

[1973?]

To appear in the Washington Post of Wednesday, September 7:

Dear President Carter,

Today General Pinochet head of the Chilean Junta is in Washington D.C. along with a great number of Americans who cherish democracy and human rights. We condemn the Pinochet visit with the full weight of our moral consciousness.

The destruction of democracy and the police state imposed by Pinochet in September 1973 and kept in power by his secret police force DINA has consistently and flagrantly violated the civil, political, social and economic rights of its victims, the Chilean people. Such has been the finding of the UN, the OAS, International Commission of Jurists, the Catholic Church of Chile. Even your own delegation of the UN Human Rights Commission in March of this year, Mr. President, cosponsored a resolution vigorously condemning the Pinochet dictatorship for its "constant and flagrant violation of human rights". Now Pinochet has replaced DINA with a National Information Center whose founding decrees are almost identical in language and purpose with those of its notorious predecessor. Pinochet will endeavor to appease world public opinion but such cosmetic changes do not signify the effective recovery of democracy, nor the restoration of fundamental human rights. Our President, the highest representative of our democratic people cannot shake the hand of a tyrant who closed the National Congress of Chile, burned all the electoral registers, dismantled the Chile Confederation of Labor, militarized the universities, incarcerated and slaughtered thousands of his countrymen and who suppresses all dissent through censorship and prohibition against freedom of expression. In your right hand, Mr. President, you hold the fate of 1500 people who "disappeared" after being detained by DINA. Do not extend that hand to General Pinochet asking him instead where are those 1500 people. Are they alive?. Why has he not honored his promise to UN Secretary Kurt Waldheim to inform him of their whereabouts?.

It is a tragic irony that General Pinochet comes to Washington D.C. almost a year to the day after the brutal assassinations of former Chilean Ambassador Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt, symbol of the best of our youth. We ask Mr. President that publicly state your views on the human rights situation in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and the other countries of the Americas where arbitrary rule and repression are the institutions of daily life. Bestowing on these dictators the same honours reserved for genuine representatives of democratic nations serves only to cast doubt on the true meaning of your human rights policy and to lessen the moral prestige of our nation in the world community.

Sincerely,

Some of the signatories are:

- Dr. Eugene L. Stockwell, Division of Overseas Ministries, National Council of Churches.
- I.F. Stone.
- Rep. Ton. Dellums
- Bella Azbug
- Rose Styron
- Bishop James Armstrong, United Methodist Bishop
- Chauncy Alexander, Executive Director National Association of Social Workers
- GEORGE WARD, RUTH HURKALAN
- DENISE LEVEXIDU