

**Regimes of Terror:  
The Relationship between Democracy and Terrorism in Chile**

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## **Abstract**

How does democracy influence terrorism? Some scholars argue that lack of representation in autocracy motivates terrorism; others claim that individual liberty in democracy permits it. This thesis explores the debate by using Chile as a case study to examine how democracy influences terrorist organizational processes. It traces how variations in levels of representation and individual liberty in Chile between 1965 and 1995 influenced terrorist strategic capacity, or the ability of groups to think and act towards long-term survival and success. Analyzing the five observable features of strategic capacity – mission, hierarchy, membership, tactics, and violence level – reveals that democratic characteristics positively influence some dimensions and constrain others. High-functioning democracy and highly repressive autocracy are unlikely to experience violence, due to the high constraints that each places on different features of strategic capacity. However, democracies with weak representation and autocracies with some individual liberty allow strategic capacity to strengthen, making violence more likely.

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## Introduction

“I am not a terrorist. We are freedom fighters, social reformers. I say this with all pride. To be a revolutionary is to be the highest form of the human species,” stated a member of the Chilean organization the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR).<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the FPMR emerged in 1983 as a popular resistance movement against the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. It enjoyed popular support and aided in weakening the leader’s repressive control. However, the group issued the above statement four years after Chile’s return to liberal democracy, when civil liberties had been restored and the political process opened.

The case of the FPMR highlights the unclear influence of regime type on terrorism.<sup>2</sup> The Bush Doctrine, former president George W. Bush’s policy of democracy promotion abroad, placed regime’s effect on terrorism at the forefront of American foreign policy. It claimed: “freedom and democracy are critical to defeating terror.... Free nations that respect human rights will help overcome hatred, resentment, and the ideologies of murder.”<sup>3</sup> Though Bush assumes a negative relationship, in fact no consensus exists on how democracy affects political violence. Two theoretical schools posit divergent arguments: the *regime-responsive school* claims that autocracy encourages terrorism by suppressing legal means of political expression;<sup>4</sup> the *regime-*

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<sup>1</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*. 98.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this paper, terrorism will be defined according to the US Federal Criminal Code 18 U.S.C 2331: “activities that involve violent... or life-threatening acts... that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State and... appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.”

<sup>3</sup> Windsor, “Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism.”

<sup>4</sup> Gross, *Violence in Politics. Terror and Political Assassination in Eastern Europe and Russia*.

*permissive school* argues that democracy offers civil liberties that grant terrorists the necessary space in which to operate.<sup>5</sup>

Each school views a different democratic feature as the primary determinant of regime's relationship to political violence. For the regime-responsive school, representation undermines political violence. Democracy institutionalizes citizen input over who governs them and ensures the accountability of decision-makers to the people. Autocracy prevents civil involvement and legal dissent, leaving violence as the only recourse for political expression. The regime-permissive school, meanwhile, identifies individual liberty as the democratic characteristic most closely linked to terrorism. Democracy sets limits on government control over its citizens, offering freedom from surveillance, freedom of association, and freedom of movement. This provides the operational space necessary to coordinate violence. By constraining individual liberty, autocratic repression prevents terrorist activity. While both schools recognize that democracy typically includes both qualities, they diverge over which most directly influences terrorism.

The importance assigned to either representation or individual liberty reflects assumptions each school makes about the nature of terrorist groups themselves. For the regime-responsive school, terrorism is a tool of the politically disempowered. Groups that turn to violence do so primarily out of frustration with the external environment, to gain a political voice in a context that suppresses all other means of dissent. For the regime-permissive school, terrorism is an opportunistic weapon of elitist actors. The use of violence in democracy exploits civil liberties to give a minority group disproportionate weight in a political system meant to

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<sup>5</sup> Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*.

reflect the general will of the people. In the former school, autocracy offers motivation for terrorism to develop; in the latter, democracy offers opportunity.

The relationship between terrorism and democracy is a more dynamic one than either school outlines, due to both variations among governments and the complex characters of terrorist groups. The regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools attribute high representation and individual liberty to democracy, and an absence of both to autocracy. However, these features exist in a continuum, varying not only among regimes but also among specific governments. Democracy and autocracy are not static terms. Over 500 labels exist to categorize democracies.<sup>6</sup> Similarly autocracies vary in structure and repressive capabilities, affecting the degree of state control over its citizens.<sup>7</sup> Understanding the influence of democracy on terrorism requires incorporating this fluid character of regime into analysis.

Nor is terrorism a set response to the external environment. Groups that use violence vary from seeking “in some sense rational objectives” to having “overall goals... so vague, apocalyptic, and all-embracing that they could never be realized in any real world.”<sup>8</sup> Operating clandestinely in hostile environments necessitates complex organizational processes that determine whether they can act effectively. This study traces *terrorist strategic capacity* to examine the ability of an organization to think and act towards its long-term survival and success in a specific operating environment. It is reflected in five observable organizational features: *mission, hierarchy, membership, tactics, and violence level*. High strategic capacity allows an organization to read its environment, orient its struggle, make decisions, coordinate action,

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<sup>6</sup> Collier and Levitsky, “Democracy with adjectives.”

<sup>7</sup> Fearon and Laitin, “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War.”

<sup>8</sup> Ash, “Is There a Good Terrorist?.” 3.



communicate a set of goals, and breed fear in its environment. Though it reflects the internal operations of a group, its dimensions are heavily influenced by operating context.

This thesis seeks to understand the dynamic relationship between regime and terrorism by dissecting how democratic features affect organizational processes. To do so it uses the case of Chile to analyze how dimensions of strategic capacity vary across governments that differ in their democratic characteristics. Representation and individual liberty, the features of regime identified by the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools as the key determinants of violence, fluctuated dramatically in Chile between 1965 and 1995. This period can be broken into five historical segments: Frei's liberal democracy; the tumultuous Allende democracy; the Pinochet dictatorship with the repressive DINA security forces; Pinochet with the less repressive CNI forces; and finally the liberal post-transition Aylwin democracy. Terrorism existed under all these governments in varying degrees. The three most active groups operated across multiple regimes, offering an opportunity to understand their internal adaptation in response to shocks in representation and individual liberty. Thus Chile allows for a study of democracy's influence on terrorism that shows sensitivity to variations among regimes and to the complex organizational processes associated with using violence.

The central argument of this thesis is that while democracy certainly affects terrorism, the direction of its effect varies among the dimensions of strategic capacity. Each feature of strategic capacity responds independently to the presence of certain democratic characteristics, resulting in non-monotonic effects of regime on political violence. Both high-functioning democracy and highly repressive autocracy tend to restrain terrorist development. However, when democracy lacks high representation or autocracy permits basic individual liberty, terrorist groups can overcome organizational challenges in order to operate. Thus strategic capacity ran low under the

DINA, where repression crippled terrorist operational ability, and under Frei and Aylwin, where the legal political process undermined support and motivation for terrorism. Meanwhile strategic capacity peaked under CNI period, when basic individual liberty permitted the development of a formalized hierarchy, increased membership size, and improved operational ability. Strategic capacity also ran high under Allende, when limited representation bred a clearer mission and a more committed membership.

Analyzing the effects of democracy on organizational features of terrorist groups highlights the complexity of this relationship. Overall, both high representation and stifled individual liberty undermine political violence. When governments fall from these two poles of high-functioning democracy or repressive autocracy, terrorist strategic capacity tends to improve. This thesis offers Chile as a case study to explore this dynamic relationship. The first chapter describes the current debate over regime's influence on political violence, before moving on to establishing a theoretical framework for how strategic capacity responds to representation and individual liberty. The case of Chile is then outlined, focusing on understanding the democratic characteristics of each historical segment. The following set of chapters describes terrorism under these governments, each opening with a history of terrorism in its operating context and then analyzing the strategic capacity of each active group. The final chapter offers conclusions and policy implications that can be drawn from the study. Overall the case of Chile reveals that the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools are not mutually exclusive, but rather that regime has non-monotonic effects on terrorist development.

## **Chapter 1: Regime Type and Terrorism**

In 2003, former President George W. Bush stated: “democracy and reform will ... make the world more secure by undermining terrorism at its source.”<sup>9</sup> By offering this as a justification for democracy promotion, the Bush Doctrine made democracy’s role in suppressing terrorism a central tenant of American foreign policy. However, two theories hypothesize different expected results for how terrorism relates to regime. The regime-responsive school claims that terrorism arises where legal means of political expression are suppressed, while the regime-permissive school argues that democratic freedoms provide terrorists space in which to operate. Each identifies a different regime-associated feature as the key determinant of terrorism. The regime-responsive school focuses on representation, and the regime-permissive school on individual liberty. While scholars on both sides typically recognize that democracy consists of both, they differ with respect to which dimension will trump the other. In turn this reflects how the schools characterize the terrorist groups themselves. The regime-responsive school views them as acting out of frustration with political circumstances, and the regime-permissive school portrays them as acting opportunistically to abuse democratic freedoms.

Both sides tend to present regime and terrorist groups as overly static. In fact, levels of representation and individual liberty vary not only among regimes but also across democratic and autocratic governments. Furthermore, expecting terrorist organizations to respond uniformly to set external conditions fails to incorporate their complex internal processes into understanding their use of violence. This chapter opens with a discussion of the regime-responsive and regime-permissive debate, emphasizing a more fluid understanding of democracy. It then describes how strategic capacity, the organizational features of a group that contribute to its ability to survive

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<sup>9</sup> Monten, “The Roots of the Bush Doctrine.” 113.

and succeed in its operating environment, can be expected to respond to representation and individual liberty. Thus this chapter offers a framework through which to understand the dynamic relationship between regime and terrorism.

### *The Regime-Responsive and Regime-Permissive Debate*

Both the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools assign certain characteristics to democracy: free and fair elections, institutional constraints, sensitivity to public opinion, civil liberties, and a free press. The regime-responsive school focuses on representation as the feature that most defines democracy's relationship to terrorism. Institutionalized citizen input, and the resulting government accountability, undermines motivation and support for terrorist campaigns. In autocracy, where an illegitimate government rules through repression, lack of representation encourages terrorism as a means to gain a political voice.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the regime-permissive school focuses on how individual liberty permits violence by limiting the control that the government can exert over its citizens. Freedom of association, freedom of movement, and freedom from surveillance give groups the operational space to use violence to generate disproportionate political importance. By suppressing individual liberty, autocratic repression limits the ability of terrorists to operate.<sup>11</sup>

Of the two, the regime-responsive view has played a larger role in policy-making. The Bush Doctrine states: "part of winning the war on terror is spreading freedom and democracy."<sup>12</sup> Director of Freedom House Jennifer Windsor traces this effect to the fact democracy offers avenues for dissent other than violence.<sup>13</sup> One important difference between this policy and the regime-responsive school lies in that the Bush Doctrine focuses on international terrorism, while

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<sup>10</sup> Gross, *Violence in Politics. Terror and Political Assassination in Eastern Europe and Russia*.

<sup>11</sup> Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy*.

<sup>12</sup> Bush, "June 1 speech."

<sup>13</sup> Windsor, "Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism."

the theoretical schools focus on domestic. Regime's influence on transnational terrorism is even more complex, as it involves both home and target states. However, the Bush Doctrine focuses on the role of autocracy in breeding terrorism. Illiberal states empower domestic radicalized elements, allowing them to gain resources and capacity to attack international targets.<sup>14</sup> In fact, the majority of terrorist activity occurs domestically: the MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base lists 1,536 events of domestic terrorism, and only 240 cases of international terrorism.<sup>15</sup> Thus the Bush Doctrine has strong links to the regime-responsive school.

The regime-permissive school remains largely confined to academia. Criticisms of the Bush Doctrine focus on the terrorism-breeding effects of instability in post-transition states, rather than on a potential positive relationship between terrorism and democracy. The first scholar to address autocracy's role in promoting terror was political philosopher Felix Gross, in his study of violent movements in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Russia and Eastern Europe. He argued that autocratic administrations lack legitimacy, leaving them vulnerable to coups and terrorism. In contrast, "democracy by definition is a political system in which respect for a dissenting minority and government by consent, not by violence, are fundamental premises."<sup>16</sup> By incorporating opposition and minority voices into the government, democracies ensure nonviolent paths for political participation. Thus Gross articulated terrorism as a manifestation of frustration with an illegitimate state.

In contrast, the foremost scholar of the regime-permissive school, Paul Wilkinson, identifies civil liberties as permitting terrorist opportunism. "Freedom of movement and association" and "freedom from totalitarian surveillance" offer groups the operational space to

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<sup>14</sup> Enders and Sandler, "After 9/11."

<sup>15</sup> Abadie, "Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism."

<sup>16</sup> Gross, *Violence in Politics. Terror and Political Assassination in Eastern Europe and Russia*. 44.

coordinate violent movements.<sup>17</sup> Lack of respect for individual liberty offers autocracies a counterterrorist advantage, since they can resort to tactics that trade human rights for regime security. A secondary motivation for terrorism in democracy lies in the sensationalizing effects of free press, which raises the benefits of using terrorism.<sup>18</sup> However, the operational space offered by individual liberty acts as the primary permissive determinant of violence.

The regime-permissive school emphasizes terrorist elitism to explain why violence persists despite legal means of representation. It claims: “terrorist organizations are not mass-based organizations.”<sup>19</sup> Groups operating in democracy are working against a state governed by majority rule. Their primary constraint lies in limitations in public support, which they can overcome through three possible pathways. In the first an organization exploits a preexisting widely held ideology or targets a specific sector of the population to create a “climate of acceptance.”<sup>20</sup> The second lies in forcing a “crisis of legitimacy,”<sup>21</sup> in which groups force democratic governments to take repressive counterterrorist measures that delegitimize it in the eyes of the people.<sup>22</sup> The third takes advantage of government sensitivity to public opinion. If terrorism can incite public pressure to end the violence, the government may be forced to concede to terrorist demands.<sup>23</sup>

Scholars have conducted empirical studies supporting both the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools. Eubank and Weinberg identify a statistically significant positive

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<sup>17</sup> Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*.

<sup>18</sup> Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*.

<sup>19</sup> Gause III, “Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?.” 4.

<sup>20</sup> Gurr, “Terrorism in Democracies.” 88.

<sup>21</sup> Sprinzak, “The Psychopolitical Formation of Extreme Left Terrorism in a Democracy.”

<sup>22</sup> Crenshaw, “The Causes of Terrorism.”

<sup>23</sup> Pape, *Dying to Win*.

relationship between democracy and terrorism.<sup>24</sup> In three studies, they find that new democracies experience the highest rates of violence, but that the effect remains positive regardless of stability.<sup>25</sup> Political scholar Sandler negates their findings based on their “flawed dataset,” claiming that their definitions of democracy and terrorism bias their findings.<sup>26</sup> Eyerman conducted his own empirical study opposing Eubank and Weinberg’s findings, identifying a negative relationship between terrorism and democracy.<sup>27</sup> Like Eubank and Weinberg, he finds that new democracies are likely to experience terrorism, but concludes that the results are overall still negative. Kruger and Maleckova found a negative relationship between high political freedom scores and political violence, calling terrorism a response to “long-standing feelings of indignity and frustration.”<sup>28</sup>

Other scholars have sought theoretical relationships between democracy and terrorism that fall outside of the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools. Li identifies democratic institutional constraints as encouraging violence, by creating checks and balances that breed frustration with the slow pace of reform and prevents swift counterterrorist policies.<sup>29</sup> Chenoweth argues that terrorism arises in democracy because groups compete for agenda space, turning to violence as a result of “intergroup dynamics.”<sup>30</sup> These arguments thus seek explanations beyond the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools, turning to other regime features to understand a proclivity for violence in democracy or autocracy.

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<sup>24</sup> Weinberg and Eubank, “Terrorism and democracy.”

<sup>25</sup> Eubank and Weinberg, “Does Democracy Encourage Terrorism?.”

<sup>26</sup> Sandler, “On the relationship between democracy and terrorism.”

<sup>27</sup> Eyerman, “Terrorism and democratic states.”

<sup>28</sup> Krueger and Maleckova, “Male [caron] ková, J.(2003) Education, poverty and terrorism.” 96.

<sup>29</sup> Li, “Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?.”

<sup>30</sup> Chenoweth, *The Inadvertent Effects of Democracy on Terrorist Group Emergence*. 1.

This debate tends to treat democracy and autocracy as overly static, when in fact regime exists along a continuum. Polity IV scores for democracy range from -10, a hereditary monarchy, to +10, a consolidated democracy.<sup>31</sup> Freedom House scores political rights and civil liberties separately, in order to place each dimension on a spectrum from “free” to “not free.”<sup>32</sup> Over 500 labels exist to classify democracies.<sup>33</sup> Definitions range from the minimalist, requiring only free and fair elections, to the fully liberal, expecting deep respect for human rights.<sup>34</sup> Autocracy displays variations as well, in structure, legitimacy, and state capacity to repress.<sup>35</sup> Understanding the influence of regime on terrorism requires taking into account variations in the democratic features of specific governments. The scholar to best account for this is Abadie, in his study of political freedom on violence. He finds that extremely high and low levels of political freedom both discourage terrorism, but those countries falling in the middle range are likely to experience some violence.<sup>36</sup> Reconciling the arguments of the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools thus requires incorporating a more complex understanding of regime.

Moreover, both schools tend to treat terrorism as a set response to a given political environment. The regime-responsive school portrays terrorists as radicalized by oppression. They turn to violence because they have no other means of expressing dissent. The regime-responsive school paints them as opportunistic elitist actors, “not organized based on democratic principles.”<sup>37</sup> They use violence because their environment permits them to operate. In fact, however, a great deal of literature has addressed organizational motivations for violence. The

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<sup>31</sup> “Polity IV Project: Home Page.”

<sup>32</sup> “Freedom House.”

<sup>33</sup> Collier and Levitsky, “Democracy with adjectives.”

<sup>34</sup> Diamond, “Thinking about Hybrid Regimes.”

<sup>35</sup> Brumberg, “The Trap of Liberalized Autocracy.”

<sup>36</sup> Abadie, “Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism.”

<sup>37</sup> Gause III, “Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?.” 4.



two dominant models are “terrorist psycho-logic”<sup>38</sup> and “rational choice.”<sup>39</sup> Psycho-logic paints terrorists as so psychologically damaged or entrenched in “groupthink” that violence seems justified regardless of chances for success.<sup>40</sup> The rational choice model views violence as the result of a terrorist cost-benefit analysis that proves it the most expedient means to achieve a goal. These models are not mutually exclusive: scholar Crenshaw identifies “varied degrees of limited rationality”<sup>41</sup> depending on the presence of psychological, organizational, or structural constraints.

These models emphasize how organizational characteristics influence a group’s relationship to its environment. Its actions depend not only on its external environment, but also on how it perceives its own position in that environment. Sprinzak applied organizational theory to understanding the American fringe group the Weather Underground, which operated despite having no realistic chances for success. He describes how collective psychology drew them into “a nonexistent ‘fantasy war’ with the authorities.”<sup>42</sup> To the extent that terrorist organizations fit this mold, they are unlikely to be particularly responsive to their political environments. Other groups, meanwhile, respond rationally and strategically to their environments. Ash profiles a Macedonian separatist movement that employed terrorist tactics, arguing that its sensitive analysis of its operating context led it to political success.<sup>43</sup> Thus not all organizations fit a standard profile, acting neither universally responsively or opportunistically.

### *Strategic Capacity*

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<sup>38</sup> Post, “Terrorist psycho-logic.”

<sup>39</sup> Crenshaw, “The Logic of Terrorism.”

<sup>40</sup> Merari and Friedland, “Social Psychological Aspects of Political Terrorism.”

<sup>41</sup> Crenshaw, “The Logic of Terrorism.” 7.

<sup>42</sup> Sprinzak, “The Psychopolitical Formation of Extreme Left Terrorism in a Democracy.” 85.

<sup>43</sup> Ash, “Is There a Good Terrorist?.”

Strategic capacity refers to the ability of a group to think and act to ensure its long-term survival and success. This requires organization to have the ability to read its environment, coordinate action to further its goals, make decisions, execute decisions, communicate a set of goals to its audience, and produce sufficient levels of fear in the population. Using this concept to analyze terrorism avoids pitfalls associated with judging “success” or “effectiveness.” Terrorists rarely succeed, yet they can still play a major role in their operating environments. No standard exists to measure terrorist effectiveness, and it largely depends upon the goals of different groups. Strategic capacity instead judges the efficacy of terrorist organizational features in relation to their operating environment.

Sociologist Marshall Ganz developed the theory of strategic capacity in a study of California agriculture unions. He wrote: “differences in their strategy... and the likelihood it would be effective in achieving desired goals, were due to differences in leaders access to salient information about the environment, heuristic use they made of this information, and their motivation.”<sup>44</sup> The use of violence, clandestine operations, and the extreme hostility of the operating environments distinguish terrorist groups from these legal nonviolent parties. While salient information, the heuristic process, and motivation remain important, violent organizations face far more intensive external constraints. Terrorist strategic capacity thus incorporates not only the internal dynamics of a group, but its ability to use violence to influence its external environment. Thinking strategically means little if a group cannot act strategically.

This study argues that terrorist strategic capacity has five main components: *mission*, *hierarchy*, *membership*, *tactics*, and *violence level*. Variation across these five features influences the ability of terrorist groups to survive and succeed. Each dimension affects strategic capacity

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<sup>44</sup> Ganz, “Resources and resourcefulness.” 1005.

both directly and through its effects on other dimensions, since breakdowns in one area reverberate throughout. These features also constitute this study's main observable features. The effect of regime type on terrorism can thus be evaluated by observing how it influences each of these dimensions.

*Mission:* The mission of an organization encompasses its stated goals, including ideology; the platform of changes that the group seeks to implement or impose; and its characterization of the struggle, including the identification of an enemy and target audience. Ideology acts as the broad justification for violence. Platform of changes sets intermediary goals, describing the steps to occur between the present and the hypothetical future. The characterization of the struggle reflects whom the organization wishes to attack as its enemy and whose support it seeks as its audience.

A mission that reflects current realities, incorporates political events to justify activities, and addresses group failures while outlining a positive plan for success provides greater strategic capacity than a mission that fails at these tasks. A group "will stand more chance of making political headway if it appears to offer a specific and positive programme or manifesto of fundamental reforms."<sup>45</sup> A clear mission permits the organization to justify its violence to the outside world; gain legitimacy as a movement; attract new recruits; maintain ideological cohesion; ensure that violence is applied in the short-term towards long-term political goals; and guarantee that the group acts with an understanding of its enemy and its audience.

*Hierarchy:* Hierarchy is the formal structure of an organization. It determines the efficacy of the decision-making and coordination processes, as well as a group's chances for survival. Hierarchy is centralized when leadership decisions are taken among an established group of

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<sup>45</sup> Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy*. 111.

elites and handed down through the organization. Hierarchy is decentralized when a group relies on dispersed, horizontal structures to decide on and carry out activities. Because centralized hierarchy facilitates decision-making, “terrorists choose [it] whenever possible.”<sup>46</sup> However, significant tradeoffs are associated with both centralization and decentralization. A tight elite structure and an intricately connected network improve decision-making by unifying command and control. Empowering a limited group of individuals to make decisions for the whole organization better ensures that actions are consistent with political vision. Complex activities also benefit from the oversight of a vertical structure capable of coordinating military, political, and logistical actions.

On the other hand, centralized groups are more vulnerable to detection and “decapitation,” the removal of key leadership. Decentralization, because it makes hierarchy dispersed and horizontal, decreases the likelihood for detection and destruction. It prevents any single set of members from knowing too much about the organization as a whole, so that if some operatives are captured the whole network will not be in danger. However, because more members are empowered to make decisions, unified strategic activity becomes a challenge. It creates communication problems that limit large-scale or high-coordination attacks. When an operating environment allows for terrorist centralization, it significantly improves the ability of a group to conduct operations chosen strategically to forward its cause. However, an organization must adjust its hierarchical structure based on its operating environment, and full centralization may not be desirable when the risks of detection and decapitation are high.

*Membership:* Membership of an organization reflects the commitment level, operational training, and size of the militant base. Commitment level is an individual militant’s willingness

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<sup>46</sup> Shapiro, “Terrorist Organizations Inefficiencies and Vulnerabilities.” 4.

to use violence, live underground, obey commands, and protect group over personal interests. It is directly tied to the quality of the potential recruits and the barriers to entry into the organization. These barriers can come either in the form of personal sacrifice to join, or requirements established and enforced by the group itself. Operative training ensures that all members have a minimum skill set to conduct clandestine and violent activities. It can also improve membership efficiency by compartmentalizing logistical, military, and political tasks. Organizations thus seek a highly committed and trained membership.

However, group size often has a converse relationship to the quality of its membership. An organization must be large enough to survive a government offensive and maintain a minimum violent presence. However, a large militant base can erode membership quality and increase potential for detection. Fearon offers a model for optimal insurgency size, describing the potential “diminishing returns” of adding guerrillas to a struggle: “adding more fighters raises the risk of detection and thus capture for *all existing* fighters.... adding more rebels increases the risk of infiltration, betrayal, and defection.”<sup>47</sup> Increasing size erodes the “ideological commitment” of the group as a whole, since “the more intensely committed types are already in the organization.”<sup>48</sup> The available recruitment pool and the state’s ability to detect and suppress the movement also feed into determining the size of a group. Groups thus seek to optimize size and commitment within a given operating environment.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* Tactics and violence level are the tools terrorists use to influence their environment. To have strategic capacity, groups must not only be able to think but act strategically. Terrorism seeks to breed a sense of fear in its environment. However, as the interface between internal processes and outside reception of the group, tactics and violence level

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<sup>47</sup> Fearon, “Economic development, insurgency, and civil war.” 295.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 302.

face acute constraints from both within and without. Suboptimal application of violence may reflect internal weaknesses in mission, hierarchy, or membership, or restraints placed by the operating environment that prevents the group from acting as it wants. As a determinant of strategic capacity, what matters is whether terrorist violence provokes the reaction that the group seeks from its enemy and audience. Because tactics and violence level act together to influence an environment, when analyzing the strategic capacity of Chilean groups the two will be considered together.

*Tactics:* Tactics refer to the features of attacks, primarily the target and the coordination required. Broadly speaking targets tend to fall between soft civilian targets or hardened government targets. Civilian targets are easier to hit, but these attacks have high potential to alienate public opinion. Typically by targeting civilians terrorists seek to either attack a specific population labeled as the “enemy” or to breed insecurity in the entire population, as a means to destabilize the state. Government targets are more difficult to attack, but have more symbolic weight and are less likely to alienate the mass public. They subvert confidence in the government by showing its fallibility.<sup>49</sup> In terms of coordination levels, low-coordination attacks are easier to perform and breed higher violence levels, potentially desirable depending on organizational goals. High-coordination attacks, however, have greater symbolic and propagandistic weight. The use of supporting political activity to ensure that the purpose of violence is understood is also important in determining the strength of a group’s tactics. Overall, the appropriateness of tactics depends largely on the specific context in which the group operates.

*Violence level:* Violence level refers to the frequency and steadiness of attacks. Typically moderately high and steady levels of violence are preferable, as this breeds the atmosphere of

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<sup>49</sup> Crenshaw, “The Causes of Terrorism.”

fear that terrorists seek to generate. Low violence levels, unless each attack has some symbolic weight, do not provoke the desired reaction in the audience. On the other hand, overly high violence levels may incite alienation or government suppression: “doing too much... can be just as damaging as doing too little.”<sup>50</sup> The steadiness of attacks is equally important. Terrorist organizations seek to threaten their enemy and create fear in its environment, to prove its capability and thus influence its audience. Sporadic activity does not create the political impact it seeks. Like tactics, therefore, the appropriateness of violence level is largely context-specific.

### *The Influence of Regime Type on Strategic Capacity*

These five observable features – mission, hierarchy, membership, tactics, and violence level – collectively make up terrorist strategic capacity, determining a group’s chances for survival and success in an operating context. This thesis seeks to understand how these features respond to varying levels of representation and individual liberty, the democratic characteristics identified by the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools as most influential in determining the use of violence. The central argument of the study is that the direction of political environment’s effect on terrorism varies across features of strategic capacity. Each dimension independently responds to the democratic characteristics in its environment. The rest of this chapter focuses on outlining expectations as to how the five features of strategic capacity will respond to representation and individual liberty.

*Mission:* Terrorist organizations can be expected to have more specific missions when representation is low, typically under autocracy. Governments restricting participation implicitly provide groups with justification for violence. They also tend to offer clearer enemies, allowing the group to portray itself as the leader in a struggle against an illegitimate government. When

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<sup>50</sup> Shapiro, “Terrorist Organizations Inefficiencies and Vulnerabilities.” 3.

legal means for political expression exist, finding an ideology to justify violent struggle becomes more difficult. The organization cannot present itself as expressing the political discontent of the broader population. Where levels of representation are high, groups face the challenge of proving that their mission justifies concessions not provided through democratic channels. Overall, therefore, levels of representation determine the clarity of mission.

*Hypothesis 1: The mission of terrorist organizations is clearer under governments with low representation.*

*Hierarchy:* High individual liberty allows for association among leaders with reduced risk of detection, which makes it easier for organizations to develop a centralized hierarchy under democracy. Freedom from surveillance and freedom of movement decrease risks of decapitation, encouraging a more vertical structure. Autocratic repression that suppresses individual liberty makes maintaining an elite structure challenging, necessitating decentralization. Hierarchy is thus linked to the level of individual liberty offered in an operating environment.

*H2: Terrorist organizations are more centralized and hierarchical under governments with high individual liberty.*

*Membership:* Democratic features have mixed effects on membership. Both high representation and low individual liberty constrain a group's size. When representation is high, the presence of a legal political process limits the terrorist recruitment pool, which may place a cap on size. This runs contrary to the goals of organizations under democracies: such groups tend to seek broader social destabilization, requiring a larger militant base. Low individual liberty also constrains the size by increasing chances for detection and creating a high militant turnover rate. Groups operating in autocracy typically seek to maintain a smaller size to minimize chances for



detection. However, an organization may become too small and therefore under-active.<sup>51</sup> Thus size is constrained either when representation is high, as in democracy, or individual liberty is low, as in autocracy.

Membership commitment improves when individual liberty is low. Environments with high costs for participation create a selection effect that limits the militant base to only the most committed, deterring those unwilling to make personal sacrifices. When individual liberty runs high, the group attracts uncommitted members that leave it vulnerable to defection or detection. To maintain high commitment a group must create its own barriers to entry, yet its ability to effectively screen members requires a large and committed recruitment pool. When this pool is small and uncommitted, as when representation is high, groups cannot afford to be selective.<sup>52</sup> High individual liberty does, however, permit training. In environments where individual liberty is low, training increases chances for detection and drains resources, particularly where militant turnover is high. Thus democratic characteristics have mixed effects on membership: low individual liberty and high representation limit size, low individual liberty increases membership commitment, and high individual liberty permits operative training.

*H3: Terrorist organizations are smaller under governments with high representation.*

*H4: Terrorist organizations are smaller under governments with low individual liberty.*

*H5: Member commitment level is higher under governments with low individual liberty.*

*H6: Terrorist organizations offer more operative training under governments with high individual liberty.*

*Tactics:* Groups tend to target civilians where representation is high, under democracy, and government targets where representation is low, under autocracy. Organizations operating in

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<sup>51</sup> Fearon, "Economic development, insurgency, and civil war."

<sup>52</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, "The Quality of Terror."

democracies seek to provoke general discontent or force the government to use repressive measures, thereby undermining its legitimacy. Civilian targets are easier to hit, allowing for higher violence levels, and exploit government to its citizens. Groups operating under non-representative governments have greater motivation to attack government targets, as they show the fallibility of the state, break its monopoly on force, and have greater symbolic weight. Targeting civilians under autocracy justifies repressive counterterrorist measures.<sup>53</sup>

However, government targets are more difficult to hit, particularly in repressive environments. Where individual liberty is low, coordination becomes more difficult. High individual liberty, by allowing for association among militants, permits higher coordination attacks. Thus in democratic governments where representation and individual liberty run high, groups tend to attack civilian targets, which tend not to require a great deal of coordination. In autocracies where representation and individual liberty are low, groups seek to target governments but have limited ability to coordinate attacks.

*H7: Groups tend to target civilians under governments with high representation, and government targets under governments with low representation.*

*H8: High-coordination attacks are more difficult under governments with low individual liberty.*

*Violence level:* Representation and individual liberty have competing effects on violence level. High representation constrains violence by undermining support and motivation, but high individual liberty permits higher violence levels, as groups are more likely to be able to conduct operations. Low representation permits higher violence by offering greater support and motivation, but low individual liberty constrains violence by increasing the likelihood of detection. In high-functioning democracy and highly repressive autocracy, therefore, representation and individual liberty have competing effects

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<sup>53</sup> Crenshaw, “The Causes of Terrorism.”

*H9: Violence level is higher under governments with low representation.*

*H10: Violence level is higher under governments with high individual liberty.*

Terrorist groups thus face significantly different sets of challenges depending on levels of representation and individual liberty. Autocracies where representation and individual liberty are low encourage a specific mission and a committed membership, but undermine hierarchy, training, and coordinated action. Democracies with high representation and individual liberty offer improved hierarchy and training, but constrain mission and militant commitment. Repressive autocracy thus undermines a group's capacity to act, and high-functioning democracy undermines motivation and support for terrorism. Thus the regime-responsive and regime-permissive schools are not mutually exclusive: terrorism is unlikely to arise under high-functioning democracies or highly repressive autocracies.

Terrorist strategic capacity can develop, however, when individual liberty improves in an autocracy or when representation weakens in a democracy. Repression is not a universal feature of autocracy, as it depends on state resources and capabilities. When the repressive capacity of an autocracy eases, basic individual liberty develops, allowing groups to improve hierarchy, training, and coordination. Similarly representation is not consistent across democracies. Representation works when all factions in a society tolerate the rule of a unified government. When rivals are no longer willing to compromise, the political process is paralyzed and representation weakened. This permits groups to develop a clearer mission and more committed membership, as groups can target opposing groups to justify the use of violence. Thus terrorism is unlikely both in high-functioning democracies and repressive autocracies, but it becomes more likely as governments move away from these extremes.

## **Chapter 2: The Case of Chile**

Within a period of thirty years, Chile transitioned from democracy, to autocracy, back to democracy. Five terrorist groups began and ended. Three of these organizations operated across multiple regimes, forced to adapt to shocks to representation and individual liberty. While the Chilean experience is unique, it offers general insights on how organizations respond to certain features of their external environments. This study focuses on understanding the dynamic relationship between regime and terrorism by tracing the strategic capacity of Chilean groups across governments. This chapter opens with a discussion of research methodology used to explore the case of Chile. It continues with an analysis of the democratic features of the five historical periods, before laying out expectations for terrorist strategic capacity under each government. Thus the use of a single case study permits an in-depth analysis that remains sensitive to variations among regimes and groups.

### *Research Methodology*

The period studied can be broken into five historical segments. The first begins in 1965, when an armed Marxist group developed under the liberal democracy of President Eduardo Frei. At this time the country had a Polity IV measure for democracy of +6, or strongly democratic, and displayed high levels of representation and individual liberty. The second period opens with the election of the socialist Salvador Allende in 1970. Though still a strongly democratic state, political deadlock paralyzed Chilean society and weakened representation. The third begins in 1973 with a military coup that installed Augusto Pinochet as dictatorship, with the repressive DINA security forces in place. The Polity IV score plummeted to -7, or strongly undemocratic, and representation and individual liberty disappeared. The fourth period begins in 1977, when

the DINA was dismantled and replaced with the less repressive CNI. The fifth opens in 1989, when Chile transitions back to a high-functioning democracy with a Polity IV score of +8.<sup>54</sup>

The Chilean groups analyzed self-identify as violent. Given that political violence is included in their mission, they have a high probability of engaging in terrorism and at some point do. However, they do not necessarily use it at all times. Selecting groups that self-identify as armed permits an analysis of why they use terrorism, but why at certain times they do not. Five groups operated in this period, with three acting across multiple regimes. The Movement for the Revolutionary Left (MIR, *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*) operated during this entire period as a Marxist-Leninist “vanguard.” The Patriotic Front of Manuel Rodriguez (FPMR, *Frente Patriotico Manuel Rodriguez*) developed under the CNI to overthrow Pinochet, but continued to operate post-transition. The Lautaro United Popular Action Movement (MAPU-Lautaro, *Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria-Lautaro*), a revolutionary youth movement, began under the CNI and continuing under Aylwin.

This study analyzes the strategic capacity of groups during each period. To do so it traces the history of each organization’s mission, hierarchy, membership, tactics, and violence level. Information on terrorist mission is drawn from primary source terrorist manifestos, internal documents, and pamphlets. Hierarchy and membership construction are pieced together from internal documents, historical accounts, and declassified CIA Freedom of Information Act documents. Tactics and violence level are reconstructed from the Global Terrorism Database

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<sup>54</sup> “Chile Polity IV Scores for Democracy.”

(GTD1), CIA documents, the Rettig Report,<sup>55</sup> domestic news stories, and an analysis of terrorism reports from the Chilean Journal of the Center for Development Studies (*Cuadernos del CED*).

Data on tactics and violence level suffers from inconsistent sourcing. The CED piece offers the most complete analysis of terrorism under Pinochet and post-transition by analyzing all newspaper articles mentioning political violence. It breaks terrorism up by group, target, and “goal.” However, it draws information from the heavily biased *el Mercurio* paper, which tended to over or under-emphasize violence depending on its political goals. The GTD1 database extends back to 1973, but it draws information from international newswires, which tend not to report low-level incidents. The Rettig Report offers descriptions of political violence resulting in fatalities under the Pinochet dictatorship, but this again limits the scope of the information. No organized data exists on terrorism under Frei, though because only one group operated at low violence levels, it can be drawn from historical accounts. Though not systematized, this variety of sources does allow tactics and violence levels to be reconstructed for all periods.

This study analyzes strategic capacity across governments varying in representation and individual liberty. However, specific organizational characteristics, not just the external environment, influence the use of terrorism. Dissecting strategic capacity on a group level ensures that the strategic capacity of each organization is understood in the context of its specific character and history. Important to note, furthermore, is that these groups tend to experience periods of bureaucratic transition following shocks to its environment. Analysis of the use of violence must take into account that these groups experience an adjustment period before

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<sup>55</sup> The Rettig Report is the more common name for the report of the Chilean Truth and Reconciliation Committee, convened by Aylwin to address the human rights abuses committed under the Pinochet government.

reaching an operational equilibrium. The rest of this chapter outlines the five historical periods, to establish the varying contexts in which violent Chilean organizations operated.

*Period 1: Frei's Liberal Democracy*

Cuba's 1959 revolution made Latin America a stage for Cold War polarization, with military coups and Communist uprisings plaguing the continent. Chile, however, maintained its tradition of liberal democracy. During Eduardo Montalva Frei's presidency, from 1964 to 1970, the country represented the most stable democracy in the region. A member of the centrist Christian Democracy Party (DC, *Democracia Cristiana*), Frei was distinctly liberal. He undertook numerous socialist reforms, most notably the "Chileanization" of copper, in which the state took 51% ownership of North American copper mines.<sup>56</sup> He promoted rights to unionize and strike, attempted land redistribution to address inequities, and gave aid for squatter communities to build houses.<sup>57</sup> He continued friendly relations with the US and its investors, but promoted a cordial relationship to the Communist bloc.

For the first half of the administration the economy grew rapidly, a response to the high price of copper, continued influx of North American investment, and growth of the internal market. By 1967, however, the copper boom had slowed to reveal low economic growth and high inflation.<sup>58</sup> The left accused Frei of reformism, and the right accused him of socialism. In this context the Movement for the Revolutionary Left (MIR), which had first arisen in 1965, began overt violent activity, seeing in economic downturn an opportunity to radicalize the poor.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> "Chile - Eduardo Frei's Christian Democracy, 1964-70."

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>59</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

Though the organization remained marginalized, Frei worked to undermine any possibility for its development. His attitude was shaped by Uruguay's experience with the Tupamaro insurgency. In economy, ethnography, and politics, Uruguay was the closest country to Chile in Latin America.<sup>60</sup> Social unrest caused by a decline in commodity prices allowed for the rise of the Tupamaro guerrillas, who used the economic downturn to build a support base among the poor and indigenous. For its first years the group focused on capacity building, until in 1968 it initiated a wave of kidnappings against officials and their families. The government was forced to pay ransoms and expend resources fighting an elusive enemy.<sup>61</sup> Though the MIR seemed isolated and weak, Frei saw its potential to exploit national circumstances, as occurred in Uruguay. Frei thus arrested MIR members under the law of Internal State Security even when the crime was only robbery, citing its political nature.<sup>62</sup>

Overall, the Frei government displayed the high representation and individual liberty associated with liberal democracy. Frei in fact promoted increased representation by promoting unionization and removing the literacy requirement that had until then prevented universal suffrage.<sup>63</sup> Individual liberty also ran high. Freedom of movement and association are most clearly demonstrated in Frei's treatment of the MIR itself. Despite violent rhetoric, Frei allowed the MIR to operate unmolested until 1967, when armed activity began. Even so, Frei respected a law granting universities self-governance that prevented police from raiding the campus. Only in 1969, following a particularly brutal attack, did he raid campus homes.<sup>64</sup> The Frei government was thus a classical liberal democracy, with high levels of representation and individual liberty.

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<sup>60</sup> Gazmuri R. , *Eduardo Frei Montalva Y Su Época*.

<sup>61</sup> Porzecanski, *Uruguay's Tupamaros*.

<sup>62</sup> Allende, *El MIR Chileno: Una experiencia revolucionaria*.

<sup>63</sup> Keech, *Democracy, Dictatorship and Economic Performance in Chile*.

<sup>64</sup> David F. Belnap, "Terrorists Make Little Political Impact in Chile."



*Period 2: Allende, Socialism, and Democracy*

Salvador Allende won the 1970 elections with less of the popular vote than he earned when he lost in 1967.<sup>65</sup> A socialist, he was the candidate choice of the Popular Unity (UP, *Unidad Popular*), a coalition of six leftist political formed for the 1970 elections. Allende's win is largely a result of a split in moderate voters, between the center-conservative Jorge Alessandri and center-liberal Radomiro Tomic.<sup>66</sup> The election of a socialist sparked significant political upheaval, the administration experiencing several distinct phases: "during the first year UP popularity ran high.... By the second year, the opposition had regrouped, and political conflict began to heat up... By the third year, which ended with the overthrow of constitutional rule in Chile, society had polarized into two highly antagonistic and militant groups."<sup>67</sup>

Even in its first year, turmoil seemed imminent. On October 25, Chief of the Armed Forces René Schneider was assassinated for his opposition to militarily overthrowing Allende's electoral victory.<sup>68</sup> Soon after Allende initiated a series of socialist reforms opposed by his legislature, including seizing foreign-owned copper companies without paying compensation.<sup>69</sup> He in fact employed the MIR in carrying out certain reforms. The MIR would foment trouble in unions to promote strikes, allowing the government to invoke a 1932 Chilean law that permitted governments to take control of any factory being improperly used.<sup>70</sup>

By the end of 1971, inflation, unemployment, and high levels of foreign debt created widespread discontent.<sup>71</sup> Agrarian productivity declined, and strikes increased from 977 in 1969

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<sup>65</sup> *Documentos*.

<sup>66</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>67</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*. 47.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>69</sup> "The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile."

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>71</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

to 2,709 in 1971.<sup>72</sup> The government responded by freezing prices and increasing wages, leading to even higher inflation. By 1973 the money supply increased by 1% each day. Basic goods were in short supply, and a black market developed.<sup>73</sup> Cuban leader Fidel Castro's visit in November, meant to strengthen the socialist government, instead became a symbol of Chilean turmoil when women protested in the streets, banging empty pots to symbolize the hunger of the people.<sup>74</sup> The Fatherland and Liberty Patriotic Front (PyL), a rightist armed group, coordinated these protests to destabilize the socialist administration.<sup>75</sup> To show solidarity with the socialist government, Castro gifted a machine gun to President Allende; however, he also handed one to each MIR leaders.<sup>76</sup> This empowered the MIR, deepening fears of a possible civil war.

To limit upheaval, the Allende administration initiated a TV and radio publicity campaign to sever perceived ties between the MIR and the administration. He then arrested members of the Socialist Party, MAPU, and MIR for supporting armed revolution, under the Law of Internal State Security.<sup>77</sup> Although the rightist PyL were small and the MIR relatively restrained in violence during this period, the perception persisted that the country was descending into civil war. A survey conducted in September 1972 among "slum dwellers" shows the weakening support for Allende even among the poor: 75% of the lower class believed a climate of violence existed in Chile; 18% blamed the government; 22% blamed the government and the opposition; and 35% blamed the opposition alone. Only 27% of lower-class respondents evaluated the government's performance as "good."<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Landsberger and McDaniel, "Hypermobilization in Chile, 1970-1973."

<sup>73</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>74</sup> *Documentos*.

<sup>75</sup> Salazar Salvo, *Roberto Thieme*.

<sup>76</sup> Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*.

<sup>77</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>78</sup> Remmer, "Political Demobilization in Chile, 1973-1978."

In March 1973, nevertheless, the Popular Unity coalition gained ground in parliamentary elections. However, at this point the understood alliance between the UP and DC had ended, and the Christian Democrats allied with the right-wing National Party (PN, *Partido Nacional*). This placed the legislature and the executive branch in conflict, further paralyzing the political process.<sup>79</sup> Furthering this disintegration, the CIA, following its anti-socialist Cold War policies, channeled 8 million dollars to right-wing opposition parties to destabilize the Allende government.<sup>80</sup>

With the aid of the PyL, in June 1973 the armed forces attempted to impose a military government. Allende put down the coup with help from loyalist military forces.<sup>81</sup> The government declared a state of emergency, closing several radio stations and two newspapers that encouraged a coup.<sup>82</sup> On August 22, 1973, the parliament voted that Allende had violated the constitution.<sup>83</sup> The next day, Carlos Prats renounced his position as Chief of the Army, and General Augusto Pinochet was instated.<sup>84</sup> Then, on September 11, 1973, Augusto Pinochet and the armed forces bombed la Moneda. Allende issued a farewell speech on live radio, after which he allegedly committed suicide using the AK-47 given to him by Castro.<sup>85</sup> Within hours Chile came under the rule of a military junta.

The Rettig Report states of this time: “the political emotions of that period do not constitute a sufficient explanation for the fact that business, occupational, and professional organizations as well as opposition parties – the grassroots more than the leadership – came to

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<sup>79</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>80</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>81</sup> Davis, *The last two years of Salvador Allende*.

<sup>82</sup> *Documentos*.

<sup>83</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>84</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>85</sup> Davis, *The last two years of Salvador Allende*.

such a point of extreme rebellion: strikes intended to make the country ungovernable. Moreover, these sectors felt abandoned by the mechanisms of the state whose purpose was to protect their rights.”<sup>86</sup> Representation rests on contending factions cooperating under an elected government. This period saw competing parties becoming unwilling to tolerate each other’s influence over the state. Neither side would compromise to ease the prevailing state of “ungovernability,” paralyzing the political process and limiting representation. Individual liberty, meanwhile, continued to run high. Freedom of association and freedom from surveillance were unchecked. In the opening years this individual liberty was in fact excessively high, with Allende in fact supporting the MIR. However, even when the president attempted to address excessive freedoms of violent groups, individual liberty remained high. Thus the Allende period shows limited representation and high individual liberty.

### *Period 3: Pinochet and the DINA*

With Decree Law No. 27, the new military government disbanded the National Congress to “assure that the principles that the junta has proposed be implemented more expeditiously.”<sup>87</sup> It outlawed leftist parties, including local trade unions. While initially the junta involved multiple generals ruling together, within months Augusto Pinochet took total control. On March 11, 1974 Pinochet cemented the dictatorship as permanent in *Declaration of Principles of the Government of Chile*. He outlined an eventual transition to “controlled” military democracy, but in the meantime political turmoil in Chile required authoritarianism: “the government of the armed forces and police will vigorously exercise the principle of authority, and will severely punish any outbreak of undisciplined behavior or anarchy.”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. Off

<sup>88</sup> Pinochet, “Declaration of Principles of the Government of Chile.”

In November 1973, Decree Law No. 521 established the Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA, *Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*). While described as an independent public agency that answered to the military government, “in practice the junta did not exert any such control.”<sup>89</sup> Its head was a former military officer, Manuel Contreras, under whom the DINA became an exceptionally secretive and autonomous organization wielding almost unlimited power.<sup>90</sup> The DINA's first detention center was the National Soccer Stadium, which it filled with those deemed dangerous to state stability. When detainee Victor Jara, an popular folk singer, attempted to sing songs of resistance, members of the DINA mutilated his fingers and then gunned him down in front of thousands of other prisoners.<sup>91</sup> It later created permanent detention centers, including *Cuatro Alamos*, a series of temporary holding cells; *Londres No. 38*, *Jose Domingo Cañas*, and *Villa Grimaldi*, torture complexes; *La Venda Sexy*, for sexual forms of torture; and *Implacate*, so secretive little is known of its use.<sup>92</sup>

Of the 2,279 people known to have been killed under the military dictatorship, 17.8% belonged to the Socialist Party, 16.9% to the MIR, and 15.5 % to the Communist party.<sup>93</sup> Between January 1 and July 15 alone, the DINA detained 672 people. Of these it eventually released 353, exiled 119, detained 130 as future refugees, and confined the other 74 indefinitely.<sup>94</sup> Pinochet forced the relocation of nearly 800,000 of Santiago’s urban poor to the outskirts of the city to limit any potential for mass mobilizations.<sup>95</sup> International outcry over human rights abuses forced Pinochet to decree that “investigation” could occur only on front of

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<sup>89</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> Chavkin, *Storm over Chile*.

<sup>92</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> CIA FOIA, “DINA Treatment of Detainees.”

<sup>95</sup> Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*.

the DINA head or one of three designated leaders. In practice, however, the DINA operated so autonomously that the dictatorship had little hope of restraining it.<sup>96</sup>

On September 21, 1976, the DINA assassinated former Allende minister Orlando Letelier in the streets of Washington DC. Agents placed a remote control bomb in his car, killing both him and his young assistant. The act sparked international outrage, particularly in the US.<sup>97</sup> Contreras had orchestrated the attack without Pinochet's knowledge, straining the relationship between the two men. In 1977 Pinochet dissolved the DINA, replacing it with the National Center for Information (CNI, *Centro Nacional de Información*).<sup>98</sup>

During the DINA period, representation and individual liberty were essentially nonexistent. Civilians had no input in the political process, and dissent was actively smothered. While no armed resistance developed, Pinochet overemphasized the presence of Communists to justify authoritarianism and the suppression of individual liberty. The Pinochet government saw itself as having no responsibility to protect or respect its citizens, seeing state security as its paramount goal. Thus any individual who opposed the government was seen as a threat, subject to disappearance, torture, or death. Thus neither institutionalized representation nor respect for individual liberty existed in this period.

#### *Period 4: Pinochet and the CNI*

The Truth and Reconciliation Committee outlines several general periods of CNI activity: from August to November 1977, a continuation of DINA style repression; from November 1977 to mid-1980, a focus more on political intelligence than repression; and after that a return to greater repression, though never to the degree of the DINA. Few "disappearances" occurred

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<sup>96</sup> CIA FOIA, "Junta Against HR Violations."

<sup>97</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

between 1978 and 1981, and even after this the CNI were “selective” in using them.<sup>99</sup> While still a distinctly authoritarian apparatus, its practices shifted to intelligence rather than repression.

With the introduction of the CNI, limited political mobilization began again. Strikes occurred in the major Chilean copper mine *el Teniente*, the Pacific Steel Company, shipping groups, peasant organizations, and iron and coalmines.<sup>100</sup> In 1980 Pinochet set forth a new Constitution that called for a “protected” democracy. This constitution prevented Marxist groups from acting as political parties, gave the military a permanent minimum one-third presence in the Congress, and enhanced presidential power. His timetable gave the start date of joint military-civilian leadership as 1981, with “constitutional normality” beginning in 1985. It ensured that Pinochet would remain president until 1989, with the likely possibility that he would continue to serve until 1997.<sup>101</sup>

Given the rise of protests, Pinochet forced the leader of the CNI to step down. The new leadership more aggressively suppressed the organization of leftist groups, to prevent unified opposition from developing. To control anti-dictatorial movements, Pinochet placed the Army rather than the police in charge of subduing protests.<sup>102</sup> However, Chile’s “economic miracle” of liberalization ended in 1981, and the Latin American debt crisis began soon afterwards. The price of copper dropped and inflation rose.<sup>103</sup> The DC took the opportunity to take a public stand against the junta, calling for Pinochet to step down and hold elections. The administration responded by prohibiting DC leader Andres Zaldivar from reentering the country after a trip

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<sup>99</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

<sup>100</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Resistance Courier*.

<sup>101</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>102</sup> CIA FOIA, “Chile: Rising Political Violence.”

<sup>103</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

abroad. Frei's death in September 1982 essentially ended the DC's role in resistance, leaving the Communist Party as the leader of the left.<sup>104</sup>

In 1983, national protests intensified.<sup>105</sup> Pinochet responded with a variety of political and military measures. He named a right-wing civilian as Minister of the Interior, to promote negotiation with leftist parties. He allowed the return of some political exiles, primarily from the DC. He dispatched 18,000 soldiers to put down protests in Santiago.<sup>106</sup> At the end of this year, nevertheless, two new armed groups developed. The MAPU-Lautaros arose from the MAPU political party, to organize street protests and conduct acts of "armed propaganda." While publicly denying ties, the Communist Party also established a violent wing, the FPMR. This group sought to use terrorist tactics to show the fallibility of the regime.

On September 7, 1986, the FPMR attempted to assassinate Pinochet. In response the dictator reinstated the state of siege that he had lifted in June 1985. The CNI rounded up huge numbers of leftists, violent and nonviolent. Unidentified individuals removed Jose Carrasco, the international editor of a liberal weekly publication, from his home on September 8<sup>th</sup>; his body was found later that day near a cemetery. That same day the son of a judge was murdered. The next the body of a political activist was dumped in one of Santiago's slums.<sup>107</sup> "Operation Albania" saw the brutal murders of FPMR militants and supporters.<sup>108</sup>

In late 1987, under increasing domestic and international pressure, Pinochet called for a plebiscite to legitimize his authority. A "No" majority would lead to free elections in 1989, while a "Yes" would confirm Pinochet's rule until 1997. Given that he had prevented the development

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> CIA FOIA, "FPMR Attempts Assassination of President Pinochet."

<sup>108</sup> Palma Salamanca, *Una Larga Cola De Acero*.



of opposition movements, his victory seemed assured. However, marches occurred throughout the country to mobilize the “No” vote. On October 5, 1988, six million Chileans went to the polls, with 44% of the vote going to the “Yes” and 55% to the “No.”<sup>109</sup> Though advisors called for him to intervene, Pinochet decided to allow the process of democratic transition to continue.

The CNI period thus saw a loosening of the repression that had distinguished DINA control. The government continued to suppress representation, preventing the development of legal political parties and refusing to incorporate the voices of political opposition. However, the dissolution of the DINA saw a growth in individual liberty. While freedom of movement and association remained restricted, the relaxation of repression offered greater political space in which opposition movements could arise. Thus while representation remained absent in this period, individual liberty returned, restricted but still present.

#### *Period 5: The Post-Transition Liberal Democracy*

Following the success of the “No” in the plebiscite, Pinochet called free and fair elections. On July 30, 1989, a referendum for 54 constitutional reforms, including restrictions on the use of state of siege, was approved by 91 percent of voters.<sup>110</sup> In presidential elections, Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin received 55.5% of the vote.<sup>111</sup> Within a month of assuming office, he established the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation to investigate human rights abuses under the Pinochet administration. However, he avoided direct confrontation with the military or with Pinochet, who remained in the symbolic position of Army Commander.<sup>112</sup> Aylwin sought redress for victims rather than punishment of perpetrators, to

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<sup>109</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>110</sup> “Tribunal Calificador de Elecciones.”

<sup>111</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>112</sup> CIA FOIA, “Items on International Terrorism: Latin America - Chile.”

avoid backlash from conservative segments of society. He aimed to nurture political stability by healing the polarization that had marked Chile for the past 20 years.

The majority of sectors of society responded positively to the reintroduction of democracy.<sup>113</sup> However, following the elections homeless families launched a wave of *tomas*, reflecting the continued divides between the poor who had so suffered under Pinochet and the upper class that had often supported him. Aylwin called on leftist parties to disavow land seizures. Even the Socialist Party leader joined with him in his contra-mobilization stance: “We have to care for democracy. We don’t want problems during this transitional period. We can’t demagogically promote mobilizations as a solution. It would be easy to occupy the piece of land near the airport and to encourage a big land seizure to solve problems, but that would be rather irresponsible on our part. We don’t want to provoke the police or our opponents.”<sup>114</sup> Allende coupled this with the use of non-repressive police force to prevent land being taken from private citizens.

Aylwin encouraged members of pro-violence groups to lay down their arms by offering them the opportunity to reenter civil society without fear of punishment. On January 24 1991, Aylwin modified the law that determined terrorist conducts to guarantee the rights of those who had been prosecuted under Pinochet’s 1984 anti-terrorism statute. The law defined more precisely what constituted a terrorist act, and guaranteed the physical safety of those who had been detained. He had the right to overturn those convicted of terrorism under the CNI’s Tribunals.<sup>115</sup>

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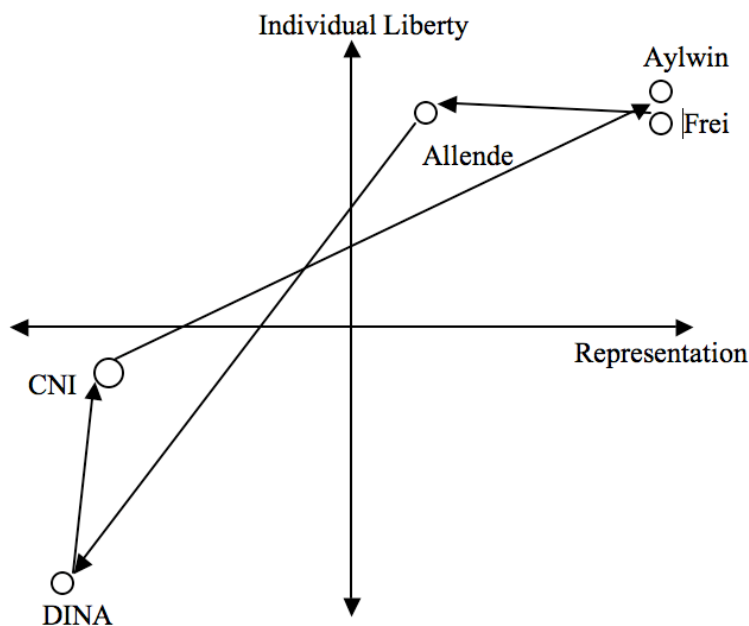
<sup>113</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>114</sup> Hipsher, “Democratization and the decline of urban social movements in Chile and Spain.”

<sup>115</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

Aylwin's government sought a return to liberal democratic values that had once defined Chile's political sphere. He focused on healing the wounds developed under Pinochet, improving human rights while avoiding castigation of those involved in violence. He offered a great deal of representation, promoting the development of unions and parties to fill the political void left by Pinochet. He promoted individual liberty, ensuring not only freedom of movement and association but focusing on human rights development through work with the indigenous and poor communities in the country.<sup>116</sup> Thus relatively soon after transition, Aylwin instituted a liberal democracy characterized by high representation and individual liberty.

*Expectations for Terrorism in Chile*



Chile offers a number of governments that vary in levels of representation and individual liberty. The first period, the Frei administration, represents a liberal democracy with high levels of representation and individual liberties. Allende's government saw the deterioration of representation

but continued high individual liberty. The Pinochet autocracy and its DINA security services stifled both representation and individual liberty. The CNI, while continuing to prevent representation, did allow for limited individual liberty by loosening repressive controls. Finally

<sup>116</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

the Aylwin government returned the country to liberal democracy with high levels of representation and individual liberty.

Applying these levels of representation and individual liberty to terrorist strategic capacity yields the following expected results:

Frei (High Representation, High Individual Liberty)

Mission	High representation leads to an unclear mission.
Hierarchy	High individual liberty permits a centralized hierarchy.
Membership	High representation limits the size of membership. High individual liberty permits operative training and breeds low member commitment.
Tactics	High representation encourages civilian targeting.
Violence Level	High representation creates a low and unsteady violence level.

Allende (Limited Representation, High Individual Liberty)

Mission	Limited representation results in a clear mission.
Hierarchy	High individual liberty permits a centralized hierarchy.
Membership	Limited representation increases size. High individual liberty permits operative training. Limited representation and high individual liberty create mixed/moderate levels of commitment.
Tactics	Limited representation encourages a government-civilian target mix.
Violence Level	Limited representation and high individual liberty permits a high and steady violence level.

Pinochet and the DINA (Low Representation, Low Individual Liberty)

Mission	Low representation results in a clear mission.
Hierarchy	Low individual liberty forces a decentralized network.
Membership	Low individual liberty limits size of membership; prevents operative training; and encourages high member commitment.
Tactics	Low representation encourages government targeting. Low individual liberty limits ability to coordinate action against government targets.
Violence Level	Low individual liberty creates a low and unsteady violence level.

Pinochet and the CNI (Low Representation, Limited Individual Liberty)

Mission	Low representation results in a clear mission.
Hierarchy	Limited individual liberty permits a moderately centralized structure.
Membership	Limited individual liberty permits moderate size; allows for some operative training; and encourages high member commitment.
Tactics	Low representation encourages government targeting. Limited individual liberty provides opportunity to coordinate action against government targets.
Violence Level	Low representation and limited individual liberty permits a high and steady violence level

Aylwin (High Representation, High Individual Liberty)

Mission	High representation leads to an unclear mission.
Hierarchy	High individual liberty permits a centralized hierarchy.
Membership	High representation limits the size of membership. High individual liberty permits operative training and breeds low member commitment.
Tactics	High representation encourages civilian targeting.
Violence Level	High representation creates a low and unsteady violence level.

This study expects strategic capacity to be high under the Allende and CNI periods, and low under Frei, Aylwin, and the DINA. Limited representation under Allende removes the support and motivation barriers that typically restrain terrorism in democracy. Thus groups can clarify their missions, increase membership size and commitment, and use violence with less chance of alienating the mass public. Limited individual liberty under the CNI should offer groups the operational space in which to operate. Improved individual liberty permits organizations to improve their hierarchical formats, increase the size and training of membership, and commit high-coordination attacks on government targets. Strategic capacity is expected to run low under Frei and Aylwin due to the stresses placed by high representation on mission, membership size and commitment, and violence level. It should also be low under the DINA,

where repression restrains hierarchy, membership training, available tactics, and violence level. This implies that strategic capacity tends to be low under both high-functioning democracy and highly repressive autocracy. Meanwhile, limited democratic representation or weakened autocratic repression should lead to improvements in terrorist strategic capacity.

### Chapter 3: Terrorism under Frei

In 1965, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) pronounced itself “the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the working class.”<sup>117</sup> With this it became the first group in Chile to promote armed struggle for socialism. However, it remained a fringe group under Frei, due both to the vigilance of the government and the lack of political momentum for its cause. The group’s strength lay in its hierarchy, unified on the University of Concepción Campus. Its central mission remained disconnected from reality, it suffered from “aficionados” in its membership, and its recruitment pool was limited to the campus. The use of *tomas*, seizures of property to develop squatter settlements, offered a minor success by exploiting preexisting social divides while requiring only minimal coordination. Overall, however, violence remained low and unsteady. While making some improvements in terms of defining its audience as the indigenous and poor, strategic capacity remained weak during this period.

On the University of Concepción campus in Chile, the success of the 1959 Cuban Revolution offered a symbol for the possible success of the global socialist movement. Inspired by the armed path taken in Cuba, in 1964 dissident members of leftist political parties banded together to form the Marxist Revolutionary Vanguard (VRM, *Vanguardia Revolucionaria Marxista*).<sup>118</sup> It opposed Frei’s government, claiming: “the CD is a bourgeoisie party, an organization of the upper class.”<sup>119</sup> However, the VRM never conducted a violent action. Even within the university it was marginalized, failing to win a single seat on the student governing council.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> “Declaración de Principios del MIR. I Congreso del MIR. .”

<sup>118</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* 11.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

Frustrated by its lack of support, in August 1965 the VRM called a conference to draw intellectuals and students inspired by the Cuban Revolution's armed path to socialism into a single group.<sup>121</sup> The primary impetus for the conference lay in giving the ultra-left a more influential role in university government, since traditional nonviolent Socialists and Communists dominated student governing bodies. Those convened came from heterogeneous ideological backgrounds, united by a belief in armed struggle.<sup>122</sup> Participants fell into two broad ideological groups, the Traditionalists and the Nontraditionalists. Traditionalists were fringe members of the Trotskyite and Communist movements. Nontraditionalists were dissident Communist and Soviet Youths. The primary divide between them lay in the timing of the revolution: Traditionalists thought the uprising would begin at a grassroots level given sufficient time; Nontraditionalists believed the path to socialism required a prolonged guerrilla war to be initiated immediately.<sup>123</sup>

Members of the conference crafted a series of resolutions defining a broad ideology and a basic structure. The first declaration established the group as armed and mass-based, and the second declared, "The 20<sup>th</sup> century is the century of the definite termination of the capitalist system."<sup>124</sup> The congress approved a formal structure, centered on a small National Secretariat with Trotskyite doctor Enrique Sepulveda as its first Secretary General. While violent rhetoric distinguished the MIR from political parties, the organization used no violence between 1965 and 1967. It remained a limited presence even on the Concepción campus, where it won only one of the 11 seats on the main student governing board.<sup>125</sup>

In 1967, the MIR became a more overtly violent group

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<sup>121</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>122</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

<sup>123</sup> Miguel Enríquez *Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile*.

<sup>124</sup> "Declaración de Principios del MIR. I Congreso del MIR. ."

<sup>125</sup> Naranjo and Enriquez, *Miguel Enríquez y el proyecto Revolucionario en Chile*.



In 1967, the MIR began minimal armed activity. Economic slowdown and the increasing criticism of Frei had created wide discontent that the MIR sought to radicalize. In the same year the Cuban government sponsored the first Conference of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS), to reinforce the global nature of the Communist movement by binding together Latin American insurgent movements. A MIR representative attended. Inspired by these groups, the organization began to stage marches through Concepción, in which it would seek to provoke police into armed clashes.<sup>126</sup>

In December, the MIR's 3<sup>rd</sup> National Congress resulted in the majority rule of Nontraditionalists. As believers in prolonged guerrilla warfare, Nontraditionalists were the more violent segment. They won 10 of the 15 Central Committee seats, all 5 National Secretariat seats, and Nontraditionalist Miguel Enriquez became Secretary General.<sup>127</sup> As a result, in 1968 the MIR intensified activity among the indigenous Mapuches and urban poor. It stressed the development of "organic" movements among the workers in Santiago and Concepción through propagandistic activity. It began a monthly newsletter; established revolutionary theory schools, including 15 in rural areas and 2 in Santiago; and conducted workshops for artisans in the country.<sup>128</sup>

Most significant to the development of the organization, the MIR initiated a policy of *tomas*, in which militants aided by a band of civilians seized civilian property for squatter settlements.<sup>129</sup> Though at first the MIR conducted *tomas* with the Communist and Socialist

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<sup>126</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>127</sup> Miguel Enriquez *Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile*.

<sup>128</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

<sup>129</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

Parties, eventually it took on sole directorship.<sup>130</sup> With increasing activity came increasing visibility. However, a Chilean law granting universities extraterritoriality prevented state police from entering campus. Most leaders of the MIR remained on university grounds, allowing the hierarchy to operate unmolested. The organization nevertheless sought to develop the rudimentary features of a secret organization, establishing “safe houses” for militants and developing an information network.<sup>131</sup>

However, internal conflicts and an inhospitable external environment stymied the success of the MIR. Secretary Miguel Enriquez estimated that only half of proposed activities were carried out, and even these had mediocre results. The majority rule of Nontraditionalists provoked Traditionalists to organize an “opposition movement,”<sup>132</sup> going so far as to call a “Factional Congress” to establish the MIR as “our movement.”<sup>133</sup> In early 1969 these ideological schisms intensified when a group of students, frustrated with the MIR’s slow pace, split from the main body to form the “MR-2.” Within months, an MR-2 militant was caught setting a bomb in an empty police car. Half the organization was imprisoned. Though it nominally continued, it performed no other armed activities.<sup>134</sup>

In July Miguel Enríquez threw internal opposition from the MIR, expelling nearly all Traditionalists. He then focused on “political consolidation” and “special politics reorganization.” Regional Politico-Military Groups (GPMs, *Grupos Politico-Militares*) were started in Santiago, Valparaiso, and Valdivia, to give the group a broader geographical base.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chilean Resistance Courier. Special Supplement*.

<sup>131</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile*.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

<sup>134</sup> “Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria.”

<sup>135</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile*.

The MIR also developed entrance requirements for its militants. Prior to this, anyone could become a “militant,” meaning that these ranks included intellectuals and “aficionados” that espoused but did not practice armed action.<sup>136</sup>

The most high profile, and disastrous, MIR activity occurred in June 1969, when *miristas* in Concepción kidnapped an opposition journalist. After luring him into a trap, MIR members stripped him, shaved his head, photographed him, assaulted him, and then freed him naked into a crowd.<sup>137</sup> This provoked widespread condemnation, giving the organization “a permanent black eye.”<sup>138</sup> Government forces violated the extraterritoriality of the University of Concepción, raiding 200 homes on the campus.<sup>139</sup> Otherwise bank robberies remained the main tool of “armed propaganda.” In August of 1969, the group robbed three banks in Santiago.<sup>140</sup> Despite limited armed activity beyond this, Frei arrested a number of MIR militants under the Law of Internal State Security, given the “political nature” of the crimes.<sup>141</sup> Frei focused on reconnaissance work to discover the location of meeting spots, such as in a raid that saw Central Committee member Zorrilla captured after tossing a grenade that failed to explode.<sup>142</sup> As a result, most MIR members spent the last two years before Allende’s election “either hiding out or in jail.”<sup>143</sup>

In large part, the MIR failed to reach its target populations among the urban and rural poor. A survey conducted in the late 1960s with 382 “slum dwellers” found that the vast majority

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> David F. Belnap, “Terrorists Make Little Political Impact in Chile.”

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile.*

<sup>140</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas.*

<sup>141</sup> “Chile - Eduardo Frei's Christian Democracy, 1964-70.”

<sup>142</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas.*

<sup>143</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989* 40.

supported the peaceful political process.<sup>144</sup> 62% of those interviewed believed that popular revolution would be either “very bad” or “bad” for Chile, while just 33% believed it would be “good.” Only 23% thought that armed action would be the best way for a progressive government to gain power.<sup>145</sup> Thus, “being a Marxist may not mean the same to a member of the lower classes as it does to a middle-class intellectual, especially in the matter of readiness to use force.”<sup>146</sup> While the MIR was buoyed among intellectual circles by the popularity of Cuban Revolutionary Theory, this support base did not extend to the poor. Only with *tomas*, which essentially garnered support by offering land, did the group have success.

In late 1969, the MIR began to infiltrate the Armed Forces to detect what it viewed as an inevitable military coup that would initiate guerrilla warfare. On May 28, 1970, *miristas* attacked a branch of the *Banco Nacional del Trabajo* in Santiago, with 15 guerrillas stealing 198 thousand escudos in bills. All wore military uniforms and carried automatic weapons belonging to the army.<sup>147</sup> At this time the MIR also sought to ally with other leftist parties. The Communist Party (PC, *Partido Comunista*) employed *autodefensas*, self-defense units, to protect it from repression and prepare for popular revolution, though it disavowed the armed path. In April the President of Command of the MIR, Victor Toro, attended a PC conference to propose uniting the *autodefensas* and the *miristas* into popular defense commands. The PC considered these activities “alien to its interests,” reflecting the general sentiment of the left towards the MIR.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Portes, “Political Primitivism, Differential Socialization, and Lower-class Leftist Radicalism.”

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Landsberger and McDaniel, “Hypermobilization in Chile, 1970-1973.” 513.

<sup>147</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>148</sup> CIA FOIA, “Milicias Populares.”

When the UP formed to run socialist Allende as the leftist candidate choice, the MIR dismissed his win as impossible, particularly as he lost the 1967 elections.<sup>149</sup> It continued armed action, though leftist parties decried violence as counterproductive. In fact, MIR activity increased following the announcement of elections. On June 25, a shootout took place between police and *miristas* in the crowded Juana Planas Plaza in Santiago. Three days later an explosion destroyed a police checkpoint in Santiago's Tobalaba province.<sup>150</sup> When Allende's election seemed a legitimate possibility, the MIR changed its rhetoric. Within months, the headlines of its newsletter *el Rebelde* changed from "No to the Elections! The One Path: Armed Struggle" to "MIR and the Presidential Elections!"<sup>151</sup> The MIR began to focus on "mobilization of the masses" and "development of our operative capacity"<sup>152</sup> so as not to "place the workers in the dilemma of having to 'be with the MIR' or 'be with Allende.'"<sup>153</sup> Should Allende win, the group called for the creation of militias to protect the electoral victory.<sup>154</sup>

In July 1970 *miristas* were caught attempting to blow up empty police cars, to protest the deaths of two university students during a national copper strike.<sup>155</sup> This political and operational blow, in conjunction with increasing criticism from leftist political parties, led to the MIR pausing armed action for the rest of this period.<sup>156</sup> The MIR leadership did so out of recognition of "the political risks that would be involved in engaging in operations during this period."<sup>157</sup>

However, the MIR continued to anger the left with warnings of the inevitable military coup that

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<sup>149</sup> Gazmuri R. , *Eduardo Frei Montalva Y Su Época*.

<sup>150</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>151</sup> "El MIR y el Resultado Electoral."

<sup>152</sup> "MIR and the Presidential Elections."

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Miguel Enríquez *Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile*.

<sup>155</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

<sup>156</sup> "Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria."

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

would result from a socialist electoral victory. When Allende did win the election, the group interpreted this as a sign that the masses were ripe for revolution.<sup>158</sup>

### *Strategic Capacity under Frei*

Internally, the MIR referred to the Frei government as “repressive.”<sup>159</sup> In fact, the administration was a traditional liberal democracy with high representation and individual liberty. While it had strong police and military, its did not use excessive force.<sup>160</sup> The MIR’s appearance in this period can be credited primarily to the popularity of Cuban Revolutionary Theory throughout Latin America, particularly among intellectuals. While this offered some support for its cause, the MIR nevertheless had a low strategic capacity. It failed to identify a mission rooted in its operating context, and to attract members willing to personally sacrifice. Its centralized hierarchy and ideological militant training could not offset weaknesses in these areas. Low coordination *tomas* aided strategic capacity somewhat by communicating directly to landless peasants more responsive to socialist communal land policies. However, beyond this MIR tactics tended to either alienate the public or leave it vulnerable to detection, with low, sporadic violence reinforcing the fringe nature of the group even among leftist parties. Thus high representation and individual liberty marginalized the group as elitist fringe actors.

*Mission:* Later MIR leadership wrote of this period: “there was no strategy and even less tactical thought.”<sup>161</sup> At its inception the organization failed to root its mission in a specific operating environment, espousing only the most basic Marxist-Leninist theory. It did not address the problems of applying the Cuban revolutionary model for rural guerrilla warfare to the highly urbanized Chile, where the majority of the population lived in geographically isolated cities.

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<sup>158</sup> “El MIR y el Resultado Electoral.”

<sup>159</sup> Allende, *El MIR Chileno: Una experiencia revolucionaria*.

<sup>160</sup> Gazmuri R. , *Eduardo Frei Montalva Y Su Época*.

<sup>161</sup> “Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria.”

While declaring itself the “vanguard” of the people, it did not explain how the masses could be mobilized in practice.<sup>162</sup> Long and thin, physically the country offered few opportunities to communicate among rural or poor communities.<sup>163</sup>

While stating that socialism would require guerrilla warfare, the group failed to differentiate its goals from those of the nonviolent Socialist and Communist Parties. Its specific platform of changes included nationalization of mining, electricity, telephone, and commercial businesses to break “the pacts that bind us to imperialism,”<sup>164</sup> all goals of leftist political parties. This left little support for violence as a means to achieve socialism. While 62% of rural community members believed that a progressive government should expropriate property from the rich, the overwhelming majority did not believe that this should occur violently.<sup>165</sup>

The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Congress saw intensified efforts to develop a specific platform of reforms for the current liberal democratic period, seeking to extend the influence of the MIR into poor communities outside of Concepción. The groups ought to develop guerrilla training schools and artisan workshops, as well as initiating *tomas*.<sup>166</sup> Through these activities it sought to gain the support of its audience, so that eventually a true armed struggle could begin. Still, the group failed to identify a coherent enemy, with its rhetoric indiscriminately targeting Socialist and Communist Party “reformists,” the Christian Democratic government, and the bourgeoisie.<sup>167</sup> Thus the MIR did not offer a convincing justification for its violence or a clear enemy, leaving mission weak.

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<sup>162</sup> “Declaración de Principios del MIR. I Congreso del MIR. .”

<sup>163</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>164</sup> “Declaración de Principios del MIR. I Congreso del MIR. .”

<sup>165</sup> Portes, “Political Primitivism, Differential Socialization, and Lower-class Leftist Radicalism.”

<sup>166</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

<sup>167</sup> Farías, *La izquierda chilena (1969-1973)*.

*Hierarchy:* The MIR in this period maintained a highly centralized structure, with its leadership collected on the University of Concepción campus. A National Secretariat of five students made all decisions, and Central Committees of 21 militants each controlled a different organizational function.<sup>168</sup> Given the extraterritoriality of the campus, leadership operated openly for the first several years. However, the 1969 kidnapping of a journalist provoked a raid on university homes, partially dismantling the leadership.<sup>169</sup> The MIR's expectation that the movement would spread organically to rural areas led it to neglect the development of regional command structures, making it dependent on a highly vertical command system.

The 1969 party restructuring sought to decrease dependency on the National Secretariat. It developed a formalized command structure in Santiago and created hierarchical regional units, GPMs. Each GPMR included a director, a subdirector, and units of five militants, each in charge of operations, operative information, infrastructure, technology, or political units.<sup>170</sup> The GPMs clustered around cities in an effort to target urban populations and unions. This encouraged the group to expand while maintaining a unified decision-making apparatus. Individual liberty thus offered the MIR hierarchy space in which to develop a centralized and defined hierarchy.

*Membership:* Nearly all *miristas* were students. The group's belief in its early years that it would spread organically meant that it did not actively recruit from outside the Concepción campus. No barriers to entry existed, and the organization suffered from high number of uncommitted "aficionados" who supported violence but refused to engage in it.<sup>171</sup> Ideological heterogeneity plagued membership, and no military training was offered.<sup>172</sup> Thus during its first

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<sup>168</sup> Naranjo and Enriquez, *Miguel Enríquez y el proyecto Revolucionario en Chile*.

<sup>169</sup> David F. Belnap, "Terrorists Make Little Political Impact in Chile."

<sup>170</sup> Pascal Allende, *El MIR Chileno*.

<sup>171</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile*.

<sup>172</sup> "Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria."



years the group remained small, with untrained and uncommitted members. When in 1967 it began to undertake *tomas*, the organization focused on attracting as many poor and urban workers to the movement, offering little training and requiring little commitment.

The 1969 restructuring saw the group shift to improving membership quality. The expulsion of Traditionalists cut membership by between 15 and 20%, significantly improving cohesion among militants.<sup>173</sup> The group created guerrilla schools to teach revolutionary theory and “military arts.”<sup>174</sup> Membership requirements were developed. Prospective militants had to spend time first as supporters, participating in public meetings; then as applicants, when they could be introduced to organizational activities; and finally as militants, when they could participate in armed activity.<sup>175</sup> However, these barriers to entry were quite low and required no personal sacrifice, with leadership continuing to complain of *aficionados*.<sup>176</sup> Despite the creation of GPMs, furthermore, membership continued to center around leftist students. Though this period saw improvements, particularly in institutionalizing training, commitment-level and size remained suboptimal.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* During its first two years, the majority of MIR activity focused on propaganda and armed rhetoric. Though it identified as revolutionary, armed activity only began in 1967. It primarily focused on *tomas*, seizures that aligned with its self-perception as a mass-based guerrilla insurgency. It sought to gain the support of its target audience and generate fear that a destabilizing, Tupamaro-style insurgency could begin in Chile.<sup>177</sup> *Tomas* were the only MIR activity to increase steadily over this period: 8 occurred in 1968, 73 in 1969,

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile.*

<sup>177</sup> “Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria.”

and 220 in 1970.<sup>178</sup> However, the group's presence remained limited. Nearly all cases of overt violence occurred when *miristas* incited police into violence during protests. The abduction of a journalist, its most coordinated action, led to massive public outcry. The general level of MIR violence was thus unsteady and low. With the exception of its *tomas*, MIR tactics and violence level failed to breed any sense of threat in its operating environment.

### *Conclusions on the Frei Period*

Though the MIR refers to the “repression” of the Frei government as its greatest barrier to action, in fact the organization lacked the organizational coherence and external support to develop a presence in Chilean society.<sup>179</sup> High levels of representation gave radical leftists a voice in the legal political process, making the use of violence for socialism unnecessary. Strong individual liberty permitted the group to maintain a centralized structure and institute some membership training, areas in which the MIR improved as it matured. However, the group remained marginalized due to its unclear mission, the small size of its militant base, and its uncommitted membership. Its tactics and violence level failed to give the group any significant political weight. Thus though the MIR did mature as an organization, even in its final state it displayed weak strategic capacity.

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<sup>178</sup> Gazmuri R. , *Eduardo Frei Montalva Y Su Época*.

<sup>179</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chilean Resistance Courier. Special Supplement*.

## **Chapter 4: Terrorism under Allende**

Allende's victory created clear opportunities for MIR expansion: his daughter Beatriz, sister Laura, and nephew Andres Pascal Allende were all *miristas*.<sup>180</sup> Though Frei warned him that failure to control the MIR could lead to turmoil, the alignment of the interests of the group and the government led to Allende's acquiescence to its activities. Meanwhile he undertook controversial reforms often without the support of his legislature, which critically weakened levels of representation. No side was willing to compromise, leaving the country in political deadlock. In this context two other radical groups, the leftist VOP and rightist PyL, added to the sense that the country was descending into civil war. The MIR and PyL thrived during this period, benefiting from the political polarization that clarified their missions, widened the recruitment pools, and improved commitment levels among militants. Frustration radicalized the population, creating a political vacuum in which groups could operate with high strategic capacity.

Far from disassociating from the MIR, in the first year and a half of his administration Allende strengthened ties to the revolutionary organization. He granted amnesty to 40 *miristas* and allowed leaders such as Luciano Cruz, Humberto Sotomayor, and Bautista von Schowen to emerge from hiding.<sup>181</sup> Several MIR members were integrated into Allende's security detail, the Group of Personal Friends (GAP, *Grupo de Amigos Personales*).<sup>182</sup> The administration went so far as to use the MIR to carry out land expropriation. The MIR would foment trouble in unions, allowing the government to invoke a 1932 Chilean law that allowed the government to seize any factory being improperly used. Within six months of the elections, the MIR and UP had jointly

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> CIA FOIA, "Chile: Government Maintains Momentum."

<sup>182</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

expropriated nearly 1.5 million hectares of land. By June 1972, this had increased to 9 million hectares, approximately 4,690 farms.<sup>183</sup> The group thus came to occupy an extralegal position in Chilean society, based on the alignments of its interests with those of the socialist government.

The MIR's broad policy toward Allende became recognition, "in the sense of recognizing Allende's triumph as a victory of the workers that would open enormous possibilities for the revolutionary process," and "defense of the electoral victory."<sup>184</sup> In the event of a military coup, the MIR would itself become the armed wing of the government. To prepare for this, the MIR maintained a clandestine structure, providing training in "military arts" in rural guerrilla schools.<sup>185</sup> Meanwhile the MIR criticized the UP as reformist: "as long as the state apparatus, its bureaucratic and military structures, remain intact, we cannot go on [to socialism]; the state will continue to be an instrument of domination."<sup>186</sup> The group thus sought to push Allende further to the left. In addition, the organization pushed deeper into rural areas. The creation of Movement of Revolutionary Workers (MTR, *Movimiento de Trabajadores Revolucionarios*)<sup>187</sup> and Front of Revolutionary Peasants (FRC, *Frente de Campesinos Revolucionarios*)<sup>188</sup> sought to remove perceptions of elitism that surrounded the MIR.<sup>189</sup>

As the MIR expanded, a small but well-organized rightist terrorist group developed to overthrow Allende. The Fatherland and Liberty Nationalist Front (PyL) formed as a nationalist and authoritarian movement on the Catholic University campus in 1970, seeking to overturn the UP's electoral victory. The PyL aimed for a military government with limited civilian control, in

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<sup>183</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>184</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)*.

<sup>185</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>186</sup> "El MIR y el Resultado Electoral."

<sup>187</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>188</sup> "The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile."

<sup>189</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

the form of a partially elected legislature. Militants were almost entirely from the middle and upper class, with a high proportion of lawyers. The group did not seek expansion, however. Totalling at most 100 members, it received substantial support from the Chilean military and used its small size to perform complex activities such as assassinations.<sup>190</sup> While advocating violent overthrow, for the first year and a half of the Allende government the PyL were unarmed, instead using propaganda and self-constructed radio stations to incite protests.<sup>191</sup> Over time armed actions increased, particularly clashes with the MIR.<sup>192</sup>

Among the revolutionary left, the “defensive plan” of the MIR bred dissidence.<sup>193</sup> Former *miristas*, who either disagreed with current strategy or were expelled in 1969 as Traditionalists, formed the Organized Vanguard of the People (VOP) in 1971.<sup>194</sup> On June 8 the group assassinated Edmundo Perez Zujovic, its first and most significant action. Zujovic had served as vice-president of Chile under the Frei government and acted as head of the Christian Democrats under Allende. His assassin, Ronaldo Rivera Calderon, had belonged to the MIR until 1969.<sup>195</sup> The MIR harshly criticized the VOP, stating: “such terrorist actions clearly suit the interests of the opposition. They unified the opposition... the reformists won positions, the fascist military coup came to the point of materializing.”<sup>196</sup> The VOP responded in its *Self-Criticism* that all actions the organization did not announce beforehand were in fact the actions of the ultra-right attempting to defame them.<sup>197</sup> This included several bank robberies and two failed shootings,

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<sup>190</sup> Salazar Salvo, *Roberto Thieme*.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.

<sup>194</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile*.

<sup>195</sup> CIA FOIA, “MAPU Assassination.”

<sup>196</sup> “Lucha de Masas y No Terrorismo Anarquista. Entrevista de Maximo Gedda..”

<sup>197</sup> VOP, “Autocriticismo.”

which it attributed to the PyL.<sup>198</sup> Regardless of the truth of these statements, this heightened a sense of polarization already emerging among the general population.

Internal documents from years later criticize the group as too focused on physical rather than political growth.<sup>199</sup> In elections for the trade union CUT, the MIR received less than 2 percent of the vote.<sup>200</sup> However, political upheaval was now widespread throughout Chilean society. Strikes nearly tripled in 1971, and Allende constantly came into conflict with his legislature.<sup>201</sup> To limit political upheaval, the Allende administration initiated a TV and radio publicity campaign to sever any perceived relationship between the administration and the MIR. He also arrested members of the Socialist Party, MAPU, and MIR under the Law of Internal State Security for supporting armed revolution.<sup>202</sup> In response, the MIR turned its rhetoric against the UP, calling the administration an “instrument of the bourgeoisie.” To account for this rapid change in policy, the MIR claimed that the group’s enthusiasm for socialism had prevented it from seeing the government’s true “class character.”<sup>203</sup>

When UP support ended, the MIR became preoccupied not with preventing a military coup, with ensuring survival when it occurred. In its current state, the leadership realized, the group acted too openly and would be too easily destroyed.<sup>204</sup> It reorganized toward “democratic centralism,” meaning a less centralized but cooperative governing body.<sup>205</sup> The MIR broadened the Central Committee; increased the frequency of meetings; reevaluated and reassigned

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<sup>198</sup> *Documentos.*

<sup>199</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile.*

<sup>200</sup> Landsberger and McDaniel, “Hypermobilization in Chile, 1970-1973.”

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>202</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas.*

<sup>203</sup> “Memorandum, Resumen del Comité Central del 13 y 14 de Noviembre. Documentos del MIR..”

<sup>204</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)*

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

leadership roles; and distributed internal documents to regional commands. It also sought to strengthen ties to the PS, MAPU, DC, and militant low-level Communists.<sup>206</sup> The MIR encouraged liberalization of the military in order to win support among the armed forces, pushing for salary hikes, the right to vote, an eight-hour day, the right for mass meetings, and the right to act independently in the event of orders for a coup d'etat.<sup>207</sup>

Allende also targeted the PyL more directly in an attempt to stifle conflict. Though it had always opposed the government, it had operated relatively openly and with public figures at its head until 1972. However, Allende's suppression created a backlash:

It provoked an upsurge of sympathizers; it generated unsettledness in those already incorporated, given their vulnerability to attack from the left in the current state of the government; and for many young people, who were attracted by the image of a paramilitary group, the situation frustrated them to the point that they sought not only some military instruction but to have some armaments at their disposal.<sup>208</sup>

Allende's attack on the small PyL conflated its importance, painting it as a rightist response to the MIR. It became perceived as a group to protect the right against the assaults of a liberal government and radical leftist groups. It continued to act despite the offensive, and gained ground as conservative elements radicalized.

When two political seats opened in rural areas in Chile in early 1973, these districts became battlegrounds to determine the relative political strength of the right and left. Both sides organized marches and meetings ending in violent confrontations. The right won both seats,

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>208</sup> Salazar Salvo, *Roberto Thieme*. 122.

though the MIR claimed that this simply precipitated a prolonged war of the classes.<sup>209</sup> Soon after a rapid succession of events continued the country's political deterioration. On June 27, 1973, the Naval Advisor Arturo Araya Peeters was assassinated. The Armed Forces blamed Jose Riquelme, supposedly a member of the MIR.<sup>210</sup> Days later, however, engineering student and PyL member Mario Rohas Zeghers confessed to conducting the assassination with a group of eight others. Still the MIR was blamed for attempting to provoke civil war.<sup>211</sup>

The failed coup that occurred in June 1973 had two effects on the MIR. First, it intensified the conviction that Chile was headed towards civil war. Second, it highlighted that the organization remained unprepared for armed resistance. The MIR failed to mobilize any significant response to the *tancazo*, despite its attempts at reorganization. To remedy this, it initiated organization-building efforts, increasing factory seizures to strengthen *cordones industriales*.<sup>212</sup> In August of 1973, the political situation intensely deteriorated. On August 13, a series of dynamite attacks by the MIR destroyed high-tension towers across the country, cutting off radio and television channels during a speech by Allende.<sup>213</sup> On August 22, the parliament voted that Allende had violated the constitution.<sup>214</sup> Weeks later Augusto Pinochet became chief of the armed forces. On September 11, the MIR's predictions were fulfilled, and on September 11 Pinochet established a military junta.

### *Strategic Capacity under Allende*

Strategic capacity improved significantly under Allende, given limited representation and high individual liberty. As politics in the country ground to a halt, the result of an unpopular

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<sup>209</sup> *Documentos*.

<sup>210</sup> Moss, *El Experimento Marxista Chileno*.

<sup>211</sup> Selser, *Chile para Recordar*.

<sup>212</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>213</sup> Selser, *Chile para Recordar*.

<sup>214</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.



government and staunch opposition, terrorist groups could expand in those areas that high representation typically suppressed. Thus the missions of operating groups became clearer, the recruitment pool widened, membership became more committed, and violence increased. By offering two extreme poles, groups could justify armed action based on preventing the growing influence of the opposing faction. Both the MIR and the PyL thus displayed high strategic capacity. By manifesting deep political divides through violence, the MIR and PyL both gained disproportionate political weight in the society, creating the impression that the country was rapidly descending into civil conflict.

### *MIR Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* Initially, the MIR mission suffered from the confused relationship that developed between the group and the Allende administration. The election of a socialist government presented challenges to the group's platform of reform, given that its end goal of socialism had progressed nonviolently. Rather than taking an opposition stance, the organization crafted itself as the government's armed wing, its slogan proclaiming: "Allende understands you, the MIR defends you."<sup>215</sup> This did create some confusion as to who constituted the enemy, with the MIR aiming its rhetoric primarily at a nebulous bourgeoisie.<sup>216</sup>

When political turmoil intensified and Allende became less tolerant of the MIR, the organization adjusted its mission to focus on the inevitability of military takeover. Its central justification lay in acting as the armed defender of the will of the people, protecting citizens from a rightist offensive. Its platform focused on restructuring and political work to gain support to prepare the masses for the oncoming coup, a defensive rather than offensive stance. As political

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<sup>215</sup>Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)* 105.

<sup>216</sup>"Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria."

polarization intensified, the MIR was offered an increasingly clear set of enemies: the PyL, rightists in the military, conservative legislature, and wealthy Chileans threatened by the rise of socialism. Socialism through electoral politics no longer seemed feasible, and in fact a military coup became an increasingly prominent fear. This allowed the MIR to overcome the elitism typically associated with the mission of groups using terrorism in democracy. The group thus clarified its mission, placing itself at the forefront of a struggle to protect the general population.

*Hierarchy:* MIR hierarchy under Allende remained highly centralized, even as it expanded. The organization divided Chile into North, Center, and South, each with its own Central Committee modeled after the national formation.<sup>217</sup> When Allende broke ties with the MIR in 1972, it sought to develop “democratic centralism” for its hierarchy to increase its resiliency when the military coup occurred. The organization thus continued its development of regional leadership bodies and encouraged cadre specialization in propagandistic, infrastructural, and technical duties. It developed clandestine traveling cadres to transfer information and decisions among the regional governing bodies.<sup>218</sup> The National Secretariat increased meeting frequency for Central and Regional Committees to ensure cohesion even as hierarchy became less vertical.<sup>219</sup> “Democratic centralism” ensured that while decisions were still made at the elite level, more leaders were involved in decision-making, leaving the organization less dependent on an extremely small leadership. Hierarchy thus remained highly centralized, but became less dependent on a small group of elites.

*Membership:* The Allende period allowed the MIR to expand in size, while maintaining a core group of highly committed militants. Until late 1971, the MIR maintained the membership

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<sup>217</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>218</sup> “Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria.”

<sup>219</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

requirements it had developed under Frei. When political turmoil intensified, however, the MIR adjusted its relationship to the “mass movement” by making its admissions more “flexible.”<sup>220</sup> The process occurred more rapidly, and the group allowed the participation of those who supported the MIR but did not participate in violence. The development of the FTR and MCR, worker and peasant subgroups, encouraged the participation of broader populations. Thus the size of the militant base increased. The Santiago Embassy estimated that in December 1972 the MIR had about 5,000 militants and over 20,000 supporters.<sup>221</sup>

As political turmoil intensified, the MIR preserved a clandestine structure and a committed core militant base. These members were trained in “military arts” in rural guerrilla training camps.<sup>222</sup> Instructions were given for how to respond to interrogation if captured: “No one knows anything about the revolutionary militias; at least, no one says they do. The truth is forgotten completely. Always negate participation.”<sup>223</sup> Among this core group of militants, the MIR allegedly practiced extreme measures of control. On August 14, 1971, the MIR elite allegedly staged the suicide of MIR leader Luciano Cruz Aguayo, who was found dead in his house due to a gas leak. Aguayo had been marginalized from the group for his association with Max Marambio, a MIR militant cast out for “disgraceful treatment” of a Chilean naval officer’s son while serving in the GAP.<sup>224</sup> The MIR’s strategy in membership during this period was, therefore, to increase size while preserving a group of highly committed and trained militants.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* The MIR continued to focus on *tomas*, with more overt violence occurring primarily during confrontations with police and PyL members. Land and

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<sup>220</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)* 29.

<sup>221</sup> CIA FOIA, “The Status of the MIR.”

<sup>222</sup> “Algunos Antecedentes del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria.”

<sup>223</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*. 112.

<sup>224</sup> CIA FOIA, “Death of Aguayo.”

factory seizures became more common as poor communities became frustrated with the slow pace of reform. The MIR would then impose a “socialist discipline” on the squatter community. From a base in the New Havana community outside Santiago, leaders initiated a set of strategic *tomas* designed so that the encampments would encircle cities. These *cordones industriales* (industrial belts) would isolate the major cities when the revolution began.<sup>225</sup> The group did not target government officials, believing that this would drive moderates to the right.<sup>226</sup> Instead the MIR focused on mass expansion and preparing for a military coup. Though it did not use high-coordination or symbolic attacks, the its high levels of activity made its presence seem far-reaching. This contributed to perception that the MIR was driving the country towards civil war, giving it great weight in the political sphere of the time.

#### *PyL Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* The PyL’s mission benefited from a clear platform of changes and enemy, focused on overthrowing Allende and countering the influence of the MIR. Its platform rested on four central tenants: “an integrated state, an authoritarian government, an integrated economy and a functional democracy.”<sup>227</sup> A “functional democracy” implied a military government that limited participation of political parties, preventing the turmoil of the current period. Its justification centered on countering the MIR and the increasing power of the left, allowing the PyL to exploit the state of political polarization. Lack of representation permitted the PyL to craft itself as the rightist voice, creating a clear mission firmly grounded in political context.

*Hierarchy and Membership:* The PyL was an extremely small group that revolved around a unified leadership council. It did not seek to extend membership to the broader population,

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<sup>225</sup> “The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile.”

<sup>226</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.

<sup>227</sup> Salazar Salvo, *Roberto Thieme*.

instead leaving violence to a core group of members. Founded on the Catholic University of Chile's campus in 1970, the group's core membership were wealthy lawyers, allowing the group access to significant resources. One American PyL member, Michael Townley, claimed to have 50 to 60 kilos of dynamite in his house for use in assassinating Allende.<sup>228</sup> By leaving the central actions in the hand of a relatively small elite group, the PyL ensured coordinated decision-making and high commitment. Turmoil permitted the PyL to align with conservative members of the military, overcoming any limitations presented by its small size.<sup>229</sup> The group sought broader support only in its strikes and protests, which typically involved middle class women. The PyL thus maintained centralized hierarchy and a small, committed membership to permit coordinated decision-making and unified activity.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* the PyL maintained high activity by diversifying its actions: consistent political propaganda to radicalize anti-Allende elements; high-coordination, highly symbolic attacks in conjunction with the military; and low-level bombings and clashes with the MIR. The PyL orchestrated a number of sophisticated attacks, often with the aid of the military, including the high-coordination assassination of General Schneider and the failed *tancazo* coup. It also purposefully struck civilian and rightist targets to implicate the MIR, emphasizing that Allende could not even control other leftists.<sup>230</sup> It proved highly effective at propagandistic activity as well: in August 1972 the PyL used their radio station, "Radio Agricultura," to encourage housewives to bang pots and pans in the streets for 15 minutes each night.<sup>231</sup> Through this wide set of activities the PyL crafted itself as the militant wing of the right, contributing to ungovernability and offering it political weight disproportionate to its small size.

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> CIA FOIA, "Right Wing Terrorist Formation."

<sup>231</sup> Haslam, *The Nixon administration and the death of Allende's Chile*.

### *VOP Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* Of the three groups, the VOP remained the weakest in all areas of strategic capacity. Its mission was extremely unclear, pushing for immediate socialist revolution but offering no vision of the struggle or the post-success future. Its polemics attacked essentially all active political groups. In June 1971, the VOP released an “assassination list” that included President Salvador Allende; Minister of the Interior Jose Toha Gonzalez; Under Secretary of the Interior Daniel Vargara; Director of the Department of Investigations Eduardo Paredes; and members of both the Communist Party and the MIR.<sup>232</sup> This highlights that the group attacked not only the “bourgeoisie” but also “reformist” political parties, a classification it applied to the MIR. The MIR itself condemned the VOP as elitist and counterproductive, leaving it isolated among radical elements. Its mission failed to develop justification for violence, a platform of changes, or a clear enemy.

*Hierarchy and Membership:* Prior to the Zujovic assassination, the VOP’s most significant attack, the group included a five person Central Committee, three “action commands” of 12 each, and a technical support apparatus of 10. After the assassination, the police dismantled at least one action command.<sup>233</sup> The VOP did manage to maintain a centralized hierarchy, but despite pushing for broad-based revolution its membership peaked at approximately 50 and fell rapidly after Zujovic’s death.<sup>234</sup> VOP members were largely those who had been expelled from the MIR, and they often undertook rogue action. In terms of both hierarchy and membership, the VOP thus failed to develop any significant coherence.

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<sup>232</sup> CIA FOIA, “Members of the Organized Vanguard of the People (VOP) have compiled a new assassination list.”

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* Sporadic activity and alienating attacks marked the tactics and violence level of the VOP. Its use of political assassinations marginalized the group from its leftist support base, which saw attacking the government as encouraging unity among the rightist opposition. Despite protests from the MIR, the group insisted upon using low-level bombings that alienated mass opinion. Even in the tumult of that period, the VOP's volatile violence level failed to establish it as a significant threat. It did not coordinate an attack on a single target identified in the "assassination list," showing its inability to live up to its rhetoric.<sup>235</sup> Thus the tactics and violence level of the VOP were weak and failed to communicate a coherent message.

#### *Conclusions on the Allende Period*

In its internal documents, the MIR refers to the Allende period as its "Golden Age," lauding the "democratic freedoms" that it offered.<sup>236</sup> In fact, however, it was not the freedom but the weakened democratic representation that permitted groups in this period to expand. The PyL and the MIR developed political importance in Chile by acting as the violent manifestations of two highly divided political poles, neither of which were willing to tolerate the influence of the opposing faction. The MIR became the violent wing of the left, its mission of prolonged guerrilla warfare striking a cord in a highly divided society. The PyL acted as the rightist response, engaging in armed clashes with the MIR and heightening a perception of lawlessness. These social schisms permitted terrorist strategic capacity to overcome weaknesses traditionally associated with democracy, to improve mission and membership.

The appearance of multiple armed groups operating within a single context also highlights how internal processes vary significantly. While both the PyL and MIR had high

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<sup>235</sup> Farías, *La izquierda chilena (1969-1973)*.

<sup>236</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)*. 117.

strategic capacity at that time, they varied in treatment of membership. The MIR sought expansion in size and scope, reaching into rural areas to take territory and drum up support among the poor. While the PyL had a significant support base, it allowed entrance to only the most committed, essentially making membership by invitation only.<sup>237</sup> This primarily relates to the self-perception of each group: the MIR viewed itself as the protector of the people, requiring broad grassroots support, while the PyL saw itself as the protector of the state, requiring symbolic action that would finally provoke the military seizure control.

The VOP represents a more extreme case of variations among groups. Its poor strategic capacity did not relate to its operating environment, as can be seen in the high strategic capacity of the MIR and PyL. The VOP simply did not exploit the features of its operating environment, instead acting completely disconnected from any realistic chances for success. The VOP developed because it could not adjust to the alliance between the MIR and the government. Wrote MIR leadership: “they did not understand the new political period that had opened up with the insertion of the left into the government; because of this, they did not adopt the new tactics and political strategy.”<sup>238</sup> One account describes how a member bombed a government office out of retribution for the death of his son in a protest.<sup>239</sup> Thus the failure of the VOP to develop its strategic capacity reflects organizational flaws rather than external challenges. Overall, the Allende period offered a weakened democracy that bred both motivation and opportunity for terrorist violence.

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<sup>237</sup> Salazar Salvo, *Roberto Thieme*.

<sup>238</sup> Farías, *La izquierda chilena (1969-1973)*. 79.

<sup>239</sup> García Naranjo, *Historias Derrotadas*.



## **Chapter 5: Terrorism under Pinochet and the DINA**

The coup that established Pinochet as Chile's dictator occurred so rapidly and so completely that opposition had no time to respond. Many believed that the imposition of military rule would be temporary, just until political divisions had been bridged.<sup>240</sup> In 1979 MIR wrote of the time: "After going through a period such as that of the UP, during which an enormous amount of ground was rapidly covered in terms of organization and consciousness, the working class and the masses then entered a period of disorientation and confusion."<sup>241</sup> The MIR barely survived the coup. Armed resistance occurred essentially for only a few days directly following the coup, before most leftists were captured, killed, or exiled. While the period offered greater clarity of mission, the MIR's hierarchy, membership, and ability to coordinated hierarchy were crushed by DINA repression. Thus the absence of representation and individual liberty made this period one of low strategic capacity.

Since the MIR already had a clandestine structure in place, certain elements survived. In contrast, legal political parties, including the Socialist Party, were crushed. Of the 26 top leaders of the MAPU, 16 were known to be both alive and in Chile, but six of these were under arrest.<sup>242</sup> The DINA used torture and surveillance to penetrate MIR cells.<sup>243</sup> By December 1973, a report produced for the *junta* stated that resistance remained only in the provinces of Concepción and Valdivia.<sup>244</sup> However, Pinochet overemphasized the leftist threat to justify political controls. The regime claimed to have in its first six months seized 100,000 pistols and revolvers; 12,000 combat rifles; 500 rocket launchers; and 70 antitank guns, "enough to arm a massive

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<sup>240</sup> Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989*.

<sup>241</sup> pp 73. Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)*

<sup>242</sup> CIA FOIA, "The State of MAPU after the Coupp."

<sup>243</sup> Ensalaco, *Chile Under Pinochet*.

<sup>244</sup> CIA FOIA, "Movements against the Junta."

uprising.”<sup>245</sup> The Chilean Civil Police also estimated there to be 10,000 MIR extremists, and 100,000 MAPU extremists. Given that only 100,000 votes were cast for the MAPU in March, this estimate seems dramatically exaggerated.<sup>246</sup>

While the MIR did survive the military coup, by May the CIA declared it “practically non-existent.”<sup>247</sup> Most members escaped into exile, where they would publish translations of the newsletter *el Rebelde* and distribute pamphlets describing the regime’s human rights abuses. They also published documents describing means to strengthen the MIR within Chile, including a systematized plan for militant training in the current political climate.<sup>248</sup> However, repression made distribution of pamphlets essentially impossible, leaving the domestic organization uncoordinated. In October 1974, the MIR suffered another severe setback when the security services killed the Secretary General, Miguel Enriquez. While the DINA claimed to be investigating a bank robbery in Santiago, two officers recognized MIR leader Sotomayor in a nearby car. They followed him back to a house and engaged in a shoot-out with those inside, killing Enriquez. The DINA did not allow any other intelligence service to examine these materials confiscated.<sup>249</sup>

Andres Pascal Allende, President Allende’s nephew, replaced Enriquez as acting Secretary General. He immediately took refuge on Church property, since Pinochet was unwilling to alienate the Catholic population by conducting raids against priests.<sup>250</sup> In January 1975, Pascal encouraged militants to leave Chile and continue the fight abroad. The DINA

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<sup>245</sup> pp 36. Ensalaco, *Chile Under Pinochet*

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> CIA FOIA, “MIR Arrests.”

<sup>248</sup> MIR National Commission of Political Education of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), in the Chilean underground, “Notes on Cadre Formation. .”

<sup>249</sup> CIA FOIA, “Death of Miguel Enriquez.”

<sup>250</sup> CIA FOIA, “Parallel Government.”

continued to target the MIR, seeking to break its will as well as its leadership. DINA officials threw the body of a dead militant into the Italian Embassy residence compound, where 300 leftists had asylum.<sup>251</sup> They arrested Pascal Allende's parents, creating a MIR scandal when Allende tried to negotiate a deal with the government for their release.<sup>252</sup> In December alone 123 *miristas* were captured.<sup>253</sup>

The MIR struggled to maintain some limited presence. The Cuban government provided funding and training to militants abroad, a low-cost but symbolic action for Castro. It sought to intensify connections to the former UP parties to form a Revolutionary Party, though the Socialist and Communist Parties continued to oppose armed struggle to overthrow the dictatorship.<sup>254</sup> The lack of representation and individual liberty of the DINA period thus crushed the ability of the MIR to act as a violent organization. On a group-level, its ability to make decisions and coordinate action was destroyed. Beyond a few isolated incidents, such as bank robberies, the group was inactive. In fact Pinochet overemphasized its presence to legitimize the continuation of the state of siege, to legitimize continued DINA repression.

#### *Strategic Capacity under Pinochet and the DINA*

Even after a year of planning for an “inevitable” military coup, the MIR was devastated when it actually occurred. After extremely limited violence in the opening days of the military dictatorship, the DINA suppressed essentially all resistance activity. In terms of strategic capacity, the MIR's only clear success lay in its development of a strong mission. While support was wide, the personal sacrifice required for participation and the high likelihood of detection

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<sup>251</sup> CIA FOIA, “Chile: MIR on the Run.”

<sup>252</sup> CIA FOIA, “MIR Connection with the Government.”

<sup>253</sup> CIA FOIA, “Extreme Left in Chile Crushed.”

<sup>254</sup> MIR National Commission of Political Education of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), in the Chilean underground, “Notes on Cadre Formation. .”

made its militant base extremely small. High commitment could not overcome the immense barriers placed on its operations by DINA repression. In fact, the MIR likely only survived the coup because of its preexisting clandestine structure. It remained a presence in Chile only in Pinochet's warnings that the group continued to lurk in the shadows, waiting for its opportunity to impose Communism.

*Mission:* Under the DINA, the MIR put aside Marxist-Leninism in favor of a goal of government overthrow, in order to align with a broader segment of the population.<sup>255</sup> The lack of any pathway for political expression justified violence as a legitimate recourse, and Pinochet's government offered a clear and visible enemy. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the MIR's mission lay in its awareness of its own weakness: "recognizing the military weakness of its forces, MIR does not plan to confront the government's security forces."<sup>256</sup> Instead, internal documents focus on: "developing the capacity to plan and appraise a military situation, both tactically and strategically; knowing how to combine the use of armed struggle with other forms of struggle, according to each concrete situation; and having the capacity to use and apply military technology."<sup>257</sup> It reformulated its strategy for resistance into a rebuilding phase; an armed propaganda campaign to show the vulnerability of the junta; and finally the formation of a leftist coalition to lead opposition.<sup>258</sup> The Pinochet dictatorship thus clarified the MIR's mission, which became deeply rooted in the current political situation.

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<sup>255</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)* .

<sup>256</sup> "The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile." 7.

<sup>257</sup> MIR National Commission of Political Education of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), in the Chilean underground, "Notes on Cadre Formation. ." 11.

<sup>258</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)* .

*Hierarchy:* Hierarchy suffered almost irreparable damage in the post-coup period. The majority of leaders were captured or exiled, and their replacements were often young and inexperienced. The national leaders were Hernan Aguilo Martinez, a member of the political commission and secretary of the Santiago regional committees; Juan Olivares, member of the Santiago Regional and Central Committees; and “Barrientos,” whose position was unknown. Both Aguilo and Olivares adopted leadership roles after security services captured or killed prior leaders.<sup>259</sup> Within a year the MIR reestablished a rudimentary formal structure. Resistance Committees, of up to seven militants, represented the first attempt to develop a decentralized network capable of operating in an inhospitable environment. Yet the disconnection between various committees made communication and coordination almost impossible: “interrogations of members revealed that one of their primary concerns is their inability to communicate with one another.”<sup>260</sup> The effectiveness of DINA intelligence reports left even these small bands under constant threat of detection. Internal documents from leaders could not be distributed nationally.

Pinochet actively undermined the credibility of MIR leadership as part of his counterterrorism policy, leading to internal factionalism in addition to its operational limitations. In 1975 the government published a letter exchange between leaders Pascal and Sotomayor, who was undergoing “rehabilitation” in a camp in Cuba after he sought asylum in the Costa Rican embassy. In the letter exchange Sotomayor accused Pascal of misusing a million US dollars of party funds. The letters also stated that Miguel Enriquez’s widow Carmen Castillo was living in Marseilles, France on MIR funds.<sup>261</sup> Pascal Allende was expelled from the organization when he sought asylum, contradicting his own statements when he expelled Sotomayor for seeking

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<sup>259</sup> CIA FOIA, “The Status of the MIR.”

<sup>260</sup> CIA FOIA, “DINA Raids.”

<sup>261</sup> CIA FOIA, “The Status of the MIR.”

asylum in October 1974. Thus the hierarchy of the MIR was largely dismantled and its leadership discredited, with only the most minor revolutionary units surviving.

*Membership:* Only about 10 to 15 percent of the MIR's total hard-core militancy remained in Chile, with about 900 militants having been killed, arrested, or "disappeared."<sup>262</sup> The DINA's constant detection of MIR meetings and attempts to regroup left the organization without "sufficient credentials to maintain and attract the necessary support for continued activity."<sup>263</sup> Barriers to entry due to required personal sacrifice deterred most all militants from joining the struggle. The few surviving units had to take steps to prevent DINA infiltration that further limited size: "because of the very requirements of secrecy and security by which the committees must operate, the selection of their members (done by the person or persons who decide to form it) is extremely rigorous."<sup>264</sup>

Those militants remaining in the country displayed high commitment, willing to accept immense personal risk for the good of the MIR. Given that no formal hierarchy existed, the individual took on great importance in keeping the organization alive. In its June 1974 *Notes on Cadre Formation*, the MIR laid out a plan for redevelopment based on self-education and "self-criticism [as] an indissoluble part of the evaluation of the task."<sup>265</sup> To further limit potential for under-commitment, the MIR harshly punished defecting members. In the March 1975 issue of *el Rebelde*, it published a death list of 12 members branded traitors for collaborating with the government.<sup>266</sup> Training, however, occurred only outside of the country, where MIR militants

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)* . 35.

<sup>265</sup> MIR National Commission of Political Education of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), in the Chilean underground, "Notes on Cadre Formation. ." 21.

<sup>266</sup> CIA FOIA, "MIR Punishes."

operated in Cuba and the Soviet Block.<sup>267</sup> The MIR membership suffered from an overly restricted size and a lack of domestic training, though low individual liberty made its membership base extremely committed.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* The MIR during this period focused on propaganda and organizational strengthening, with few other actions taken. The first years of the Pinochet regime saw almost no resistance from the revolutionary left. Between September and December 1973, 15 members of the armed forces, 14 policemen, and one investigator were killed.<sup>268</sup> The majority of this occurred on September 11 or within days of the coup. Between January 1974 and August 1977, meanwhile, six police or military figures were killed for political reasons, and only four of these were believed to be the result of the MIR.<sup>269</sup> Given its limited resources, attacks typically involved hand grenades, machineguns, and pistols stockpiled during the Allende administration. These were supplemented with Molotov cocktails and *miguelitos*, metal devices used to deflate automobile tires. Most actions involved just 1 or 2 militants.<sup>270</sup> While the MIR's strategy stated that, after rebuilding, it would use armed propaganda to destabilize the junta, its inability to coordinate restricted its attacks.<sup>271</sup>

The MIR stayed afloat by robbing banks and supermarkets, receiving economic aid from Cuba, and receiving arms from Palestinian organizations such as the PLFP.<sup>272</sup> Starting in 1974 the MIR attempted to create a rural base in the south of Chile to avoid operating in urban centers,

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<sup>267</sup> *Miguel Enríquez Y El Proyecto Revolucionario En Chile.*

<sup>268</sup> "Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace."

<sup>269</sup> "GTD1 Home Page."

<sup>270</sup> "Terrorismo 1976-1990."

<sup>271</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)* .

<sup>272</sup> "The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile."

where it felt more vulnerable to detection.<sup>273</sup> The group was also forced to adjust its propaganda mechanisms in order to communicate politically while minimizing the chance of network infiltration: “revolutionary propaganda will have to adopt new forms that will obviously make it less efficient. Verbal communication and individual agitation will become more important. Propaganda, as a means to restore hope and confidence to the masses and provide leadership, still remains fundamental, but carrying it out involves risks.”<sup>274</sup> DINA repression and the resulting lack of individual liberty thus prevented the organization from coordinating any significant activity, making it of no threat to the dictatorship.

#### *Conclusions on the DINA Period*

Under the UP government the MIR had operated essentially unchecked, buoyed by limited representation but the presence of high individual liberty. The military coup essentially crushed the group. The constraints placed by the new operating environment crippled the internal processes of the group, dismantling its hierarchy and severely restricting its size. The ruthless intelligence and repressive practices employed by the DINA left the MIR unable to coordinate activity. While it had a clear mission and a highly committed membership, this meant little when the group had no ability to communicate, either internally among regional units or to its target audience. That no other resistance emerged and leftist political parties were crushed highlights that the MIR could likely only operate under the DINA due to its preexisting clandestine nature. Thus the DINA period crippled strategic capacity.

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chile the MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance (Resistance Courier Special Edition Number One)* . 130.



## **Chapter 6: Terrorism under Pinochet and the CNI**

The MIR wrote of the beginning of the CNI period: “the second half of 1977, and mainly the last three months of the year, marked a turning point and signaled a qualitative change in the activity of the mass movement and the resistance struggle.”<sup>275</sup> Almost destroyed by DINA repression, under the CNI the MIR began to regroup and undertake armed action. While unable to fully recover organizationally, new groups self-identifying as armed emerged to fill the political space. This created a secondary effect of interorganizational competition, with the MIR, FPMR, and MAPU-Lautaros all seeking to assert dominance. The MIR’s relatively unclear ideology, underdeveloped hierarchy, and inappropriate tactics led to the FPMR’s rise as a replacement. In turn, changes in the external environment led to the ascension of the MAPU-Lautaros. Overall, aggregate strategic capacity rose in response to the improved individual liberty offered by the loosening of repression.

The destruction of the DINA offered space for individual liberty to arise, with the CNI focused on intelligence rather than repression. The use of “disappearances” and torture, particularly those targeting the families of the left, decreased.<sup>276</sup> Levels of representation remained low, with Pinochet actively preventing the development of leftist parties and refusing to incorporate liberal voices into his government. In the opening phase of the CNI, the MIR continued a defensive strategy of rebuilding. In early 1978, it formulated “Operation Return,” which sought to reestablish the MIR in Chile by smuggling exiled leaders back into the country. In September 1978, Operation Return brought leaders Rubén Orta Jopia and Santiago Rubilar

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<sup>275</sup> Organ of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, *Chilean Resistance Courier. Special Supplement. 2.*

<sup>276</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

Salazar from Cuba.<sup>277</sup> The plan also sought to develop formalized structures in rural areas to radicalize its support base among the poor.<sup>278</sup>

Operation Return failed to lead to structural growth. Security forces captured several returning leaders, and disbanded the MIR contingent in rural Neltume.<sup>279</sup> Continuing with a policy of rebuilding, rather than more overt violent action, also bred internal dissent. On November 23, 1978, the house of the Supreme Court Judge Israel Bortquez was bombed. MIR central command claimed that a rogue cell, controlled by Alejandro Olivares, had conducted the action out of frustration with the “defensive strategy.” It went on to say that former DINA members had infiltrated the cell in order to influence Olivares’ actions.<sup>280</sup>

In 1980, the MIR initiated the second phase of its overarching strategy, the period of “armed propaganda.” In its most spectacular action, on June 15 *miristas* assassinated the head of the Army Intelligence School, Lieutenant Colonel Roger Juan de Dios Vergara Campo.<sup>281</sup> When economic discontent led to protests and strikes in 1981, the MIR attempted to capitalize on this by conducting a series of 26 bombings against water, electrical, subway, and railroad facilities.<sup>282</sup> However, “instead of generating support for the MIR, these attempts have drawn media criticism and strong counterattacks from police and carabinero intelligence units.”<sup>283</sup> The PC criticized the MIR for its counterproductive armed action, although the party itself funded technical training of militants in Cuba, the Soviet Block, and the Sandinistas’ Nicaragua.<sup>284</sup> Communist Party exiled

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<sup>277</sup> Pérez, “Historia del MIR.”

<sup>278</sup> Donoso, “Teoría de la violencia y estrategia de poder en el Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria, 1967-1986.”

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> CIA FOIA, “MIR Deny Bombing.”

<sup>281</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

<sup>282</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

<sup>283</sup> CIA FOIA, “Change in MIR Tactics.”

<sup>284</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*.

leadership requested that Castro cut off support to the MIR, reinforcing schisms among leftists.<sup>285</sup>

By 1979 the MAPU concluded that a peaceful exit from authoritarianism could not occur. In its 5<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session in 1983, the MAPU decided to establish an armed wing to capitalize on the discontent of the people.<sup>286</sup> The Lautaro Youth Movement (MJL, *Movimiento Juvenil Lautaro*), named after a famous native Mapuche warrior, aimed to mobilize protests throughout Santiago and to undertake acts of armed propaganda.<sup>287</sup> Later the Rebel Popular Lautaro Forces (FRPL, *Fuerzas Rebeldes y Populares Lautaros*) developed as a more exclusively terrorist organization. By 1985, the political MAPU, the MJL, and the FRPL had merged to form the MAPU-Lautaros.<sup>288</sup>

In December 1983, the Communist Party, though for years vehemently opposed to violent overthrow, decided to establish an armed wing of its own. In a clandestine conference, it founded the Patriotic Front of Manuel Rodriguez (FPMR) to carry out acts of terrorism against the military regime.<sup>289</sup> The group acted in conjunction with the propaganda and mobilization works of the PC's Rodriguist Militias.<sup>290</sup> Publicly, the party denied ties to the FPMR. In turn, the FPMR maintained few ideological ties to communism. Instead its central manifesto listed its central goals as ending the current regime; repealing Pinochet's 1980 constitution; and establishing a directly elected provisional government.<sup>291</sup> The organization stressed that

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<sup>285</sup> CIA FOIA, "Joint FARC and MIR activities."

<sup>286</sup> "Resoluciones Políticas del Quinto Pleno Nacional."

<sup>287</sup> De Luigi, Maria A., "Los Lautaro: Hijos Descarriados de la Izquierda."

<sup>288</sup> Arriaza, "El MAPU-Lautaro en las Protestas Populares (1978-1985)."

<sup>289</sup> Partido Comunista, "Para voltear a Pinochet el único camino es el enfrentamiento continuo y ascendente, Informe al Pleno del Comité Central del Partido Comunista."

<sup>290</sup> Palma Salamanca, *Una Larga Cola De Acero*.

<sup>291</sup> Groth, "Armed Wing of the People."

“paramilitary preparation” of the people to struggle against the armed services of the dictatorship would create “paralyzation,” which would undermine the ability of the government to rule.<sup>292</sup>

In 1985, Chile suffered more terrorist bombings than any other country in the world.<sup>293</sup> The government responded by unleashing the police, imposing a curfew, limiting the publication of news describing terrorist activities, and creating military courts to control outbreaks of violence. Pinochet attempted to control dissent by increasing repression and surveillance. In 1986, a student protest led to army officials deliberately setting fire to two young Chileans.<sup>294</sup> In July the CNI intercepted the final segment of a massive influx of arms for the FPMR in the rural third region of Atacama.<sup>295</sup>

On September 7<sup>th</sup> FPMR militants attempted to assassinate Pinochet. Though they failed, the operation required complex coordination, with 30 members performing a variety of functions.<sup>296</sup> Following the attack, 17 FPMR operatives were captured, not counting logistical and communications personnel. The CNI publicly assassinated the organization’s heads, Ricardo Ignacion Valenzuela Poheresky and Patricio Acosta Castro.<sup>297</sup> Eyewitnesses stated that several men were gunned down from behind, and others killed as they attempted to surrender. A wave of disappearances, of both armed and unarmed leftists, struck Santiago. Known as “Operation Albania,” this crackdown resulted in the death of 12 FPMR members within 24 hours. The CNI claimed all died in shootouts with police.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> CIA FOIA, “Chile: Rising Political Violence.”

<sup>294</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.

<sup>295</sup> Benavente Urbina, *El Triángulo Del Terror*.

<sup>296</sup> CIA FOIA, “FPMR Attempts Assassination of President Pinochet.”

<sup>297</sup> Benavente Urbina, *El Triángulo Del Terror*.

<sup>298</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*.

The repression unleashed after the attempted assassination led to a breakdown in relations between the PC and FPMR.<sup>299</sup> Seeing the armed wing as a liability, Communist leadership attempted to dismantle the group, though instead the organization proclaimed its independence:

We cannot act irresponsibly towards our people and dismantle the Front. We already took some steps in October 1986 to reduce our actions, with devastating results... After the separation, the Party painted us as a “little group” of the Front separated from its ranks, as though we were a faction. This is not the case, the Front made its decision in unity and cohesion, except for a member of the National Direction and some colleagues that claimed unconditional loyalty to the position of the Party.<sup>300</sup>

Autonomy presented two primary challenges to the FPMR. First, it had to make a clean break from its ideological roots. Given that many of its members identified as Communists, rupturing this relationship left many questioning whether to follow peaceful ideological Communism, or a path of violent overthrow. The second challenge lay in developing an independent political mechanism. The PC had controlled propaganda through the Rodriguist Militias, but to ensure its relevance the FPMR had to develop a political mechanism.<sup>301</sup>

The FPMR saw an opportunity for propagandistic development when Pope John Paul II visited Chile in November 1986. In its newsletter *el Rodriguista* the group stated: “every opportunity that we have to be close to this illustrious visitor we will take to discuss with him the repression, the misery, the terrorism that defines this state.”<sup>302</sup> However, during his first speech Pope John Paul II not only appealed for the government to respect human rights, but also denounced the use of violence to achieve political goals. This dealt a severe blow to the FPMR,

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<sup>299</sup> Benavente Urbina, *El Triángulo Del Terror*.

<sup>300</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*.

<sup>301</sup> Benavente Urbina, *El Triángulo Del Terror*.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.* 79.

which hoped to use the leader's visit to justify its continued struggle. Instead, the pope strengthened the position of leftists seeking nonviolent democratic transition. For about a month following his visit the FPMR fell silent, attempting to regroup.

In September 1987 the FPMR undertook its first major operation without the support of the PC. In "Operation Beginning," members of the Ignacio Valenzeula unit kidnapped the director of Manufacturing and Factories for the Army of Chile (FAMAE, *Fabrica y Maestranza del Ejército de Chile*), Colonel Carlos Carreño. The leader of the operation, known by the codename Simón, selected six militants to form two exploratory teams to trace Carreño's movements. More than 30 militants were involved in the kidnapping and subsequent negotiations. The group smuggled the colonel into Sao Paolo, Brazil, "because the victim had relatives there; because of the tremendous publicity impact, and to guarantee his physical security."<sup>303</sup> More than 10,000 Chilean soldiers and policemen searched for him.<sup>304</sup>

In exchange for release, the FPMR requested that an FPMR statement be published in all news sources in Chile, that the state release political prisoners, and that clothing, toys, and food be distributed to 13 poor communities in Santiago. The requests were sent to the Carreño family, but targeted at the government. Pinochet rejected all demands. Negotiations lasted until November 1987, at which point the Carreño family agreed to distribute food and clothing to Santiago's slums. The FPMR relinquished its request for release of political prisoners, claiming that the "main objective" of the kidnapping had been fulfilled. However, the protests of the Catholic Church likely played the most significant role in ending the crisis.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Bonasso, Roberto, and Restrepo, "Operación Príncipe."

<sup>304</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*.

<sup>305</sup> Bonasso, Roberto, and Restrepo, "Operación Príncipe."

When Pinochet announced the 1988 plebiscite, the FPMR continued armed activity, stating this vote would simply provide a sheen of legitimacy to the junta: “it is a fraud to present to the people the opportunity of a plebiscite, and to construct these illusions.”<sup>306</sup> However, factionalism split the FPMR in two, each side supporting different paths. “Old” militants, more accustomed to armed struggle, sought to end the insurreccional strategy, “not for questions of honor, but simply because it has proved ineffective.”<sup>307</sup> “New” militants, primarily youths, argued that armed struggle remained the only way out of dictatorship.<sup>308</sup> The organization did not formally split, however. The Lautaros mimicked the FPMR’s position of incredulity toward the plebiscite, while the MIR actively called for abstention.<sup>309</sup>

The success of the “No” in the plebiscite essentially ended the CNI period. While it remained in place until after the elections, any repressive tendencies disappeared. Maintaining a focus on intelligence, it allowed individual liberty to grow as representation transitioned back to high democratic levels.<sup>310</sup> The CNI period’s emphasis on intelligence over DINA-style repression permitted the development of violent groups, allowing coordination and action challenges to be overcome. While the MIR organizationally disintegrated, the FPMR and MAPU-Lautaros successfully filled the agenda space, using terrorist tactics to undermine Pinochet’s monopoly on violence.

### *Strategic Capacity under the CNI*

Strategic capacity ran high under the CNI, benefiting from loosened autocratic restraints that permitted basic individual liberty to develop. Multiple terrorist groups developed, varying in

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<sup>306</sup> “FMR al Pueblo de Chile y a la Juventud.”

<sup>307</sup> Benavente Urbina, *El Triángulo Del Terror*.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> Amorós, *Chile*.

<sup>310</sup> “Chile: Reports: Truth Commissions: Library & Links: U.S. Institute of Peace.”

degrees of strategic capacity. The FPMR became the primary operating group, choosing the best format for its hierarchy and optimizing its tactics to suit the limitations placed by its operating environment. After the MIR lost its monopoly on violence, organizational pathologies, including clinging to its prior leadership and its unwillingness to use assassinations, prevented it from taking full advantage of improved individual liberty. The MAPU-Lautaros undertook few armed action and had low strategic capacity, unable to hollow out significant political space in the face of organizational competition. Overall, the CNI period saw significant development in terrorist their strategic capacity, a response to the relaxing of repressive autocratic controls.

### *MIR Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* The MIR began this period as the sole rebel movement in Chile, giving it a monopoly on the mission of armed overthrow. Under the CNI it continued to emphasize destabilizing the Pinochet dictatorship, putting aside Marxist-Leninism until more favorable conditions arose. While mission remained specific, with a clear intermediate goal and a plan of “armed propaganda” to show government fallibility, the government suffered in the face of interorganizational competition. The FPMR, the group with the highest strategic capacity during this period, arose organically from the dictatorship. Comparatively, the MIR suffered from lingering connections to the turmoil of the Allende period. While its mission did not change from the DINA period, its loss of monopoly on violence left it vulnerable to the rise of other armed groups. Its call to abstain from the plebiscite confirmed its disconnection from political reality.<sup>311</sup> Thus while MIR mission remained strong, this was not enough to buoy it when it faced competition for agenda space.

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<sup>311</sup> Sandoval Ambiado, *MIR (una Historia)*.



*Hierarchy:* Most MIR leadership remained in exile at the beginning of the CNI period. Rather than cede power to *miristas* in Chile, however, these elites sought to reenter the country through Operation Return.<sup>312</sup> Seeing this as a means to reconstitute the organization as it existed under Allende, in fact this led to a failure of the group to adapt to new political circumstances, limiting innovation and growth. Operation Return led to the arrest of key leaders and the disbanding of a rural base. When MIR factions gathered in the early 1980s at the Madre Miguel Enríquez base to restructure its units, only about 30 militants attended.<sup>313</sup> In July 1986, MIR inactivity, a rise in mass protests, and the ascendance of the FPMR led to its division into two groups: a nonviolent faction that collapsed later in the 1980s, and an uncoordinated armed group continuing traditional *mirista* strategy under Pascal Allende.<sup>314</sup> Though at the beginning of the period the MIR seemed on the path to redevelopment, refusing to adapt to new circumstances eroded its hierarchy.

*Membership:* During the late 1970s, MIR membership was expanding. It maintained limits to the size of Resistance Committees to ensure commitment, but the loosening of repressive restraints allowed more of these Committees to arise. As the longest-acting group, its members were the most experienced in armed struggle.<sup>315</sup> However, the failure of Operation Return and the rise of the FPMR weakened the group's ability to attract new members.<sup>316</sup> More committed members followed the FPMR, which employed more overtly violent, symbolic armed action. While its older militants remained loyal and well trained, interorganizational competition led to deterioration in the size and commitment level of MIR membership.

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<sup>312</sup> Donoso, "Teoría de la violencia y estrategia de poder en el Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria, 1967-1986."

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* The MIR continued to rely on small bombings as its primary tactics throughout the CNI period, primarily attacking power lines and empty factories. Its activity peaked in 1979, at which point violence began to steadily decline.<sup>317</sup> In March and April of 1983 it conducted a series of 26 utility bombings to attempt to recapture public attention.<sup>318</sup> However, wrote the CIA: “We believe that the increase in low-risk bombings could indicate the MIR’s declining capability to carry out more sophisticated terrorist activities.”<sup>319</sup> Not only “capability” but organizational pathology influenced MIR tactics, however. The group prided itself on minimizing risk to civilians, making it unwilling to conduct theatrical bombings or assassinations.<sup>320</sup> Between 1977 and 1982, when MIR was the only active group, a total of 8 attacks aimed to harm or kill. In 1983 alone, the year other groups began to develop, 13 such attacks occurred.<sup>321</sup> After a peak in utility bombings in 1984, violence level plummeted, and the organization became nearly inactive by 1987.<sup>322</sup> The MIR thus failed to adopt tactics or establish a high enough violence level to give it a significant presence.

#### *FPMR Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* The Communist Party denied all ties to the FPMR, leaving the group with no ideological goals beyond Pinochet’s overthrow. As a result, mission was extremely focused. The FPMR described its goal as realistic, with a clear and achievable platform: “We are not dreamers, we don’t aspire to the complete annihilation of the enemy, but we do seek to make their repressive apparatus ineffective.... We do not have messianic aspirations, we do not consider

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<sup>317</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

<sup>318</sup> “GTD1 Home Page.”

<sup>319</sup> CIA FOIA, “Chile: Revival of MIR Terrorism..”

<sup>320</sup> “RAND | Notes | The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile.”

<sup>321</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

ourselves omnipotent.... Our actions are selective.”<sup>323</sup> Justification rested directly on lack of alternative means for political expression. During a takeover of Radio Santiago, the group blamed the government for forcing it to turn to violence: “We would love to have moved forward through other paths, we would like to be able to democratically elect our destiny. But when all these paths are closed off, when Pinochet rejected the Accord and Dialogue, when our companions are being oppressed, tortured, and killed, when we are governed only through the power of arms, no option remains but to fight.”<sup>324</sup>

Given that its central justification for violence rested on Pinochet’s illegitimacy, the call for a plebiscite offered significant challenges to the FPMR’s mission. It seemed that its goals would be achieved nonviolently, forcing questions as to how the group would respond. In an internal document written after the plebiscite, it stated: “we will continue together with the people until the government offers a real solution to their problems. We will only put down our arms when there is a full guarantee that arms will not be used against the people.”<sup>325</sup> While the plebiscite weakened the goals of the FPMR, throughout the majority of the CNI period mission remained extremely strong, offering a clear set of goals to exploit frustration with the lack of political representation.

*Hierarchy:* The FPMR’s hierarchy exploited loosened security restraints, creating a moderately decentralized network that fit within its autocratic bounds. Leadership never made up more than 10% of personnel, to ensure that the organization did not become overly reliant on “professional officials.”<sup>326</sup> A 12-person National Directorate defined the role of each individual,

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<sup>323</sup> Cataldi, *Chile, La Rebellion Popular*.

<sup>324</sup> “Radio Santiago Takeover.”

<sup>325</sup> FPMR, “Analysis of the 27 of August, 1988.”

<sup>326</sup> Lozza, *Chile Sublevado*.

group, detachment, and region within the organizational framework.<sup>327</sup> This ensured that the destruction of the National Directorate would not end regional armed uprisings, and that redevelopment could occur quickly.

Detachments acted in predetermined zones, each divided into operational groups that received orders from the level above. Units did not know the actions of other units.<sup>328</sup> This diffusion of information ensured that the capture of some members would not uproot the entire network.<sup>329</sup> Even after the repression provoked by the attempted Pinochet assassination, the hierarchy was able to survive, showing the resiliency of this format. However, diffusion of information also “impeded the communist bases from receiving clarifications in how the political significance of the military apparatus could complement the fighting of the masses. This led to several regional organizations not cooperating with directors on the subject of military considerations.”<sup>330</sup> Thus occasionally lower-level militants refused to carry out the commands of superiors, as they lacked a clear understanding of overall strategy. Despite these challenges, the moderate decentralization that the FPMR employed allowed it to remain resilient to decapitation and develop a wide geographical base, while maintaining unified decision-making.

*Membership:* The Front encouraged wide membership, stating during a takeover of Radio Santiago: “To whomever joins with us, we will greet you with happiness and fraternity.”<sup>331</sup> The limited individual liberty offered by the CNI permitted greater opportunity to exploit its base of support. Detection remained a concern and all FPMR members lived in hiding, keeping membership commitment high. To further ensure commitment in its members, prospective

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<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> Benavente Urbina, *El Triángulo Del Terror*. 105.

<sup>331</sup> “Radio Santiago Takeover.”

militants first acted as “collaborators” and then as members of the PC’s Rodriguist Militias, before passing into the Front itself. Combatants would begin as militants before rising to become chief of a detachment, chief of a zone, and then potentially a member of the National Directorate.<sup>332</sup> This ensured that all elites at some point acted as militants.

FPMR members were asked to self-educate in revolutionary theory, and were offered training in “military arts” during the process of entry. However, even when linked to the Communist Party FPMR militants received little ideological indoctrination. Communist Marxist ideology was “scarce or nonexistent. While declaring themselves ‘militant communists,’ many did not participate in cell work nor did they pay party dues. In the difficult conditions of communication and meeting while underground the PCCH could not educate this new contingent in the old ways of bolchevique discipline.”<sup>333</sup> During the majority of the CNI period, this did not affect membership. Only during the plebiscite did lack of indoctrination begin to create divides. High commitment and military training, combined with the high costs of detection, made militants extremely disciplined. Overall, the CNI period saw high commitment and fewer restrictions on size, individual liberty offering the opportunity for membership.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* The FPMR directed that all violence should fall into one of three categories: sabotage against the dictatorship and its economy to create paralyzation; actions to punish junta members; and propaganda to show government fallibility.<sup>334</sup> The FPMR distinguished itself tactically by accepting casualties, frequently assassinating low-ranking members of the military and employing theatrical bombings likely to cause injuries.<sup>335</sup> In

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<sup>332</sup> Lozza, *Chile Sublevado*.

<sup>333</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*. 108.

<sup>334</sup> Cataldi, *Chile, La Rebelion Popular*.

<sup>335</sup> “RAND | Notes | The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile.”

October 1984, the FPMR conducted the first car bombing in Chile, wounding five.<sup>336</sup> While it rarely targeted civilians directly, its tolerance of damage ran contrary to the MIR policy of never endangering human lives.<sup>337</sup> For the majority of the period, the organization attacked about twice as many government as civilian targets.<sup>338</sup> This emphasized government fallibility, contributing to weakening the dictator's hold over the state. With the exception of a dip in government attacks in following the attempted Pinochet assassination, levels of violence remained high and steady.<sup>339</sup>

Of all the groups, the FPMR had the widest geographical area of activity. Only 61% of its actions took place within the Santiago Metropolitan area, as compared to over 80% for the other two organizations.<sup>340</sup> It was also highly successful at political propaganda, particularly when it had the support of Rodriguist Militias and the Communist Party. Innovative tactics such as radio and television takeovers allowed the FPMR to rapidly and directly reach a wide audience. It also distinguished itself by attacking American interests, conducting seven anti-US bombings in 1984 and 10 in 1985. An attack on a Coca-Cola factory in Santiago resulted in two million dollars in property damage.<sup>341</sup> Activities targeting the US increased the international visibility of the FPMR, to call attention to popular dissatisfaction with the Pinochet government. Individual liberty permitted the FPMR to coordinate attacks that highlighted the fallibility of the government and the potential for resistance.

#### *MAPU-Lautaro Strategic Capacity*

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<sup>336</sup> CIA FOIA, "Chile: Rising Political Violence."

<sup>337</sup> "RAND | Notes | The Revolutionary Left and Terrorist Violence in Chile."

<sup>338</sup> "GTD1 Home Page."

<sup>339</sup> "Terrorismo 1976-1990."

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> CIA FOIA, "Chile: Rising Political Violence."

*Mission:* Though it benefited from an intermediate goal of government overthrow, the Lautaro mission had a socialist focus that undermined its clarity. The MAPU-Lautaros developed out of the Marxist-Leninist MAPU political party. While the end of the dictatorship stood as the first priority for the armed wing, its central justification rested on a platform of class struggle, social transformation through Cuban Revolutionary Theory, and Maoist concepts of prolonged guerrilla warfare.<sup>342</sup> This did make the group resilient to the calling of the plebiscite. While the vote challenged the FPMR mission of overthrow, the MAPU-Lautaros simply shifted attention more towards revolution: “For us the political and social road itself is a war... to open a totally new period in the history of Chile is the key to a different life and a better one for the majority... We make war on democracy, not for democracy but for its end!”<sup>343</sup> Overall, the Lautaros failed to generate a great deal of support.<sup>344</sup> Its continued emphasis on socialism left it vulnerable to interorganizational competition from the clearer FPMR, and made strategic action more difficult. Thus mission for the MAPU under the CNI was weak, despite lack of representation.

*Hierarchy:* The MAPU’s limited presence allowed it to maintain the most centralized organizational structure of the groups operating under the CNI. In its first years, the MAPU-Lautaros were split between the youth-based Lautaro Youth Movement (MJL), the more overtly violent Revolutionary Popular Lautaro Forces (FRPL), and the legal political wing. However, overlapping mandates made differentiation among these wings nominal, and they were merged in 1987.<sup>345</sup> A Central Committee communicated instructions to smaller Local Committees. While it facilitated decision-making, in 1985 Central Committee members were arrested and tortured

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<sup>342</sup> Arriaza, “El MAPU-Lautaro en las Protestas Populares (1978-1985).”

<sup>343</sup> Italia, “EL Movimiento Juvenil Lautaro (MJL).”

<sup>344</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

<sup>345</sup> Italia, “EL Movimiento Juvenil Lautaro (MJL).”

for five days by CNI Operatives.<sup>346</sup> The replacement leaders, known by codename “Joaquin” and “Nico,” did little to decentralize the network. Instead they initiated a program to detach “military capacity” from the local militias, separating the violent and propagandistic units.<sup>347</sup> This was a somewhat hollow gesture, since the MAPU performed almost no overtly violent activities. Thus while the most centralized of groups operating, this structure was not optimal for its environment, reflecting its limited presence and weak internal processes.

*Membership:* Prior to merging, the MAPU and FRPL were largely made up of educated leftists, while the MJL sought to attract urban and rural youths. As a result the MJL was considered the most “relaxed” of the collective.<sup>348</sup> Older Lautaros believed that because these youths had not suffered under the DINA, they had low commitment for large-scale operations. They were criticized as acting more like a “collection of friends” than units of militants, undermining the discreteness necessary for group security.<sup>349</sup> Intensified recruitment in poor areas in 1986 attracted a wave of uncommitted members known as “youths from the corners.” From the extremely poor regions of la Grana, Bulnes en Reca, la Serena, and Lorenzo Arenas in Concepción, older members complained of their “marijuana culture” and offered little political indoctrination.<sup>350</sup> Lautaro membership thus remained small, uncommitted, and untrained.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* MAPU tactics focused on bank robberies, attacks on policemen, expropriation of arms, takeover of media outlets, and *tomas*.<sup>351</sup> While other groups relied less on these land seizures during the Pinochet period, they accounted for 14% of all actions, compared to 12.8% of the FPMR’s and 10.1% of the MIR’s. MAPU relied on them

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<sup>346</sup> Arriaza, “El MAPU-Lautaro en las Protestas Populares (1978-1985).”

<sup>347</sup> Hermosilla, “Jóvenes, rebeldes y armados: Teoría, identidad y praxis del MAPU-Lautaro.”

<sup>348</sup> Italia, “EL Movimiento Juvenil Lautaro (MJL).”

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Hermosilla, “Jóvenes, rebeldes y armados: Teoría, identidad y praxis del MAPU-Lautaro.”

<sup>351</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”



primarily because it lacked external financial support, giving low-coordination *tomas* both resource and propagandistic value.<sup>352</sup>

Upon assuming command, Joaquin and Nico sought to make the Lautaros a greater social presence by strengthening propaganda and encouraging more overt violence. To strengthen politically they created a national organism for propaganda, to publish the newsletter *El Pueblo Rebelde Vencerá* (*the Rebellng People will Triumph*) and distribute pamphlets.<sup>353</sup> The decision to follow a more violent path occurred shortly before the plebiscite, and reflects the MAPU belief that the social organizations it had sought to mobilize were now taking to the streets of their own accord. Joaquin and Nico saw the need to “evolve” new practices to initiate class war and overthrow the dictatorship.<sup>354</sup> However, these modified tactics were rarely used until democratic transition began. During the CNI period, the organization maintained extremely low violence levels, committing less than a quarter of the number of actions as the FPMR.<sup>355</sup> Thus the Lautaros thus remained a marginalized presence under the CNI, though that it could act at all reveals the importance of expanded individual liberty in permitting terrorism.

### *Conclusions on the CNI Period*

After the repression of the DINA, the introduction of basic individual liberty offered violent groups in this period the political space in which to formalize a hierarchy, expand and train members, and coordinate attacks on government targets. Given even limited operational space, the groups developed high strategic capacity. The development of the FPMR emphasizes that more than motivation is required for terrorism to develop. Under the DINA, the Communist Party remained committed to peaceful democratic transition and harshly criticized the MIR’s use

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<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>353</sup> Arriaza, “El MAPU-Lautaro en las Protestas Populares (1978-1985).”

<sup>354</sup> Hermosilla, “Jóvenes, rebeldes y armados: Teoría, identidad y praxis del MAPU-Lautaro.”

<sup>355</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

of violence. When the operating environment opened, however, the PC developed the FPMR. While claiming to be simply a response to an authoritarian environment, this rhetorical turnaround shows that the FPMR develop not wholly due to motivation, but also out of opportunism.

This period again highlights organizational variations in levels of strategic capacity. Of all groups operating in this period, the FPMR had the highest strategic capacity. It developed a specific mission focused on lack of legal representation; a moderately decentralized hierarchy, to minimize potential for detection; a committed membership tested through entrance requirements; tactics aimed at undermining the government's monopoly on force; and a high and steady violence level that gave it a presence in its political space. For years the MIR had been the only group operating, yet under the CNI it failed to adapt its organizational structure to fit its new operating environment, clinging to its past leadership and tactics. Similarly, the MAPU maintained a Socialist mission that prevented it from tapping into the significant support base offered by low representation. The FPMR thus came to dominate the agenda space, displaying extremely high levels of strategic capacity that took advantage of the political environment of the CNI.

## **Chapter 7: Terrorism under Aylwin**

The process of democratic transition occurred peacefully, culminating in the election of Patricio Aylwin as president. The new leader emphasized human rights in the post-transition democracy, offering a challenge to violent groups as to whether to continue armed action despite political liberalization. The MIR, FPMR, and MAPU-Lautaros all continued to use violence, though all experienced some factionalism. The MIR, already severely weakened by Pinochet and the effects of interorganizational competition, had only a minimal presence. The FPMR shifted its goals to retribution for past human rights abuses, with minimal success in the transition period but a weak presence under democracy itself. The MAPU-Lautaros had the most success, based on its policy of youth rebellion, but failed to breed any significant sense of threat. Thus this period of high representation and individual liberty saw the disintegration of terrorist strategic capacity.

Neither the FPMR nor the MAPU ceased armed activity following the success of the “No” in the plebiscite. The MIR did pause its use of violence, though this largely reflected the group’s disintegration.<sup>356</sup> During elections, the Communist Party disavowed the actions of its former armed wing: “at the time when the people decide their own destiny, there is no more to discuss. The FPMR will attack whatever resolution the people take, the government that it elects, regardless of its policy.”<sup>357</sup> This cemented the organization’s political isolation. At the same time the group lost its central leader, Commander Rodrigo, a charismatic personality that most credit with holding the group together through the plebiscite.<sup>358</sup> A horizontal network of lower-level militants replaced the previous moderately centralized structure. On August 20, 1989, second in

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<sup>356</sup> “Chile PCCh and MIR Reject Use of Violence During Aylwin Administration.”

<sup>357</sup> Communist Party of Chile, “We are the products of this regime.”

<sup>358</sup> Benavente Urbina, *El Triángulo Del Terror*.

command Roberto Nordenflycht died in a shootout with police when he returned for a second time to attack the aerodrome in Tobalaba, Santiago.<sup>359</sup>

Upon transition to democracy, the FPMR split between a political party and an armed wing. The political entity proclaimed: “in the current situation, there is no need to promote the struggle for democracy through the use of weapons.”<sup>360</sup> The active FPMR, known as the FPMR/D, sought “psychological compensation” through punishment of those involved with the junta and the release of political prisoners. On January 30, 1990, 43 leftwing prisoners escaped from a Santiago prison by traveling under it through a complex series of tunnels.<sup>361</sup> On March 22, the FPMR attempted to assassinate General Gustavo Leigh, a former air force chief and founding member of the military government. Two young men open-fired on him in a Santiago suburb, riddling him with seven bullets to his right eye and torso. Three bullets also struck his partner, General Enrique Ruiz. Minutes afterwards the FPMR telephoned local radio stations to claim responsibility, saying that the FPMR were punishing Leigh for his human rights abuses.<sup>362</sup> However, the FPMR’s attacks provoked backlash. The PC aligned with Aylwin to criticize FPMR death threats against Pinochet, stating that it hindered the democratic transition process. Security services created a tight cordon around Temuco to uproot the leadership of the regional FPMR cell, the largest remaining in rural areas.<sup>363</sup>

While FPMR violence began to slow, the MAPU increased its armed actions following transition, despite lacking clear motivation. At first it mimicked the FPMR by targeting former junta members, but because the majority of the organization were youths who had not suffered

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<sup>359</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*.

<sup>360</sup> “Chile FPMR Spokesman on Group's Decision to Join Democratic Process.”

<sup>361</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*.

<sup>362</sup> Coad, “Left claims attempt to kill Chilean general.”

<sup>363</sup> “Chile FPMR "Terrorist Cell" Disbanded in Temuco.”

under the junta they “lacked credibility in their intentions to connect to the fight for human rights.”<sup>364</sup> On April 29, 1990 the MAPU assassinated Domingo Sarmiento, a member of the Party for Democracy who had abandoned armed resistance to pursue mainstream politics. On November 14, a member of the organization known as Machine Gun Girl attempted to rescue an arrested leader while he was hospitalized, which resulted in her arrest and the leader’s death.<sup>365</sup> Lautaros stayed active by stealing and redistributing products in shantytowns to maintain some support among the rural poor.

The MAPU proceeded to adjust its central tenant, focusing not on revolution and sexual freedom in an attempt to wider support among Chilean youths. A study conducted by the National Federation of High School Students (FENES) claimed that the guerrilla group recruited 5,000 young people from educational establishments.<sup>366</sup> Its primary recruitment and propagandistic activities were “bazaars of desire,” in which it distributed condoms and women’s underwear throughout university campuses.<sup>367</sup> During a bank robbery in February 1992, when students robbed a Citibank of 10,000 dollars, it left behind condoms and promotional pamphlets that read “to spread joy, sensuality, and dreams now,” with a figure of a naked couple.<sup>368</sup> The group employed anti-government rhetoric as well. After killing a cop in Santiago, the Lautaro distributed pamphlets proclaiming, “All cops are our enemies.”<sup>369</sup>

Of the post-transition groups, the MIR remained the weakest. Its military commission severed entirely from its political wing. This lack of unity can be seen in its contradictory actions: while it stated publicly that it would pause armed action out of “confidence in the

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<sup>364</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.” 18.

<sup>365</sup> Kushner, *Encyclopedia of terrorism*.

<sup>366</sup> Gonzalez, “CHILE.”

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

<sup>368</sup> “Guerrillas Rob Bank, Leave Pamphlets and Condoms.”

<sup>369</sup> Gallardo, “Chilean Guerrilla Group Promotes Marxism, Sexual Revolution.”

socialization of this country at a social and political level,<sup>370</sup> it continued to conduct bombings and bank robberies during the early democratic years<sup>371</sup> Terrorist actions primarily aimed at resourcing the group. On January 3, 1990, Brazilian police foiled a kidnapping involving ten MIR members and a Canadian citizen.<sup>372</sup> The group made an attempt to join the FPMR/D in its struggle, but traditional rivalry prevented the merger when the MIR claimed that the assassination attempt against Gustavo Leigh reflected the infiltration of the FPMR by right wing extremists.<sup>373</sup> In March 1991, the MIR held its 5<sup>th</sup> General Conference, its first since 1973. The Political Committee Coordinator Nelson Gutierrez called for the MIR to become a legal political party, and for the creation of a national panel of academics to investigate human rights abuses.<sup>374</sup>

The FPMR as well became increasingly disjointed. In January 1991, it staged a jailbreak to free arrested militants. In February, it launched an antitank rocket attack against the US embassy marine guard. In March, militants conducted a double homicide of a psychologist treating the military, Carlos Hernán Perez Castro, and his wife.<sup>375</sup> One of the final meaningful actions conducted by the group was the assassination of Chilean Senator Jaime Guzman in April 1991, which “in effect created a political consensus against the terrorists.”<sup>376</sup> Though the FPMR initially claimed responsibility, later it denounced the action as a plan by government and rightist forces “to discredit the FPMR by blaming it for actions in which we have not participated.”<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> “Chile PCCh and MIR Reject Use of Violence During Aylwin Administration.”

<sup>371</sup> Catalina Olea, ““La cultura rebelde.”

<sup>372</sup> Brazao, “Canadian a careless terrorist, court told.”

<sup>373</sup> “ CHILE.”

<sup>374</sup> “Chile MIR holds its first congress in Chile since 1973; will become a party.”

<sup>375</sup> “Chile FPMR Denies Involvement in Guzman Murder.”

<sup>376</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

<sup>377</sup> “Chile FPMR Denies Involvement in Guzman Murder.”

The CIA wrote, “there is little public support for terrorist activities” at this time, based on Aylwin’s “ability to give the far left a stake in the success of democratic government.”<sup>378</sup>

In June 1991, members of the FPMR national executive board unmasked themselves. They stated that from then on they would be known as the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Movement (MPMR).<sup>379</sup> Jorge Livera, a senior FPMR leader, stated that the FPMR “will not surrender its arms as some military groups in other Latin American countries have done because the FPMR does not have any guns. All of them have been seized by the Pinochet regime’s security organization.”<sup>380</sup> The “FPMR Active,” or FPMR-A, meanwhile, continued the armed struggle, stating that President Aylwin and Pinochet “are the same thing.”<sup>381</sup>

In March 1993 Aylwin initiated a comprehensive counterterrorism program to eradicate criminal hangouts, augment the police and investigation budget, increase police patrols, reform the legal system, impose minimum security measures for banks, and apply the anti-terror law less narrowly to allow for more incarcerations. On March 27, 1993 Lautaro leader Delfin Diaz Quesada was killed.<sup>382</sup> Soon afterwards, another leader, Guillermo Ossandon, was arrested, essentially ending the MAPU movement.<sup>383</sup> Despite some limited acts of terrorism, Aylwin released six FPMR members detained under Pinochet. Fernando Zegers, the head of the Committee for the Defense of People’s rights lauded this decision as “an act of justice.... Vital in the process of repairing the serious damage suffered by Chile under the 16 year Pinochet dictatorship.”<sup>384</sup> Sergio Buschmann, a former FPMR leader, returned to the country after fleeing

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<sup>378</sup> CIA FOIA, “Anti-US Terror in Chile: The Threat Continues.” 17.

<sup>379</sup> “Chile More Details of Guerrilla Group's Decision to End Armed Struggle.”

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

<sup>382</sup> “Chilean Police Capture Head of Terrorist Group, Kill Another.”

<sup>383</sup> “Armed Left Virtually Disappears with the Arrest of Leader.”

<sup>384</sup> “CHILE.”

prison in 1987, motivated by a desire to exercise his right to defend himself and to resume his life legally.<sup>385</sup>

Violence continued at rapidly dropping rates. In June 1993, the Lautaro movement issued a statement declaring the continuation of armed action, stating that the Aylwin administration “culminated in a complete failure for the needs of the people.”<sup>386</sup> In September the MIR claimed responsibility for the bombing of two McDonald’s restaurants in protest of “US imperialist Yankees.”<sup>387</sup> It then threatened Arnoldo Dreysse, the judge handling prosecution of Lautaro members. The FPMR and Lautaro forces attempted to form a new group, but this was quickly foiled by security services.<sup>388</sup> By the mid-1990s, terrorism in Chile had been dismantled.

#### *Strategic Capacity under Aylwin*

Terrorist strategic capacity suffered for the reestablishment of liberal democracy. Active groups lost clear motivation for violence, leading to a loss of support that reflected itself in the limited size and low commitment of the militant base. While under Frei the MIR could draw on enthusiasm for Cuban Revolutionary Theory, Aylwin’s presidency came after 15 years of repressive dictatorship. Public reception for violence was thus extremely poor. The continuation of terrorism at the beginning of this period reflects organizational inertia as the groups attempted to adapt. Within several years, the high-functioning Aylwin democracy imposed such constraints on support that the organizations could no longer operate.

#### *MIR Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* The MIR’s mission became increasingly confused post-transition. It returned to its Marxist-Leninist roots, but it failed to define a clear enemy or platform of reforms. This led to

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<sup>385</sup> “FPMR Leader Buschmann Returns Voluntarily and Is Arrested.”

<sup>386</sup> “Chilean Rebel Group Threatens Officials.”

<sup>387</sup> “Four Injured in Bomb Attacks on McDonald's Restaurants in Santiago.”

<sup>388</sup> “Police Dismantle Incipient "Terrorist" Group.”



random acts of violence, such as the bombing of a McDonald's restaurants to criticize "Yankee imperialism."<sup>389</sup> MIR activity became increasingly criminal, as political justification for its violence disappeared.<sup>390</sup>

*Hierarchy:* At the time of democratic transition, MIR hierarchy was already weak. The failure of Operation Return had deprived it of its vertical structure. Following the transition to democracy, the remaining elites largely defected to the political path and left the group as a formation of small horizontal bands.<sup>391</sup> Internal divisions thus prevented centralization, despite the presence of high individual liberty.

*Membership:* The most disciplined and committed MIR members, those who had seen the organization through both the DINA and CNI, defected from the armed path to enter the political process.<sup>392</sup> *Miristas* who continued violence tended to be untrained and young, including the 10 militants involved in the kidnapping in Brazil.<sup>393</sup> These militants had no interest in training, and largely took criminal actions under the name of the MIR. Thus membership deteriorated significantly in size and commitment with the reinstatement of high representation.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* The MIR suffered during this period from extremely low levels of activity. In January 1989 it assassinated a local business owner, and in April it bombed a bridge in a rural district. Its most spectacular action lay in attacking former security service members in August 1989, killing one and injuring two.<sup>394</sup> After this the organization did not act for a year and a half, allegedly out of respect for the transition process. Actions following this period of inactivity focused on criminal "resource-gathering," disconnected from political

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<sup>389</sup> "Four Injured in Bomb Attacks on McDonald's Restaurants in Santiago."

<sup>390</sup> Gallardo, "Guerrillas Who Fought Pinochet Turning to Crime, Authorities Say."

<sup>391</sup> "Chile MIR holds its first congress in Chile since 1973; will become a party."

<sup>392</sup> Pérez, "Historia del MIR."

<sup>393</sup> Brazao, "Canadian a careless terrorist, court told."

<sup>394</sup> "GTD1 Home Page."

propaganda.<sup>395</sup> The MIR displayed low levels of violence and disjointed tactics, operating without any goal of political success.

### *FPMR Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* Democratic transition led to what one high level leader referred to as the “political-ideological decomposition of the superiority of the FPMR.”<sup>396</sup> The group changed its platform to seeking the release of 400 political prisoners and “retribution” for human rights abuses under Pinochet.<sup>397</sup> The spokeswoman of the organization warned after the attempted assassination of General Leigh: “if other state terrorists are not tried and judged, we will continue imposing our popular justice.”<sup>398</sup> While this gave it a medium-term platform of changes, it failed to offer justification for why these goals could not occur legally. As Aylwin addressed human rights issues, the group became increasingly less relevant. It adjusted its mission to attack American “imperialism,” as well as US involvement in the Gulf War.<sup>399</sup> Thus the FPMR’s mission broke down after it lost its central organizing ideology of autocratic overthrow.

*Hierarchy:* FPMR hierarchy was unable to take advantage of the individual liberty offered by the new government, in part because of its preexisting structure. Under Pinochet it had focused on rural development and avoiding rigid security services, making it too decentralized for a democratic environment where popular support ran low.<sup>400</sup> The elite system disintegrated with the death of Commander Rodrigo, Second-in-command Nordenflycht’s death in a shootout led to the perception that “destiny and the consequences of the operatives of crucial

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<sup>395</sup> Gallardo, “Guerrillas Who Fought Pinochet Turning to Crime, Authorities Say.”

<sup>396</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*. 140.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Coad, “Left claims attempt to kill Chilean general.”

<sup>399</sup> CIA FOIA, “Anti-US Terror in Chile: The Threat Continues.”

<sup>400</sup> “Chile FPMR “Terrorist Cell” Disbanded in Temuco.”

importance in the short history of the organization were played with excessive audacity.’<sup>401</sup>

When the FPMR split between armed and political wings, most leadership followed the peaceful path of the MPMR.<sup>402</sup> Thus the FPMR’s hierarchy failed to adapt to its new liberal environment.

*Membership:* The quality of the FPMR’s militant base declined as support waned. Its policy of retribution for past abuses made recruitment difficult, so nearly all militants were those who had operated under Pinochet.<sup>403</sup> Even under the CNI ideological cohesion had been minimal, and training and indoctrination did not increase with individual liberty. After the split between the MPMR and FPMR/A, the best trained of militants followed the political path. Active members were primarily youths who had not suffered under the DINA and lacked commitment to armed struggle.<sup>404</sup> FPMR membership thus dropped in size and disintegrated in commitment.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* The FPMR went from committing 64 terrorist attacks in 1990, to 11 in 1991, to 10 in 1992. It essentially ceased armed activity in 1993.<sup>405</sup> It maintained high-coordination tactics in the early transition period, employing assassinations and complex bombings. However, this created the perception that the FPMR was an elitist group seeking to undermine the peaceful democratic transition process. To maintain political momentum and attract press, it frequently targeted US interests. In November 1990, the bombing of an organized softball game killed a Canadian citizen and wounded a US Embassy official, and an attack on a restaurant injured three US sailors and five others. Anti-American attacks rose from six in 1988

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<sup>401</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*. 142.

<sup>402</sup> “Chile More Details of Guerrilla Group's Decision to End Armed Struggle.”

<sup>403</sup> Vidal, *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile*.

<sup>404</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

to 65 in 1990, the most anti-US attacks of any country in the world at that time.<sup>406</sup> After the negative public response to Senator Guzman's murder and the split between a political and armed wing, the group stopped employing assassinations. The split between political and armed wings left a weak militancy that could not maintain sufficient secrecy for high-coordination activity, and the operating environment remained hostile to violence.<sup>407</sup> Thus the FPMR's terrorist tactics reinforced it as a fringe group, until finally it ceased armed activity altogether.

#### *MAPU-Lautaro Strategic Capacity*

*Mission:* The Lautaros were the only group to in fact increase attacks following the transition to democracy, reflecting in part its focus on youth recruitment. While the FPMR's central tenant failed to attract new members, the MAPU-Lautaros shifted its mission to stress revolution through armed propaganda, with a focus on "sexual freedom." Such an organizing tenant appealed to youth in the traditionally Catholic but rapidly globalizing Chilean society.<sup>408</sup> While it appealed to youth, its broad Marxist aims left it with an unclear platform of changes and a nebulous enemy. The most frequent targets for its polemics were police.<sup>409</sup> Despite its focus on youth recruitment, MAPU mission remained weak.

*Hierarchy:* The MAPU-Lautaros continued the loosely centralized hierarchy it developed under the CNI period, suited to its new democratic environment. Because the MAPU did not have a great deal of public support even under Pinochet, its hierarchy did not require significant adjustment for its new environment. However, the group was not effective at operating underground. Combined with high centralization, this left the Lautaros vulnerable to decapitation, which occurred during Aylwin's counterterrorist offensive in 1993. Thus the

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<sup>406</sup> CIA FOIA, "Anti-US Terror in Chile: The Threat Continues."

<sup>407</sup> Gallardo, "Guerrillas Who Fought Pinochet Turning to Crime, Authorities Say."

<sup>408</sup> Gallardo, "Chilean Guerrilla Group Promotes Marxism, Sexual Revolution."

<sup>409</sup> Gonzalez, "CHILE."

MAPU-Lautaros remained too isolated from society to develop a resilient hierarchy, disintegrating in its new democratic environment.

*Membership:* As under the CNI, the Lautaros were primarily youths. The group focused on developing the size rather than the commitment level of the militant base. No barriers to entry existed, and typically militants received no revolutionary education. “Bazaars of desire,” used for recruitment among students, tended to draw in delinquents.<sup>410</sup> Thus while it could maintain a sizeable membership, its militants were uncommitted and untrained.

*Tactics and Violence Level:* Violence levels for the MAPU rose from just one action in 1988, to 10 in 1989, to 43 in 1990. In the first six months of 1991, propagandist actions increased to 8.9% of actions, as compared to 6.1% in 1990. Attacks aiming to cause casualties also increased, from 4.7% to 6.9% in 1991.<sup>411</sup> However, attacks were typically low-coordination. For example, in March 1993 Lautaro forces shot several rounds into a police building in downtown Santiago, and then abandoned the attack vehicle, filled with Lautaro pamphlets.<sup>412</sup> The use of “bazaars of desire” highlights that the organization was almost entirely unconcerned with political success. The MAPU-Lautaros exploited the space offered by individual liberty to conduct more actions, but the nature of these actions failed to offer it any significant political momentum. By the mid-1990s, armed activity ended.

#### *Conclusions on the Aylwin Period*

The Aylwin government represented a return to a liberal democracy with high representation and individual liberty. Terrorism existed at any significant level only during the immediate transition period, primarily reflecting the organizational inertia of the three groups.

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<sup>410</sup> Hermosilla, “Jóvenes, rebeldes y armados: Teoría, identidad y praxis del MAPU-Lautaro.”

<sup>411</sup> “Terrorismo 1976-1990.”

<sup>412</sup> “Terrorists Attack Carabinero Barracks in Chile.”

All three groups sought to adapt to ensure survival, regardless of the changes this required. This can be seen most clearly in the continuation of the FPMR, formed specifically to overthrow the Pinochet dictatorship. Even with its goals achieved, the group justified continued violence by changing its mission. Of the groups, only the MAPU-Lautaros were able to increase its presence, but even this organization broke down by the mid-1990s. An unclear mission, small recruitment pool, and uncommitted membership isolated these groups from Chilean society, stifling strategic capacity.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusions and Policy Implications**

Does democracy help or hinder terrorism? The case of Chile highlights the complexity implicit in that question. This study argues that the central shortcomings of the current debate lie in overly static treatments of both regime type and terrorism. Assigning representation and individual liberty to democracy, and the absence of both to autocracy, ignores that these features exist along a spectrum. Nor do groups employ terrorist tactics as an automatic response to their external environments. Every organization faces the task of optimizing activity based on both a set of complex internal processes, and the opportunities and constraints created by their operating contexts. To understand the interplay between these organizational and structural influences, this study analyzed the effects of key democratic features on the five dimensions of strategic capacity – mission, hierarchy, membership, tactics, and violence level.

Each feature of strategic capacity reacts independently to democratic characteristics, and the directions of these responses vary. Chile demonstrates the mixed effects of regime on violence in practice. Under the high-functioning Frei and Aylwin democracies, high representation restrained strategic capacity by breeding an unclear mission and an uncommitted membership. Limited representation under Allende allowed groups to improve these features and expand in size. Stifled individual liberty under the DINA undermined the ability for terrorists to operate, diffusing hierarchy, limiting size, and preventing coordinated tactics. The institution of the CNI loosened repression and offered basic individual liberty, permitting improved strategic capacity. Thus this study finds that political violence is unlikely under both high-functioning democracy and highly repressive autocracy, due to the sizeable constraints they place on organizational processes. When government slips from the extreme poles of regime, however, terrorist strategic capacity has opportunity to improve.

## *Democracy as a Counterterrorist Strategy*

Overall, democracy holds some advantage in undermining terrorist strategic capacity. Suppressing terrorism in autocracy relies on repressive capability, leaving the burden of prevention with the state's ability to detect a dispersed enemy with broad support.<sup>413</sup> Effective repression requires economic and political resources not always available to the state. When the DINA dissolved in response to international pressure, even the limited individual liberty offered by the CNI significantly improved terrorist strategic capacity. Democracy, meanwhile, relies on the efficacy of representation to limit terrorism.<sup>414</sup> This does not require resources, instead resting on maintaining institutionalized opportunity for popular input into government decisions. In Chile, only when political paralyzation arose under Allende did strategic capacity develop. Many in fact claim that Allende was within days of stepping down when the coup occurred, meaning that representative politics may have simply returned the country to a state of stability with time.<sup>415</sup>

Does this mean that democracy can be considered a treatment for terrorism? This study implies that both high-functioning democracy and highly repressive autocracy are unlikely to experience high rates of terrorism. However, as Abrahms writes, "open, competitive elections are clearly not a panacea for terrorism."<sup>416</sup> While representation can limit strategic capacity by creating channels for legal input and dissent, not all democracies are equal. Chile until 1970 was in fact famed for its stability, incorporating even radical voices into the political process.<sup>417</sup> The population itself is homogenous, almost entirely Catholic and lacking a strong indigenous or

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<sup>413</sup> Fearon, "Economic development, insurgency, and civil war."

<sup>414</sup> Carothers, "Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror."

<sup>415</sup> Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*.

<sup>416</sup> Abrahms, "Why Democracies Make Superior Counterterrorists."

<sup>417</sup> Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*.



minority population. Political extremism arose regardless. In democracies where social cleavages are more entrenched or intense, terrorism only becomes more likely. Representation rests on all sectors of society tolerating the rule of a single government. Where antagonistic political, religious, or ethnic groups split a society, all sides may find the influence of the others intolerable, preventing compromise and paralyzing the political process. Terrorism thus benefits from a clear mission of opposition and a radicalized membership, seeking to limit the influence of competing factions.<sup>418</sup> Thus the presence of institutions for representation does not guarantee that representation will in practice prevent political violence.

Furthermore, while democracy has important features that suppress motivation for terrorism, its use of security and military counterterrorist tactics is inherently limited. Democracies that employ totalitarian-style surveillance risk losing legitimacy.<sup>419</sup> Instead, “counterterrorist policies in democracies... are most effective when they coincide with larger shifts in the climate of political opinion away from support for, or sympathy with, terrorist causes and tactics. Law-enforcement strategies may reinforce the erosion in support for radical action; they cannot create it.”<sup>420</sup> Democracies thus tend to be more passive counter-terrorists than autocracies. Individual liberty permits terrorist opportunism but leaves democracies with a limited ability to actively respond, particularly important where representation is weakened.

This variable nature of regime means that democracy itself cannot act as a structural tool for counterterrorism, at least in the short-term. A high-functioning democracy has the potential to stifle terrorism, but this requires significantly more than holding free and fair elections. Imposing democracy in divided societies may lead to an increase in terrorism, unless the roots of these

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<sup>418</sup> Horowitz, “Democracy in divided societies.”

<sup>419</sup> Chalk, “The Response to Terrorism as a Threat to Liberal Democracy (1).”

<sup>420</sup> Gurr, “Terrorism in Democracies.” 101.

conflicts are addressed. The misconception is that electoral democracy will fix these cleavages by offering a popularly elected government, creating opportunity for cooperation. However, in looking at terrorist strategic capacity, as long as divides are strong or institutions weak, terrorist groups will benefit from a clear mission, a visible target, and a radicalized membership. In addition they will have the opportunity to act afforded them by high individual liberty.

A second implication of the Chilean case lies in recognizing variations among terrorist organizations themselves. These groups have complex internal processes that heavily influence their responses to the outside world. Expecting democracy to prevent terrorism ignores that these groups are adaptive; if they can continue to use violence, they likely will. Even when the FPMR in Chile achieved its goal of government overthrow, it adapted its central tenant to continue to justify violence. In highly democratic Spain, the Basque separatist movement ETA operates by seeking support from the Basque minority, despite the high level of autonomy that the population already enjoys.<sup>421</sup> Expecting a broad structural policy to address the causes of terrorism offers an overly simplistic vision of why groups use terrorism.

Taking into account variations in mission, hierarchy, membership, tactics, and violence level offers a more complex understanding of pressure points to exploit in counterterrorist policies. Treating terrorism as a solid block, such as by using rhetoric of a “War on Terror,”<sup>422</sup> ignores organizational variations that should determine the policies employed in ending their use of violence. Strict opposition is not always the best response. When Allende attempted to suppress the PyL, it empowered the group by creating the perception that it offered a significant rightist threat. Meanwhile, Aylwin’s pardons to FPMR guerrillas encouraged their reentering civil society and discouraged continued struggle. Group features also offer the opportunity to

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<sup>421</sup> Sánchez-Cuenca, “The Dynamics of Nationalist Terrorism.”

<sup>422</sup> Windsor, “Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism.”

understand vulnerabilities in specific structural formats. Shapiro, for instance, highlights organizational vulnerabilities arising out of hierarchy and funding mechanisms that offer opportunities for intelligence-based counterterrorism.<sup>423</sup>

The war in Iraq highlights the possibly counterproductive results of imposing democracy to undermine terrorism. The Hussein autocracy stifled internal terrorism by employing cruel and repressive measures to suppress dissent. While not preferable to democracy, it did limit internal upheaval. The overthrow of his government sparked violence among highly polarized factions, most notably the Shi'a and Sunnis. Elections did little to heal these divides. All groups appeared to find compromise intolerable. Applying the concepts of strategic capacity, higher individual liberty and the presence of highly antagonistic factions allowed terrorist strategic capacity to increase. Groups benefited from a clear mission of limiting the influence of other factions within the new government. High political emotions among all factions provided both an audience and a support base. The strong divides between the communities, in addition to the presence of American troops, offered clear enemies.<sup>424</sup> Even if, as Condoleezza Rice stated, these are only "birth pangs," they show the potential effects of unstable democracy on terrorism.<sup>425</sup>

At least in the short-run, democracy does not cure terrorism. Dissecting how organizational features respond to democratic characteristics shows the mixed effects of regime on terrorism. The constraints placed by high-functioning democracy and highly repressive autocracy both limit violence. However, developing a democracy with strong representation requires more than simply holding elections. Voting alone will not heal social divides, and may in fact intensify them when certain sectors find the rule of the majority intolerable. Structurally

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<sup>423</sup> Shapiro, "Terrorist Organizations Inefficiencies and Vulnerabilities."

<sup>424</sup> Hoffman, "Terrorism trends and prospects."

<sup>425</sup> Karon, "Condi in Diplomatic Disneyland."

addressing terrorism requires policies focusing not solely on establishing electoral democracy, but on strengthening liberal democratic institutions and on encouraging accords between competing factions, to undermine terrorist mission. While in the long-term a stable democracy provides a means to suppress terror, regime itself does not act as a sufficient condition to remove the motivation and opportunity for terror.

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