernández, an ideological ally of Guzmán, became the first civilian

<sup>157</sup> See also Cristi (2000), and Salazar Salvo (1994).

Interior Minister in April 1978 and was given broad powers to implement sweeping reforms. He argues that his appointment was a victory over the hard-liners like Contreras, and (in his view) the beginning of Chile's "transition to democracy" (Fernández 1994; Fernández 1998). One of his cabinet's first acts was to decree an amnesty (D.L. 2191)<sup>158</sup> for all those who had been sentenced by military courts since the time of the coup.<sup>159</sup> Another was to lift the state of siege, which had been in place since 1973, as well as to ease the strict curfews. The most important reform was to oversee the implementation of a new constitution over the next two years (Fernández 1994; Schweitzer 1996; Fernández 1997).

Jaime Guzmán, who became the chief architect of the 1980 Constitution and one of Contreras' principal rivals within the regime, lends support to these views. In a clear allusion to the DINA, he argued that the military regime during the first few years was a "bucking horse" that had to be tamed. The civilian-led administration under Fernández, presumably, largely succeeded in doing so (Guzmán Errázuriz 1992).<sup>160</sup> Guzmán also strongly believed that the Junta should not be merely a hiatus in between two periods of divisive partisan politics, but should instead "open a new chapter in national history."<sup>161</sup>

Evidence of the soft-liners' complaints also supports the view that the DINA troubled them. Members of the *Consejo del Estado* – an important group of civilian and military advisors – in March 1977 protested that it was imperative to "moderate the actions of the DINA" given that its "violent measures" were compromising the government's image.<sup>162</sup> In May 1977, *El Mercurio* admitted that the DINA might have

<sup>158</sup> Published in the *Diario Oficial* April 19, 1978.

<sup>159</sup> Justice Minister Mónica Madariaga, who defended the amnesty on the grounds of bringing national reconciliation and "a new era of peace," drafted the law. Although some political prisoners were released under the law's benefits, the overwhelming majority of those who benefited from the law were state agents. Indeed, until the mid- to late-1990s (when the Supreme Court began to interpret the law in a different way than before), it served as the linchpin to prevent prosecutions into the human rights violations during the 1973-78 period. Also, Miguel Schweitzer, one of Fernández's top aides at the time (and most recently Pinochet's counsel in London), noted that Pinochet at first opposed the amnesty (Schweitzer 1998: 205).

<sup>160</sup> The extent of Guzmán's criticism of the DINA's human rights violations has recently become a subject of some controversy, at the time of the tenth anniversary of his assassination in April 1991. (He was killed by members of the armed wing of the communist party, the *Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez*.) It is true that Guzmán strongly criticized the DINA toward the end of the military regime, in the late 1980s, as the quote above suggests. And his disputes with Contreras on other grounds are well known. Contreras blamed Guzmán for failing to build support for the regime, and used the DINA to spy on him and his supporters, a vigilance Guzmán deeply resented. There is also evidence of Guzmán having acted in private on behalf of people he was personally acquainted with and who had been detained by the regime. For example, my review of the archives at the Fundación Jaime Guzmán revealed several letters from public figures in the center and left either requesting aid from Guzmán, or thanking him for his intervention on their behalf. But notwithstanding these actions, the evidence does not support his supporters' claim that Guzmán was a strong defender of human rights principles during the time of the regime. Even though he was deeply religious, Guzmán strongly criticized the Church on several occasions for its anti-regime stance, and he supported the measures to send several high-profile Christian Democratic critics of the regime into exile. For a thorough discussion of Guzmán's relationship to the regime's coercive policies, see Huneus (2000a: 342-51).

<sup>161</sup> Memo from the Fundación Jaime Guzmán, quoted in Huneus (Huneus 2000b).

<sup>162</sup> Consejo del Estado, *Actas del Consejo del Estado* (Santiago: Session 14, 29 March 1977). Debates over human rights violations had taken place within the government from the earliest periods. In the *Comisión Constituyente*, some members argued for ensuring the protection of citizens' rights (an obvious reference to the current situation), while others argued that while defending people's rights was well and good, the

committed “criminal abuses.”<sup>163</sup> Coming from the leading pro-government paper, this represented a significant critique. In August 1977, when the DINA was replaced by the CNI, the same paper applauded the change and wrote “No one can deny the serious possibility of grave errors and abuses of power [by the DINA].”<sup>164</sup> *Ercilla*, the country’s principal conservative weekly magazine, in March 1978 noted that in “this muddy river [of coercion] it is imperative to touch bottom ... in order to return to the tranquility and prestige of the country.”<sup>165</sup>

Government officials abroad also faced embarrassing critiques over the DINA’s human rights record. UN Ambassador Sergio Diez, in November 1977 in a speech before the United Nations Human Rights commission, admitted, “The most serious situation facing Chile is that of the disappeared.” He added that while the government is

... certain about the absolute innocence of the Chilean government in any situation having to do with the disappeared ... we do not want to hide anything, we want to clear everything up, and if the investigations indicate that Chilean government officials are involved, I can assure this commission that, as the President of the Republic has affirmed, these people will be severely punished. ... This problem is of such grave importance and delicacy, that I call upon the working group to collaborate with the Chilean government in our investigation on the fate of the disappeared.<sup>166</sup>

Critiques by civilians also echoed critiques from within the military itself, reinforced in part by the fact that the DINA, although led by a military officer, sidestepped standard military protocol. Contreras was a colonel, yet in practice his power was greater than any general’s was except Pinochet.<sup>167</sup> The DINA remained outside the military hierarchy, as an independent institution that answered only to the President. Although some supporters of Contreras to this day claim that the Letelier murder was a CIA plot,<sup>168</sup> they are less exculpatory on other grounds. General (ret.) Fernando Arancibia, who was CNI director for a brief time immediately after Contreras, argued that the DINA had “successfully carried out a difficult task against subversion,” but that its operations had often been “improvised,” and marked by “excesses” (Arancibia

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“practical exigencies” of rebuilding the country demand that more pragmatic prescient principles be adopted. (República de Chile, *Actas Oficiales de la Comisión Constituyente* (Santiago: Talleres Gráficos Gendarmería de Chile, esp. Session 9, 23 October 1973).

<sup>163</sup> *El Mercurio*, May 28, 1977, Quoted in Quezada (Quezada 1978: 362).

<sup>164</sup> Quoted in Quezada (Quezada 1978: 362).

<sup>165</sup> *Ercilla*, March 28, 1977, quoted in Quezada (Quezada 1978: 362).

<sup>166</sup> Quoted in Quezada (Quezada 1978: 362). Quezada himself adds, “One does not make these solemn declarations before such an official without accepting as a premise the existence of serious irregularities” (Quezada 1978: 363). Quezada’s article is written in the *Vicaría*’s monthly publication, *Mensaje*, and the author’s reflections can be interpreted as a signal that the *Vicaría* itself knew about the growing discontent with the DINA from within government circles. Former UN Ambassador (and current Senator) Sergio Diez is, perhaps unfairly, remembered as the person who went in front of the UN to say that there were no human rights violations in Chile. The quote above suggests that his actual statement was somewhat different, guarded but indicating that the issue could not be brushed aside lightly.

<sup>167</sup> The importance of this cannot be overemphasized. The Chilean military is a rigidly hierarchical institution, and such a disruption of military rank was bound to cause deep resentment (Sohr 1989).

<sup>168</sup> General (ret.) Fernando Arancibia stated that “it would have made no sense politically for Chile” to have killed Letelier, that “clearly the CIA was behind it,” and that “I would have cut their balls off if I’d found someone here responsible” (Arancibia 1995). For the argument that the assassination was a CIA-inspired plot to destabilize the Pinochet government, see Morete Alnar (Morete Alnar 1987).

1995).<sup>169</sup> General (ret.) Odlanier Mena, a career intelligence officer and one of Contreras' most notorious critics,<sup>170</sup> argued that Contreras had essentially "confused intelligence with security," military parlance for stating that he believed the DINA was run by thugs (Mena 1996).<sup>171</sup>

Barros provides a different variant of the domestic politics explanation for the shift. While he supports the view that the push to institutionalize the regime played an important role in the 1978 reforms, he argues that the driving force behind this push was the need to settle rivalries among the four Junta members over their precise division of powers. During 1977 and 1978, the Junta engaged in tense debates over various proposals to regulate its structure and the division of powers between the executive and the legislative branches.<sup>172</sup> Pinochet floated several proposals that would have replaced the Junta's unanimity rule with majority decision making, giving the President the deciding ballot, as well as giving the executive a series of other powers that could be exercised without consultation with the legislative branch as exercised by the Junta (Barros 1996: 143-44). Air Force Commander Gustavo Leigh, in particular, strongly challenged Pinochet's drive to centralize power.<sup>173</sup> The tensions between Leigh and Pinochet were manifest at many levels, from deep disagreements inside the Junta over the basic structure and purpose of the regime, to the clashes of the DINA versus the SIFA

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<sup>169</sup> Arancibia also stated, however, that "in order to fight bandits you have to take a tough line. Sometimes you have to hang them up by the balls" (Arancibia 1995).

<sup>170</sup> The rivalry between the two men went back to the beginning of their military careers, as students in the Military Academy in the 1940s (Frühling 2000: 541).

<sup>171</sup> Mena was brought out of retirement and out of virtual exile as Ambassador to Uruguay in February 1978 to take over the command of the CNI. He had gone to Uruguay in part because of discontent over Contreras' rise (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 134-36; Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991: 617-23). Jaime Castillo, a leading opposition figure and a senior member of the Christian Democratic Party, also has come to believe that Contreras "was not a good security chief. He wasn't rigorous. Those people acted with such impunity that they didn't worry about the details. They improvised. In other words, I actually believe them when they say they have no information on the disappeared" (Castillo Velasco 1995).

<sup>172</sup> As we saw in Chapter Three, at the time of the coup the military lacked a clear vision of what to do with power once it had it. When it took power, the Junta announced that it would remain in power only for a short period of time. *Bando* N° 5, issued the day of the coup, stated that the purpose of the coup was simply to restore political and economic order, and to return power quickly to civilian authorities. (General Sergio Arellano's son notes that during this time military officers and civilian allies commented in casual conversation that 1976 – the end of Allende's presidential term – would be a likely date to return power to civilians (Arellano Iturriaga 1985; Huneus 2000b).) Nevertheless, within a relatively short period of time a different view took hold among the members of the Junta. On October 11, 1973, Pinochet delivered a speech in which he noted: "Reconstruction is always slower and harder than destruction. Because of this, we know that our mission will not be as fleeting as we might wish, and as a result we are not stating specific timetables or dates. Only when the country reaches the necessary social peace, to attain the true progress and economic development to which it is entitled, and there are no more hatreds, that is when our mission will have been accomplished" (quoted in Huneus (2000b).)

<sup>173</sup> Leigh was more senior than Pinochet, but as head of the Air Force he commanded fewer resources than Pinochet did as head of the army. Leigh, along with Navy Commander Merino, had also been one of the original planners of the coup, a plot that Pinochet had joined only at the eleventh hour. Participation in the coup was an important source of legitimacy within the new regime, and this put Pinochet at a distinct disadvantage. Within the army, Pinochet systematically outmaneuvered the entire "coup class," those among his colleagues who had taken part in the coup (Arriagada 1988; Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989; Barros 1996; Huneus 2000b)

and *Comando Conjunto*.

Guzmán also opposed Pinochet's efforts. He understood that a long-term military regime – the main outcome were Pinochet to succeed in completely centralizing power – would be disastrous for the armed forces, as well as the country as a whole. Experience in neighboring countries such as Argentina and Brazil suggested that political involvement risked undermining military professionalism, as the various branches of the armed forces fought with each other for resources and power (Barros 1996).<sup>174</sup> For soft-liners like Guzmán, Pinochet's efforts to accumulate power underscored the urgency of institutionalization.

Barros notes that Guzmán had to balance the projection of the regime into the future with the exigencies of rule in the present. He disagreed with a quick return to democracy, arguing that in the short run it was expedient to give maximum power to one person to get things done. But he was keenly aware of the pitfalls inherent in this practice: the regime would become personalized and not institutionalized, and would risk all the hazards of prolonged military involvement in politics. He pressed for a new constitution to bind the regime and the entire country to a new and permanent set of political institutions beyond any one political sector's ability to alter (Barros 1996).<sup>175</sup> Beyond avoiding divisions inside the regime, Guzmán's principal aim was to avoid in Chile what happened in Spain after Franco's death. The Spanish *caudillo* had built a highly personalistic regime, but failed to ground it in solid permanent institutions. After his death in 1974, future governments found it relatively easy to transform the country's basic institutions and rapidly undo his regime's legacy.<sup>176</sup> Thus, by having "... recourse to sources of agreement beyond the Junta for the first time appeared as a mechanism for bolstering the institutional order decreed from above and as a justification for introducing a limit upon the Junta's unilateral exercise of constituent power" (Barros 1996: 151).

In this way, Barros' and Huneus' explanations overlap and complement each other. The latter emphasizes the *gremialistas*' push (led by Guzmán) to institutionalize the regime, and the former argues that this push was made all the more urgent by the intra-Junta struggles. The civilians with a strong vision of the future found ready allies among the Junta leadership keenly aware of the disastrous consequences of internal splits. All sectors wanted to capitalize on the potential of military rule to prevent a recurrence of the kind of political crisis that led to the coup. None wanted a Marxist government to return to power. But the civilians, in particular, understood that the

<sup>174</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the risks of political involvement for military professionalism, see Stepan (1988).

<sup>175</sup> The Junta had appointed a commission of constitutional and legal experts to study the possibility of drafting a constitution. The commission, was made up mostly of figures closely tied to former right-wing president Jorge Alessandri (1958-64) and to other conservative political sectors. It included Enrique Ortúzar (Justice Minister under Alessandri, 1958-64), Sergio Diez (National Party Senator), and Jaime Guzmán. Jorge Ovalle (former Radical Party member who was a constitutional law expert at the Universidad de Chile) was the sole exception. A few weeks later four more commissioners were added. Of these, two came from the Christian Democratic party, one from the Liberal Party. The fourth was a woman, who did not belong to any political party but who was an ideological conservative (Huneus 2000b)

<sup>176</sup> On Franco's Spain and the transition to democracy afterward, see Agüero (Agüero 1991), Huneus (Huneus 1985), Linz, Stepan, and Gunther (Linz, Stepan, and Gunther 1994), Maravall (Maravall 1978), Maravall and Santamaría (Maravall and Santamaría 1986), and Olmeda (Olmeda 1988).



military regime itself also posed dangers that had to be avoided. On the one hand was the possibility of disintegration into internecine fights and even warfare among the different branches of the armed forces, but on the other hand was the all-too-real possibility of the consolidation of one-man rule by Pinochet.<sup>177</sup>

While Pinochet's attempts to centralize power were recognized as a clear danger, these accounts show that this factor alone is insufficient to account for the shift. Pinochet ruled the army with an iron grip, but this did not necessarily extend even to the rest of the armed forces. Pinochet's greatest personal coup over the Junta was to oust Air Force Commander Gustavo Leigh on July 24, 1978, soon after the civilian-appointed cabinet took power. His departure followed months of increasing tension between both leaders over the question of how long the regime would last, the division of powers between the executive and the Junta, and what Leigh saw as the personalization of power around Pinochet. His fall was triggered by comments Leigh made in an interview with the Italian newspaper *Corriere de la Sera*, suggesting that the country could not "keep denying liberty indefinitely" (Varas 1979; Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 222-24). But despite this clear victory over his most relentless rival inside the Junta, Pinochet failed to achieve complete control over the Junta as an institution. Throughout the regime, the Junta retained its unanimity rule, and the commanders in chief of the armed forces retained control over their respective branches. This meant that as president Pinochet was not given a power that all previous civilian Chilean presidents had enjoyed: the power to appoint the heads of the different armed forces branches (Barros 1996).<sup>178</sup>

Barros and Huneeus thus point to a more complex mechanism for the shift than simply a Pinochet power grab. This was the push to institutionalize the regime, which would not only prevent a return to Marxism in the future, but also avoid the present pitfalls of either collapse or one-man rule. The DINA's tensions with the rest of the armed forces provoked concerns about the regime's cohesion. Its tight nexus to Pinochet provoked concerns about personalistic rule. Restraining coercion in this way accomplished the twin goals of appeasing the many critics of Contreras and the DINA at home and abroad, and removing an important obstacle to the institutionalization of the regime.

While this is a powerful account, at best it provides a partial answer to why the regime may have been interested in reorganizing coercion. It explains why the civilians who supported the regime wanted to do so (principally to avoid a personalization of power that would mortgage the kind of future regime they desired), and also why their project found a ready audience inside sectors of the military (to avoid either a Pinochet power grab or breakdown into internecine fights). But it does not provide a satisfactory answer to why Pinochet would have supported the project to institutionalize the regime, and why he would have agreed to reorganize coercion by breaking his nexus with Contreras, which had given him exclusive access to the most powerful and feared coercive institution in the country. In other words, this account fails to answer how the

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<sup>177</sup> Moreover, these views are also on some level complementary with explanations that focus on international factors. As we saw, the timing of the shifts, and some of the particular outcomes, can be explained according to international factors.

<sup>178</sup> For a discussion of how Pinochet used his control over the army to centralize power, see Arriagada (1988).

soft-liners managed to convince Pinochet to support the institutionalization of the regime and the reorganization of coercion. As we will see below, Pinochet could have decided not to do so. Hence, the reorganization of coercion was not a given. It could have been implemented in different ways, or not at all. In addition, there are also some aspects of the reorganization of coercion (especially regarding external monitoring) that are not directly and clearly a function of the institutionalization project. It is not possible to explain these aspects by this factor alone, or in combination with other factors such as the international pressures.

### Available options

The reorganization of coercion during this time was related to the broader political transformations underway. Indeed, it was arguably necessary to accomplish the institutionalization of the regime. However, it was not completely a function of broader developments at the political level. To understand the difference, in this section I consider the various options available to the regime to reorganize coercion. As I have been doing until now, I describe and analyze the regime's options according to the tradeoffs involved in internal and external monitoring.<sup>179</sup>

In previous chapters, we saw that the regime created the DINA to resolve specific organizational problems, but that the DINA failed to achieve substantially higher levels of internal monitoring. It did not completely take over and redirect coercion, and conflicts remained between the DINA and other coercive agencies (in particular the DIFA and the *Comando Conjunto*), which undermined regime cohesion. Moreover, as the DINA ran increasingly amok, unconstrained by any other power inside the regime, it failed to deliver on the promise of plausible deniability. Risky and high profile acts of international terrorism such as the Letelier assassination provoked U.S. retaliation over and above the growing international pressures caused by the human rights violations. Most seriously, the DINA and the reformist sectors inside the regime clashed repeatedly over all aspects of the DINA's operations. The DINA mistrusted the civilians and spied on them, and the latter understood that projecting the regime into the future required bringing the DINA under control (or taming the "bucking horse," in Guzmán's phrase).

In this context, what options were available to the regime to deal with the problems posed by the DINA? The regime's options essentially boiled down to either keeping or altering the level of internal and external monitoring. I discuss each one in turn.

With respect to internal monitoring, the options were to decrease it, keep it the same, or increase it. One way to decrease internal monitoring would have been to get rid of the DINA altogether, and to return the regime to the type of coercion in place during the first several months after the coup. The other branches of the armed forces and *Carabineros* could have taken on a more active independent role, reporting to each of their superiors, but not to the Junta or Pinochet in a comprehensive way. Another option could have been to weaken the DINA substantially, abridging its information-gathering and reporting abilities. While in theory it would have been possible to do either of these,

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<sup>179</sup> I do not consider *all* possible combinations of different levels of internal and external monitoring (a list that would quickly become unmanageable). I consider only the broad alternatives of reducing each level, keeping it the same, or increasing it.

in practice neither was likely. Both options would have returned the regime to a kind of organizational pattern similar to what existed during the first several months after the coup, with the attendant similar problems of coordination and control I discussed in Chapter Three. Moreover, instead of providing the reformers with the necessary control over the coercive forces, here they would have had far less.

Another way to decrease internal monitoring would have been to allow the DINA even *greater* power and discretion. As we saw in the previous chapter, the DINA technically came under the command of the Junta, but in practice reported exclusively to Pinochet, who relied on it and on Contreras in his drive to consolidate personal power. The Junta-as-principal received no internal reports from the DINA, while Pinochet-as-principal received daily reports from him. By stopping this flow of information, and giving Contreras complete *carte blanche*, Pinochet could have effectively reduced internal monitoring.

While this was possible as an option, it would have worsened things on several fronts. It would have magnified the problem of the DINA running amok, and the attendant international and domestic pressures. In addition, it would have provided the reformers with even less control over coercion. Thus, as an option it was also unlikely. There is no indication that Pinochet or the rest of the regime had had any interest in decreasing internal monitoring in any of these ways, nor is there evidence that they seriously considered it as an alternative.

Keeping internal monitoring the same could likewise have been accomplished with or without the DINA and Contreras. The regime could have chosen to keep the DINA under Contreras, notwithstanding pressure against it from international sources and from critics inside the military and among civilian supporters. This alternative would no doubt have been attractive to many hard-line sectors within the regime. Pinochet himself may also have had an interest in keeping Contreras, given his direct and close relationship with the DINA's director. But while in theory it would have been possible to do this, this option would not have resolved the problems of the DINA's tensions with the other branches, and it would not have given the reformers any greater leverage over coercion. Under these circumstances, the pressure to get rid of the DINA and Contreras increased the costs of this option.

Keeping the same level of internal monitoring as before but without the DINA could have been accomplished by replacing it with a similar organization, or by having the agents in the different branches of the armed forces monitor each other and report to the top. For instance, Pinochet could have replaced the DINA and Contreras with another institution and leader that reported directly and exclusively to him. This would likely have eased some of the domestic and international pressures against the regime for the DINA's excesses. And while many would have been happy to be rid of a source of internal conflict and international trouble, this option would not have appeased reformers who understood that they needed to play a greater role in controlling coercion in order to succeed at institutionalization.

In short, both decreasing internal monitoring and keeping it the same were unlikely. Neither option would have addressed the DINA's problems, and at least one risked a return to the previous state of affairs, the problems of which the DINA itself was designed to resolve.

The third broad alternative was to increase internal monitoring. Again, there are

various ways the regime might have achieved this. One would simply have been for Pinochet and Contreras to stage what in essence would have been an internal coup, getting rid of rival intelligence and coercive institutions. Doing this would have resolved one of the problems that the DINA had failed to address. The DINA was meant take over the organization of coercion, but it did not achieve this goal. By getting rid of rivals like the *Comando Conjunto* and by gaining complete control over coercion inside the different branches of the armed forces, this problem could finally have been resolved. As I discussed in Chapter Four, indications are that the level of internal monitoring inside the DINA (with Contreras as the principal) was relatively high. By getting rid of rival organizations over which it had little control, the DINA could simply have extended its operations to the entire state coercive apparatus.

One important effect of such a coup would have been to allow Pinochet to consolidate his position as the unquestioned strongman in Chilean politics, with an iron grip over all major military and political institutions. By getting rid of rival coercive institutions, Pinochet and Contreras would have built a formidable power base. As we have seen, there is a great deal of evidence that Pinochet wanted to centralize power in this way, and, as I indicated above, many observers refer to the 1978 shift in particular as an important step in the consolidation of Pinochet's personal power.

No doubt this would have been a costly option. The army was the dominant branch of the armed forces but it did not completely overwhelm the navy, air force, and *Carabineros*. This option would have required the army to risk a potentially serious armed conflict with the other branches. While there is no evidence that Pinochet seriously considered risking such conflict, it is important to keep this option in mind. The balance of power between the various players could under not very different circumstances have tilted in a different direction.

Assuming for a moment that a Pinochet-Contreras coup would have been possible (i.e. that there would have been little resistance from the other branches of the military), this option would still have left one major problem unresolved. Relying on Contreras in this way would have significantly increased Pinochet's dependence on him, and hence his own vulnerability. Pinochet therefore had to weigh carefully the benefits of relying on the DINA to consolidate power with the considerable costs this would have imposed on him.

One way to increase internal monitoring without incurring the costs of vulnerability would have been for Pinochet to place the DINA itself under stricter internal oversight. As it stood, while the DINA monitored operations in the rest of the state, Pinochet relied strictly on Contreras to monitor the DINA's operations. Changing this state of affairs could have been done by placing the DINA under Ministerial control, as the CNI was placed, or by creating another regulatory or monitoring agency to oversee the actions of the DINA. This option was attractive to the Junta, and especially to the civilian reformers discussed above, for whom control over coercion was a necessary condition for institutionalization.

Even though Pinochet and Contreras enjoyed a close strategic alliance up to this point, events such as the revelations and political fallout of the Letelier case were a signal that the DINA was out of control, and they could have prompted Pinochet to place it under stricter oversight. But this option would have had costs of its own. The most obvious would have been deep resistance from the DINA itself. Contreras no doubt

would have strongly opposed and attempted to undermine any plans to place the DINA under any sort of oversight. This would have led either to bitter internal fights, creating serious problems of internal governability for Pinochet.

In short, there are strong reasons to believe that a higher level of internal monitoring was generally desirable and understood as such by the major players. Indeed, this was precisely what the DINA intended but failed to do. But different actors had very different tradeoffs at stake in the each of the different ways to increase internal monitoring. The starkest contrast was between Pinochet and the civilian reformers. Pinochet until this time had relied strongly on Contreras to consolidate power: through the counterinsurgency campaign and by coercing the rest of the regime into line. On the face of it there was no obvious reason why this nexus should have been broken. Given the resistance to Pinochet's effort to consolidate personal power inside the Junta, he might have calculated that the costs of relying too much on Contreras would have been a price worth paying for absolute control over the regime. (Provided, of course, Contreras could deliver this control.) By contrast, the civilians were in a different position. They understood that controlling coercion was necessary for institutionalizing the regime. Some ways of implementing higher internal monitoring – such as terminating the DINA and replacing it with a new institution more accountable to civilian sectors – would have allowed them greater control. Other options – such as strengthening the Pinochet-Contreras nexus – would have had precisely the opposite effect.

Before analyzing the organizational reforms that actually took place in light of these alternatives, we need to consider the second broad organizational dimension: external monitoring. As we know, external monitoring involves many kinds of information gathering from many different sources (e.g. from the courts, to the press, to independent observers). I will not list all the possible different institutional variations and their costs and benefits (or the combinations between these and internal monitoring). The three broad alternatives were straightforward: to do nothing, to decrease external monitoring, or to increase it.

Doing nothing meant simply continuing the situation where the courts had very weak oversight over coercion, the opposition press was driven underground, and a few human rights groups operated under the constant threat of government repression. This option would not have required any major institutional innovation, and it would have been unlikely to cause deep divisions inside the government beyond those that already existed. All things being equal, there is no reason why the regime could not have simply continued this strategy.

A different option would have been to impose, or revert to, far lower levels of external monitoring. Although external monitoring was already quite low, it was not zero. It would have been possible to go lower still. For example, the regime could have shut down the *Vicaría* (as it had previously shut down COPACHI) and prevented another similar organization from taking its place. This would have removed a troublesome critic that was an essential source of information for opposition campaigns, especially at the international level. However, the regime would have paid a huge political price at home and abroad for turning against an organization that formally belonged to and enjoyed the protection of the Church.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> This constraint did not prevent the regime from turning against human rights workers, however. For

One problem for the regime, however, was that not only the opposition criticized its coercive actions. Increasingly, as we saw above, these critiques came from its supporters' magazines and newspapers, including *Qué Pasa* and *El Mercurio*. Despite – or because of – these sources' support for the regime, their critiques stung. Were the regime to have chosen to decrease external monitoring to silence its critics, it would likely have faced a decision about what to do with critiques from within the ranks of its supporters. Censoring publications like *El Mercurio*, for example, would have seriously threatened the regime's crucial base of support among the country's elite.

The final option was to increase external monitoring. There were various alternatives, from allowing greater press freedoms, to lifting the restrictions on associations, to establishing clear Supreme Court oversight over the military courts.<sup>181</sup> These measures would have had the effect of increasing the pool of available information gatherers (and hence information) on the operations of the coercive institutions. Consequently, the DINA (or any other coercive agency that took its place) would no doubt have strongly resisted any such efforts. In addition, while reformers within the regime might not necessarily have opposed this, there is little evidence that they favored an increase in external monitoring purely as a way to check the power of the coercive institutions. As suggested above, they would no doubt have resisted attempts to restrict *their* civil freedoms (for instance by restrictions on such publications as *El Mercurio*). However, this did not necessarily extend to a defense for the protection of civil freedoms in general, for *all* groups and views. (On the contrary, one of their basic goals was to permanently exclude left-wing groups and views from the Chilean political system.)

The regime, of course, did not have complete control over external monitoring. Doing nothing would have meant that an organization like the *Vicaría* would continue to accumulate information, present it to the courts, and serve as the basis for critiques against the regime. These critiques, once in the public sphere, were available not only to the regime's enemies. As the examples of *El Mercurio* and *Qué Pasa* illustrate, they were also available to its supporters, and could thus have an impact on the regime.

The regime was also worried about its image abroad (and sent special envoys to the UN and to other countries to lobby on its behalf). However, there was no immediate or obvious reason to have increased external monitoring to appease its critics at home and abroad. There was also no pressure to increase it simply as a mechanism to allow greater information on coercion, nor is there evidence that the regime considered doing so. The path of least resistance for the regime concerning external monitoring would likely have

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example, in August 1976 the regime kidnapped and sent into exile two prominent centrist human rights lawyers, Jaime Castillo and Eugenio Velasco.

<sup>181</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, the Judiciary received information on human rights violations through the *recursos de amparo*, but overwhelmingly failed to use this knowledge to check the executive's use of coercion. A central reason for this was that the courts ruled that cases involving actions of military personnel belonged in the military courts. The cases were closed without further investigation. In the military courts, over which the Supreme Court ruled after the coup it had no jurisdiction, were run by military personnel. Once in the military court system, the cases were simply ignored. It appears that in some cases members of the civil courts attempted to carry out their own ad-hoc investigations. In March 1976 Supreme Court Chief Justice José María Eyzaguirre reported to Pinochet and to Justice Minister Miguel Schweitzer Speisky on the results of a personal observation tour through various DINA detention centers. The memo provides detailed information on various prisoners' cases, including tortures they were subjected to or had seen others receive (*El Mostrador*, 3 March 2001, <http://www.elmostrador.cl>).

been to do nothing.

In short, therefore, all things being equal the pressures on the regime were to leave external monitoring levels unchanged and to increase internal monitoring somewhat (with the attendant problem of choosing precisely which internal monitoring scheme). In the next chapter, I describe the reforms that actually took place. I measure internal and external monitoring, and explain how these results came about in light of the alternatives we have just analyzed.

## 7. THE ORGANIZATION OF COERCION AFTER 1978

A brief comparison between Tables 1 and 2 of the previous chapter against Tables 5 and 6 of Chapter 5 shows an increase in both internal and external monitoring after 1978. I discuss each one in turn.

### Internal monitoring

We can infer that one important change was an increase in overall information to the principals on the CNI's own operations, and on those of other organizations. For the moment, without complete access to the entire collection of the regime's archives, we cannot be completely certain about the full extent of information availability. Nevertheless, we can infer an improvement based on several pieces of evidence. For instance, given that the CNI, unlike the DINA, was comparatively more constrained to domestic operations, it is reasonable to infer that information on its operations was more readily available through established (formal and informal military) channels.<sup>182</sup> Moreover, the DINA relied more than the CNI on right-wing civilians and paramilitary groups.<sup>183</sup> These included many of the *Cóndor* operatives, such as local right-wing groups in Argentina, the United States, and Italy.<sup>184</sup> The CNI relied almost exclusively on its own personnel, recruited mainly from the different branches of the armed forces (especially the army). It was easier for principals to obtain information on the operations

<sup>182</sup> Mena argued that placing the CNI more clearly under the command of the cabinet established a "guarantee to citizens because one knows for certain the channels through which information is directed, given the existence of a Ministry accessible to the public." Quoted in United Nations (United Nations 1978: 32). Mena obviously exaggerates the accessibility of the Ministry of Interior to the general public at large, but this exaggeration is less than might be imagined. A more precise description would have been "accessible to right-wing civilians." Nevertheless, a civilian-led cabinet was a significant departure for the regime; permitting conservative civilian sectors a great deal of influence and control (Guzmán Errázuriz ; Fernández 1994; Huneus 2000b; Huneus 2000a).

<sup>183</sup> The CNI appears to have set up some front organizations (such as Chilean Anti-Communist Association, ACHA or the September 11 Command). The *Informe Rettig* notes that there are "grounds for presuming that [such] organizations ... which publicly took credit for some of the killings, were names that the CNI used to conceal its activities or those of people working for it" (Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 639). AChA was the name of a much older right-wing paramilitary group, which operated between 1946-48. Maldonado notes that "a second version of AchA existed during General Pinochet's military regime. This group claimed a few attacks and the kidnapping of opposition figures; its method was similar to that of the military secret police and the *Carabineros*. Though there are accusations that Acha was secretly financed and supported by the government, no court has seriously researched this allegation so far" (Maldonado 1999).

<sup>184</sup> For example, this included civilian operators such Michael Townley, Enrique Arancibia Clavel, and Eugenio Berrios (the chemist who led DINA experiments with sarin gas). It also included association with Miami-based anti-Castro Cubans (such as Virgilio Paz and Dionisio Suarez) to carry out the Letelier assassination, and with right-wing paramilitary groups in Italy in the Leighton case. Paz and Suarez are currently serving a sentence in U.S. prisons for the murder. The DINA also built relationships with Argentine paramilitaries such as the Triple A.



of an organization whose agents belonged to a known entity and to well-established structures under their own control, than on organizations outside their direct control.<sup>185</sup> Consequently, we can gather that the principals (not only Pinochet but also the Cabinet and the Junta) received better information from the coercive agents on their operations, as well as better reporting on other agents' actions. (Therefore, **IM 1 and 2 = High**.)

In one respect, the full extent of which is hard to gauge at this point without being able to delve inside the DINA's and the CNI's archives, it is possible that internal monitoring decreased with the CNI. Although the CNI inherited the bulk of the DINA's personnel and physical infrastructure, Contreras took what appears to be a great deal of information with him (in the form of archives). How many archives or how valuable is not clear. Nevertheless, this suggests a reason why at least with respect to its capacity as an information clearinghouse the CNI might have been less effective than the DINA. (I have therefore coded this with a question mark, **IM 3 = Medium?**)

Internal monitoring increased according to another criterion, however. Unlike the DINA, which was an independent institution, separate from the rest of the armed forces, the regime placed the CNI under the Ministry of Defense. Whereas Contreras had reported only to Pinochet, the head of the CNI reported to the President through the Ministry of Interior. This gave the CNI a status similar to that of *Carabineros*. While not technically a branch of the armed forces (as the Army, Navy, and Air Force were), both were military institutions, and were given status as such under the Ministry of Defense. (This status governed, for example, the jurisdiction of military courts over their actions, and their career or officer structure.) For day-to-day operational purposes, however, the Ministry of Interior directed both. In other words, this change in status introduced at least two new internal oversight mechanisms over the CNI (thus **IM 4 = Medium**). This was a significant shift. It meant essentially that Pinochet gave up the monopoly control over coercion that he had enjoyed under the DINA. Even though the DINA was technically under the jurisdiction of the Junta, in practice Manuel Contreras reported exclusively to Pinochet. (I will discuss below why this happened.)

With respect to trust, on the face of it there is no reason to assume that Pinochet (or the Junta) fundamentally mistrusted the CNI, its leadership, or the other coercive agencies. However, at least two cases suggest otherwise. The first was the replacement of Mena by the more hard-line General Humberto Gordon. Pinochet removed Mena shortly after the MIR assassinated the director of the Army's Intelligence School, Colonel Roger Vergara, on July 15, 1980.<sup>186</sup> The case sent shockwaves throughout the regime, and former DINA personnel (including Contreras) seriously criticized the CNI and Mena in particular for incompetence (Frühling 2000: 542).<sup>187</sup>

<sup>185</sup> General Odlanier Mena indicated that one of Contreras' most serious mistakes had been not only to associate with civilians such as Townley, but also to allow them to obtain such high-level access within the organization. This turned out to be a grave security risk after Townley turned state's witness in the U.S. over the Letelier case (Mena 1996).

<sup>186</sup> After the murder, Contreras gave an anonymous interview in the newspaper *La Tercera*, in which he charged Mena with losing the fight against terrorism. Mena retaliated by charging Contreras with corruption (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 301; Huneus 2000a: 505, 541 n. 24).

<sup>187</sup> One former DINA officer stated, "we can only miss the days (of the DINA), knowing for certain that this vile assassination could not have been committed, because the prevention exercised by that force was radically effective and it secured peace and tranquility for the nation" (Cavallo Castro, Salazar Salvo, and

The second case was a serious dispute between the CNI and *Carabineros* in 1985. The dispute followed the murder by *Carabineros* agents of three human rights workers who belonged to the Communist Party. (Because of the manner of their death,<sup>188</sup> it has become known as the *Degollados*, or “Slit-throat” case.) The agents belonged to the *Dirección de Comunicaciones de Carabineros* (DICOMCAR), created in 1983 as that institution’s intelligence and counterinsurgency agency in the aftermath of a wave of protests against the regime (Caucoto Pereira and Salazar Ardiles 1994). The DICOMCAR and the CNI cooperated on many cases, but the boundaries between their spheres of jurisdiction was often unclear, and relations among both were tense (Maldonado 1990; Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991). After the murders, the CNI issued a report on the case and cooperated with the courts and even with human rights groups to bring the responsible officers to trial.<sup>189</sup> The result was a massive shakedown in *Carabineros*, leading to the resignation of the top command, including its Director, Junta member General César Mendoza, along with four of his most senior officers. Apart from the case’s deep political impact, the CNI’s punishment of *Carabineros* signaled deep mistrust between the two most important coercive institutions in the country. Consequently, I have coded **IM 5 = Medium**.

Regarding inter- and intra-branch coordination, it is not entirely clear whether the CNI was more effective than the DINA. Under the DINA, tensions with agencies such as the Air SM z q rB z qH q M B M .Ungered during a period of institutional confusion. The division of powers between Pinochet and the rest of the Junta members (i.e. between the executive and the legislative powers) remained unresolved. Compared to the DINA, the CNI operated in a period of far greater institutional clarity. The key struggles for power at the top (e.g. between Pinochet and Leigh) had been resolved, and the 1980 Constitution set the boundaries for politics for the duration of the regime. Yet, there remained lingering tensions over primacy between the CNI and *Carabineros*, which increased especially after the 1983 wave of protests against the regime (resulting in the 1985 crisis mentioned above). For this reason, with respect to coordination I have coded the CNI’s performance as medium (**IM 6 = Medium**). Overall it performed better than the DINA in this respect, but given the more stable broad institutional context it was reasonable to expect greater coordination.

Last, regarding corruption, it is also not clear how much of an improvement the CNI was over the DINA, especially after 1980. Although apparently isolated, there were incidents of CNI agents engaged in bank robberies and other acts of personal corruption.<sup>190</sup> (**IM 7 = Medium**).

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Sepúlveda Pacheco 1989: 303), quoted in Frühling (Frühling 2000: 542).

<sup>188</sup> The agents slit the victims’ throats.

<sup>189</sup> See below.

<sup>190</sup> For example, a 1981 bank robbery near the *Chuquicamata* copper mine that was originally attributed to the MIR proved to have been carried out by CNI agents (Huneus 2000a: 506).

**Table 1: Internal Monitoring Chile 1978-1990**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
<u>PROCESS</u>			
1. Internal reporting by agents to superiors on their activities			X
2. Monitors' briefings on agents' operations to principals			X
3. Information clearinghouse		?	
4. Number of overseers minus number of agents		X	
<u>OUTCOME</u>			
5. Principal's self-reported trust in agents		X	
6. Intra- and inter-branch coordination		X	
7. Corruption and coercion for personal ends		X	

### External monitoring

With respect to external monitoring there was also an increase. Some measures of external monitoring remained more or less the same. Outsiders still had very little if any official access to prisoners (**EM 2 = Low**). There was still no real independent legislative oversight with respect to coercion (**EM 6 = Low**). There was no change with respect to freedom of information laws (**EM 8 = Low**). However, with respect to other measures we can see a difference, in some cases significant.

For example, the CNI leadership assumed a much more open public presence than Contreras had ever done. There had been virtually no public images of Manuel Contreras, or any interviews or photographs of him in the newspapers. His identity was known, but little else. In a sharp break from this practice, soon after taking office Mena called a meeting with Church authorities in order to “present himself.” Although the results of the meeting were less than fruitful, perhaps not surprisingly given the context, this type of public presence signaled a shift in the regime.<sup>191</sup> Therefore, I have coded **EM 1 = Medium**.

Indeed, this initial meeting was the first of a series of contacts that would later become far more direct. During the *Degollados* case, the head of the CChDH, Jaime Castillo, and General Humberto Gordon, Mena’s successor, established a regular and on-going informal contact to share information and coordinate activities. The CChDH wrote a report implicating *Carabineros* in the case, and made it directly available to the CNI, which had arrived at a similar conclusion through its own investigations. Most surprising, however, was a “hot-line” established between the CNI and the CChDH – essentially between Castillo and Gordon – in the aftermath of the case. Both organizations maintained this link until 1989 when the CNI was finally disbanded (Castillo Velasco 1995; Domínguez Vial 1995). The CChDH, of course, did not establish this link in order to furtively leak information to the CNI. Castillo stated simply that “We had to speak with those in charge. I am free and I have a right to be heard. We practiced democracy within the dictatorship” (Castillo Velasco 1995). Besides being another signal of the emergence of an interlocutor between the coercive agencies and outsiders, this sort of contact also signals an increased trust in outsiders’ information. It is unlikely that this sort of contact was a secret to the military leadership, or to Pinochet. It signals that the principals had enough trust in the reliability and validity of the information published by the CChDH to establish and maintain direct contact.<sup>192</sup> (Therefore, **EM 3 = Medium**.)

An important shift was the appearance of a series of new human rights groups during this time. One of these was the *Servicio Paz y Justicia* (SERPAJ), created at the

<sup>191</sup> The nature of the conversation reveals either surprising naïveté or astonishing cynicism on the part of Mena. During the meeting, in response to the bishops’ natural inquiries on the matter of the disappeared, Mena told them that “there are people who are not here,” but that “there are no political prisoners at this moment.” Mena notes that he was disappointed in the fact that the bishops did not believe him (Mena 1996). Given the regime’s record, it is not surprising, to put it mildly, that the Church authorities did not react kindly to Mena’s claim. Still, the fact that such a meeting took place at all signaled an important shift.

<sup>192</sup> It is unlikely that this contact was established as a way to spy on the CChDH. The CNI did not lack for ways to monitor opposition groups. There were far more effective ways to do this (such as the common practice of telephone tapping). The hotline, instead, provided the far rarer opportunity for direct communication with the CChDH’s leadership.

end of 1977 to promote the defense of human rights in areas not covered by the *Vicaria*, such as education (Orellana and Hutchison 1991: 104). The largest and most important of the new organizations was the Chilean Human Rights Commission (*Comisión Chilena de Derechos Humanos*, CChDH), created in 1978. The CChDH complement the work of the *Vicaria*. It adopted a broader definition of human rights, to include not only the rights to life and physical integrity, but also the full range of civil, political, economic, and even cultural rights. The CChDH was led by high-profile political leaders, and received support especially from various international organizations. A series of other groups would continue to appear throughout the 1980s (Frühling 1984; Frühling 1986; Orellana and Hutchison 1991: 103). Although these groups often suffered severe restrictions, their appearance was a major departure with respect to the previous period. (Thus, EM 4 = High.)

Last, another notable change with respect to external monitoring was the behavior of some members of the courts. After 1978, the Supreme Court and the judiciary did not experience any fundamental structural changes. In April 1978, also, in one of its first acts, the new civilian-led administration decreed an amnesty for all those charged by the military courts from the time of the coup until March 10, 1978. The government announced that its purpose, now that a new “peace and order” prevailed, was to “leave hatreds behind” (República de Chile 1978).<sup>193</sup> Although some political prisoners were released under the law’s benefits, the overwhelming majority of those who benefited from the law were state agents.<sup>194</sup> Observers at the time quite rightly dismissed this law as an illegitimate blanket self-amnesty for the regime’s own crimes. (To this day, human rights lawyers are fighting in court to overturn it or, as a second-best strategy, to exploit potential loopholes.)<sup>195</sup> In addition, in the overwhelming majority of cases that fell within this period (as most of the cases of the disappeared did) the attending civilian judge declared himself without jurisdiction (*incompetente*) and passed the case on to the military court. Given that the regime increased the jurisdiction of the military courts, this was the fate of the overwhelming majority of cases.

Notwithstanding all these obstacles, certain important exceptions proved the rule. For example, in late 1978 15 bodies were discovered in an abandoned mine tract in the town of *Lonquén*, just south of Santiago (Pacheco 1979; Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation 1993: 238-40). The Supreme Court appointed a special judge for the case (*ministro en visita*), whose investigation concluded that *Carabineros* agents had murdered the victims in October 1973. Because military personnel were involved, the judge passed on the case to the military courts, which invoked the amnesty

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<sup>193</sup> Quoted in Constable and Valenzuela (Constable and Valenzuela 1991: 129).

<sup>194</sup> Indeed, until the mid- to late-1990s (when the Supreme Court began to interpret the law in a different way than before), it served as the linchpin to prevent prosecutions into the human rights violations during the 1973-78 period.

<sup>195</sup> The second-best strategy thus far has been far more successful than the first. The principal argument used by human rights lawyers, which the Supreme Court has recently also adopted, is that a disappearance is technically a “kidnapping” until a body turns up. As such, it is a crime that continues *beyond* 1978, and hence beyond the protection afforded by the amnesty. The Supreme Court’s changed interpretation of the Amnesty Decree has thus effected a political sea-change in Chile. It means that now investigations into the particular cases can proceed until a body turns up, whereas previously cases were summarily closed prior to any formal inquiries.

decree and closed the case.<sup>196</sup> Nevertheless, the case marked an important turning point. It showed for the first time that “horrific crimes had been committed by military personnel and then covered up by the government, and, moreover, that with a decided effort, the truth about such crimes could be discovered” (Hilbink 1999: 272).

During the 1980s, other judges defied the injunctions of the Supreme Court and the regime, and pursued cases of torture and abuse. For example, in October 1984 Judge José Benquis responded to a *recurso de amparo* on behalf of Francisco Jara and Teresa Rosas, a married couple who were detained in their own home along with their maid, María Vásquez, by CNI agents. In an unprecedented move, Benquis went to the couple’s home and demanded entry. After being refused by the CNI agents, he went to their superiors, and eventually managed to free the detainees. The CNI agents, who had come in the night before, had also detained Vásquez husband, and had taken him away in custody. In one of the few cases of its successful use during the regime, Benquis presented a writ of *habeas corpus* and obtained the prisoner’s release. The Supreme Court, moreover, issued a complaint to Pinochet, who responded that no such further abuses would take place (Matus 1999: 149-51). The case is not significant because the promise was kept. It was not. It simply illustrates the kinds of actions that some judges took in exercising their powers, however limited, to oversee coercion.

Judge René García Villegas, whose jurisdiction in Santiago in the 1980s covered the area where an important CNI detention center was located (in Borgoño 1470), pursued the many accusations of torture and assassination that victims and their relatives issued.<sup>197</sup> Inevitably, the cases would end up in the military courts, where they would be closed. But Villegas persisted, taking on more cases and carrying out further investigations. The Supreme Court reprimanded García Villegas, and eventually disbarred him, signaling the kind of pressures the institution brought to bear on dissident judges.<sup>198</sup>

In this sense, the amnesty decree was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it forced the courts to close cases that fell between 1973-78. On the other hand, it forced the regime to develop strategies to avoid legal prosecution after that time, given the absence of amnesty protection. These strategies included expanding jurisdiction of the military courts, as well as granting the executive new powers of detention during different states of emergency (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991; Huneeus 2000a). In what was essentially a new political and legal space, some judges defied the strictures imposed by the court and the regime and went ahead with the prosecution of cases of human rights abuse that took place after 1978. (I will describe a couple such cases in the section below.) For these reasons, I have therefore coded **EM 7 = Medium**.

<sup>196</sup> However, the case was closed after recognizing the guilt of the policemen involved.

<sup>197</sup> For a full account, see his memoirs (García Villegas 1990).

<sup>198</sup> For a comprehensive account of the Supreme Court’s exercise of its institutional capacities against dissident judges, see Hilbink (Hilbink 1999).

**Table 2: External Monitoring 1978-1990**

		<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
1. Interlocutor or ombudsman for outside groups		X	
2. Outsiders' access to prisoners	X		
3. Principal's trust in monitor's reports		X	
4. Unofficial human rights agencies			X
5. Independent media			X
6. Legislative oversight	X		
7. Judicial jurisdiction		X	
8. Freedom of information laws	X		

In short, Tables 1 and 2 show that after 1978 there was an increase in internal monitoring and a more substantial increase in external monitoring. In the final section, I compare these results against the predictions of institutionalization (as suggested in the accounts by Huneeus and Barros).

### **Lingering questions**

First, recall that while the principal actors generally had an interest in increasing internal monitoring, each had substantially different tradeoffs at stake in the different mechanisms to accomplish this increase. For example, it would have been possible to increase internal monitoring by making the DINA more powerful, but it would have gone against the interests of the civilian reformers. And substituting the DINA for a new institution over which they could have greater supervision would have been in the interest of the reformers, but not in the hard-liners'. The central problem was Pinochet. For all the criticisms against Contreras, he was instrumental in helping Pinochet consolidate power. The nexus between both men was strong. While there were costs for Pinochet to keeping this nexus, there were also significant benefits to monopolizing control over the central coercive agency. Moreover, there were costs for Pinochet to breaking his alliance with Contreras, particularly during a time of institutional uncertainty and lingering tensions with the rest of the Junta members. Given these tradeoffs, why did Contreras and the DINA fall? While in 1973 the problem was explaining how Contreras (and Pinochet) managed to convince the Junta to create the DINA, in 1977 and 1978 the problem is precisely the opposite. Pinochet and Contreras formed a tight nexus, and Pinochet, as we have seen, had managed to become the most powerful player.<sup>199</sup> How, in other words, did the reformers convince Pinochet essentially to abdicate his monopoly control over coercion and to allow higher internal monitoring through greater overall (including civilian) supervision over coercion?

Guzmán and the other civilians advocating the institutionalization of the regime understood that controlling coercion was a necessary condition for its implementation. However, the problem for the soft-liners was that the DINA, despite its blunders, remained powerful, particularly so long as Pinochet continued to see it as a central instrument for his rule and exercise of power. It is here that the international pressures, particularly over the Letelier case, likely presented an opportunity. Pressures on the regime accelerated the internal critiques against the DINA. The DINA's critics gained legitimacy and a political opening, as previously silent observers now spoke up for the first time. Even *El Mercurio*, the country's leading newspaper and a staunch defender of the military regime, joined the fray to criticize the DINA and Contreras.

In short, no single factor alone, but rather a combination of factors explains the choice of higher internal monitoring through the CNI and greater civilian control. The reformers' institutionalization program explains why civilians sought to restrain and control coercion. International pressures explain some of the timing of the reforms, and they likely stiffened the backs of the reformers who pressed to get rid of the DINA. The internal divisions among the military branches explain the overlapping interests between

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<sup>199</sup> Although he was not, as I have shown, all-powerful in the manner described by the personalization of power accounts.



military insiders and civilians in institutionalizing the regime. Moreover, although it was not necessary to implement higher internal monitoring, Pinochet's drive to accumulate power very likely explains the fall of Leigh as an outcome of the process.

Important though these combined factors are, however, they miss the precise nature of the DINA's striking failures. The DINA was created not simply to mount a counterinsurgency campaign and to centralize coercion. Even if the principals at the time did not refer to it as such, the DINA was created in order to increase internal monitoring: to coordinate coercion efficiently, and to prevent divisive internal disputes. But notwithstanding its power, the DINA failed to achieve substantially higher levels of internal monitoring. In short, the DINA was powerful, but ineffective. It did not accomplish what it was supposed to, and this must surely have weighed heavily on Pinochet's mind when he considered various parties' proposals over whether and how to reorganize coercion.

We know that Pinochet changed course. It is likely that he calculated that using Contreras to stage an internal coup in the face of the increasing critiques (inside the military and among civilians) would cost too much. The risk of internecine fights was higher than the likelihood of achieving total power. But had the DINA been more effective as an organization, it would undoubtedly have altered this balance. It would have provided Pinochet with significantly more benefits, which might have made its costs (such as vulnerability) worth paying. The power balance was not so overwhelmingly tilted in one direction or in favor of one player that there was no room for human action or error. By supporting the soft-liners' institutionalization project, Pinochet effectively closed off both the option of divisive internal disputes as well as that of his own permanent personal dictatorship.

The Constitution enshrines the division of powers between the executive and the legislative, with Pinochet occupying the former and the Junta members (now with a separate army appointee to fill Pinochet's slot) the latter. Furthermore, Pinochet achieved the removal of his principal rival inside the Junta, Air Force Commander Leigh. Although the evidence for exactly how this took place remains beyond reach for the moment, it remains a strong possibility that Leigh's removal may have been a condition for Pinochet to support the Constitutionalization project.<sup>200</sup>

The DINA's failure as a coercive organization was a significant factor in the reorganization of coercion. In this way, we can do better than to simply state that the shift in the organization of coercion was the result of a combination of factors. An analysis of the organization of coercion as I have provided here pulls the different political factors (such as international pressures and institutionalization) together. It presents the dilemmas faced by the different actors and explains the choices available to them, in terms of the tradeoffs of different internal monitoring forms. But it also adds a crucial different dimension: the organizational one.

Believing that the central political fact about the military regime is, for instance, Pinochet's consolidation of power, leads naturally enough to the view that the CNI was simply the DINA by another name. Or, believing instead that the main dynamic was the civilian and military soft-liners' successful institutionalization drive, leads naturally

<sup>200</sup> The circumstances surrounding Leigh's removal suggest such a possibility. He was ousted for publicly criticizing the institutionalization plans, accusing Pinochet of a power grab and demanding a quick transition to a civilian government (González 2000: 481).

enough to the view that the CNI was more restrained than the DINA. Neither of these approaches that focus strictly on political level factors captures the important nuances in the quite different ways coercion was organized under the DINA and the CNI. The CNI *was* more restrained than the DINA, but it achieved higher internal monitoring. It succeeded as an organization where the DINA failed.

Questions linger also concerning external monitoring. The main institutionalization accounts (provided by Barros and Huneeus) suggest a confluence of interests between the armed forces' (including the Junta leadership's) desire to resolve internal conflicts, and the civilians' desire to institutionalize the regime. Institutionalization is the agreement by a set of actors to abide by a set of common rules. Implementing such an agreement avoids the twin hazards of continual internecine fights over fundamentals (such as the division of powers among the rulers), as well as the imposition of one-man rule. This is a powerful explanation indeed for many of the major developments in the civil and political spheres, such as the lifting of the state of siege, the appearance of a reformist Cabinet in 1978, and the implementation of the 1980 Constitution. However, it is a less powerful explanation for many of the specific outcomes in external monitoring.

For example, the call for greater civilian participation in government included only a limited circle of regime supporters. It would have been possible to institutionalize the regime without an interlocutor to *outside* groups such as the *Vicaria* or the CChDH. Also, nowhere in the institutionalization plans was there a call for creating more human rights groups to monitor the coercive agencies. On the contrary, the reformers often resisted these groups' activities and supported measures to curb them and their staff members. Moreover, the reformers intended the amnesty to put an end to the problem of the disappeared in order to legitimize the new constitution. Institutionalization did not include empowering the judiciary to check human rights abuses. Yet, despite being the exceptions that proved the rule of the overall failure of the judiciary to check human rights abuses, more judges that defied the trend appeared after 1978. These outcomes are also not a function of international or domestic pressures. International pressures did not target these sorts of specific organizational matters, and there were no mass protests or other forms of clear domestic opposition pressures against the regime at this time. How did all these changes in external monitoring happen?

The shifts at the organizational level are related to those at the broader political level (such as the institutionalization of the regime), but they are not reducible to them. The organizational sphere, as I have argued in this thesis, has its own dynamic. One difference between the political and the organizational spheres is the set of actors that matters for each. This is especially true regarding external monitoring. By definition, external monitoring involves information on agents' performance gathered from various kinds of sources in society at large. This encompasses not only the main principals, such as Pinochet, the Junta, and the civilian soft-liners, but also a broader group of civilians, including even opposition groups and individuals. These latter groups' activities were not completely under the control of the regime. The regime could at best decide to tolerate them. (Which it did, though the decision to do so was not necessarily a function of a desire to have these groups serve as external monitors. They operated often against the explicit wishes of the regime, and the regime often resisted their actions.) But this is another way of stating that the regime did not completely control the (re-) organization of

coercion through higher external monitoring. Outside groups also played a role. Accounts that focus strictly on the (domestic soft-liners') institutionalization project or (even less so) the international pressures are a poor predictor of this role.

The 1978 shift thus created an opening not simply in the civil sphere (somewhat, through lifting the state of siege) and in the political sphere (somewhat, through a civilian-led cabinet and the institutionalization/Constitution project). It also marked the beginnings of an opening in the organizational sphere (somewhat, through the appearance of new groups, abilities, and links).

In sum, the 1978 shift and its aftermath provide further evidence that the organization of coercion is related, but not reducible, to the broader political context. It is its own sphere, with its own policy space, options, and tradeoffs, which I have described and analyzed according to the options and tradeoffs of internal and external monitoring.

## CONCLUSION

### The Politics of Organizing Coercion

During a time of broad consensus that institutions somehow “matter,” it has become common for works in comparative politics to end with a call to pay more attention to how they actually *work*. This dissertation has taken this call as its starting point. Coercion, as Weber observed, is fundamental to politics. In the preceding chapters I have provided a framework to compare institutional variation in the organization of coercion, and shown how it sheds new light on a period of significant institutional flux during the early years of the Chilean military regime. Organizing coercion is related but not reducible to broader political dynamics, such as struggles for power and efforts to institutionalize political affairs. The organization of coercion is a discrete problem of governance that takes place in its own sphere, with an independent set of alternatives and tradeoffs, which can be identified according to a matrix of the different combinations of internal and external monitoring. Actors make choices from within this set of alternatives, and grapple with the different tradeoffs they impose. Thus, Weber’s fundamental insight about coercion in politics can be turned in on itself. Coercion is not simply at the center of politics, but the choices and struggles involved in organizing coercion show it to be itself an inherently political process.

I showed in Chapter 1 how to measure internal and external monitoring according to various indicators of the breadth and depth of information on agents’ performance available to principals. The resulting matrix yields four basic types of coercion: blind, transparent, bureaucratic, and hide and seek. These are the axial points, and cases can show any combination of internal and external monitoring, and lie anywhere on the matrix.

I used this basic matrix to analyze the organization of coercion in Chile during the military regime, focusing especially on a period of significant institutional flux (between 1973-78), which had long-lasting consequences. During this period, there were two major organizational shifts, along both internal and external monitoring. As we saw in Chapters 2 and 3, during 1973 there was a low level of external monitoring, and also (more surprisingly) internal monitoring was not high. While not quite “blind,” coercion during this time was applied in a relatively haphazard manner, and the new military regime ran into trouble when the different branches of the armed forces largely failed to coordinate their activities in crucial areas. Often one branch did not know what the other was doing, or which prisoners were being held where. Even inside the army, the largest and most powerful branch, officers disagreed on key issues such as whether they were in a state of war. In some places local commanders took a hard line against opponents and prisoners, while in others they adhered to strict codes of conduct. These differences posed a serious problem for the Junta. There were divisive internal fights over how to apply coercion, made all the more threatening amid growing international pressures against the new regime over its many human rights violations.

In the first major organizational shift during the regime, analyzed in Chapters 4 and 5, the DINA aimed to resolve these problems by increasing the level of internal

monitoring. The DINA was given broad powers not only to carry out its own operations, but also to oversee those of the other branches of the military and the police. Under the DINA, coercion was applied more consistently according to the regime's goals. Fewer people were targeted, and assassinations were carried out in a much more strategically secretive manner. The DINA carried out hundreds of "disappearances," which permitted the regime to claim plausible deniability for the human rights violations.

The DINA resolved many of the problems it was designed to do, but it failed to do so completely. Internal monitoring barely increased under the DINA, and deep tensions remained with the other military branches. In addition, the DINA created a series of new problems. Indeed, as the DINA grew in power and as its operations broadened in scope (extending to acts of international terrorism in South and North America, as well as in Europe), the DINA ran amok. Policing the police became an increasingly urgent problem for the regime.

External monitoring also increased somewhat during this time, making the DINA's excesses all the more apparent. Groups of human rights lawyers working under the protection of the Church presented hundreds of *recursos de amparo* for those who had been detained by the regime. Even though the courts ignored the overwhelming majority of these petitions, all the information collected on each of the cases - gathered from witness accounts and from former prisoners - formed the basis for what increasingly became the single most systematic record of the regime's coercive activities. Observers inside Chile and abroad relied on this information to report on human rights violations and to pressure the regime.

Chapter 6 analyzed the second shift in the organization of coercion, which took place from 1977-78 when the DINA was replaced by the CNI. This shift was part and parcel of the most important political shift during the course of the regime: the push to institutionalize it by adopting a clear plan to impose a new constitution. But the changes in the organization of coercion were not strictly reducible to the larger political process. As we saw, while these are powerful explanations for why the regime may have been interested in reorganizing coercion, they are less powerful accounts for how this was done or which direction the reorganization actually took.

We also saw that the reorganization of coercion was crucial to the institutionalization of the regime, but that it could have turned out differently, for example if Pinochet had chosen to strengthen his bond with Contreras. The DINA's failures - as explained by analyzing how it organized coercion - contributed significantly to its downfall.

Internal monitoring increased after 1978, as the regime imposed greater constraints on the CNI, and supervised its activities more closely through a broader range of mechanisms and observers. (For example, instead of reporting directly to the President, as the DINA had done, the CNI reported to a civilian Minister of Interior.) More surprisingly, the levels of external monitoring also increased after this time. New human rights organizations joined the Church-based groups in monitoring coercion, and in some cases established unprecedented information-sharing networks with the CNI. The regime and the opposition shared knowledge about prisoners' fate, and coordinated actions prior to protests and demonstrations. These changes in external monitoring, in particular, were not a function of international pressures or the push to institutionalize the regime. They were the result of particular arrangements of varying degrees of formality

regarding the organization of coercion by an increasingly wider range of actors.

In each period, the regime struggled with concrete organizational problems, and experimented with different solutions. The regime succeeded in reining in the police through greater institutional and political constraints, and the opposition gained new spaces to press the regime on the actions of its coercive institutions.

### Comparisons

In Chapter One I suggested that the organization of coercion framework can be applied to a variety of cases, and provided examples of different authoritarian regimes with various combinations of internal and external monitoring. These included, among others, Argentina during the *Proceso de reorganización nacional* (1976-82), East Germany, and South Africa under apartheid. In this section I discuss each of these three in somewhat more detail, to show how the organization of coercion framework may be applied. (I will not discuss the various monitoring criteria in the same order as the Chilean case – internal monitoring first and then external monitoring – nor will I present each criterion in the order in the table. I will summarize them in the order that makes most narrative sense.)

#### *Argentina*

The Argentine military came to power in a coup against the government of Isabel Perón on March 24, 1976. Perón had been in power since her husband – the populist leader Juan Perón who returned from exile to power in 1973 – had died in 1974. Juan Perón's return had come in the midst of a growing guerrilla insurgency from a series of groups, the most serious of which included the *Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo* (or *Montoneros*), from the left wing of his own *Partido Justicialista*. The armed forces had previously held power from 1966-73, but stepped aside and held elections (which the Peronistas were likely to win) in the hope that Perón in power would better be able to stem the growth of the guerrillas and the insurgencies. Instead, guerrilla activity grew under Perón. After Perón's death his wife countered the guerrillas through a series of secret and shady alliances with military and paramilitary groups such as the *Alianza Argentina Anticomunista (Triple A)*.<sup>201</sup>

The military justified its takeover as a restoration of order in the face of a growing guerrilla threat and virtual civil war. The military claimed it fought a “Dirty War” against a well organized, secretive, and violent opponent. But according to the best estimates, the guerrillas numbered some 2,000 at the height of their power (Brysk 1994: 197; 1985; Frontalini and Caiati 1984: 63). The military's claims to have fought a “war” are thus largely self-serving and exculpatory. Andersen (1993) systematically rebuts the claim and shows that even at the peak of their power the guerrillas never posed a serious military threat to the armed forces, which were about a hundred times more numerous.<sup>202</sup>

<sup>201</sup> The *Triple A* was set up in 1974 by José Lopez Rega, President Isabel Perón's Minister of Social Welfare, often called the “Rasputin of the Pampas” (Andersen 1993: 94-123; Brysk 1994: 30, n. 50-52; CONADEP 1995 (1984): xi-xii). The Triple A was a “loosely organized ‘federation’ of death squad-style organizations directed or assisted by organs of the state, including SIDE, the state intelligence service, and the Social Welfare Ministry. ... There were also links to the authoritarian-nationalist current of the army ... [and] between the Triple A and European fascists and terrorists, including the Franco regime in Spain and the Italian fascist lodge Propaganda-Due (P-2)” (McSherry 1997: 72-73).

<sup>202</sup> It is nevertheless telling that the myth of the Dirty War is also perpetuated by sectors within the Peronist

The evidence thus suggests that “the guerrilla threat ... was not the only, nor even the most important, reason for the coup” (McSherry 1997: 78). Army Commander-in-Chief Jorge Videla had stated that the guerrillas had by and large been defeated by 1975.<sup>203</sup> Instead, the armed forces took power to implement a whole scale reorganization of the country,<sup>204</sup> and to “change the mentality of Argentines” (McSherry 1997: 79).

Coercion in Argentina during the *Proceso* was most similar to Chile before the DINA, but far closer to pure blind coercion. First, as Table 1B shows, external monitoring was lower than at any period in Chile. When the military took power in 1976, unlike Chile where the judiciary remained at least nominally independent, it took complete control of all three branches of the state (**EM 6, 7 = Low**). There was no interlocutor to outside groups (**EM 1 = Low**), and outsiders had no access to prisoners (**EM 2 = Low**). There was a comparatively far weaker independent media than Chile (**EM 5 = Low**),<sup>205</sup> and there were no freedom of information laws to speak of (**EM 8 = Low**). There were several human rights organizations, some of which, such as the *Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos* (APDH), existed for a long time. These organizations provided a measure of external monitoring, but far less so than in Chile. First, they lacked the protection of the Argentine Church, which supported the dictatorship. And second, they made less use of the *recurso de amparo* as a strategy for challenging the state’s detentions, and consequently they developed far less comprehensive archives (**EM 4 = Medium**). There is no indication that the principals inside the regime trusted these organizations’ reports. On the contrary, the human rights groups operated under constant threat of harassment, detention, or closure (**EM 3 = Low**).

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party (*Partido Justicialista*). The Undersecretary for Human Rights under the (Peronist) Menem government, Dr. Alicia Pierini, argued that the Peronists have a “different view” of human rights than many other sectors in society. “We experienced a civil war,” she noted, “where *we* suffered the blunt of the repression.” She also argued that the war ended with a “peace treaty” in which each side made compromises. “The military accepted democracy, and we accepted the pardons (*indultos*) [issued by Menem]” (Pierini 1996).

<sup>203</sup> Mignone (1991: 53), cited in McSherry (1997: 78).

<sup>204</sup> An official document stated that “...the Armed Forces took over the political power (sic) of the Argentine Republic, together with the responsibility of curbing the progressive disintegration of the State ... so as to subsequently redirect the country towards order, productive work, and progress under democracy (Republica Argentina, Poder Ejecutivo Nacional, *Terrorism in Argentina: Evolution of Terrorist Delinquency in Argentina* (Buenos Aires, 1980), p. 1. Quoted in McSherry (1997: 89)). The source is an official publication of the Argentine Junta published (and translated into English) to counter growing international critiques (cf. McSherry (McSherry 1997: 325, n.17))

<sup>205</sup> The sole exception was the English language paper, the *Buenos Aires Herald*.

**Table 1A: Internal Monitoring Argentina**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
<b><u>PROCESS</u></b>			
1. Internal reporting by agents to superiors on their activities	X		
2. Monitors' briefings on agents' operations to principals	X		
3. Information clearinghouse	X		
4. Number of overseers minus number of agents	X		
<b><u>OUTCOME</u></b>			
5. Principal's self-reported trust in agents	?		
6. Intra- and inter-branch coordination	X		
7. Corruption and coercion for personal ends	X		



**Table 1B: External Monitoring Argentina**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
1. Interlocutor or ombudsman for outside groups	X		
2. Outsiders' access to prisoners	X		
3. Principal's trust in monitor's reports	X		
4. Unofficial human rights agencies		X	
5. Independent media	X		
6. Legislative oversight	X		
7. Judicial jurisdiction	X		
8. Freedom of information laws	X		

Internal monitoring levels were also very low. The Argentine dictatorship oversaw a hydra-headed repressive apparatus with shadowy connections to a highly decentralized network of different military and paramilitary organizations. The roots of this lie in the fact that there is no clearly dominant branch within the Argentine armed forces.<sup>206</sup> Unlike countries such as Chile or Brazil where the army has unquestioned predominance over the other branches, in Argentina the Navy is a serious rival for power against the Army. As a result and likely in order to avoid a severe power struggle among the different branches, when they took power, the Army, Navy and Air Force divided the country into geographically separate areas over which each branch enjoyed virtually complete control (Stepan 1988: 25).<sup>207</sup> Moreover, although the Junta set the broad outlines of repression, in practice there was a great deal of autonomy within and inside each branch over which enemies to target and in which ways. Brysk writes that

... each service, each military zone, each concentration camp, and even each task force had considerable latitude in deciding whom to detain, whether and how much to torture them, whether to officialize, release, or execute them, and how to dispose of their children and property. ... As one who was a political prisoner at the time (and subsequently, a Peronist legislator) put it: "In those days, the country was feudalized; there were guys decorated by the First Corps, kidnapped in the Second, killed by the Third, and vindicated by the Fifth" (Brysk 1994: 39).<sup>208</sup>

This kind of organizational decentralization was also believed to be a fundamental strategy of counterinsurgency: the fight against an enemy decentralized in clandestine cells was thought to require similar kinds of organization. The Junta relied extensively on highly autonomous task forces (*grupos de tarea*) within the armed forces to carry out detentions, tortures, and assassinations. Paramilitary groups such as the Triple A had begun operations before the coup, but the military replaced the activities of the Triple A with its own task forces, often groups of five to fifteen members from the military, the police, and civilian groups who operated in secret (McSherry 1997: 93). As a result of the wide discretion given to radically decentralized agents both within the military and in outside groups, there was very low information available to principals on the details of agents' operations (**IM 1, 2 = Low**), and coordination among the different institutions and organizations, as Brysk notes, was often poor (**IM 6 = Low**).

There was also no equivalent to the DINA or CNI as an information clearinghouse. The closest institution that could have served this function in Argentina was the State Intelligence Service (*Servicio de Inteligencia del Estado*, or SIDE). But

<sup>206</sup> By contrast, the Chilean Army is unquestionably the dominant branch within the armed forces. Pinochet, as head of the Army and the armed forces at the time of the coup, was also named head of the Junta. This appointment was a recognition of his de facto status as *primus inter pares* among the Junta members, even though, unlike the heads of the Navy and Air Force, he had joined the coup plots only at the last minute.

<sup>207</sup> In Chile, only the Army and *Carabineros* had an organizational reach that extended throughout the country. The Navy and Air Force took and held prisoners in their respective regiments and bases, but their reach was limited by the fact that they simply have far fewer bases. The Navy, however, was essentially given control over the city of Valparaíso, the most important port and the center of Navy operations.

<sup>208</sup> Brysk quotes Moncalvillo and Fernández (Moncalvillo and Fernández 1985: 29-33).

this institution lacked the power and scope to systematically monitor all coercive agencies. Moreover, the SIDE had been created under the Perón government, which meant that it lacked prestige and legitimacy in some sectors of the military (Stepan 1988: 24-25), and was relatively ineffective as a clearinghouse. At most, each branch monitored its own divisions, and in particular its own intelligence agencies (Pion-Berlin 1989: 102-04). Thus, **IM 3 = Low**. As a result, also, the ratio of monitors also reflected low internal monitoring (**IM 4 = Low**).

How much trust principals had over agents is hard to gauge in any military institution prone to secrecy. But I have coded it with a question mark as **IM 5 = Low?** The reason is the relatively unspecialized manner coercion was organized. Each branch of the armed forces took part in repression and all branches rotated their agents to ensure a pact of silence by widespread guilt (Brysk 1994: 39; Roniger and Sznajder 1999: 20-21). A chilling account of this rotation is provided by Horacio Verbitsky's interview of Captain (Ret.) Francisco Scilingo. Scilingo took part in missions to kill opponents by throwing them from a plane, alive and drugged, into the open ocean. His was the first public confession of this practice. He states that the majority in the Navy took part in the flights, and that this rotation was a deliberate policy, a kind of "communion," something "that had to be done." He notes that "the whole country had been on rotation. Maybe one guy might have been able to avoid it, but only rarely (*en forma anecdótica*). It was not one little group: it was the entire Navy [that took part]" (Verbitsky 1995: 31-32). This kind of rotation among the agents of coercion can thus serve the purpose of accentuating the differences between the agents and the victims, by preventing any possible formation of affective bonds and by emphasizing the differences between "us" and "them."<sup>209</sup> It also serves to build loyalty, by ensuring that everyone's hands are dirty.<sup>210</sup> I have taken this as an indicator of basic mistrust by principals in their agents.

And last, corruption was far more common in Argentina than Chile. For example, taking possession of a victim's property was often an important incentive for agents to take part in repression.<sup>211</sup> Thus, **IM 7 = Low**.

This pattern of organizing coercion remained remarkably stable during the dictatorship. Why were there no shifts? Shift in the direction external monitoring are inherently problematic for authoritarian regimes. Accepting legitimate independent actors involves restrictions on the powers and scope of the government. It would take a severe crisis to force the government to consider trading off limitations on its power for increased accountability of its coercive institutions. In Argentina, the Junta might have responded to rising popular discontent by shifting to external monitoring, but chose instead to attempt to divert attention away from these problems by stirring up nationalist sentiment through the invasion of the Malvinas/Falkland Islands. The staggering defeat, if the military regime had somehow managed to survive, would likely have prompted

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<sup>209</sup> Al Capone hired a variety of out-of-town assassins to ensure the hired gun would feel he was killing one of "them" rather than one of "us" (Diamond 1992: 298).

<sup>210</sup> See also Rosenberg (1991).

<sup>211</sup> The most notorious difference between Chile and Argentina in this regard was the Argentine practice of keeping the babies of detained expectant mothers. The search for these children, many of whom were brought up by military officers' families, has been championed by the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo (*Las Abuelas*). The well-known movie *La Historia Oficial* centers on the crisis of one military officer's wife who realizes that their adopted daughter was illegally taken from a woman in detention.

calls for political reform and opening: external monitoring by different names. Instead, external monitoring was imposed de facto with the collapse of the military regime and the transition to a democracy with a separation of powers and respect for the basic rights and liberties. Had the war been fought (and lost) earlier, the shift might also have happened earlier.

Somewhat more puzzling is why the Argentine generals did increase internal monitoring. The explanation for this is most likely rooted in the decision at the time of the coup to radically divide power among the three branches of the armed forces. (This division was far more severe than anything attempted in Chile.) This initial division made it extremely difficult to later create a single all-powerful coordinating or overseeing institution. Any such attempts would have faced the hurdle of inter-service competition for control of a new agency of obvious political importance (Stepan 1988: 24-25).

### *East Germany*

The new East German state was formally declared in November 1949, and the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED, or *Sozialistische Einheitspartei auf Deutschland*) imposed a strictly Stalinist model of social and political control, which had emerged in the post-war years. East Germany was a case of almost pure bureaucratic coercion. There was no external monitoring to speak of (**all EM criteria = Low**). A *Politbüro* and a *Zentralkomitee* (ZK) were established by the cadre of party executives to ensure political control and to allow Moscow supervision of its new satellite. A new Ministry of Security (MfS) was created in February 1950. This State Security Service (*Staatssicherheit* or *Stasi*), aimed to centralize control over coercion and intelligence throughout the country. The coercive apparatus was crucial to the party's control.

**Table 2A: Internal Monitoring East Germany**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
<b><u>PROCESS</u></b>			
1. Internal reporting by agents to superiors on their activities			X
2. Monitors' briefings on agents' operations to principals			X
3. Information clearinghouse			X
4. Number of overseers minus number of agents			X
<b><u>OUTCOME</u></b>			
5. Principal's self-reported trust in agents			X
6. Intra- and inter-branch coordination			X
7. Corruption and coercion for personal ends		?	

**Table 2B: External Monitoring East Germany**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
1. Interlocutor or ombudsman for outside groups	X		
2. Outsiders' access to prisoners	X		
3. Principal's trust in monitor's reports	X		
4. Unofficial human rights agencies	X		
5. Independent media	X		
6. Legislative oversight	X		
7. Judicial jurisdiction	X		
8. Freedom of information laws	X		

The failure of the *Stasi* to predict a serious uprising in 1953 led to the fall of its head, Ernst Wollweber, who had neither Moscow's nor the SED's confidence (Fulbrook 1995: 33-34; Childs and Popplewell 1996: 54-65).<sup>212</sup> Wollweber was replaced by Erich Mielke, a Moscow-educated long-time KPD member and admirer of Felix Dzerzhinskii (the founder of the Soviet Union's *Cheka*).<sup>213</sup> Mielke remained in charge of the *Stasi* until the breakup of the GDR,<sup>214</sup> and imposed a hierarchical "*Chekist*" structure on the agency (Childs and Popplewell 1996: 81). Under his command, especially given his deep Soviet ties, the *Stasi* established extremely close relationships with the KGB in the Soviet Union.

Mielke also used his position to turn the *Stasi* into the leading coercive institution, especially after the 1960s. It became more powerful than any other coercive force, reporting on all agents and operations. Also, the functions of domestic and foreign intelligence were not carried out by separate and independent agencies (as for, instance, in the US or the UK), but by different branches of the *Stasi*. And, particularly through a rapidly growing and massive file system on the GDR's citizens, the *Stasi* acted as the crucial vetting mechanism for career advancement and for keeping social control (Rosenzweig and Le Forestier 1992). As a result, **IM 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 = High**.

The *Stasi* under Mielke was crucial to Moscow's control over the GDR. In 1970, Mielke's support was instrumental in removing GDR President Ulbricht from the top leadership of the SED, after Moscow felt that Ulbricht had established too close a relationship with West Germany's Willy Brandt under the sway of the latter's "*ostpolitik*" (Childs 1966; Fulbrook 1995: 36; Koehler 1999: 65-75).<sup>215</sup> His lieutenant, Erich Honecker, who remained in power until 1989, replaced Ulbricht. Under Honecker, Mielke continued to expand the size and reach of the *Stasi*, turning it into the premiere coercive institution in the country (Childs 1983; Childs 1985). Thus, **IM 5 = High**.

There were two kinds of agents who worked for the *Stasi*: officers and informants. The former were full-time employees directly employed by the *Stasi*. The number of full-time officials had grown from 52,700 in 1973 to 81,500 in 1981, to roughly 100,000 by the time of the breakdown, including some 11,000 MfS special guards regiments. This represented roughly 1 MfS agent per 165 inhabitants in 1989. By contrast, official statistics showed 1 medical practitioner per 450 inhabitants in 1988 (Childs and Popplewell 1996: 82).

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<sup>212</sup> "Despite all the SED's efforts to depict the upheaval as a fascist putsch or the work of West German provocateurs," Maier observes, "the movement revealed how alien and dependent on a continuing Soviet presence the regime remained. Until the disappearance of the GDR, the uprising remained an anxious memory; as their authority evaporated in 1989, Politbüro members repeatedly asked whether unrest had become as serious as it had been in 1953" (Maier 1997: 15).

<sup>213</sup> On Dzerzhinskii and the *Cheka*, in English, see Leggett (Leggett 1981).

<sup>214</sup> Which makes him (one of or) the most durable intelligence chief(s) in history.

<sup>215</sup> Koehler points out that in the Soviet system in general the secret police is a powerful kingmaker, and that "No Soviet leader had ever been removed from office without the active support of the secret police" (Koehler 1999: 71). But in East Germany the fragility of the state contributed to an especially strong leverage by Moscow, through the secret police, over the SED leadership. Mielke was crucial to this. Koehler argues that Mielke was a master at switching personal allegiances, and that he was not loyal to a particular person per se, but rather to the joint KGB/*Stasi* goal of building and cementing Communist power (Koehler 1999: 72).

The number of informers (IM or *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*),<sup>216</sup> was far larger, and had grown especially in the 1970s. Conservative estimates are that by the mid 90s there were some 174,000 IMs (Childs and Popplewell 1996: 82-86; Garton Ash 1997: 84; Koehler 1999: 8). By this measure, in a country of 16 million, this meant that 1 out of every 50 people had a connection with the *Stasi*.<sup>217</sup>

The *Stasi* was thus the antithesis of a small and highly specialized institution. As these figures suggest, the level of specialization was very low as regards IMs, and somewhat higher as regards the full-time employees. The *Stasi*'s broad reach was crucial to establishing control over the population. Not only were its agents literally everywhere, but also cooperation with the *Stasi* had a corrupting effect on the population (Rosenberg 1991; Rosenberg 1995). Consequently, I have coded **IM 7 = Medium?**, with the question mark indicating the counter effects of corruption.

Like Argentina, there was very little variation in this pattern of organizing coercion after the *Stasi* under Mielke established its predominance in the 1960s. Fundamental change came only after 1989, when the collapse of the Berlin Wall led to the end of the GDR altogether.

### *South Africa*

*Apartheid* in South Africa was a repressive authoritarian regime that denied suffrage to blacks,<sup>218</sup> the bulk of the population, while a white minority retained complete political and economic control and enjoyed the protection of their basic civil and political liberties.<sup>219</sup> Unlike Argentina or East Germany, the organization of coercion in South Africa under *apartheid* underwent several shifts, and maintained far higher levels of external monitoring. (In this way, South Africa resembled Chile.) I will not describe all the shifts, but focus on coercion especially after the *Soweto* uprisings of 1975.

With regard to external monitoring, given the fusion of powers in a parliamentary system, the ruling Afrikaner-led National Party (NP), which put apartheid into practice during its 46 years in power (1948-94), retained an iron grip on both the executive and the legislative branches during its reign. Consequently, there was no equivalent to effective legislative oversight over coercion (**EM 6 = Low**). (And there was also no equivalent to freedom of information laws, **EM 8 = Low**.) There remained a vibrant civil society, however. As noted above, whites enjoyed full civil rights, and white opposition movements challenged the government. While many black organizations (such as the

<sup>216</sup> In 1968 the MfS changed the classification of its informers. Previously referred to as *Geheime Informatoren* (GI or secret informants), the new title became *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* (IM or unofficial colleagues, or collaborators). Mielke intended this shift as a way to ease the psychological burden of informing, and to allow the number of informants to increase (Childs and Popplewell 1996: 83).

<sup>217</sup> Garton Ash adds: "Allow just one dependent per person, and you're up to one in twenty-five" (Garton Ash 1997: 84).

<sup>218</sup> Apartheid law divided the population into four major racial groups: Africans (blacks), whites, coloreds, and Asians. This law was abolished in 1991, but many South Africans still view themselves and each other according to these categories. I use the term "black" instead of African, but others whom I cite use the older term.

<sup>219</sup> The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report* states: "For at least 3.5 million black South Africans [*apartheid*] meant collective expulsions, forced migration, bulldozing, gutting or seizure of homes, the mandatory carrying of passes, forced removals into rural ghettos and increased poverty and desperation" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 1999: 34).



African National Congress) were driven underground, they remained active and continuously challenged the regime's coercive practices. (Thus, **EM 4 = Medium**.)

The judiciary remained independent, although the executive, "through scarcely disguised manipulation of the composition and quorum requirements of the appellate division," often forced its policies through (Corder 1987: 98). In practice, until the 1980s the courts tended to rule in favor of the executive, even though such an outcome was not an "intentionally biased or prejudiced policy" (Corder 1987: 99). However, as the government resorted increasingly to extra-legal means in order to maintain *apartheid* in the 1980s, the courts often ruled against the government and in favor of individual applicants. As a result, **EM 7 = Medium**.

Far more problematic for the regime was the independence of the media. The NP tried to control the press, a goal that Hachten writes was "not easy to do because freedom of the press is a long-established value in South African society. Even right-wing Afrikaners give it lip service .... Further, the opposition English press, financed as it is by major financial and mining interests, represents significant economic power. And, finally, the Nationalists recognize that South Africa's claim to the 'freest press in Africa' is one of its few assets in world opinion" (Hachten, Giffard, and Hachten 1984: 76). (Thus, **EM 5 = High**.)

Censorship of various forms was an essential tool of governance for the NP, however.<sup>220</sup> Through the Publications Act of 1974 (and its predecessor the Publications and Entertainments Act of 1963), the government asserted control over all media. The act included extremely vague and broad grounds for banning and censoring material. "Anything that might cause 'ill-feeling' among the different races is reason for finding an utterance or object 'undesirable.' T-shirt slogans, key-ring emblems, films, audiotapes, videotapes, song lyrics, plays, cabaret skits, even government broadcast material, are all subject to banning, just as much as the obviously threatening political speeches, books, socially critical novels, and works of scholarship. There are stretches of blank pages in locally published encyclopedias" (Phelan 1987: 8).

Nevertheless, the NP faced continuous strong challenges to its coercive practices from the press. For example, the NP denied responsibility in the 1977 death of Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko, held under police custody. When Police Minister Kruger suggested that Biko had died as a result of a self-imposed "hunger strike," the English language press responded with strong critiques (Woods 1991: 246-56). An inquest into the death ruled that Biko died of head injuries but found no evidence to attribute the death "to any act or omission amounting to a criminal offense on the part of any person" (Woods 1991: 396).

The Biko case also exemplifies the fact that outsiders had relatively little access to prisoners held by the security forces (**EM 2 = Low**), the absence of an interlocutor to outside groups (**EM 1 = Low**). It also exemplifies the tense relationship to outsiders' reports on its coercive practices. While accusations from the black press or other groups were likely to be dismissed, those from the liberal white press – representing a constituency whose support the government courted – were more likely to have an

<sup>220</sup> Nadine Gordimer observed that "We shall not be rid of censorship until we are rid of apartheid. Censorship is the arm of mind control and as necessary to maintain a racist regime as that other arm of internal repression, the secret police" (Gordimer 1980: 27).

impact. Therefore, **EM 3 = Medium.**<sup>221</sup>

The relationship with the main black opposition shifted in the mid-1980s, however. At this time the NP began to hold secret talks with the ANC leadership, including Mandela, after it became clear that *apartheid* could only be maintained by increasing levels of repression, which the bulk of the white community was not prepared to accept. During this time such external monitoring mechanisms as the press, the courts, and outside (opposition) groups gained in power and made more of an impact inside the government.

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<sup>221</sup> The relationship with the main black opposition shifted in the mid-late 1980s, however, when the NP began to hold secret talks with the ANC leadership, including Mandela.

**Table 3A: Internal Monitoring South Africa**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
<u>PROCESS</u>			
1. Internal reporting by agents to superiors on their activities		X	
2. Monitors' briefings on agents' operations to principals		X	
3. Information clearinghouse		X	
4. Number of overseers minus number of agents	X		
<u>OUTCOME</u>			
5. Principal's self-reported trust in agents			X
6. Intra- and inter-branch coordination		X	
7. Corruption and coercion for personal ends		X	

**Table 3B: External Monitoring South Africa**

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
1. Interlocutor or ombudsman for outside groups	X		
2. Outsiders' access to prisoners	X		
3. Principal's trust in monitor's reports		X	
4. Unofficial human rights agencies		X	
5. Independent media			X
6. Legislative oversight	X		
7. Judicial jurisdiction		X	
8. Freedom of information laws	X		

Regarding internal monitoring, the apartheid regime responded to the Soweto uprisings in 1975 by centralizing its security forces and essentially imposing a higher level of IM. The police and security establishment was caught unprepared for the levels of violence marked by the Soweto uprising. A 1977 South African Defense Force (SADF) white paper called for a new “total national strategy” against the insurgency in what was described as a “state of war” against a guerrilla army (Stanbridge 1980: 93-94; Seegers 1996: 151-52; Truth and Reconciliation Commission 1999: 26-27). The Defense Minister, P.W. Botha, argued that the shift to mass violence marked by Soweto also required a much more comprehensive response than the South African Police alone was able to provide. “What [the SADF] had learnt in the preceding (sic) years of coexistence with the SAP was that military decisions had to be linked with non-military ones. It enhanced efficiency, if only by reducing rivalries” (Seegers 1996: 161-62). A series of coordinating committees were created to oversee operations carried out jointly between the SADF and the SAP as well as the National Intelligence Service and the Department of Foreign Affairs. Seegers notes that this “was going beyond coordinating information; its interest was in coordinating the implementation of policy” (Seegers 1996: 163).<sup>222</sup>

This sort of coordination suggests high levels of internal monitoring on several criteria. However, this was contradicted by other developments. For example, in the 1980s in particular the security establishment responded to increased opposition violence through a series of covert (“Third Force”) operations that relied on groups within the black communities to strike against the ANC and other opposition black groups. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission notes, furthermore, that during this time the SADF took on an increasingly predominant role as the leading coercive institution in the state, and “violence was met with greater violence and the security forces themselves became involved in extra-judicial killings, acts of arson and sabotage and other reprisals” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 1999: 38). In other words, this indicates that part of the state operated with high internal monitoring on some criteria (IM 1, 2, 3, 5, 6). But this is counterbalanced by reliance on outside groups over which the government had accordingly less direct control, and by the TRC’s suggestion of the blurred boundaries between both groups’ activities. I have split the difference and coded **IM 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 = Medium**. Given the reliance on outside groups, also, **IM 4 = Low**. With respect to corruption for personal ends, there is little evidence of this in the main security forces, but for the same reasons as above I have coded **IM 7 = Medium**.

In short, Argentina is closest to blind coercion, the GDR is closest to bureaucratic coercion, and South Africa (like Chile after 1978) lies somewhere in the center of the matrix. These comparisons are summarized graphically (along with the organization of

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<sup>222</sup> An official organ of the ANC noted that this coordination network “allows the police, military, National Intelligence Service and Military Intelligence to pool information at a local level. This co-ordinated action of all intelligence systems is new, and gives the racist regime an improved capability in identifying individuals and groups that are opposed to it” (Comrade Ramat 1987: 29), quoted in Herbst (Herbst 1988: 674).

coercion in the different periods in Chile) in Table 1 of Chapter 1.

### Consequences

Chapter 1 discussed the different tradeoffs in the ways of organizing coercion. All things being equal, lower levels of internal monitoring are likely to result in more intra- and inter-organizational coordination problems and a higher likelihood that agents will deviate from their assigned task. Although rulers (principals) are less likely to have accurate information, and hence direct control, over agents' actions without high internal monitoring, there may be times when rulers want to simply let their agents loose to do as they may.<sup>223</sup> Higher levels of internal monitoring, by contrast, give the principal more precise information on his agents, and hence more direct control. While this has obvious advantages, it means more work, such as hiring and training a staff, writing reports, and so forth. It can also make the principal more accountable for his agents' actions or more dependent on (and hence vulnerable to) any specialized internal monitor.

Low levels of external monitoring are likely to give coercive institutions maximum freedom from independent outside observers, with the attendant benefits of high discretion. Principals and agents may find it desirable to operate with this freedom, but on the other hand, more actors providing oversight means more available information, and hence more feedback channels.

We can use the Chilean case along with Argentina, East Germany, and South Africa, to make comparisons according to the tradeoffs and consequences of different organizational types. These comparisons are speculative. I have not controlled for important differences in each of the cases, such as ideology, or the existence of an armed opposition. They are intended to show the kinds of hypotheses that a comparison of the organization of coercion could be used to test.

For example, as suggested above (and in Chapter 1), the more discretion agents on the ground have to apply coercion, the more likely their actions are to deviate from their principal's policies, or from the strictures of outside observers such as the courts or groups in society at large. The more discretion agents have, and the freer they are from outside oversight, the more differences there are likely to be among different agents' application of coercion, and hence the more broadly targeted it is likely to be.

Our cases support this prediction. Coercion was targeted very imprecisely (and hence broadly) in Chile in 1973, and targeting became more precise and narrower as both internal and external monitoring increased. In East Germany, coercion was targeted very precisely to specific individuals that the SED deemed enemies, though the *Stasi's* reach meant that virtually the entire population was the object of its snooping. In South Africa, there were fluctuations in targeting. At some points there was massive application of force, for example in response to protest. In other cases specialized forces were effective in pinpointing specific targets. This pattern is consistent with South Africa's position in the middle of the organizational matrix. With respect to Argentina, targeting was probably narrower than might be expected given quasi blind coercion. Coercion was not applied to broad sectors of the population but rather targeted to specific sectors of the opposition. One explanation is that Argentina was not a pure case of blind coercion, but

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<sup>223</sup> For example, Genghis Khan was extremely effective in wreaking havoc throughout Europe with what amounted to blind coercion over his troops.

rather had some degree of internal monitoring. Another may be a learning effect from neighboring countries such as Chile, which by the time the Argentine generals came to power had adopted a far more targeted (and secretive) *modus operandi*.

Another consequence of the organization of coercion is the sheer number of people killed. All things being equal, it follows that as agents have more discretion (less internal monitoring), and less oversight from outside sources (external monitoring), there are likely to be more victims. Again, our cases support this prediction. Argentina, the closest to pure blind coercion, had the highest number of victims, while in East Germany, with the highest level of internal monitoring, there were relatively few victims.<sup>224</sup> In Chile, the number of victims dropped as the levels of internal and external monitoring increased. And in South Africa, the number of people killed increased as the NP pursued its “total national strategy” (against what it perceived was a coordinated guerrilla onslaught). This effort increased internal monitoring in the SADF and SAP, but reduced it elsewhere through reliance on independent coercive agents. It also reduced external monitoring, e.g. through increased press restrictions. (As we saw above, the efforts to reduce external monitoring, in particular, met with resistance and raised the costs of repression.)

How coercion is organized and implemented is also likely to have an impact on regime stability, and on the possibilities and types of regime transition. All four of our cases are authoritarian regimes that eventually underwent a transition to democracy. A brief comparison, however, reveals two broad modes of regime transition. The Argentine and East German dictatorships (for quite different reasons in each case) essentially collapsed, and were replaced by new democratic regimes. In Chile and South Africa, by contrast, regime and opposition negotiated a transition to democracy. No doubt many political factors account for this difference, such as the kinds of policies pursued by the regime against the opposition, the decision whether to undertake broad political reform, the existence of a viable opposition, and its decision to negotiate instead of fight. Nevertheless, it is striking that Argentina and East Germany share similar low levels of external monitoring, while in Chile and South Africa external monitoring is comparatively higher. The analysis of the 1977-78 shift in Chile showed that not all of the external monitoring factors could be explained strictly as a function of the broader political developments (such as the reforms to institutionalize the regime).

No doubt principals in authoritarian regimes have a great deal of control over many aspects of external monitoring. For example, they can decide how much freedom and discretion to provide independent bodies such as judiciaries and the media. But external monitoring is also carried out in various ways by a wide range of actors, many of whom are beyond the principal’s or the regime’s direct control. Organizations and individuals can dodge a regime’s strictures and collect information on its operations. In this way external monitoring may be seen as a double-edged sword for authoritarian regimes. More actors and institutions providing oversight impose limitations on the principal’s control over the organization of coercion. Yet, these new actors also provide an opportunity to capitalize on the new networks and contacts provided by these channels. The opening and closing of these spaces is not directly under the control of the

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<sup>224</sup> Strictly in terms of people killed. In terms of number of people affected by coercion, East Germany was undoubtedly the highest, given the *Stasi*’s reach.

principal, yet a principal can learn from decisions made at the local level by actors resolving problems as concrete as how to respond to a particular detention.

With regard to Chile and South Africa (as well as other countries that have experienced similar processes of external monitoring and regime change), it is entirely possible that network, reputation, and trust building at the organizational level may have had an independent impact on broader political networks and relationships.

In short, this suggests the need to pay closer attention to the impact of the organization of coercion on liberalization in authoritarian regimes. The literature on regime transition focuses on the *last* stages of authoritarianism, immediately prior to the transition to democracy.<sup>225</sup> But as we have seen, some authoritarian regimes liberalize before the transition to democracy, while others do not. And we have seen that the organization of coercion is not completely reducible to broader political trends and factors. Indeed, this observation turns many of the recent debates about “authoritarian enclaves” in newly democratic regimes on their head (Mainwaring, Valenzuela, and O'Donnell 1992; O'Donnell 1993; Mainwaring 1994). The politics of organizing coercion – especially external monitoring – might be understood as a sort of “democratic enclave,” however precarious or limited, within an authoritarian regime. The effect of different organizational options and strategies on regime liberalization is fertile ground for further research.

The last major consequence of the organization of coercion follows from targeting, number of victims, and regime stability. It is the likelihood that perpetrators of state crimes will be brought to justice after the end of an authoritarian regime. Here again our cases offer fruitful comparisons. In the collapsed regimes (Argentina and East Germany), the incoming regime was essentially the winner in a winner-take-all game, and hence more likely to be able to impose its agenda after the transition. In Chile the incoming democratic regime in 1990 had the least room to be able to bring the perpetrators of state crimes to justice. And in South Africa, the government of national unity between the NP and the ANC worked out a formula to maximize the information about the human rights violations by encouraging perpetrators to testify in exchange for an amnesty. All of the factors discussed above that shaped the direction of the authoritarian regime, in other words, also affected the possibilities of justice after the end of the regime.

Internal and external monitoring are also likely to have a more direct and independent impact on the possibilities of justice, notwithstanding broader political factors such as regime stability and type of transition. Accountability is premised on information. Hence, higher levels of monitoring – either internal or external – are a necessary factor to bring perpetrators of crimes to justice. In South Africa, for example, most of the agents who availed themselves of the amnesty provision were those for whom there would otherwise have been enough information to prosecute. The agents were given a clear choice: to confess and receive amnesty, or to face the full brunt of the law. By definition, this means that agents on whom there is little information – such as those who acted outside the direct control of the SADF and the SAP – did not have the same incentives to confess, or the same reasons to worry about being put on trial.

Moreover, even though there were no trials in Chile immediately after the end of

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<sup>225</sup> The exception, of course, is Stepan (1988).



the military regime, external monitoring by human rights groups has eventually made it possible to bring some perpetrators to trial. Pinochet's arrest in London in October 1998, as well as his subsequent prosecution in England and in Chile, was made possible thanks to the wealth of information on state crimes that was accumulated by human rights groups in Chile from the earliest days of the dictatorship. It was this information that permitted stubborn prosecutors (such as those in Spain) to simply keep trying.

### **Implications**

These comparisons are speculative and intended to suggest problems for future research. Such research also requires further disaggregation along several lines. Indeed, just about every element I have presented here can and should be disaggregated further and more systematically. This includes further disaggregation across time (more shifts), space (more cases), institution (different police and military organizations), and so forth.

Other variables need to be examined more systematically. The first is regime. For example, the framework I have presented applies to democratic and authoritarian regimes alike. I have focused only on the latter in this dissertation. Notwithstanding liberalization in Chile and South Africa, in none of my cases are the levels of external monitoring especially high. Future research should focus on much more systematically on analyzing the relationship between organization of coercion and regime type. What kinds of organizations are most likely in what kinds of regimes? Which are most effective? What consequences do different organizational forms have on different regimes?

The second is the relative weight and importance of various monitoring options. In this dissertation I have taken the first step in analyzing the organization of coercion through the various criteria of internal and external monitoring. However, it is likely that not all of the criteria I have used carry the same weight across different times and places. For example, access to prisoners may be a relatively minor aspect of external monitoring, and there could be good reasons for giving different criteria different weights. Moreover, in some places such things as an information clearinghouse or legislative oversight may be far more significant than in others.

Third, further work should distinguish between state and non-state actors. Although we have been discussing essentially state coercion until this point, there is no reason why the basic framework in this dissertation could not be used to analyze non-state actors as well. These would draw on an organizational repertoire that overlaps with state actors (for instance reliance on the media or the courts for information), but perhaps not as complex or diverse, especially as regards internal monitoring. Non-state actors are becoming the dominant players in many of the world's conflict zones, from Colombia to Congo. A more systematic understanding of the tradeoffs and consequences of how they organize coercion would be an important corrective to the blind spot in the regime transition and democratization literature, which tends to focus overwhelmingly on states (Linz and Stepan 1996).

Nevertheless, the state in its various forms (even by its absence!) remains the predominant and unavoidable framework for politics, with coercion as its defining function. This dissertation has been guided by the conviction that it is necessary to understand how coercive institutions work in order to better design and control them. I believe this is an urgent task given the durability and pervasiveness of regimes whose

coercive institutions are under the control of tyrants. As we gain experience in how to do this, we can adjust internal and external monitoring to impose better accountability mechanisms, and to begin to accomplish the full potential of our best democratic hopes.

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