

National Coordinating Center in Solidarity with Chile

Fact Sheet

At the First National Conference in Solidarity with Chile, held last March in Chicago, representatives of over 100 local and national organizations met to formulate a basic national program in solidarity with the Chilean people. The delegates, representing labor unions, church groups, Chile support committees, and a wide spectrum of political organizations, succeeded in launching a national program around the demands to 1) end the brutal repression of the Chilean people; 2) free all political prisoners held by the military regime; and 3) stop all forms of U.S. economic and military aid to the junta.

A National Continuations Committee* representative of Conference participants was constituted with the mandate to carry out the practical steps of national coordination necessary to fulfill the Conference's program.

The First Six Months

**As its first national activity, the Center organized the National Legislative Conference and Peoples Lobby on Chile, at which 215 representatives from all over the U.S. met with over 50 Congresspeople, presenting demands to suspend U.S. economic and military aid to the Chilean junta, for Congress to take a more active role in the restoration of human rights in Chile, and pressing for a Congressional investigation of U.S. involvement in the coup.

**During the summer months, the Center was instrumental in obtaining a visa for Beatriz Allende, daughter of the late President Salvador Allende, to participate in various mass activities in the U.S.; and in arranging for the visit of Carlos Fortin, former Commerce Attache in London in charge of the crucial copper negotiations with Europe, who met with many Congresspeople and other influential figures.

**Most recently, the Center has coordinated national events organized in conjunction with the International Week of Solidarity, September 4-11, commemorating the first anniversary of the destruction of democracy in Chile, and raising substantial funds to aid the Chilean anti-fascist movement.

**To aid in the overall coordination of Chile solidarity work, a National Center in New York has been set up, and the regular publication of a newsletter has been established.

Strengthening Solidarity: Plans for the Coming Year

The current situation requires several urgent, well-planned national campaigns on vital issues; a closer coordination of the local Chile committees and affiliated organizations; and increased efforts to fulfill our responsibility to the international movement.

—Present activities include the initiation of a national petition drive against repression in Chile. Our goal is to collect 100,000 signatures against U.S. aid to the junta; in favor of U.S. asylum for Chilean refugees and for an open Senate investigation of the U.S. role in the fascist coup.

—We plan to raise the issue of U.S. complicity in the coup by giving national support to Rep. Michael Harrington's (and others) call for an investigation by the House Foreign Affairs Committee into the CIA's clandestine operations against the Popular Unity Government.

—A third necessary campaign is one to free Chilean statesmen now held at the Ritoque Naval Base. Among the 34 reported prisoners are many who have been severely physically and psychologically tortured, including Clodomira Almeyda, Luis Corvalan, Jaime Toha (whose brother was murdered earlier this year) and Bautista van Schowen.

—To strengthen our organization and make these campaigns successful, a second National Conference in Solidarity with Chile is planned for later this year—bringing representatives from local and national groups together to plan our program for 1975.

—We are also helping to initiate a Canada-U.S. conference in solidarity with Chile, with leaders of the Chilean United Left invited to attend.