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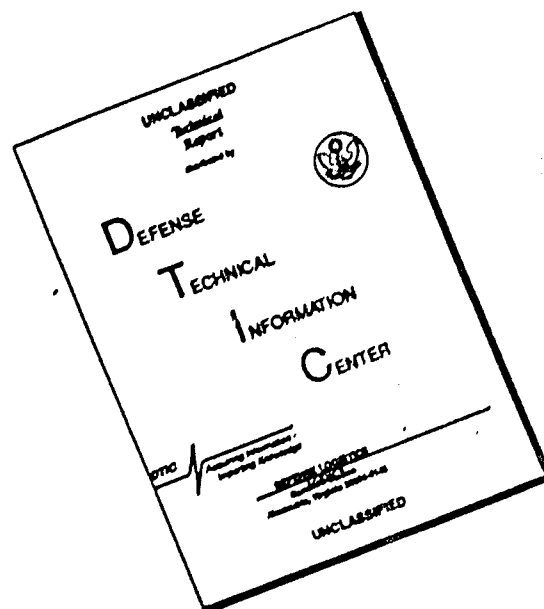
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**THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN GOVERNMENT IN CHILE
1924-1925**

**A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Georgetown University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS**

By

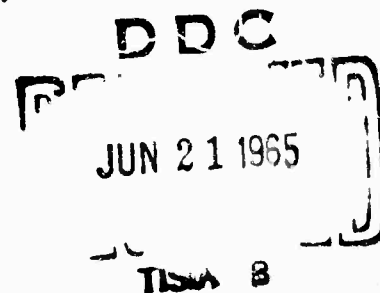
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Richard George Toye, B. S.

Washington, D. C.

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PREFACE

This thesis is, in large measure, the result of the insight and knowledge of an eminent Latin Americanist and inspiring teacher, Professor William B. Manger. The thesis grew from discussions held in a seminar on Latin American governments and politics conducted by Dr. Manger. It is to his excellent teaching, patient guidance, and unfailing help that the author owes a large debt of gratitude. Without his aid, suggestions, and criticisms, this paper could not have been written.

The author is also greatly indebted to Professor Luis E. Aguilar-Leon who has read the paper and who, through his vast knowledge of the source material, directed much of the research. His help and advice have directly contributed to the accuracy of the final thesis.

A further debt is owed to Miss Avelina M. Sabangan who typed and edited the final copies of the thesis.

To the United States Air Force Institute of Technology a special acknowledgement is due. The United States Air Force and the Institute provided the funds and the even more important element, time, so that the author might pursue his graduate studies.

Probably the most important statement of gratitude is due the author's wife, Sandra, who typed all drafts of the work and who read, edited, and re-read the paper through the final edition.

Finally, a word concerning the mechanics of the thesis is in order. All translations from the Spanish are by the author. For these translations as for all matters of factual content the author must accept full responsibility: any errors are his.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUNDS OF REVOLUTION

The Political and Social Background

The events of 1924 and early 1925 were a series of complex interactions which had their roots not only in the contemporary political situation, but also in the Chilean past, in the civil war of 1891. To understand the situation in 1924 requires an examination of the economic, social, and political situation of the entire era. The successive coups d'etat were not caused merely by a few young army¹ officers who rattled their sabers in the Senate galleries; rather, they were the result of a long series of irritations within the total life of Chile.

From the economic viewpoint, Chile's internal economy was closely tied to its exports of copper and nitrates. From 1850 to 1880 Chile was the world's largest producer of copper, and the duties laid upon this product accounted for most of its governmental² finance. With victory over Peru and Bolivia in the War of the

1. The first overt incident which finally culminated in the coup d'etat of September, 1924, was the rattling of sabers by young Army officers seated in the visitors' gallery of the Senate. See Juan [Pablo] Bennett Argandoña, La revolución del 5 de setiembre de 1924 (Santiago de Chile: Balcells & Co. Editores, [1926?], p. 16. This particular incident was, of course, but a spark which ignited an already explosive situation.

2. George Wythe, Industry in Latin America (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 191.

Pacific, Chile acquired the vast nitrate fields of the Atacama. With the proven usefulness of nitrate fertilizers in agriculture, and later, the use of nitrate in the manufacture of smokeless powder, that resource soon replaced copper as Chile's leading export. From 1911 to 1913, Chilean nitrate exports averaged \$140,000,000 per year.¹ In 1913 Chile supplied 55% of the world's nitrate. And of even greater significance, in 1914, to cite one example, of the total government receipts of 16,308,979 pounds sterling, 6,786,688 pounds sterling were derived from export duty on nitrate.³

With the advent of World War I, and the enormous requirement for nitrates in the production of smokeless powder, Chilean production remained high.⁴ However, the same war which placed these heavy demands on the nitrate industry carried with it the seeds of disaster for the Chilean economy. In Germany, the development of a process for the cheap commercial extraction of nitrate from air forced a severe cutback in Chilean production. In 1919 Chile

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 193.

3. J. Scott Keltie (ed.), The Statesman's Yearbook (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914), p. 736.

4. By 1916 Chile exported a record 931,401 metric tons of nitrates. J. Scott Keltie (ed.), The Statesman's Yearbook (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1919), p. 735.

exported only 803,961 metric tons of nitrate.¹ As a result, "... depression had hit badly as early as 1920, in the aftermath of World War I." When the critical relationship between mineral exports, or world demand for those products, and Chile's internal revenue, up to 67% of which came from mineral duties, is considered, it is not difficult to understand the importance of the reduction in demand caused by the new nitrate process.³

During the same period of wartime boom, the easy money coming from nitrate sales engendered a rise in the cost of living, which those upon a fixed income or a salary not pegged to the cost of living could ill afford. With 1913 as the base year (100), the cost of living can be shown to have risen steadily even through the period of decreased demand for nitrate.

1913--100	1916--117	1919--143	1922--173
1914--108	1917--118	1920--168	1923--176
1915--120	1918--121	1921--169	1924--179 ⁴

1. J. Scott Keltie (ed.), The Statesman's Yearbook (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1922), p. 753.

2. Carleton Beals, Latin America: World in Revolution (New York: Abelard-Schuman Limited, 1963), p. 91.

3. Jorge Barria Cerón, "Evolución histórica de Chile de 1910 hasta nuestros días," Anales de la Universidad de Chile, CXVIII, No. 120 (cuarto trimestre /sic./ de 1960), p. 50.

4. "Chile," Current History, IX, No. 6 (September, 1924), p. 1015.

Within the jaws of the vice of falling employment and rising living costs were caught many of the lower classes. Of that era, Emilio Rodríguez Mendoza says, "During that period, the atmosphere was heavy and disturbed; and one upon another, the crises accumulated."¹ Had the Chilean worker had social legislation and even some elementary form of social security, or had the governments since the civil war shown any interest at all in the fate of the city-dwelling working class, it is possible that even the problem of the disastrous nitrate losses and rising living costs could have been solved without a radical social upheaval. Such, however, was not the case. Additionally, the pressures of urban population growth made the conditions of the city dweller even more unbearable. While from 1870 to 1950 the total population of Chile more than doubled, the rural population remained fixed; the total increase occurred in the cities.

According to sociologist Guillermo Feliú Cruz, by the start of the twentieth century, "a self-assertive revolutionary wave tried to find an equilibrium in the equalization of classes."³ Most of the

1. Emilio Rodríguez Mendoza, El golpe de estado de 194 (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Ercilla, 1938), p. 101.

2. Preston E. James, Latin America (3d ed. rev.; New York: The Odyssey Press, 1959), p. 51.

3. Guillermo Feliú Cruz, "La evolución política, económica, y social de Chile," Anales de la Universidad de Chile, CXVIII, No. 119 (tercer trimestre de 1960), p. 54.

important political parties, however, took little notice of this new sentiment. The Conservative Party in 1901,

. . . believed that it could put itself in the forefront with so many lyrical phrases, of sound inspiration, and truly Christian--but ineffective to restrain the brutal reality of the clash of interests.¹

Neither did the Radical Party take an active interest in the affairs of the lower classes.² It was not until 1910 that the Liberal Party made an unsuccessful attempt to call for "Permanent Committees of Workers" in factories of 150 or more employees.³

There were, however,, some parties which attempted to appeal to the working classes. The Partido Democrático was formed as a disaffected branch of the Liberal Party in 1887. Its specific role was to speak for the working class:

It fell to the Partido Democrático to be the true organizer of the working masses, the party which, for the first time, awakened in them a class consciousness, one which was the precursor of social legislation.⁴

1. Ibid.

. Ibid., p. 55.

3. Ibid., p. 61.

4. Ibid., p. 60.

Also speaking for the workers was the Partido Socialista Obrero, founded in 1917 by Luis Emilio Recabarren. This party became the Communist Party in 1921.¹ It was, in both forms, active among the nitrate workers of the north. By the end of World War I, those parties which counted any worker support were the following: Partido Socialista Obrero, nitrate workers; Partido Democrático, coal miners and city artisans; and Partido Radical, white collar middle class.²

The political affiliations rarely satisfied the needs and demands of the various working groups, however. From the beginning of the twentieth century, many informal trade groups held open public meetings throughout the country. The city artisans of Santiago held open meetings and put their problems before the public. Other rising groups were doing the same throughout Chile. The nitrate workers, the coal miners, the longshoremen, the railworkers, and the factory workers each banded together in informal organizations. By the time of the postwar nitrate crisis, several of these associations had been formed: La Asamblea Obrera de Alimentación Nacional, the Federación Obrera de Chile and the International Workers of the World (IWW) Región Chilena. These quasi-organized groups helped give body to the

1. Robert J. Alexander, Communism in Latin America (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1957), p. 177.

2. Robert J. Alexander, Prophets of the Revolution (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), p. 96.

otherwise heterogeneous working groups.¹

Also in the vanguard of this "new social revolution" was the Federación de Estudiantes de Chile (FECH). The FECH went into the workers districts to educate the masses.

Closely allied with Socialist, Anarchist, and Syndicalist labor movements as well as the leftist wings of the Liberal and Radical Parties, students plunged into a campaign of prolonged agitation for social and political reform.

While these organizations and party affiliations appear to be rather important, in reality they had little or no actual voice in the national or local governments and could not obtain even minimum goals for the workers. The one method through which the working man gained the little he did was the strike. Before World War I the workers had been sporadically organized, and hundreds were killed in strikes against employers. In 1903 in Valparaíso, the Army shot and killed thirty strikers and left more than 200 wounded. In October, 1905, more were killed in Santiago. On February 6, 1906, and again in 1907, more were killed and wounded in Antofagasta and Iquique, respectively. In Iquique

1. Barriá Cerón, op. cit., pp. 51-53.

. Frank Bonilla, "The Student Federation of Chile: 50 Years of Political Action," Journal of Inter-American Studies, II, No. 3 (July, 1960), p. 314.

3. Alexander, Prophets of the Revolution . . ., op. cit., pp. 55-56.

the troops killed 2000 strikers who had been herded into the bullring. Natales in 1919 and Magallanes in 1920 also suffered the repression of strikes.¹ In Natales, some of the struck workers were burned alive as "examples."²

In a single year, 1908, there were twenty-nine major strikes throughout the country. In Santiago there were eleven; Antofagasta, three; Concepción, three; the coal mining region, three; and there were nine centers which suffered one strike each. Some 200,000 people were involved in these strikes.³

With the success of the Russian Revolution, the workers got what they had theretofore lacked: a successful ideology which told them they were correct in their actions and which justified their sacrifice: "The word 'soviet' had a magical prestige."⁴ The revolutionary and radical workers' press, which had increased to 100 newspapers and magazines since the beginning of the century, kept alive the desire for radical change and the spirit of disgust with

1. Alberto Edwards Vives and Eduardo Frei Montalva, Historia de los partidos políticos chilenos (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico S. A., 1949), pp. 153-155.

2. Feliú Cruz, op. cit., p. 67.

3. Ibid., p. 6.

4. Jorge Barria Cerón, "Chile. La cuestión política y social en 1900-1916," Anales de la Universidad de Chile, CXVII, No. 116 (cuarto trimestre /sic./ de 1959), p. 57.

the government.¹ It is probably difficult to overestimate the importance of the positive program of Communism. Anarcho-syndicalism, although radical, offered essentially a negative program foreign to all of the country's political experience. Socialism or Fabian socialism for a country in which hundreds of workers were killed annually seemed to offer little to the hungry roto.

In spite of this ferment, the government showed little sympathy for the workers; as a matter of fact, it generally repressed them. Although in 1919 the government had been forced to declare a state of siege and banish syndicalist leaders to remote parts of the country, in his last presidential message of 1920 President Sanfuentes said not a single word about the social upheaval within Chile! The whole situation seems well summarized by Guillermo Feliú Cruz:

The peace introduced by the parliamentary regime disdained, with complete indifference, to worry about social problems which accumulated one upon another, each one with more gravity, in the congressional archives.

1. Feliú Cruz, op. cit., p. 70.

2. Ibid., p. 54.

For the working class, then, the combination of a declining external market for the most important product of Chile and a rising cost of living created an atmosphere of discontent. The flames of this discontent, fanned not only by a public apathy, but worse, by a public antipathy, had been growing since 1900. The support given the working classes by the various radical newspapers aided in keeping alive their belief in their ultimate triumph. It was, however, the victory of Communism in Russia which added an ideological base to the growing discontent.

A strong, active, imaginative central government might have been able to cope with the problems facing Chile, but a government such as the country had known since 1892 found itself totally incapable or unwilling to enter into the class struggle:

What endured intact during the period from 1892 to 1920 was not the state, either in essence or in form, which had come forth at the battle of Yungay [the defeat of Balmaceda], but a dead political form kept on its feet by the support of the past.¹

Since the victory of the congress over the executive in the civil war of 1891, the governmental power had rested within the parliamentary regime of the Chilean Congress. The political power

1. Francisco Encina, "El pueblo chileno hacia 1910 y los rasgos cardinales de su evolución política y económica hasta 1920," Anales de la Universidad de Chile, CXVIII, No. 119 (tercer trimestre de 1960), p. 43.

within the Congress was generally exercised by the landed interests¹ and the new rich of mining and manufacturing. The members of the lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, served four years, and Senators served eight years.

The Congress, in addition to being conservative in an era of social change, had two other faults which frustrated almost all sectors of Chilean society. First, the Congress was more an organization for debate than one for passing needed legislation.² For example, immediately after the defeat of Balmaceda in 1891, a law for workers' housing was introduced into the Congress. The proposed legislation was debated for nearly sixteen years, until 1906. Only after the strike of 1905 in Santiago was the bill passed as Law Number 1838, on February 10, 1906.³

In 1909 there was introduced into the Congress a bill regarding working accidents. As with the bill on housing, this was debated

1. William Lytle Schurz, "Government," in The Evolution of Latin American Government, ed. Asher N. Christensen (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1951), pp. 32-33. See also Charles A. Thomson, "Chile Struggles for National Recovery," Foreign Policy Reports, IX, No. 5 (February 14, 1934), p. 8; and Austin F. MacDonald, Latin American Politics and Government (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1954), p. 9.

2. Luis Correa Prieto, El presidente Ibáñez; la política y los políticos (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Orbe, 1960), p. 67. See also Schurz, op. cit., p. 9.

3. Feliú Cruz, op. cit., p. 63.

sporadically until it was finally passed in 1916, eight years after its introduction.¹ In 1919, a mixed commission was formed by the Congress to study the need for and impact of legislation throughout the country. This committee met intermittently until 1921, when it was dissolved without having accomplished anything.² One cause for such an unproductive record, according to the historian Encina, was that although the Chilean Congress was a parliamentary body, there was a complete lack of party discipline within the several parties.³ In a multi-party parliamentary legislature such lack of discipline made it nearly impossible to pass anything of importance.⁴

From that time [1891] forward, a plutocracy consolidated its control of parliament; and while it revelled in its power, new social forces gathered strength in the shadows.⁵

The second major fault of the Congress was its almost constant interference in the affairs of the executive branch. The congressional victory in the civil war established that the President's cabinet could

1. Ibid., p. 65.

2. Ibid.,

3. By the turn of the century there were at least six well-defined parties. See Schurz, loc. cit.

4. Encina, op. cit., p. 41; and Alberto Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Nascimento, 1948), p. 64.

5. Feliú Cruz, op. cit., p.75.

remain in office only so long as it enjoyed the confidence of the Congress.¹ It would appear that after the civil war, congressional disapproval of cabinets increased sharply. A comparison of governmental crises in pre-civil war and post-civil war administrations indicates the instability of the post-war cabinets:

Pre-Civil War Cabinets

<u>Government</u>	<u>Number of Cabinets</u>	<u>Number of Ministers</u>
Prieto (1831-1841)	4	9
Bulnes (1841-1851)	5	15
Montt (1851-1861)	5	16
Perez (1861-1871)	7	22
Sanfuentes (1871-1876)	2	11
Pinto (1876-1881)	6	21
Santa Maria (1881-1886)	5	15
	<u>34</u>	<u>109</u>

Post-Civil War Cabinets

Balmaceda (1886-1891)	16	59
Jorge Montt (1891-1896)	10	40
Errázuriz Echaurren (1896-1901)	17	59
Riesco (1901-1906)	17	73
Pedro Montt (1906-1910)	11	43
Barros Luco (1910-1915)	15	55
Sanfuentes (1915-1920)	15	78
Alessandri (1920-1924)	0	71
	<u>121</u>	<u>478</u>

1. Encina, loc. cit., and A. Curtis Wilgus (ed.), Argentina, Brazil, and Chile Since Independence (Washington, D. C.: The George Washington University Press, 1935), pp. 357-364.

2. Felín Cruz, op. cit., p. 76. It should be noted that in their book dealing with the Chilean political parties, Edwards and Frei state that there were 121 cabinets and 530 ministers. The difference is probably attributable to the fact that some ministers served more than one time. See Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, op. cit., pp. 134-135.

The lack of party cohesion is also illustrated in the composition of cabinets and ministers from 1909 to 1919.¹

<u>Party</u>	<u>Heads of Cabinet</u>	<u>Ministers</u>
Liberales		70
Balmacedistas	5	46
Nacionalistas	4	36
Radicales	2	0
Conservadores	1	20
Democratas	0	6

During the years under consideration, these six groups shifted alliances often enough to yield at least five separate identifiable coalitions:²

<u>Alliance</u>	<u>Time in Cabinet</u>
Liberal Alliance	3 yrs. 7 mos. 19 days
Universal (no identifiable bloc)	3 yrs. 3 mos. 24 days
Predominantly of the President's Party	2 yrs. 10 mos. 19 days
Liberal-Balmacedista	1 yr. 5 mos. 25 days
Other Coalitions	1 yr. 4 mos. 3 days
	12 yrs. 3 mos. 0 days

With such a rapid succession of governments between 1891 and 1914 (an average of more than three cabinets per year), it was difficult for the executive branch to make any prolonged assault on social or any other problems. It has been said that "there were ministers who, having taken their oaths of office in the morning, lost their posts in the Senate or the Chamber of Deputies in the

1. Feliu Cruz, op. cit., p. 79.

2. Ibid.

afternoon of the same day." 1

It therefore seems not surprising that by the end of the Infuente's Administration, there was a general recognition, throughout the entire country and at nearly every level of society, of the social and political bankruptcy of the parliamentary government. Little had passed through the Congress for presidential signature, and what little did survive was usually relatively unimportant.

The general disaffection, manifest in part by strikes, could only create an atmosphere within Chile which infected nearly all of society, including the military.

1. Ibid., p. 76. Víctor Contreras Guzmán, in his book Bitácora de la Dictadura: Administración Ibáñez (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta "Cultura," 1941), p. 3, states: "There were cabinets that fell because a junior of a ministry or a school teacher was displeased with it. So far had we descended!"

The Military Background

Before 1924, Chile's armed forces had created a record of political non-intervention and professional competence of which any country could be proud. The infusion of these admirable qualities and attitudes came about as a result of a combination of people and events which influenced the Chilean military from its beginnings. Even during the war of independence, the Chilean experience was somewhat different than that of other Latin American militaries. The most important difference was the leading role of sea power, which finally enabled the land forces to defeat the Spanish. The early patriot army under O'Higgins and San Martín could not have done the effective job which it did without the help of the patriot navy under the Englishman, Lord Cochrane.

In the first attempt to win independence, which started in 1810, the Chilean forces had no seapower, while Spain controlled the coast. Primarily as a result of their lack of mobility, the patriot army was forced to flee to Argentina by 1814.¹ The importance of sea power to Chile was noted by Diego Portales somewhat later, when he averred, "In our position, I find a warship more necessary than an army."² In the second, successful attempt for independence in 1817, the patriot navy

1. Wilgus, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile..., op. cit., p. 293.

2. Raúl Silva Castro, Ideas y confesiones de Portales (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico S. A., 1954), p. 38.

under Lord Cochrane was instrumental in gaining the final victories.¹

There is reason to believe that none of the three primary leaders of the independence movement, neither San Martín, O'Higgins, nor Cochrane, was of the caudillo mentality. Of the military, San Martín himself warned, "The presence of a fortunate soldier is dangerous to a newly constituted state." General O'Higgins, after resigning as head of state in 1833, retired to Peru and made no overt attempt to return to power.³ Finally, according to Worcester, "...Cochrane refused to become embroiled in partisan politics."⁴ Thus, of the three early military leaders, none attempted to use his forces to subvert the new government. Edwin Lieuwen attributes Latin American caudillismo to the military's assumption of power in the leadership vacuum left by the expulsion of the Spanish.⁵ If this analysis is correct, then it was particularly significant for the future political-military

1. Donald E. Worcester, Sea Power and Chilean Independence (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1966). This complete book gives a detailed account of the role which the patriot navy played in the final victory of the wars for independence from Spain. See also George Pendel, The Land and People of Chile (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1960), p. 30.

2. Michael Howard, Soldiers and Governments: Nine Studies in Civil-Military Relations (London: Eyre & Spottiswood, 1957), p. 157.

3. Wilgus, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile . . ., op. cit., p. 97.

4. Worcester, op. cit., p. 77.

5. Edwin Lieuwen, "The Changing Role of the Military in Latin America," Journal of Inter-American Studies, III, No. 4 (October, 1961), p. 560.

relationship of Chile that these three potential caudillos removed themselves from power.

While the famous early leaders were not of the caudillo mentality, there were some lesser leaders who were. During the period of disorder lasting from 1818 to 1830, Chile had five constitutions,¹ and was in a constant state of conflict between liberals (pipiolos) and conservatives (pelucos). It was finally the victory of the conservative forces led by General Joaquín Prieto over the liberal forces which put the control of the Chilean government into the hands of Diego Portales. The early years of the Portales Government were critical in further developing the military's relationship to politics. General Prieto's victory, while insuring a conservative government, did not insure rule by civilian authority. This was achieved by Portales: "The Army, a hotbed of dissension, was subjected to the Presidential will; officers of an independent mind were demoted, imprisoned, exiled or executed."³ By 1833, the military, purged of insurgent elements and subordinated to the central government through promotion

1. Robin A. Humphreys, "Democracy and Dictatorship," in The Evolution of Latin American Government, ed. Asher N. Christensen (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1951), pp. 298-99.

2. Fredrick B. Pike, Chile and the United States, 1880-1967 (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963), p. 10.

3. Hubert Herring, A History of Latin America from the Beginnings to the Present (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 547.

and pay policies and the tradition of the military academy,¹ was forced to abstain from politics.

This strong disciplining of the military by Portales, following closely the wise military leadership exercised by San Martín, O'Higgins, and Cochrane, definitely aided in subordinating the military to civil authority. Portales was successful because of the earlier work of the three warriors; and, in turn, their early apolitical attitudes became tradition because of the positive discipline imposed by Portales. As Edwin Lieuwen says,

Where the military was disciplined early, as in the unique case of Chile under Diego Portales, the civilian oligarchy was able to assume -- and did assume--control of the nation's machinery.²

Such discipline, accomplished so early in the military's history, could not alone be expected to account for the traditional military attitude of Chile. It has been said by an intimate observer of more than one golpe de estado in Latin America that

The long period of peaceful training embellished only with tactical maneuvers and occasional parades does not satisfy the urge for activity of ambitious and energetic young officers.³

1. See Francisco A. Encina, Historia de Chile desde la prehistoria hasta 1891 (Tomo X; Santiago de Chile: Editorial Nascimento, 1948), p. 549.

2. Edwin Lieuwen, Arms and Politics in Latin America (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961), p. 4.

3. Kurt Conrad Arnade, "The Technique of the Coup d'Etat in Latin America," The Evolution of Latin American Government, ed. Asher H. Christensen (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1951), p.311.

The history of Chilean arms is replete with honors won, not in the halls of congress, but on the fields of battle. James Bryce decided that "the bent of Chilean genius. . .has been, on the whole towards war and politics."¹ That this "bent" has borne fruit was attested by Austin F. MacDonald, who said of the Chileans, "They have fought a large number of foreign wars, . . .with uniformly successful results."²

In 1836 Chile went to war with a coalition of Peru and Bolivia, finally defeating them in 1839. This war "established abroad the reputation of Chile as a fighting nation."³ From 1863 to 1866, Chile was at war with Spain.⁴ While this war was not one of great military importance, it did keep the army ready and caused the Chilean navy to enjoy a renewed importance in the military hierarchy.⁵

Certainly one of the most important of Chile's foreign wars was the War of the Pacific, the "Nitrate War," in which Chile's military defeated both Bolivia and Peru. By the end of the war in 1883, the Chilean armed forces had reached the height of their military prestige,

1. James Bryce, South America: Observations and Impressions (New York: The Macmillan Company, 191), p. 21.

. MacDonald, op. cit., p. 83.

3. Wilgus, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. . ., op. cit., p. 311.

4. Mary Wilhelmine Williams, The People and Politics of Latin America (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1938), p. 61.

5. William Columbus Davis, The Last Conquistadores: The Spanish Intervention in Peru and Chile, 1863-1866 (Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1950), p. 329. This book deals in its entirety with this virtually bloodless war between Spain and her two ex-colonies.

and they were quite willing to rest on that prestige alone. Although the public worshipped the army and navy with almost limitless admiration, the military made no attempt to use this adulation as a stepping stone to political power.

Instead, the army was content to find its full measure of satisfaction in its professional accomplishments, while leaving politics to the civilians.¹

Finally, between these many foreign wars the Chilean army was not resting and plotting for lack of other occupation. To the south, from the days of the first conquistadores, the Araucanian Indians had been causing constant military problems.

General Tellez states flatly that the conquest of the Araucanian Indians in Chile cost Spain more than all the rest of the discovery and conquest put together.²

The Chilean military, while never conquering these Indians, did subdue them by 1883. That the Indians did, indeed, cause the Chilean military to wage heavy campaigns is indicated by the statement of a foreign visitor in 1850:

Almost the whole of the regular army is quartered on the south frontier to keep check of the bold, savage Araucanians, but in the north from Valparaiso to the desert a regular soldier is rarely seen.³

1. Pike, op. cit., p. 32

2. William S. Stokes, Latin American Politics (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1959), p. 107.

3. George Byam, Wanderings in Some Western Republics of America (London: John W. Parker, West Strand, 1850), p. 20.

To subjugate the Indians required the best the military could offer. The Indian wars were a constant presence, both between and during often glorious formal wars. As such, they were a significant feature of the total environment within which the Chilean military matured and developed its philosophy.

Throughout these years of the development of the military, there was a definite trend toward professionalization. This development probably took place because the Chilean military was successful and free from political intrigues: but conversely, it must be noted that because the military was already a professional organization, it was victorious and did not deal in politics. Certainly victory, professionalism, and non-interference in politics are closely inter-related.

Yet if, as Edwin Liewen suggests, professionalism is the antithesis of militarism or caudillismo, then regardless of how or why professionalism developed in Chile, it should be examined. Liewen's definition of professionalism embodies these three aspects:

First, the officer corps turned its energies to the exercise and development of its military function; second, the armed forces tend to become the servants rather than the masters of the state; third, that their function became increasingly limited to the "legitimate" military duties of maintaining internal security and defending the country against external aggression. ¹

Under these terms, it could be said that even under Portales the Chileans were so developing.

1. Liewen, Arms and Politics. . . , op. cit., p. 31.

The success of Chilean arms indicates that the officers early turned to the development of the military function. The actions and statements of the early military leaders indicate subordination to civil authority. Finally, the uniformly successful foreign wars and the domestic pacification of the Indians show that the military was able to maintain internal security and to defend the country against external aggression.

Chile was one of the first Latin American nations to request a military mission from Prussia, receiving its mission, led by General Emil Koerner, in 1885.¹ The training mission was so effective that one author decided that "the Chilean army was almost Prussianized."² It should again be noted that Koerner had a successful military machine with which to work. The Chilean army had become so highly professionalized that by 1905 it was itself sending military missions to Colombia, Venezuela, Paraguay, and El Salvador.³

While it is difficult to assess how much of Chile's professionalization was cause and how much was effect, the important factor is that Chile's military did become a thoroughly professional organization. Through this, it became constantly less interested in politics and more involved in its two primary missions of protecting internal tranquillity and providing for external defense.

1. Ibid.

2. Stokes, op. cit., p. 129.

3. Lienow, Arms and Politics. . . , op. cit., p. 32.

As the civil war of 1891 marked a turning point in the political and social development of Chile, so also did this conflict leave its mark on the armed forces. The war was a sanguinary affair which lasted nearly a year and cost the country 10,000 lives and over 100 million pesos' damage.¹ Yet, it would be difficult to assign the cause of this conflict to militarism, as in fact the real and basic cause lay not in a civil-military conflict, but in a conflict within the civil government itself. In speaking of the civil dispute, Pedro Montt, a Chilean representative in Washington, commented,

At this crisis, seeing the President was bent on an arbitrary dictatorship, Congress resolved to exercise the powers conferred upon it by the Constitution. . . . This it proceeded to do, and solemnly ordained that Mr. José Manuel Balmaceda had ceased to be the President of Chile.²

After the crisis had been started, not by the military, but by the civil government, the navy en toto supported the congressional position, while a number of elements, if not the majority, of the army supported the President.³ Not all of the army remained loyal

1. Williams, op. cit., p. 630.

2. Pedro Montt, Exposition of the Illegal Acts of Ex-President Balmaceda Which Caused the Civil War in Chile (Washington, D. C.: Gibson Bros., Printers and Bookbinders, 1891), p. 14. This particular pamphlet must be used with care, as Montt was the representative of the congressional forces in Washington during the civil war. The author has attempted to use only statements within the competence of the congressional representative: the work is definitely a propaganda device.

3. Wilgus, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. . ., op. cit., p. 357.

to Balmaceda, however, and some elements went to the congressional side. General Koerner, the head of the Prussian military mission, was one of the key figures:

In January, 1891, Koerner's already great influence over the Chilean armed forces increased still further when his defection from President José Balmaceda helped turn the tide of revolution in favor of the constitutionalist forces.¹

Using the navy and a cadre of loyal army officers, the Congress raised a new army which defeated Balmaceda within eight months.²

In August, 1891, shortly before the defeat of Balmaceda, the congressional forces wrote, "At last the constitutional army is well-equipped and they will soon continue along their accustomed paths of victory."³ While only a portion of the army supported the congress, within eight months this cadre had become the core of another army. This new army, the Congress declared, was really the army Chile had always had. This new army would be the one to "continue along their accustomed paths of victory." Thus, the Congress imputed the whole military history and tradition to that portion of the forces which remained loyal to it. By August 8, 1891, the Congress could say, "The fleet as well as the most distinguished officers of the army placed themselves at the disposition of the Congress."⁴ Actually, of course,

1. Lieuwen, Arms and Politics. . . , loc. cit.

2. Wilgus, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. . . , loc. cit.

3. Montt, op. cit., p. 19. Emphasis supplied.

4. Ibid., p. 15. Emphasis supplied. Such an optimistic evaluation is belied by the 10,000 deaths suffered throughout the war. Obviously, the Presidential forces were not entirely incompetent.

the army was irremediably split by the civil war. Afterwards, it was reorganized. Those officers who had supported the conservative Congress were given commands and allowed to remain, while those who had backed the President were removed from their ranks and commissions.¹

From that time on, concomitant with the changes which the rest of Chilean society was experiencing, a subtle change took place within the army and parts of the navy. The military had progressively come to be drawn more and more from the middle sector backgrounds, the very sector which felt most strongly the changes of the three decades from 1891 to 1920. There were, however, still some officers from the upper class. This social division within the officer corps still existed in 1920. According to Professor Johnson,

In the 1890's as both the army and the navy became increasingly professionalized, they lost any remaining appeal that they had held for the elites. As a consequence, young officers of middle sector background moved readily into positions of responsibility.²

Such a statement, however, cannot be taken to mean that there were no officers from the elites, for, to the contrary, officers from the conservative high society continued to advance far faster than their contemporaries. General Sáez Morales said of the post-civil war officers,

1. Ideuwan, Arms and Politics. . . , loc. cit.

2. John J. Johnson, Political Change in Latin America: The Emergence of the Middle Sectors. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), p. 70.

"The officers who belonged to alta sociedad had their futures assured."¹

During the time of the parliamentary republic the members of Congress constantly interceded with the army and navy to promote special "friends" and to assure them good assignments.² While such attention was not devoted solely to members of the "elite," it was given to those who were sympathetic to the conservative Congress.

The majority of officers, however, were from middle sector backgrounds.

The Armed Forces are made up mainly of men of the middle class in the officer corps, and of members of the industrial and rural proletariats in the ranks.³

Thus, the division between liberal and conservative officers which appears later during the several military interventions was not based so much upon total numbers of officers from the various backgrounds, as upon the highly preferential promotion policies which favored the conservative officers.

1. Carlos Sáez Morales, Recuerdos de un soldado; el Ejército y la política (Vol. I; Santiago de Chile; Biblioteca Ercilla, 1934), p. 34. See also Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 13.

2. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 61. The higher officers of the Navy as well as those of the Army were definitely in sympathy with the conservative forces. See Ricardo Boizard, Cuatro retratos en profundidad: Ibañez, Lafertte, Leighton, Walker (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta El Imparcial, 1950), p. 3. According to Lieuwen, the Chilean Navy was the more conservative of the armed forces; see his Arms and Politics. . ., op. cit., p. 132.

3. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, op. cit., p. 196

General Ibanez^{IN} himself indicted the promotion system:

Actually, the young army officers were dissatisfied with the promotion pattern, which was of exasperating slowness. With great luck, one might receive the grade of major when he was something over fifty years of age.¹

The slow promotion did not occur, however, because of any lack of openings within the hierarchy of command. According to Colonel Raúl Silva Maturana, there were nineteen general officers and fifty-seven colonels for the Chilean army composed of 20,000 men. This is, on the average, one general for every thousand men and one colonel for every three hundred.² As far back as 1907 there was general disgust with the law of promotion and the open favoritism shown to some.³

Other internal problems tended to damage discipline among the officers and men. According to Alberto Cabero, after 1891, military discipline started to decline.⁴ A summary of the problems facing the military was amply stated by General Bennett, member of the first Junta de Gobierno of 194:

The Army lacked everything: justice, barracks, food, incentive; and no longer could public enchantment with the white manes of the plumed helmets of parading cadets suffice: everything was lacking and

1. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 60.

2. Raúl Silva Maturana, Caminos al abismo. (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, S. A., 1955), pp. 25-8.

3. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 37.

4. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., 87.

everything was bad: the quartermasters did not obtain a cent unless they enjoyed the personal favor of some minister.¹

The general lack of facilities and money affected the officers, especially those of middle class background, who had no family fortune to finance them. By 191 the officers generally in the grades of lieutenant through lieutenant colonel began to be concerned. One of the things which most affected Ibanez when he was a young officer was the condition of his recruits:

Who knows--perhaps the awareness of social backwardness which I gained when I was an instructor-officer fortified my convictions about the necessity for a change which would better the conditions of the poor sectors of our population, especially that of the country folk.³

Because the rich were allowed to "buy" their way out of the service, only the poor filled the ranks. They slept on straw.⁴

Many of the officers and men, then, faced formidable military and personal problems arising from the politico-economic situation. In addition, by the very nature of the backgrounds from which these men had come, they felt a close affinity for the problems of the civilians.

1. Quoted in Rodríguez Mendoza, op. cit., p. 173.

2. Pike, op. cit., p. 180.

3. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 42.

4. Silva Maturana, op. cit., pp. 13-32.

I understood the miseries of the people when the enormous extent of illiteracy and the physical poverty of the race, so burdened with deformity and congenital illness, were made known to me.¹

Those officers who lived closely with civilian society came to know the hardships of the rising cost of living which they, their men, and the civilian society were experiencing: "Through daily contact with the men, they come to understand the general misery, a condition which arouses in them a longing for social transformation."²

In addition to this awareness born of living in proximity to the poor, the armed forces had, from the beginning of the century, been given the duty of suppressing the various civil disorders. As indicated above, the suppression of these disorders had often been bloody and, in many cases, absolutely cruel. Considering the Chilean respect for non-violence, it would seem likely that such intimate contact with death and civil disorder left its mark on many members of the armed forces. By the time of the Russian revolution, the military surely had come to question its role:

The very [Chilean] Army, backbone of the structure of the State, seemed to have been shaken by an effective work of propaganda. The soldier had placed himself side by side with the Worker of the [Russian] Revolution.³

1. Ibid., p. 13.

2. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, loc. cit.

3. Barria Ceron, "Chile. . .," op. cit., p. 57.

Because of poor promotions, poor living conditions, a growing social awareness, and a general revulsion at having killed so many countrymen with whom they felt an economic and social tie, the younger, junior officers lost respect for the military hierarchy and, as a consequence, suffered from poor discipline.¹ "Many came to doubt the sense of justice of their superiors, and this doubt is always a bad indication." Another commented sadly, "The discipline of the Armed Forces differed from that of the Glorious Army of 1879."³

This spirit of decadent discipline, so similar to the general public indiscipline,⁴ broke into open revolt several times during the years after the civil war, and gave rise to several plots to overthrow the government, already held in general disrepute for lack of social sensitivity and political stability. It would appear that as early as 1909 the discontent with the government gave rise to secret societies within the Army.⁵ By 1912, the Liga Militar had been identified as such a society, but its exact character has remained in doubt.⁶ These

1. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 36.

2. Ibid., p. 50.

3. Alberto Cabero, Chile y los chilenos (3d ed.; Santiago de Chile: Editorial Lyceum, 1948), p. 267.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 22.

5. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 60.

6. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 38.

societies took an active interest in the affairs of the government and, at least among themselves, formulated real programs of reform. As they were illegal, little information exists concerning them.

As far back as the Presidency of Errazuriz Echeurren (1896-1901), the military had received a reprimand for plotting changes of government. Pedro Montt, during his tenure of office (1906-1910), arrested several officers for insubordinate actions against him.¹ In 1911, during a parade for President Barros Luco, the troops broke ranks and threatened his life. They were only brought under control with difficulty.² Later during his administration, in 1912, several lesser officers "almost executed a concrete plan against the government."³ Finally, in 1918 and 1919, high-ranking officers had a plan of takeover near realization when the police discovered them. President Sanfuentes retired General Manuel Moore, General Guillermo Armstrong, Comandante de Canto, and Almirante Cuevas for their complicity in the plot. Many other junior officers were also forced to leave the army, creating an internal dissension, as their fellow officers looked upon them as innocent.⁴

1. Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, loc. cit.

2. Ibid. See also Feliú Cruz, op. cit., p. 8.

3. Feliú Cruz, loc. cit.

4. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, loc. cit.; Feliú Cruz, loc. cit.; and Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 44.

Thus, by the end of the Sanfuentes Government, the Chilean military suffered from indiscipline and internal dissension to the extent that its loyalty was in doubt by 1910.¹ Of the internal upheavals within the once-proud Chilean military, General Langlois could say, "Of such conduct is made, not a national army, but an army for coups d'etat."

Such was the economic, social, political, and military situation on the even of the elections of 1910. There was a general economic paralysis, social upheaval, political apathy, and military discontent. The country was passing through a change which went to its very foundations, not a political change, but a social reorientation.³ As one commentator saw it, "The pressure continued to mount, and all that was lacking was a popular demagogue to turn an ill wind into a raging tempest."⁴ The caudillo popular was waiting, in the person of Arturo Alessandri.

1. Alberto Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática; historia política de Chile (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico S. A., 1952), p. 239.

. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 36.

3. Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, op. cit., p. 56.

4. Rodríguez Mendoza, op. cit., p. 95.

The Pre-Revolutionary Alessandri Era

For a country in social turmoil, the candidacy of Alessandri, who presented himself to the masses as their savior, was the hope of the people. Nominated in 1910 as the candidate of the "Liberal Alliance" composed of the Radical, Liberal, and Democratic Parties, Alessandri, the "Lion of Tarapaca," ran against Luis Barros Borgoño, the candidate of the conservative "National Union."¹

There is reason to believe that Alessandri looked to some of the military leaders for support before the elections, and he definitely contacted military leaders during the campaign. On May 1, 1919, El Mercurio of Santiago published an expose of certain clandestine meetings between Alessandri and Army officers, held in the War Department building.² While El Mercurio's charges were never proved, contact between Alessandri and some Army officers is indicated by

1. Much of this background section is taken from Pike, op. cit., pp. 170-181; Luis Galdames, A History of Chile (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941), passim., J. Fred Rippy, Latin America: A Modern History (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1958), pp. 456-460; Herring, op. cit., 588-596; Earle K. James, "Chile's Bloodless Revolution Viewed as a Triumph of Democracy," Current History, XXI, No. 3 (December, 1944), pp. 276-280; Williams, op. cit., 634-636; and Ricardo Donoso, Alessandri, agitador y demoleador (Mexico: Fondo de Cultural Económica, 1951), passim.

2. El Mercurio (May 1, 1919), p. 3. There have been charges against Alessandri stating that he took part in the attempted coup in 1919 in which many officers were forced to retire. It seems reasonable to suggest that he did, in some manner, take part in the planning of the events of 1919. See, for example, Sáez Morales, op. cit., pp. 48-50; and Donoso, op. cit., pp. 227-239.

various factors. To cite one example, after winning the Presidency, Alessandri reincorporated into the Army some of the officers connected with the plot of 1919, who had been summarily discharged by President Sanfuentes.¹

During the election campaign itself, in which Alessandri went to the people, travelling the length and breadth of Chile, the military played a passive role, but some officers were, nevertheless, in contact with Alessandri.² According to General Sáez Morales both the "National Union" and "Liberal Alliance" met with officers during the campaign.³

Alessandri won the election with a total of 179 electoral votes to 174 for Barros Borgoño.⁴ However, the result was in doubt, as the conservatively oriented Congress had to pass on the results. Fearing that the Congress might rule in favor of Barros Borgoño, which it could have done,⁵ Alessandri's forces made clear in public statements that such action would be looked upon with disfavor. In addition to these statements, Alessandri contacted some unidentified high officers to ask them to plan a military coup or demonstration, if necessary to

1. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 50.

2. Rodríguez Mendoza, op. cit., p. 171.

3. Sáez Morales, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

4. Williams, op. cit., p. 635.

5. Earle K. James, op. cit., p. 277.

get him into office. During this period of doubt, General Sáez Morales received a letter from General Anabalon saying,

While. . . Alessandri. . . has turned to the possibility of success through a cherished movement which would call upon him as the "chosen one," another even more audacious plan was initiated by Alessandri in 1919, which put its hand into the barracks and prepared, if not a coup, an advance in his candidacy, which at that time was beginning to be noticed. Confidentially, he had many commanders and officers on his side.¹

When the "Tribunal of Honor," formed by the Congress to decide the election, ruled in favor of Alessandri, the immediate threat of military action ended. It is interesting to note that also during this period of doubt, the Sanfuentes Minister of War and archconservative, Ladislao Errázuriz, apparently invented a false war-like incident in the north in order to mobilize the Army and send it to that section. The move, a patent attempt to remove the Army from Santiago and to distract public attention from the proceedings of the "Tribunal of Honor," failed almost immediately, and was given up.²

Although Alessandri may have been "the man of the people," he had to face a recalcitrant, conservative Congress which could block his every attempt to put the country on the road to political, economic, and social recovery:

1. Sáez Morales, loc. cit. Emphasis supplied.

2. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, op. cit., p. 187.

The program of "Chile Nuevo," which announced in 1920 and which emphasized great social reform, stayed virtually prostrate in the face of political resistance. ¹

As an illustration of the President's problems, the Código de Trabajo which he presented in 1911, still had not left Congress at the time of the military intervention of September, 1924.² As a further complication, the Congress gave fifteen of his cabinets a vote of "no confidence," which required, on the average, the appointment of a new cabinet every three months. Had his programs passed through Congress, which they did not, none of the cabinets was in office long enough to have implemented them.

In addition to the political problems he faced (and indeed because of them) Alessandri could not implement any of the economic and social reforms necessary to ease the repercussions of the crash of the world nitrate market.

For four years he battled against further collapse, as synthetic nitrates ruined Chile's major industry and drove hordes into the cities unemployed and starving.³

As a temporary measure to ease the burden placed upon the Chilean economy, unbacked paper money was issued. This, however, had only the effect of inflating prices even higher, as the unemployed saw none of the

1. René Silva Espejo, "Gobernantes de medio siglo," Anales de la Universidad de Chile, CXVIII, No. 119 (tercer trimestre de 1960), p.87.

2. Barria Cerón, "Evolución histórica de Chile. . .," op.cit., p. 55.

3. Beals, op. cit., p. 91.

increased money supply in the form of actual income.¹

In the immediate background to the events which started in September of 1914, upon the death of Senator José P. Alessandri of Ñuble, circumstances took a course which culminated in revolt.

Senator Alessandri died on December 7, 1913, leaving the seat for Ñuble vacant. The Senate, in accordance with legal precedent, asked President Alessandri to announce publicly a date for a special election to fill the seat. President Alessandri, wishing to encourage the election of a liberal, delayed in fixing the date.

Hoping to force an immediate election, the Congress promptly ceased all legislative action of even the most routine nature, and demanded the resignation of Alessandri's Subercaseaux ministry. By December 31, 1913, the Congress had still not passed the Garrison Laws which allowed the Santiago Garrison to remain in its barracks.³ On January 1, 1914, the Garrison left the city. On January 7, in

1. Barria Cerón, "Evolución histórica de Chile. . .," op. cit., p. 54.

2. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., p. 77.

3. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 6; and Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 16. These laws, renewed annually, provided permission to the national Congress. When these laws were not passed anew each year, the military was forced to withdraw from the site of the congressional meeting until their passage.

retaliation, Alessandri declared the session of Congress closed. This impasse was broken by an agreement between Alessandri and the Congress. In exchange for passage of the Garrison Law and a statute fixing primary importance to fiscal legislation, Alessandri promised free, uninfluenced Congressional elections, to be held at the normal time, March of that year.¹

It was in the preparation and conduct of these elections that the military, and especially the army, was drawn into political activity. Contrary to his "arrangement" with the Congress, Alessandri started in January to visit all the units of the Santiago Garrison to deliver discourses against the conservative Senate as the cause of both military and public discontent. These political "explanations" coming from the President influenced the younger liberal officers.²

The conservative forces, preparing for the election and realizing the import of the military supervision of them, also visited the barracks, but, in turn, dealt more with the senior officers and other conservative elements.³ It would appear, however, that the actions of these two factions were laying the groundwork within the Santiago Garrison for the future blows the country was to feel.

1. Clarence H. Haring, "Chilean Politics, 1920-1928," The Hispanic American Historical Review, XI, No. 1 (February, 1931), pp. 4-5.

2. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, op. cit., p. 189; and Saez Morales, loc. cit.

3. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 75; and Cabero, Chile y los Chilenos, op. cit., p. 267.

The talks of the President had produced their effects in the Armed Forces; and the National Union, for its part, also worked for their intervention, but in a quite different direction than the President might wish: they were untying a tempest which would sweep them away.¹

In spite of his promise, Alessandri decided to do more than talk to the military, the body which was to supervise the polls at the March elections. Alessandri used the Army supervisors to force the election of liberal Congressmen. Of Alessandri, A. Curtis Wilgus writes,

Directing his followers to break up and disperse the gatherings of their opponents, he made ready to use the Army and the national police force in his own behalf.²

While there seems to be little evidence to indicate that it was the military intervention which decided the election in favor of the Liberal Alliance, the intervention was foreboding: ". . . in effect, the armed forces appeared to be controlling the electoral act, because the Army had been imprudently mixed up with the political fight."³

The pre-election speeches to the military of Santiago and the actual use of the military to aid the liberal cause during the voting

1. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, op. cit., p. 192.

2. Wilgus, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile . . ., op. cit., p. 383. See also Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 75.

3. Saez Morales, op. cit., p. 63.

drew the Army into politics. Although the Army had been apart from overt intervention in politics for years, notwithstanding the several planned coups discussed above, it was now drawn into direct intervention by its own President; and by his speeches to it, the Army was led to believe that it held the political power balance or was, at least, a very important political factor. General Sáez Morales states,

The officers were not soon going to forget that if the circumstances demanded, they would be able to go so far as to impose a "saving" solution upon the powers of the State.¹

The forcing of the military into political matters caused this last depository of State power to become aware of a political role it therefore had not had. This political awareness of the military, the major coercive power of the state, unbalanced the civil political alignment of the day. Given the several crises facing the country in 1944, this awakening, organized, powerful force in Chilean politics provided the means for rapid political change.

Amid the turmoil of the country, amid the lack of authority, there remained in Chile only one organized and potent force, that of the armed institutions.²

Considering the background and social awareness of the Army, the new political awareness gave it not only the desire, but the ability to

1. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 63.

2. Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, loc. cit.

intervene, given the necessary spark. The spark could have been any one of several incidents: the important factor was the background, the attitude, the ambience of Chile in the year 194.

CHAPTER II

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

FROM SEPTEMBER, 1924 TO JANUARY, 1925

In both houses of the Congress elected in March, 1924, the Liberal Alliance held a majority; thus, theoretically, that body was favorable to the President. It must be remembered, however, that the Liberal Alliance was only a quasi-formal grouping of left of center parties united in little more than their opposition to the National Union. There was no central governing body of the Alliance, and little extra-party discipline was demanded.¹

Although this Congress was elected with the active support of Alessandri, once in power, its object of unity--the defeat of the National Union--was gone. Soon the new Liberal Congress could agree no more than did its conservative predecessor. The conservative Congress which held power until March of 1924 had purposely obstructed the Liberal President's legislative program. The liberal Congress in power after March, 1924, was composed of self-seeking parties, and did not attempt to unify to pass the President's legislation. The final result of both Congresses was the same: a legislative paralysis.² Pike states flatly, "The newly elected Congress proved no more cooperative than its predecessor."³

From March until September, 1924, Congress did little more than debate. It was slow in passing money bills, even those for the

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1. Wilgus, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. . ., op. cit., p. 383.
 2. Haring, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
 3. Pike, op. cit., p. 176.

payment of salaries due. The military as well as the civil service and police suffered, as their pay was constantly in arrears. Ibáñez himself, commander of the Cavalry School in Santiago, often had to borrow personally from banks in order to pay the men of his command. The government eventually would redeem his notes, but sometimes as much as six months later.¹ General Bennett, member of the first Junta de Gobierno, said of the financial situation of the officers, ". . . they were owed 'gratifications' from years before. . . ." ²

This lack of action by the new Congress, upon which so many hopes had been fixed, further disgusted the disaffected groups, especially the military. There is reason to believe that the country could have been set into revolt given any incident of importance. With the management of the March elections, various anti-Alessandri forces started to conspire to bring about his fall.³ The feeling of these forces toward Alessandri seems well stated by Earle K. James, "The pendulum had swung from the extreme of political conservatism to the extreme of political debauchery."⁴

1. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 76. Edwards Vives, in La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., p. 45, also discusses this problem of overdue salaries.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 103.

3. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., p. 255.

4. J. Fred Rippy, Historical Evolution of Hispanic America (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1940), p. 371.

In April of 1914, soon after it appeared that the new Congress offered the country no more than the old, General Bennett was approached by an unidentified retired officer who asked Bennett if he would help change the government. The General said that while he would take no action while on active duty, he would certainly consider the request after retirement. According to Bennett, this same person contacted other senior officers, also unidentified, and received an affirmative reply from them.¹ The general could not state if there were any definite relationship between the National Union and the retired officer, though he did admit to this possibility.² Alberto Edwards Vives, while not mentioning Bennett or others by name, does state,

Meanwhile, the leaders of the old Unionist opposition also got in contact with some high-ranking officers of the Army and Navy, in the hope of putting an end to the existing situation by means of an armed pronunciamiento.³

Future leaders of several revolts and former classmates and friends at the Military School,⁴ Carlos Ibáñez and Marmaduke Grove held meetings

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit. pp. 16-17. The author has not been able to determine the identities of the other officers, although it is not unlikely that General Altamirano may have been one of those contacted.

2. Ibid., p. 88.

3. Edwards Vives, *La fronda aristocrática*. . . , op. cit., p. 135.

4. Chile, Academia de Guerra, Resena histórica de la Academia de Guerra, 1886-1936 (Santiago de Chile: Instituto Geográfico Militar, 1936). According to this publication, the careers of Blanche, Ibáñez, and Grove started similarly. In 191, all three entered the same class, which was graduated in 1914. These three were the only members of that class to have been sent abroad. Blanche went to Germany; Ibáñez, to San Salvador; and Grove, also to Germany. See pp. 114-113.

within the very offices of the General Staff. In these meetings the two officers commented favorably upon the actions of the liberal juntas of Spain of that period. Not only were these officers not censured for these meetings, their actions were condoned.¹ There can be little doubt as to the existence of active, nearly overt plotting against the Alessandri regime.

In this atmosphere of plots and counterplots, legislative paralysis, and overdue public salaries, came the spark which set off the explosion which was to rock Chile for eight years. The Congress, which had been composed of the landed and wealthy since the days of Diego Portales, served without remuneration. With the election of the new Congress, less wealthy people entered the two chambers:

Perhaps in an endeavor to win its good will, Alessandri encouraged the Congress to pass a bill giving its members a salary of two thousand pesos (about \$1.0) per month, both for senators and deputies.²

This bill, called the "Parliamentary Diet Law," was to be retroactive to June, 1924, and also provided for the senators and deputies to have free rail travel and a free congressional restaurant. Its total annual cost would have been 100,000,000 gold pesos, or about \$36,000,000.³ When it is considered that many military officers earned only two hundred pesos (about \$40) a month, and that even a part of this was in

1. Saez Morales, op. cit., p. 66.

2. Pike, loc. cit.

3. Earle K. James, op. cit., p. 372.

arrears, along with a part of the salaries of civil servants, police, and teachers, it is not surprising that the timing of the bill, if not its very content, was considered to be something less than judicious.

According to Víctor Alba in his work on militarism in Latin America, the younger officers of the military are the more politically and socially progressive, and are also more likely to want a change from the "old ways."¹ As has been discussed above, this pattern seems to have prevailed in Chile in 1940. General Bennett felt there was an alienation between the junior officers (including the older ones of low rank) and the senior officers of high rank, caused, in part, by their divergent views of "social progress."

The young officers, without realizing it, blamed their generals for not working hard enough to obtain these laws [of retirement and promotion], and the disgust and lack of enthusiasm for the service and the want of faith in the actions of their superiors grew from day to day.²

This, it would appear, might help to explain the impact of the Diet Law on the young, progressive officers. Not only had the Congress of March offered the country nothing new, it was now voting itself a salary for its lethargy! Additionally, General Bennett's views concerning the breach in communications between the junior and senior officers aid in explaining the impetuosity of the interventions which

1. Víctor Alba, El militarismo (Ensayo sobre un fenómeno político-social iberoamericano) (México: Biblioteca de Ensayos Sociológicos, 1959), p. 63.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 14.

were to come:

. . . the September movement was the work of the young officers, spontaneous, idealistic, rapid, and effective, as it was the fruit of young minds and virile spirits.¹

On September 3, 194, the Congress passed the Dist Bill.

According to numerous sources, several young officers went to the Senate that very day in anticipation of the passage of the bill.²

It would appear that while the appearance of military officers in uniform in the Senate was unusual, it was not unprecedented. The same type of visit had been made during the administration of Pedro Montt, and "it is very possible that this example stimulated the officers to their action in the Senate."³ Other active lobbying had also taken place in Chile after the Montt administration. In August, 194, a new women's organization, the "Patriotic Union of the Women of Chile," went to the Chamber of Deputies. In the Chamber balconies they staged a protest against the laws of divorce, separation of Church and State, and sectarian projects. Alberto Cabero feels that this successful demonstration was the inspiration for the officers'

1. Ibid., p. 18.

. See, for example, Rippey, Historical Evolution of Hispanic America, loc. cit.; Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 19-20; Pike, loc. cit.; Arturo Alessandri, Rectificaciones al tomo X (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Universitaria, 1941), p. 53; Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocratica. . ., op. cit., p. 57; and Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., p. 89.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 16.

action on September third.¹

According to several participants, the decision to go to the Senate on September 3 was made spontaneously. There is reason to believe this, as fewer than twenty officers³ went to the Senate on the third. After the young officers organized however, many more took part, indicating that the original officers probably had no organized backing. Although the first visit to the Senate was probably impulsive, youthful discontent with the Diet Bill and with Congress in general was not. General Ibáñez later claimed that the first organized discontent started before September third in that officers of the Escuela Militar an institution roughly analogous to the Command and Staff School of the United States forces, had earlier made public statements against the Diet Bill. Further, although the author has found no other proof Ibáñez states that two conservative politicians Ríos Gallardo and Francisco Hancourt dined often at the school just before the incident in the Senate. The General indicated that they

1. Cabero Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., p. 3. It is, of course, difficult to state that any particular antecedent was the inspiration for the officers' visit.

2. Eduardo Vives, La fracción aristocrática, op. cit., p. 255 and Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, op. cit., p. 204.

3. Eduardo Vives and Frei Montalva, Historia de los partidos, op. cit., p. 191.

were actually working for some type of military intervention.¹

Although no open confrontation between the officers and the senators took place on this day, the senators spoke out against the appearance of the officers and also insulted them. Some justification for the senators may be found in that the officers deliberately and noisily coughed, sighed, and rattled their sabers from time to time during the session. After the insults were voiced, the officers left the Senate and went to the Club Militar, located in the center of Santiago.

The President of the Senate immediately notified the Minister of War, Senor Gaspar Mora, of the officers' action in the Senate chamber, and demanded that the officers involved be punished. However, it was discovered that there was no military regulation against military observance of a Senate session. This fact, combined with the spontaneity of the event and the lack of any overt act by the officers made any punishment extremely difficult to justify.³

The Minister of War, however, went to the Club Militar on the evening of September third. By the time he arrived, the officers who

1. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 77. Other authors do state that unnamed politicians were dealing with the military: see Alessandri, op. cit., p. 48. Also, Carlos Silva Villacola, writing in El Mercurio in early September 1924, was against the Congress. See also Rippy, Historical Evolution of Hispanic America, op. cit., p. 37d.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 19; and Rippy, Historical Evolution of Hispanic America, loc. cit.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 20.

had been involved at the Senate had gathered a large group of the younger officers, and there was loud conversation. At that time, the officers had little motivation other than to complain about the insults suffered at the hands of the senators.¹ The Minister of War was received with little courtesy by the group, which now totalled several hundred. Mora informed them that the President of the Senate had asked that they be punished for their acts. The meeting lasted until nearly midnight of September 3-4. The Minister, insulted, bullied, and often ignored,² finally stated that he would not punish any officer involved.

There were, however, other reasons for the removal of the threat of punishment. The official opinion of the high officers, by the morning of September 4, was, if anything, in favor of the act of the third. At the daily cabinet meeting held on the morning of September 4, General Altamirano, Inspector General of the Army (its highest position), told the cabinet that he was frankly in sympathy with the protest by the officers.³ General Saez Morales also indicates that as early as the morning of the fourth, President Alessandri looked upon the action in the Senate and the subsequent meeting in the Club Militar with favor, although at that time he had

1. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 8.

2. Ibid.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 23; and Saez Morales, op. cit., p. 77.

given it no official support.¹ Surely having this backing, both overt and tacit, from two such important people, the officers were in a favorable position vis-a-vis any attempt to discipline them.

Later, during the day of the fourth, a group of sixty officers again went to the Senate gallery. This visit to the Senate had been decided upon the night before by those gathered at the Club Militar. This second visit had little objective other than to register the officers' protest at their treatment on the day before and to emphasize their solidarity. The visit of the fourth ended in an uglier manner than had the previous day's. As both the officers and the senators were sensitive to each other's action, it was not long before insults were traded: "Several personal disputes between Senators and officers also took place in the Senate."³ This time the officers were ordered by the President of the Senate to leave the gallery, which they did with no little noise.

That afternoon, after notice of the confrontation had been given to all units of the Santiago Garrison, two meetings were held in the Club Militar. The first was a tea offered by the lieutenants to the

1. Sáez Morales, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 20. Another account states that nearly 100 officers went back to the Senate on the fourth. See Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, Historia de los partidos. . . , op. cit., p. 193.

3. Rippy, Historical Evolution of Hispanic America, loc. cit.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

captains. The purpose of this tea was to gather together all the young company grade officers in order to discuss the exchange of insults of that morning. From this meeting, held at 1800 on September 4, came a pledge of unity in facing the Congress.¹ While this particular meeting produced no permanent plan, it was important, for it was the first unified public declaration by any military group of a position vis-a-vis the problems of the day.

The second meeting, also scheduled for 1800 of the fourth, had been planned hastily after the sixty officers had been ordered to leave the Senate. This meeting was planned on the initiative of a Lieutenant Lazo, an officer under the then Major Ibáñez. Lazo sent telegrams to each unit calling for the officers, regardless of rank, to meet at the Club Militar that evening.² While no copy of the telegram has been found, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that higher authority than Lieutenant Lazo would have been necessary for the other officers--some majors and lieutenant colonels--to have accepted the invitation. There is, however, absolutely no proof, to the author's knowledge, to connect Ibáñez with the telegram. Víctor Contreras Guzmán believes, nevertheless, that Ibáñez was in the plot from the beginning.³ If this is so, it may account for the telegram's authority.

1. Ibid., p. 23.

2. Correa Prieto, op. cit., pp. 83-84.

3. Contreras Guzmán, op. cit., p. 27.

These officers, some four hundred strong, also met at the club. Almost immediately, they were told by someone that General Altamirano had defended them that morning before the cabinet. Before 1900, they had decided to send the General an invitation to attend the meeting.¹ This he did, but he said little more than that no one would be punished, and that he was in sympathy with the officers. Soon after he left, the four hundred, among themselves, decided that they should request that President Alessandri veto the Diet Bill, as it was the immediate cause of discontent; but they did not at this time offer any definite program beyond this. But with the insults, a change had come over the group: ". . . now it did not speak of 'asking' it spoke of 'demanding'."²

There seem to have been at least three major reasons for the success of this meeting and for the officers' having been left alone to plot. First, among the plotting officers themselves there was general agreement upon the need for action, although the type of action was in dispute. Second, there were some senior officers who, while taking no part in the plot, looked upon any action as being preferable to the prevailing inaction.³ General Altamirano's statement before the cabinet indicates such an attitude. Additionally, the President himself

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 24.

2. Ibid.

3. Dana Gardner Munro, The Latin American Republics: A History (New York: D. Appleton-Centry Company, 1942), p. 317.

gave no indication, at that time, of disapproval.¹ Finally, other senior officers, among them General Dartnell, commander of the Santiago Garrison, looked upon the meeting with indifference: "in reality, no high officer of the Army gave the matter the importance which it had."² These several attitudes may aid in explaining the lack of any force having been used to keep the officers from the meeting of the fourth.

Soon after General Altamirano left the Club Militar, the news had been made public that "something unusual" was taking place. Shortly before 2200 that same night, a representative from Alessandri went to the club and asked that a delegation of officers be sent to speak with the President.³ "The 400" rapidly selected Ibanex and two other officers to represent them.⁴ The meeting, held at the President's official residence, the "Moneda", took place late in the night of 4-5 September. To the three officers Alessandri made his position clear: "If the Army is with me, I am with the Army. . .;" but he left no doubt that he felt himself in command as he continued, ". . . but do not forget that I already have the support of a great

1. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, loc. cit.

2. Correa Prieto, loc. cit.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 25.

4. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 85. While the author has found no proof, it is possible that one of the other officers may have been Colonel Blanche.

part of public opinion."¹

It would also appear that during this meeting, the President himself formulated the reforms and a general program of demands for "the 400" of the Club Militar. After the meeting, Ibáñez stated that he (Ibáñez) took operational control of the program for the officers.² General Sáez Morales also states that it was only after this meeting that Ibáñez started to talk about the military's supporting the changes which Alessandri wanted.³ Alessandri also admits to the similarity of his program and the military's demands:

The petitions or aspirations of the military, as I have said before and repeat now, amply correspond to that for which the President of the Republic has been asking, soliciting, and requesting in reports, in speeches, and in his Messages during four long years.⁴

Thus, there is reason to believe that the program of demands later presented by the military came originally from the meeting with Alessandri on the night of 4-5 September. For this reason, perhaps, as the President stated, he felt he was in control of the movement. From this time onward, the Club Militar and the four hundred officers of the Santiago Garrison became the focal point of action.

1. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 77.

2. Correa Prieto, loc. cit.

3. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 78.

4. Alessandri, op. cit., p. 44.

Learning of the meeting which Alessandri had called, the Minister of the Interior, Pedro Aguirre Cerda, second in power only to the President, attempted to stem the tide of revolution on the same September 4. Minister of War Gaspar Mora, apparently having lost all of his prestige and influence at the meeting of September 3, was effectively replaced by Aguirre Cerda himself. To bring the situation under control, Aguirre first asked General Altamirano and General Dartnell if they could count upon the loyalty of the troops to invest and close the Club Militar. Both generals said that they felt the young officers were correct, and that no successful military action could be taken against them.¹ Finding this path blocked, Aguirre Cerda bypassed the chain of command.

. . . He called the unit commanders to a meeting in the Interior Ministry shortly after midnight [September 4-5] and expressed his desire that the officers concur in maintaining discipline at all cost, to which end he would avoid no sacrifice; that if the officers had something for which to ask, they ought to do so through their commanders in order for the request to reach His Excellency [Alessandri].²

At the same time, Aguirre Cerda also sent a messenger to the naval headquarters in Valparaíso to determine whether he could expect support from the Navy. Mora attempted to contact the naval commander at

1. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., 89.

2. Bennett Argandoña, loc. cit.

Talcahuano for support, but was told that he was sick.¹ The Navy gave no immediate answer to either inquiry.

These rather uncoordinated attempts to dominate the situation indicate much of the problem facing the government. At the very time the President of the Republic was telling a group from the Club Militar that he was "with them," the Head of Cabinet, Aguirre Cerda, was attempting to rally forces to resist. It would seem obvious that this lack of communication between the two most important government figures was intentional.² The President saw in the movement an opportunity to force all of his program, yet he also felt he could keep the movement under control if there were no outside interference.

Second, and perhaps more grave, was Aguirre Cerda's attempt to call forces against the officers. The locus of command authority was apparently extremely difficult to ascertain. The two high combat commanders, Altamirano and Dartnell, would do nothing. The unit commanders were then contacted, but would not commit themselves, especially since they knew their generals backed "the 400". While the troops were in the barracks, Aguirre Cerda could find no method by which to deploy them. Further, the armed forces appeared to present no united front at that time. Although Aguirre Cerda knew he had little, if any, Army support, he attempted to contact the Navy to ascertain its position.

1. Ibid.

2. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., 90.

As it was, events moved too rapidly for him to receive an answer.

This problem of the indefinite authority locus appears to have existed during the whole period of turmoil.

On the morning of September 5, Ibáñez held a meeting of selected officers, each of whom represented a specific unit, in the Cavalry School of which he was the commander.¹ At that meeting Ibáñez outlined the program which the President has suggested. The program was stated unofficially as being:

1. reform the Constitution of 1833 to eliminate the Parliamentary system;
2. veto the congressional salary bill, or "Diet Law;"
3. increase the pay of the Army, Navy, and police;
4. pay these bodies the back salaries due them;
5. promise Congressional passage of other outstanding legislation.²

Ibáñez ordered Lieutenant Lazo to notify key units throughout the country requesting their pledge to support the program.³ It was from this meeting that an embryonic organization emerged. This group was the first to notify the units outside of Santiago of the occurrences in the capital, and it was the nucleus of the later powerful Junta

1. Correa Prieto, loc. cit.

2. Haring, loc. cit.

3. Sáez Morales, loc. cit.

Militar. The group also called for another meeting at the Club Militar later in the day. The several representatives notified their units and each unit sent most of its officers to the Club Militar.

This second meeting of September 5 was probably one of the most important ones of the crisis. The first order of business was for the four hundred officers of the Garrison to appoint a junta to represent them in all official relationships with the government. The members elected to the junta were the following:

Commanding General of Forces in Santiago: General Pedro Dartnell
 Navy: Commander Ditborn and Commander Ocevedo
 General Staff: Commander Uracullo
 Military School: Colonel Ahumada and Lieutenant Bravo
Carabineros: Commander Ewing and Captain Fenner
 Cavalry School: Major Ibañez and Lieutenant Iazo
 War Academy: Lieutenant Calvo
 Regiment of Buin: Major Canales
 Regiment of Pudahuel: Major Mujica and Captain Aguirre
 Regiment of Valdivia: Major Díaz
 Regiment of Telegraphers: Commander Salinas
 Light Infantry Regiment: Commander Blanche and Captain Cabrera
 Regiment of Tacna: Major Puga
 Mounted Group: Major Vieux, Captain Vasquez, Lieutenant Urizar
 Mountain Group: Major Grasset
 Andean Battalion: Major del Pozo
 Secretary of the Junta: Captain Moreno. ¹

It is important to note the ranks of those elected to the junta. With the exception of General Dartnell and Colonel Ahumada, none of the officer was higher than Comandante, which is approximately equivalent to lieutenant colonel. Of the twenty-five, four were only lieutenants, five were captains, eight were majors, and six, comandantes.

¹ I. Bennett Argandoña, *Op. cit.* pp. 27-28, General Altemirano was never listed as a member of the Junta Militar.

Additionally, every major unit of the Santiago Garrison, including the Navy, was represented. The junta gave several indications of being a political grouping of military men. The distribution of rank was closely proportional to the importance of the participation of the various ranks in the events leading to the crisis. The unit representation, on the other hand, emphasized the several repositories of armed strength, not the officers in them per se. Thus, it would appear, the junta represented the interests of the various rank groupings and the interests of the components of the Garrison, somewhat in the manner of a bicameral decision-making organization. Evidently, this organization reflected rather accurately the various views of "the 400." Some of its members were liberal; some, conservative. Among the liberals, some were radical, and some merely highly progressive.¹ Ibanéz described the diversity of opinion among the officers as follows:

From the first moment there predominated among them two marked currents: one motivated by the rightist politicians and by the elegant sailors who asked smoothly and plainly for the departure of Alessandri; the other, formed by the progressive military and supporters of the leader of the Liberal Alliance, which desired to take advantage of the movement of the young Army officers for the advancement of social legislation, but respecting

1. Boizard, op. cit., p. 24; and Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 54.

the stability of the Executive.¹

It would appear that the membership of the Club Militar, politically, was not dissimilar to the national Congress, except that "the 400" agreed upon desiring "action" of one type or another.

The second major business of the meeting of September 5 was the logical outgrowth of Ibañez' meeting with Alessandri, and of the morning meeting at the Cavalry School. The "Ibañez liberals" presented for a vote of "the 400" the "Pledge of Conditions" which they felt the military should demand from the government. At this time the liberal elements appeared to be in control of the meeting. This is understandable, as the meeting was held less than twelve hours after the liberal officers had visited Alessandri, and they had an organized program to present to "the 400," while the conservatives, as yet, did not. The following conditions were presented to and passed by "the 400" as the military's demands of the government:

- I. Reform of the Constitution of the State, including in this act the Parliamentary Diet.
- II. Immediate veto of the Present Parliamentary Diet Law.
- III. Immediate dispatch of the Tax Law.
- IV. Retirement of cabinet ministers Salas Bono, Enrique Zanartu, and Gaspar Mora.

1. Bolzard, op. cit., pp. 23-24. It should be noted that the two naval officers, Dittborn and Osevedo, were stationed in Santiago and were on the junta as interim representatives, maintaining neutrality until representatives from naval headquarters in Valparaíso could arrive. Thus, in these early hours of the Junta Militar, the voice of the Navy was much less decisive than later.

- V. Immediate dispatch of the Labor Code and other social legislation.
- VI. Modification of the Rent Tax.
- VII. Stabilization of the currency.
- VIII. Approval of the Law of Private Employees.
- IX. Operation of the Law of Compensations to the Survivors of the War of the Pacific.
- X. Reform of the Organic Laws of the Army which do not impose costs on the Government.
- XI. Payment of outstanding debts to primary school teachers and other public employees.
- XII. Augmentation of salaries to the carabineros, police, Navy, and Army.
- XIII. Declaration of the following principle: the absolute and permanent exclusion of the members of the Army and Navy from electoral campaigns and from any act whatever of politics.¹

These demands corresponded rather closely to the program of Alessandri.

In fact, later, on November 30, 1924, the Junta Militar stated officially that these conditions came directly from Alessandri, and were merely approved by "the 400."²

The junta, by this time known as the Junta Militar, as the executive organ of the officers of the Santiago Garrison, immediately determined to send the statement of conditions to the President. They

1. Quoted in Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 29-30.

2. Ibid., p. 30. See also Silva Espejo, op. cit., p. 87, in which it is said that in reality these were Alessandri's reforms which were passed.

chose the ranking field grade officer, Colonel Ahumada, to carry the demands to the President. In his party went several lesser officers.¹ Upon receiving the demands, the President spoke for a time with the officers and finally asked for twelve days' time to consider the demands: "The officers urged an earlier decision; the President promised to give his reply by five o'clock that afternoon."²

Point IV of the demands required the resignation of three members of the cabinet, a point which apparently was not part of the program which Alessandri had discussed with Ibanez.³ This change of demands, coupled with the short time limit forced upon Alessandri, was among the first overt indications that the Club Militar and the Junta Militar were decision-generating organizations, and not simply tools of the President.

The cabinet, receiving the demand that three of its members resign, tendered its resignation en toto to the President, who accepted their action with scant ceremony.⁴ Although the demands had come from the Junta Militar, signed by its president Comandante Blanche, and delivered by its emissary Colonel Ahumada, President Alessandri chose not to answer to the Junta directly. At 1600 on the afternoon of September 5, the President called General Altamirano and stated that he assented

1. Bennett Argandoña, loc. cit.

2. Earle K. James, op. cit., p. 373.

3. It appears that in no document did Alessandri or the Junta Militar state that Alessandri asked to have anyone removed. He was more interested in passing his legislative program.

4. Earle K. James, loc. cit.

to the military demands. He then asked Altamirano to form a cabinet.¹

There seem to be two possible explanations for the President's choice of Altamirano, neither of which has been given any attention in the memoirs which the author has studied. First, the President may have called upon Altamirano as the ranking officer of the Army and of the Santiago Garrison. Considering the chain of command, such action would be logical. The second possibility, somewhat more speculative, is that Alessandri decided to use Altamirano as a counter to the Junta Militar. Alessandri knew that the General was not a member of the Junta, but inasmuch as the organization had only formed that same day, it was not known how much external support it enjoyed. Had Alessandri felt that control of the movement was slipping from himself to the Junta Militar, he might have used Altamirano as a check on its power.

However, according to General Bennett, the most important result of the decision to call upon Altamirano was that it established a second channel of communication between the President and the officers, causing confusion and duality of command.²

Upon receiving the request to form a cabinet, General Altamirano went to the Club Militar to discuss the possible ministers. The

1. Haring, op. cit., p. 7.

2. Bennett Argandoña, loc. cit.

Junta Militar, in a closed meeting, decided that as a minimum, the cabinet would have to include Generals Ortiz and Bennett.¹ As a result of pressure from the naval officers far out of proportion to their representation (of the twenty-five junta members, only two were naval), General Ortiz was replaced by Admiral Nef.² These men, in turn, were given permission to choose the remaining members of the cabinet. Gregorio Amunategui, Angel Guarello, and Emilio Bello Codesido, all outstanding civilians, were chosen.³ The new cabinet was sworn in at 2230, September 5, 1934.⁴

One is left with the impression that General Altamirano had little freedom of decision by the time he was asked to form a government. The troops were not, apparently, immediately responsible to him; they were, rather, under General Dartnell, the commander of the Santiago Garrison, and their individual unit commanders.⁵ These people were all members of the Club Militar, and some were members of the Junta Militar. For General Altamirano to function with political

1. Ibid., p. 3.

2. Earle K. James, loc. cit., What specifically occurred has not been recorded.

3. Ibid., p. 374; and Haring, loc. cit.

4. Haring, loc. cit.

5. General Bennett states that for the Inspector General to visit a unit he first has to obtain the Commanding officer's permission. Bennett Argandona, op. cit., p. 347.

effectiveness as the head of the cabinet, it was imperative for him to be backed by a power bloc. By September 5, the armed forces were such a bloc, but the Army was controlled by the Junta Militar, not by Altamirano. General Bennett described the situation:

A government can only maintain itself while it has the support of the forces which created it. In this case, it was the officers of the Garrison of Santiago. . . .¹

As of September 5, the status of the Navy was unclear, except that regardless of all else, they had to be represented in the cabinet. Thus Altamirano sought support from the junta, as without that support, his government was, perhaps, even more vulnerable than had been that of Aguirre Cerda which had, at least, the backing of the Liberal Alliance. The Junta Militar was making the political demands; since it controlled power, it had to be satisfied if it could not be stopped.

During the rapid progress of events the Congress had attempted to act, but with little success. Early on the morning of September 5, the presidents of the two houses of Congress met in an attempt to agree upon a program of action. Almost immediately, however, it became apparent that the National Union would view the events in a manner quite dissimilar to the view of the Liberal Alliance. After the Altamirano cabinet had been sworn in, the Union commented:

The action of the Army and Navy makes us shelter hopes of a return to normalcy and a national resto-

1. Ibid., p. 112.

2. Earle K. James, op. cit., p. 373.

ration, and the personnel of the cabinet deserve our full confidence. 1

The Liberal Alliance was, in general, indifferent to the military action. However, the Radical Party, led by Aguirre Cerda, almost immediately announced opposition. They denounced the action of the Junta Militar as " . . . an action decidedly against the present regime. . . ."

This disunited front presented by the Congress made it impossible for it to agree on action. The conservatives saw in the Junta Militar the force to depose the liberal Alessandri.³ They would take no action to save the Government. Many of the Liberals, including Alessandri, " . . . submitted to the demands of the military junta because they offered an escape from the unpopular situation created by the shortcomings of Congress."⁴ The Radicals wanted to resist. Thus, the Congress, the branch of the government normally concerned with cabinet changes and approval of executive actions, could not rally the forces to resist or even to present a united front to assist.⁵ It was at this point that the congressional power and its

1. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, op. cit., p. 194. See also Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., pp. 259-261.

2. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 9.

3. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., loc. cit.

4. Haring, op. cit., p. 9.

5. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., p. 96.

representative nature were subordinated to the Junta Militar. As noted above, the public was disgusted with the Congress, and the military was reacting precisely to Congressional impotence: the Congress had lost its bases of support.

The Junta Militar stepped into this power vacuum on September 6. On that day, following the installation of the Altamirano cabinet, the Junta Militar organized its activities. In many respects it was similar to a congress. First, it seemed to represent the various political views of the country--represented them, in fact, more precisely than did the actual Congress: ". . .in the reflections of the Junta Militar soon appeared the divisions existing in public opinion in the country."¹ With the wide diversity of views, the Junta was soon forced to acquire a parliamentary character.

The junta did not wait long in transforming itself into a small parliament, with commissions to study the different matters: foreign relations, justice, interior, etc., etc.; with an agenda, interrogations, and votes of majority and minority.²

1. Correa P. *etc.*, *op. cit.*, p. 91. Of the officers of the junta, Charles A. Thomson says, "But the officers, aside from personal interest in questions of salary and promotion, functioned as an instrument of public opinion rather than a militant force which was striving to seize direct control of the government." See Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 283. La Nacion in Buenos Aires stated that the nation's political differences were taken up in the junta. "The only new feature is now that it [the feud between liberal and conservatives] is waged within the Army, where the youth is liberal and the elder elements conservative." Quoted in "Chile's President Who Came Back," Literary Digest, LXXXIV, No. 11 (March 14, 1915), p. 22.

2. Sáez Morales, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

There were sixteen commissions appointed. Among other rules, a three-fourths majority was required to pass "decrees."¹

Almost immediately after this internal organization, the Junta Militar turned to the public, one of the bases of support, in order to win strength for the movement. On September 6, the Junta Militar established a press commission whose mission it was to explain the military action to these organs of public information. The officer-representatives of this commission immediately contacted La Nación, El Mercurio, and El Diario Ilustrado.² By September 10, these three had pledged their support, and most of the other papers throughout the country did likewise.³

Not content with enrolling the loyalty of the press, the Junta established another commission to visit various workmen's and students' centers in order to explain the activities of the Junta Militar. These representatives, visiting on the local level, were the only representatives of the government the masses had ever seen.

The Junta Militar, understanding the importance of maintaining the sympathies of the working element, commissioned various officers to meet in their centers to explain the ends of the movement.⁴

Delivering, in some cases, printed declarations of aims, these representatives of the Junta Militar became the representatives of the

1. Ibid., p. 119.

2. Ibid., pp. 90-91. See Also Earle K. James, op. cit., 374.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 85.

4. Ibid., p. 84.

government in the eyes of the people.¹

The Junta also immediately attempted to win the support of the Navy. While the Navy had indicated its disapproval of the "Diet Bill" and its approval of the young officers' action in the Senate,² it had not announced its position on any positive programs. Again, it must be remembered that during the first few days, the naval headquarters, located in Valparaíso, required time to learn of the course of events, to evaluate them and establish their own position, and to send their representatives to Santiago. On September 6, the Junta Militar established an information committee to visit the major naval installations. Ibáñez was appointed to visit Talcahuano in order to explain the Junta's action, answer questions, and enlist support. Major Marmaduke Grove, an Army officer, but an ex-naval cadet, was chosen to visit the headquarters in Valparaíso.³

Officers were also sent to the various political parties, the police and carabineros, the retired officers of all services, and the reserve officers' associations. To each group, the purposes, goals, and methods of the Junta and "the 400" were explained.⁴ The political

1. Ibid., p. 58.

2. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., p. 257.

3. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 87; and Saez Morales, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 78-79

parties did not give undivided backing, and it was with them that the Junta enjoyed least support. The Partido Socialista Obrero, by 1924 renamed the Partido Comunista, remained aloof and took a "wait and see" attitude.¹ The Radical Party was against the Junta; the Democratic Party was aloof but ready to criticize; the Liberal Alliance Party (not to be confused with the Liberal Alliance) was in accord with the Junta; and the National Union "...celebrated and applauded ceaselessly all that had been done to this point [by the Altamirano cabinet]." ²

In these early days, the young Army officers of the Santiago Garrison had completely stolen the initiative from the older, more senior officers. All contact between the government and the news media, the public, and many of the special interest groups took place only through the several committees of the Junta Militar. The conservative El Mercurio bore witness to the efficacy of the Junta Militar's organization: "The attitude of the Army, in complete accord with public wishes, has been independent of all party opinions."³

Although in Santiago the liberal young Army officers appeared to control the situation while the senior, conservative officers progressively lost authority and freedom of action, the opposite situation

1. Alexander, Communism in Latin America, op. cit., p. 179.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 85.

3. Quoted in Rippy, Historical Evolution of Hispanic America, op. cit., p. 374.

obtained in Valparaíso at Navy headquarters. With the first notification of events in Santiago, Admiral Valdez, the Director General of the Fleet, called a meeting of the Consejo Naval, the Navy's General Staff.¹ The flag officers and senior captains made the decisions for the Navy from the first notice of an abnormal situation in Santiago. This group of senior officers was conservative, and Ibanez thought they were under the influence of the National Union.² This had two major effects upon the role of the Navy. First, the official representatives the Navy sent to the Club Militar from Valparaíso, Capitan de Corbeta Luis Escobar and Capitan de Fragata Benjamin Barros Merino,³ were conservatives. Their philosophy, and in fact, their very orders from the Consejo Naval forced them to side with the conservative minority in the Army, and against Alessandri and his programs. This resulted in the Navy as a whole being represented as conservative,⁴ while the general tone of the Army representation was liberal.

Second, as those who spoke for the Navy on the Consejo Naval were also the ranking officers in the naval hierarchy, the duality which appeared in the Army did not exist in the Navy. In the Army,

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 79.

2. Correa Preito, op. cit., p. 88; and Boizard, op. cit., pp. 23-24.

3. These men joined Ditborn and Ocevedo upon arrival in Santiago. See Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 80.

4. Arnold Roller, "American Imperialism in Chile," The Nation, CXXIV, No. 3224 (April 20, 1927), p. 425.

General Altamirano needed the permission of lieutenants and majors for any act; in the Navy, the Admirals acted alone. The result of this was that the Navy

. . . was able to maintain the revolutionary concept in perfect harmony with discipline, which the Army did not do. . . .¹

It can be said that the Navy maintained discipline, as it supported the action of the Junta in Santiago; thus, any young naval officer could at one and the same time support the action of the Club Militar and remain loyal to the naval command hierarchy. As long as both the liberal Junta Militar and the conservative Consejo Naval were fighting against the existing form of government, their views coincided: only when the need for positive programs arose did differences appear. The most important consideration for the Navy was that the liberal Alessandri be removed, while the young Army officers still supported positive liberalism and Alessandri.

In addition to maintaining control of the naval portion of the movement, the Navy, like the Junta Militar, started to broaden its base of support. The first committee formed was the Comité Informativo en Valparaíso, whose mission it was to keep the Fleet informed concerning events in government. All news which reached the naval officers and men had to pass through this group. The officers on this powerful committee differed greatly from the young captains and majors of the

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 79.

Junta Militar. The members were the following:

Admiral Luis Gomez Carreno
 Vice Admiral of Engineers Diogenes Cordova
 Vice Admiral and Surgeon Manuel Valencia
 Naval Captain Carlos Ward
 Frigate Captain Able Campos
 Corvette Captain Luis Munoz
 First Lieutenant Enrique Condones
 Corvette Auditor Carlos Zegers
 First Engineer Tadeo Miqueles¹

This committee, accurately representing the hierarchical structure of the Navy with only two officers of company grade, presented a structure far different from the Junta Militar with its emphasis on the lower and middle ranks. A similar committee was formed in Talachuan, under the command of Frigate Captain Alejo Marfan.

The Consejo Naval also immediately contacted the press of Valparaiso and of the other naval centers. The Comision de la Prensa was headed by Sr. d. Moises Gacitua, a conservative, and second lieutenant Ramon Beytia.³ All notices given to the press and most support received from the press was of conservative orientation. The difference between the Army and Navy orientations is indicated by Emilio Rodriguez Mendoza who was in the naval town of Antofagasta shortly after the events of early September. Of the naval officers who were in charge, he said,

They were not in the least in accord with the military of terra firma and maintained that it

1. Bennett Argandona, op. cit., p. 79.

2. Ibid., pp. 81-82.

3. Ibid.

would soon be necessary to fight.¹

This united, conservative front presented by the Navy was, perhaps, due more to the fact that the senior officers retained control of the movement than to any prevalence of conservatism among naval officers. Ibanez states that early in December, 1944, a group of young naval officers visited him to protest the actions of the higher naval officers. Also, within the Navy there was a breach between the high line officers and the engineering officers, the latter feeling that the former ignored them:

The high officers of the Navy and especially the blunt Admiral Swett [sometimes spelled Sweet] had not been able to overcome either this discord or the discontent of the lower ranking officers regarding salaries and promotions.²

This would indicate that the Navy also had its share of liberal officers and of discontented officers. Within the Army, this group had triumphed in the form of the Junta Militar; within the Navy, the senior conservative element had triumphed in the form of the Consejo Naval.

There were two major lines of communication between these two power blocs, one of which favored the Army and one, the Navy. First, the Navy sent representatives to the Junta Militar, but due to the three-fourths majority rule, their votes were often lost. It

1. Rodríguez Mendoza, op. cit., p. 157.

2. Boizard, op. cit., p. 38.

must be noted, however, that the power behind the naval vote gave it an importance that belies its size. The second line of communication between Army and Navy was favorable to the latter. As stated above, both groups were represented in the government, by Generals Altamirano and Bennett and by Admiral Mef. As later events were to indicate, this triumvirate was actually rather conservative.¹ Both of these channels were active during the first few months of the revolution.

On September 7, the Junta Militar again met in the Club. It was at this meeting that the officers first discussed the status of the President within the new framework of military demands and the Altamirano cabinet.² The debate was essentially between those forces which wanted the President to leave the country, primarily the Navy, and those which wanted him to stay as head of government.³ According to Alberto Edwards, the conservative elements and the Navy blamed Alessandri for all problems and felt that only his departure and a return to 1920 would solve Chile's problems.⁴ The naval representatives to the Junta Militar for the meeting of the seventh demanded that Alessandri resign. The naval officers were joined by some of the

1. See Lieuwen, Arms and Politics. . ., op. cit., p. 130.

2. Saez Morales, op. cit., p. 92.

3. Boizard, op. cit., p. 24; and Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., p. 258.

4. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., p. 259.

conservative Army men.¹

Almost from the first, the National Union, whose members had been excluded from the Club Militar, as had all politicians,² started a campaign of rumors concerning the loyalty of the President to the Junta Militar. They also used the rightist press, which had given initial support to the Junta, in order to foment doubt surrounding the motives of Alessandri:

The press of the National Union predicted to the officers who distrusted the President that they were going to be fooled as had been the National Union in the pacts of January 30 [1924, at which time Alessandri had promised not to interfere with the March elections].

In this atmosphere, it was natural that in the Junta Militar, the predominant idea was that the departure of the President from the country was indispensable, exaggerating the danger of the continued presence in Chile of a person who, as President, was a popular caudillo.³

This pressure from the press, combined with the pressure already existing within the Junta Militar began to make itself felt.

The Navy also used its other contact with the government, Admiral Nef, in order to request the resignation of Alessandri.

1. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit., p. 98; Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 53; Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 87; Boizard, op. cit., p. 23

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 41. The Club Militar was closed to all civilians to "exclude" politicians from the debates of the Junta Militar.

3. Ibid., p. 5.

Admiral Gomez Carreño asked Nef to aid in displacing the President:

The necessity for the departure of the President was insinuated to the cabinet by the members of the Junta Militar y Naval [sic].¹

From both sides, Alessandri received notification that it was felt he should resign. The cabinet said he should withdraw, perhaps by taking a leave of absence. The Junta Militar, now almost a congress, was also debating his fate, although no vote was taken and no public statement was made.

The action which would appear to have forced Alessandri's departure from Chile was the conduct of the cabinet and the Congress on the day of September 3. Appearing before the Congress, General Altamirano said:

First, the military movement has not, and will in no sense have political character; second, the movement was inspired exclusively as a supreme necessity for the salvation of the nation, ruined by political and administrative corruption, and it will not end until its mission has been completely fulfilled; third, it is declared that there is no intention to make or establish a military government or to introduce a dictatorship of any kind.²

The speech gave fair warning to all that the military was in control and would stay in control until the country was "well." "In a word, the revolutionary state would not disappear with the dictation of the laws, as the President had hoped."³ That same day under the slightly-

1. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, loc. cit.; and Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 55.

2. "Chile," Current History, XXI, No. 1 (October, 1924), p. 110. Emphasis supplied. This was written by the Junta Militar.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 53.

veiled threat of Altamirano, the Congress passed thirteen bills, most of which had been before it since 1920.¹ Francisco Walker Linares, professor of labor law, states, ". . . these laws, amplified or modified later, constitute the fundamental base of the social legislation of Chile."² However, the significance of the Altamirano statement and the pressure brought to bear on Congress did not escape President Alessandri.

On the evening of September 8, 1924, Alessandri, feeling that he no longer had control of the situation and seeing the antagonism between the forces controlling the Army and Navy, requested the hospitality of the United States Embassy.³ His request was granted, and the President of Chile submitted his resignation to the Congress from the Embassy of the United States. The Congress, in turn, refused to accept the resignation. That same evening, Alessandri again tendered his resignation, and Congress again refused it, but it did authorize him a six month leave of absence.⁴ To the Ambassador of the United States, Mr. Collier, Alessandri indicated that he had lost control of

1. Earle K. James, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

2. Alessandri, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

3. United States, Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1924 (Washington, D. C.; Government Printing Office, 1939), p. 358. Telegram from Ambassador Collier to Secretary of State Hughes.

4. Ibid.

the movement. Ambassador Collier wrote to Secretary of State Hughes,

He [Alessandri] stated to me that he intends again to resign when he crosses the [Argentine] frontier, inasmuch as he believes it to be inconsistent with his self-respect and dignity to remain in office when he is not permitted by the military junta to perform the duties of his office. In a sense his resignation is absolutely voluntary although his departure from Chile is a result of his knowledge that if he did not depart he would be forced to by the junta.¹

Alessandri left Chile on September 10, 1924, and went to Buenos Aires and thence to Europe. In accordance with the Constitution of 1833, then in effect, the Minister of the Interior and Head of Cabinet, Altamirano, became Vice-President.

At 2000 on the 10th of September, Admiral Gomez Carreño arrived in Santiago, coming from the Consejo Naval in Valparaíso. Upon arriving, Gomez Carreño, a highly conservative person, immediately started agitating for the departure of Alessandri and the dissolution of the Congress:

He revealed to the cabinet that he brought the charge of the Navy to demand the rapid exit of the President from the country [at this time, Alessandri's plans were known only to Ambassador Collier] and the dissolution of the Congress in the shortest time possible.²

When the civilian members of the cabinet heard of Gomez Carreno's

1. Ibid.

2. Bennet Argandoña, op. cit., p. 67.

demand, they resigned.¹ The Junta Militar approved of their resignation and so informed Altamirano. Almost as soon as Alessandri left the country, General Altamirano, as head of Government, dissolved the Congress, and having done so, accepted the resignation of Alessandri.²

Almost immediately after the dissolution of Congress, the three military members of the government, Generals Altamirano and Bennett and Admiral Nef, had a conference with the Junta Militar, which by this time had increased in number from 25 to 36 members.³ The Junta Militar with which all action had to be cleared, decided that until such time as new elections could be held, the three military members of the government should form a Junta de Gobierno.⁴ This new Junta was to rule as the executive authority, a sort of caretaker Government.

Under this triumvirate, another cabinet was formed which was, in theory at least, free of military control. Although General Sáez Morales claims that the Junta de Gobierno was free from the control of the Junta Militar,⁵ it is doubtful that the Junta de Gobierno or its

1. Emilio Bello Codesido, Recuerdos políticos; la junta de gobierno de 1925; Su origen y relación con la reforma del régimen constitucional (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Nascimento, 1954), p. 18.

2. Earle K. James, loc. cit.

3. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 117. The new composition of the Junta Militar was Army, 29; Navy, 4; police, 2; carabineros, 1. Also, Grove replaced Colonel Ahumada.

4. Ibid., p. 116; and Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 72.

5. Sáez Morales, loc. cit.

cabinet enjoyed such freedom during the early weeks of the revolution. The Junta Militar still had complete control of the Army, and was the major link in communication between the government and the people. These bases for control were further reinforced by a formal connection between the juntas. Comandante Bianche, president of the Junta Militar, was "appointed" to the post of under-Secretary of War, and Captain Jouanne of the Navy was similarly "appointed" under-Secretary of the Navy.¹ These two important members of the Junta Militar, located in key positions within the cabinet, served two purposes. First, it was a formal acknowledgement of power relationships. The land military power rested with the young Army officers of the Junta Militar, not with the two generals on the Junta de Gobierno. The naval power rested with the older officers of the Consejo Naval, of whom Jouanne was the representative on the Junta Militar. The second purpose of these appointments was to place the two most important members of the Junta Militar in a position to know of all actions taken by the Government.

On September 11, 1924, a statement of purpose was issued to the public by the Junta Militar. This manifesto stated that until the conditions within the country were rectified, the military could not surrender interest in the government.² Statements were also issued

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 77.

2. Cabero, Recuerdos de don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, op. cit. p. 97; Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 103-105; Contreras Guzman, op. cit., p. 47. This was written by Ibanez and Oscar Fenner.

to the various military units to keep them informed on the progress of the movement. General Bennett feels this kept the Army tied to the Junta Militar as the real power in government. In response to requests from the officers of the Club Militar who had gone to the workers' centers, a public statement was issued on September 14, entitled "A los Obreros del País (To the Workers of the Country)." This particular statement was written by Blanche.¹ On September 20, El Mercurio of Santiago published a similar statement of goals directed to the doctors of the country.² All of these statements and manifestos were signed by the Junta Militar. These statements did present an admirable impression, as they were rather broad, and spoke of ends rather than of means. Their most important result was to generate confusion. General Bennett believes that the public, seeing all of the "official" statements which came from the Junta Militar, confused that group with the Junta de Gobierno, and credited, albeit erroneously, the works of the government to the officers of the Club Militar.³ If this is true, the officers received more credit they were due, while the Junta de Gobierno was forced further into the background.

The Junta de Gobierno, however, had positive support from the ranking naval officers and was thus not completely dependent upon the

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 113.

2. Ibid., p. 115.

3. Ibid., p. 106.

Army. As noted before, the senior naval officers had kept effective control of their service. Admiral Nef became a member of the Junta de Gobierno, and Admiral Gómez Carreño became Minister of War and Navy.¹ This position created a formal connection between the Consejo Naval and the Government. In addition to support from the Navy, the Junta de Gobierno attempted to gain support from organized political groups. Alberto Cabero believes that as the Junta de Gobierno had overthrown the Liberal Alliance by dissolving Congress and accepting Alessandri's resignation, it could only look to the National Union for support.¹ Alberto Edwards and Eduardo Frei definitely believe the government had the support of the National Union.³ The members of the Junta de Gobierno did attend several meetings at the Club Hípico, a club frequented by the conservatives.⁴ There does seem to be reason to believe that the government was composed of essentially conservative individuals, and that it enjoyed the support of the Navy and the National Union.

Rather quickly friction developed between the two juntas and, therefore, between the Army and Navy. The composition of the two military groups, the Consejo Naval and the Junta Militar, was quite different. The Consejo presented a united front, headed by Gómez

1. Ibid., pp. 135-137.

2. Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, op. cit., p. 274.

3. Edwards Vives and Frei Montalva, op. cit., p. 195.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 133. See also Correa Prieto, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

Carreño, who also served as the Minister of War and Navy, and supported the Government. The Junta Militar, on the contrary, tended to be a rather democratic organization with little correlation between the military rank represented and the political power held. Ibáñez believed that this resulted in the "right" presenting a united front, while the "left," or Ibáñez' group grew less united as time passed.¹

The first open rift between the two juntas came when Sáez Morales and a civilian, Pedro Prado, published an article criticizing the government and expressing a lack of confidence in it.² While this statement was not signed by the Junta Militar, it was known that Sáez was a member of that group. A second rift occurred on October 25, when Ibáñez, still commander of the Cavalry School, held a luncheon there for members of the Junta Militar. In addition, he invited a number of junior naval officers. No member of the Junta de Gobierno or high-ranking naval officer was invited.³ For the after-meal speeches, Ibáñez presented several young Army and Navy officers who condemned the government for taking no action upon the demands of the Junta Militar.⁴ This caused a clear break between Ibáñez and Altamirano. The fact that Ibáñez kept his command at the Cavalry School after making such

1. Boizard, op. cit., p. 24.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 137-138; and Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 150.

3. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 127.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 141.

open insults of the government indicates his great strength in the behind-scenes structure.

By the beginning of November, the Junta Militar felt it was losing control of the movement, as the government was doing absolutely nothing toward achieving the goals of the Junta Militar. It was also seen that the Navy was replacing itself firmly behind the Junta de Gobierno. The officers of the Club Militar decided that the Junta should appoint a "Committee of Liaison" to the government in order to provide an official channel of communication. The position of Blanche as under-Secretary of War under Gómez Carrano had proven less than fully effective in establishing a satisfactory liaison with the government. On November 3, the following committee was elected:

Army

Lieutenant Colonel Blanche
Lieutenant Colonel Ewing
Major Ibáñez
Major Poblete
Lieutenant Lazo
Lieutenant Urizar

Navy

Captain Jouanne
Captain Dithorn
Captain Barros

Police

Subprefect Carlos Dinator¹

Even in this group, the Navy was represented, indicating that it also maintained its strength in the Junta Militar.

The following day, November 4, the committee petitioned General Altamirano for an interview, which was set for 1130 that day. At the

1. Ibid., p. 129.

meeting, the committee asked Altamirano to grant them periodic interviews in order that he might ascertain the feelings and desires of the officers. This and other suggestions Altamirano agreed to consider, and the meeting ended.¹ The press release given to the newspapers by the Junta Militar concerning this meeting caused a breach between it and the Junta de Gobierno which ended only with the dissolution of the Junta Militar. The statement said,

The Junta de Gobierno invited a committee of the Junta Militar to confer with it [Junta de Gobierno], with the objectives of receiving the inspirations of the Junta Militar and being oriented precisely, so that the Executive may continue the realization of that which was promised to the country in the manifesto of September 11.²

The government immediately denounced the announcement as untrue in a strong statement which appeared in El Mercurio.³ This rebuttal, written by the Minister of the Interior Roldan with the approval of the Junta de Gobierno, was the first public denunciation of the Junta Militar by the government. Immediately upon hearing of this rebuttal, the Junta Militar held an extraordinary session and demanded of Altamirano the resignation of Roldan as the minimum acceptable atonement for such action.⁴ The cabinet decided to resign if Roldan were forced to do so, and the Junta de Gobierno likewise

1. Ibid., pp. 144-145.

2. Ibid., p. 145.

3. Ibid., p. 147.

4. Saez Morales, op. cit., p. 130.

stated it would resign if the cabinet were to do so.¹ The Consejo Naval immediately notified Captain Jouanne that this loss of Admirals Hef and Gomez Carreño could not be tolerated, as it might result in the delivery of the government to the liberal Junta Militar. Thirty-three years after the last civil war, Jouanne now threatened another military discord. He said to the Junta Militar,

The retirement of the Admiral Hef and of the generals creates a new situation which does not permit us to continue to form a part of the Junta Militar.²

With the two opposing power blocs face to face, an agreement was reached. Both of the Juntas would retract their statements, acknowledging a mutual misunderstanding. Finally, the Junta Militar agreed to appear only as a collaborator, not as an instigator of the government programs. For their part, the cabinet ministers all agreed to visit the Junta Militar to lecture concerning each program.³

From this time onward the two juntas drifted apart rapidly, with little understanding for each other.⁴ The press, seeing the duality of command in the two juntas, started to agitate. On December 5, El Diario Ilustrado called upon the Junta Militar to dissolve.⁵

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

2. Saez Morales, op. cit., p. 132.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 150-153.

4. Saez Morales, op. cit., p. 150.

5. Bennett Argandoña, loc. cit.

These manifestations against the Junta as a formal organization had a telling effect upon it, causing some internal disunity among its members. As noted above, the Junta had spoken of ends, not means, and it was upon means that there was little agreement among the members. With criticism against it undermining its solidarity, the Junta Militar became incapable of formal, official action.¹

The final confrontation between the Junta Militar representing the liberals and the Junta de Gobierno representing the conservatives was caused, not by a major incident, but by a minor one, the significance of which lay essentially in a question of prestige. When the Junta de Gobierno announced the presidential elections would be held in 1925, as normally scheduled, Major Pacheco of the carabineros, a member of "the 400" of the Club Militar, in a public statement suggested the name of his commander, Colonel Ewing. Ewing, a member of the Junta Militar, was immediately called to the Junta de Gobierno and told to resign his commission as commander of the carabineros.² On December 13, he was told to leave the service entirely, as he had "fomented political propaganda." "The crisis was described as a trial of strength between the Government junta and the military junta."³

The Junta Militar denounced the government action, and stated that the government no longer enjoyed the support of the Junta Militar,

1. Thomson, op. cit., p. 283.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 154-162.

3. "Chile," Current History XXI, No. 4 (January, 1925), p. 611.

nor did it any longer represent the revolution.¹ With this, the government asked for the dissolution of the Junta Militar, using all the military threats available to it:

To make this petition, the Government counted on the discipline of the Navy and its unconditional adherence to its admirals, and that this time as the time before [incident of November 4], it was decidedly behind the opinion of its high officers in the Government.²

To emphasize the determination of the government and the Navy's support of that determination, the Consejo Naval sent the following message to the Junta Militar:

In a meeting held yesterday afternoon, the Consejo Naval unanimously agreed upon the following:

- 1, That having a constituted government, the Navy does not deem the existence of the Junta Militar as necessary;
- 2, To reiterate the decided support of the Navy for the Junta de Gobierno;
- 3, For the first reason, it dissolves the Comite Naval and retires its representatives from the Junta Militar, first communicating this accord to said Junta as a courtesy.

The Navy will hereafter deal directly with the Government.

--Valdez, Director General of the Navy³

After an abortive coup in defense of Ewing on December 12, led by two young carabinero officers,⁴ the Junta Militar lost all

1. Bello Codesido, op. cit., pp. 43-45

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 162-163.

3. Bello Codesido, op. cit., p. 51.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 166.

accord, the younger officers wishing to resist, while the Navy and some of the conservative officers favored dissolution of the organization.¹ Colonel Blanche and Major Ibáñez still had the support of the Army troops even though the Junta Militar organization was sterile. Before committing the Junta to dissolution, these two leaders went to visit Emilio Bello Codesido on December 16. They told him that they were ready to take over the government by force on that same day if he would head a new government.² Bello suggested that a compromise might be reached to avoid the armed conflict between the Army and Navy which such a coup would almost certainly bring. The compromise, to form a new, more liberal cabinet in exchange for the dissolution of the Junta Militar, was accepted by both Blanche and Ibáñez and by the Junta de Gobierno.³

These events probably indicated that there had been a change in power relationships after October. Originally, the Junta Militar spoke for all of the armed forces, or so it appeared. In retrospect, it is evident that the Junta Militar was composed of diverse elements which agreed, not upon a total program, but upon the single demand

1. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 92. This division of opinions and attitudes was constantly a problem for the Junta Militar.

2. Bello Codesido, op. cit., p. 45. This meeting was attested by Ibáñez. See Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 90.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 303.

that the form of government then in existence was not good for Chile. With the overthrow of that government, the ranking Army officers and all the Navy, as represented by the Consejo Naval, desired the establishment of a conservative government. The liberal young Army officers of the Club Militar, however, had no such non-philosophic accord. Actually, within that group was represented a rather typical cross section of all Chilean thinking and most of the "isms." The two groups rapidly separated, with the conservative group retaining a more effective organization through the Junta de Gobierno and Consejo Naval.

Yet it cannot be assumed that the conservatives had more armed force at their disposal. Although the Junta Militar was moribund by December, 1924, the Army still was actively in support of Ibáñez and Blanche. While the Junta Militar as an organization could not face the Junta de Gobierno with equal power, the visit of Blanche and Ibáñez to Bello Codesido gives every indication that the liberals still commanded the greater armed potential. That no confrontation took place may be attributed to the compromise worked out by Bello Codesido. The dying Junta Militar would dissolve itself in exchange for a more liberal cabinet. If the government were to become more progressive, Ibáñez would be satisfied; with the Junta Militar gone, the Navy would be satisfied.

The locus of Army power had shifted again. Ibáñez held it, with backing from Blanche. The naval power remained with Admirals Nef and Gómez Carreño. The two opposing forces, liberals and conserva-

tives, continued to exist. The only change was in the leadership structure of the liberals, which was transferred from the Junta Militar to Ibáñez.¹ The loyalty of the majority of the Army never varied. Speaking to the popular support for the young officers who were loyal to Ibáñez, Rodríguez Mendoza states,

Had the lieutenants or captains, or in other words, the most impetuous part of the movement, been caught, the troops, led by sergeants and bands, would have appeared on the streets.²

Although the compromise had buried the already dead Junta Militar, the liberal ideals of September were still very much alive.

With the dissolution of the Junta Militar there was no formal group either in or out of the government which represented the Army. Bianchi became ineffective in the cabinet and was completely disillusioned when Gómez Carreño retained the portfolio of Minister of War after the "Codesido Compromise".³ Neither Altamirano nor Bennett could claim any support or contact with the Army. Almost from the time Alessandri left office, these two had communicated solely with the Junta Militar, not with the units.⁴

This lack of communication between the Army and the leaders of government was in no way solved until after Christmas of 1924.

1. Silva Espejo, op. cit., p. 88.

2. Rodríguez Mendoza, op. cit., p. 179.

3. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 98.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 337.

General Bennett, in his memoirs, claimed to have been aware of the breach between the several units of the Santiago Garrison and the government. He realized that with the intermediary Junta Militar gone, the only way to plumb the feelings of the officers was by visits to the units. There remained, therefore, an awareness of the importance of the sentiments of the young officers.¹

From Christmas until the revolt of January, 1925, Altamirano and Bennett called upon the various units to discuss political problems and achievements with them. Finally, on January 17, only five days before the second major revolt, Altamirano called all the unit commanders to the "Moneda" for a large meeting to hear complaints. The major complaint voiced was that the Junta de Gobierno should be less distant and hear not only the unit commanders, but also the lieutenants and captains.² It is difficult to state the efficacy of the complaint, for before the government could act, it was displaced by another revolt.

1. Ibid., p. 340.

2. Ibid., pp. 351-352.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THE EVENTS OF 1925:

THE REVOLT OF JANUARY; THE RETURN OF ALESSANDRI; THE NEW CONSTITUTION

Upon the announcement that the presidential elections were to be held normally, the several parties and coalitions started their search for candidates. With Alessandri's having gone to Europe, the Liberal Alliance was essentially without a leader. It has been suggested, however, that from the time the junta announced the election until Alessandri's return, his supporters were constantly involved in programs which envisioned that return.¹ By early January, the liberal press was attacking the government, saying it had little contact with the people.² The press said that with the dissolution of the Junta Militar,

... all contact between the people and the government had disappeared, and from that point on, the government had no control whatsoever.³

Such statements are not, of course, proof of interference by Alessandristas, but they do indicate a liberal agitation for a change of government. They were almost certainly in contact with liberal Army elements, and were among the prime movers of the January, 1925, revolt.

1. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . . , op. cit., p. 267. It would seem that Bello Codesido, a sympathetic liberal supporter of Alessandri, was involved with Ibáñez.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 323. Also, the legal status of Alessandri himself was in doubt. The Congress had granted him a six month leave of absence. Of that time, less than four months had elapsed. It was the Junta de Gobierno which accepted Alessandri's resignation, an act which Alessandri contested as illegal and therefore not binding. See, United States, Department of State, op. cit., p. 359, telegram from Secretary of State Hughes to Ambassador Collier.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 303.

Edwards Vives believed that the most important organizers of the 23 January revolt were the fallen politicians of the Alessandri government.¹

The conservatives welcomed the announcement of elections, for they saw the opportunity to gain firm control of the government. The leaders of the National Union had never considered the events of September as a true revolution, but rather as a manifestation of discontent with the Alessandri government.² They saw in the events of 1924 the victory of high-ranking officers represented by the Junta de Gobierno and the Consejo Naval, and did not seem to realize that they ruled, in large measure, only by leave of the liberal forces of the Army.³

On January 8, 1925, the National Union held a large meeting to which members of most parties were invited. The purpose of the meeting was to nominate, if possible, a single candidate for the coming elections.⁴ From this nominating meeting emerged conservative unity and the candidacy of Ladislao Errázuriz: "Mr. Errázuriz was, at

1. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., pp. 267-269.

2. Ibid., p. 263.

3. Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, op. cit., p. 275.

4. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . ., op. cit., pp. 264-265. See also Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 156. The candidato unico was proposed in order to avoid any electoral strife in a country already suffering from many aggravations.

least for the moment, the very personification of the National Union."¹ Errázuriz was a conservative, and perhaps the one man most disliked by the liberal young Army officers.² Such a nomination, following upon the forced resignation of Ibáñez' friend Ewing and the dissolution of the Junta Militar, could only create ill feeling among the Alessandrist group around Ibáñez.

Soon after Christmas, Ibáñez started to plot the overthrow of the Altamirano government. At first, neither Major Mariadueque Grove, appointed to the old Junta Militar in December,³ nor Colonel Blanche was privy to the plot; but they were soon advised as to its progress.⁴ The group called themselves the Comité Revolucionario, and quietly began to contact the units of the Santiago Garrison.⁵ After the refusal of Bello Codesido to assume control of the government as offered by Ibáñez and Blanche, Ibáñez found himself in an untenable position: he was committed to the dissolution of the Altamirano Government, but he had no leader with whom to replace Altamirano. It was here that the propaganda of the Alessandristas became effective.

1. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . . , loc. cit.,

2. Sáez Morales, loc. cit., also Haring, op. cit., p. 11.

3. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 60.

4. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 98.

5. Bello Codesido, op. cit., p. 66.

They had quietly agitated for the return of Alessandri with telling effect, for soon his name was the only one considered by Ibáñez.¹

The general program of the new movement was to overthrow the Altamirano government, which was felt to have betrayed the September revolution, and return the country to the hands of the liberal president, Alessandri. It must be remembered that the young Army officers were not the ones who had forced Alessandri out of office. To the contrary, they had generally supported his program. These aims were stated after the successful revolt of January 23, 1925:

The new government issued a manifesto in which it declared that the men responsible for the movement last September, when the government under President Alessandri was overthrown, had decided to depose all the chiefs who had betrayed their confidence and maliciously deviated from the proposed programs.²

The structure of the units of the Garrison was somewhat different, however, from what it had been in September. Soon after the disbanding of the Junta Militar, the government, and more particularly, Admiral Gómez Carreño, started to transfer commanding officers whose loyalty was in doubt and to replace them with more trusted officers.³ Thus, Ibáñez could not ask the units for direct support, because, while the junior officers were still loyal to him, the commanders were pledged to the Junta de Gobierno. What he did ask for was not a pledge of help from the young officers in the planned

1. Eduardo Vives, La Fronda Aristocrática. . . , op. cit., p. 267.

2. "Chile," Current History, XXI, No. 6 (March 1925), p. 933.]

3. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 159.

revolt, but, rather, a pledge from them to delay any action whatsoever until Altamirano was ousted.¹

General Altamirano received first notification of Ibanez' activities late in December, 1924. He and General Bennett spoke with Ibanez, who assured them that nothing could be further from the truth.² Both Altamirano and Bennett accepted Ibanez' word, for two reasons. First, and most important, they knew he had too much military backing to be summarily ousted. Second, and surely not unimportant, as General Bennett emphasizes it time and again in his book, they accepted the word of honor of an officer. In a Latin country, "honor" is not treated lightly.

Other notices of a plot were received, nevertheless, and General Altamirano became more and more impressed with the imminence of a new golpe.³ Convinced that the plot was near realization, on January 15, 1925, Altamirano ordered the following officers to leave Santiago within 48 hours:

Major Contargo
Captain Millan
Captain Aguirre
Lieutenant Fuenzalida
Lieutenant Ugalde

Major Bari
Captain Penner
Lieutenant Lennon
Lieutenant Soloaga
Lieutenant Jara

1. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocratica. . . , op. cit., p. 267. The government was attacked by few, but was likewise defended by few.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 356.

3. It may be remembered that he and Bennett started to visit the Santiago Garrison at this time in order to draw the young officers to the Government.

4. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 357.

Ibanez was ordered to leave, not Santiago, but Chile. He called Major Grove, who was now in the plot, to take charge of the meetings of the conspirators.¹ Apparently, it was from this change of command that Grove became co-author of the second golpe.

It soon became apparent that these men were not going to leave the city within the specified time. One by one, they visited General Bennett, and with excuses of personal illness or family problems, all except Ibanez asked to have the departure date extended. Again, each gave Bennett his "word of honor" that his reasons were valid and that he was not plotting. This the General accepted, and almost all of these officers were in Santiago on January 23 to take part in the golpe de estado.²

Such a demonstration of "good faith" by General Bennett must be condemned as foolish in light of the reports that were coming into the government. Yet, again, the Hispanic concept of honor must be considered. The General, surely busy with other matters, and obviously far from understanding the thinking of the junior officers, permitted the very plotters to stay in the city. The willingness of the junior officers to compromise their word of honor was indicative of the change through which the military had passed since the September revolt. Along with

1. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 99.

2. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., pp. 357-367.

young Captain Tobias Barros they felt themselves to be absolutely right: "...we have come to believe that our intervention, in one way or another, saved the Republic. . . ." ¹ To save the Republic, honor might be sacrificed. To General Bennett, once Alessandri the liberal was gone, the country was saved, and nothing could be more important than honor.

In the preparation for this second coup, the Navy was not contacted by the Comite Revolucionario, as the senior naval officers had complete control of all the line forces. ² There appears to have been one exception to this, however. The United States Consul in Concepcion reported that the naval engineering officers in the yard at Talcahuano were in favor of the Army during the revolt. ³ Ibanez himself also stated that the engineering officers were of the same views as he. ⁴ From these facts it may be posited that Ibanez may well have contacted the naval engineers, although the remainder of the Navy was not included in the plot.

The golpe de estado itself hardly deserved the name. On the morning of January 23, 1925, Ibanez secretly returned to Santiago. ⁵

1. Ibid., p. 336.

2. See, Bello Codesido, op. cit., p. 65; Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocratica. . ., op. cit., p. 267; and "Chile's President Who Came Back," loc. cit.

3. United States, Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1925 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 583.

4. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 101.

5. Ibid., p. 99.

Apparently by prior arrangement, General Dartnell, still Commander of the Santiago Garrison, called a meeting of the unit commanders for the afternoon of that day.¹ After these officers had left their commands, Ibanez and Grove marched to the "Moneda" with two regiments, where Altamirano and Nef, who had heard of the movement, were waiting.² By telephone, they had already determined that no force, including the carabineros, was prepared to defend them. Dana G. Munro indicates the limited effort expended in the revolt, saying,

On January 23, 1925, a small group seized the Moneda, or presidential palace, and installed a new junta composed mainly of friends of Alessandri.³

Once again, the senior officers had seen the initiative stolen from them by younger men. In this revolt, however, the initial aims were much more clearly liberal and free from the ambiguity of the first revolt.

The Army group of Ibanez, influenced by the Alessandristas, demanded the return of Alessandri, thus placing the Navy in an

1. Sáez Morales, op. cit., p. 169. As he was later placed on the interim Junta de Gobierno which ruled until Alessandri's return and was a member of the old Junta Militar, it seems likely that all action was not a coincidence.

2. General Bennett was out of town on vacation.

3. Munro, op. cit., p. 317. At 1700 January 23, 1925, General Altamirano actually turned over the government to Ibanez and Grove, who then arrested Altamirano, Nef, and Gomez Carreño. Only then did the new junta composed of Bello Codesido and Generals Dartnell and Ortiz Vega assume control of the government. See United States, Department of State, . . . Foreign Relations. . . 1925, op. cit., p. 531.

untenable position. To the Navy the return of Alessandri was nearly as unthinkable as the nomination of Errázuriz had been to the Army.¹ Due to the rapidity and audacity of Ibáñez' golpe, however,

The Navy had no choice but to submit, and once again, a fait accompli won the day.²

In a message sent to Secretary of State Hughes on the very day of the revolt, Ambassador Collier stated that he questioned whether or not the Navy supported the coup.³ By 0100, January 26, Collier was able to state that the Navy was in "firm opposition" to the return of Alessandri, and that there was a "possibility" of civil war.⁴

On the day after the revolt, the new junta, composed of Generals Dartnell and Ortiz Vega, received a message from the Navy in Valparaíso stating that they differed from the Army views, and that to prevent conflict, they requested that Agustín Edwards mediate the two services' differences at a conference scheduled to start January 27 in Santiago.⁵

The armed forces were not disposed to destroy one another in a fight of partisan character, as was, or at least, as appeared to be, that which threatened to break out.⁶

1. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . . , op. cit., p. 265.

2. Ibid.

3. United States, Department of State, . . . Foreign Relations . . . 1925, loc. cit.

4. Ibid., p. 583.

5. Bello Codesido, op. cit., p. 71.

6. Edwards Vives, La fronda aristocrática. . . , loc. cit.

In the meantime, the Fleet at Valparaíso kept up full steam and had one Army regiment, which was loyal to the Navy, ready for embarkation.¹

At the first mediation conference, January 27, Edwards proposed the following list of compromises to the Army and Navy:

1. Form a Junta de Gobierno composed of a civilian approved by both the Army and the Navy, and one member each from the Army and Navy, to be chosen by the civilian.

2. Form immediately a civilian cabinet headed by a neutral politician and composed of four members each from the National Union and the Liberal Alliance.

3. Promise that the Army would not recall Alessandri; in exchange for which Errazuriz would promise to withdraw his candidacy.

4. Postpone the presidential elections until July 25, 1925.

5. Call a constitutional assembly immediately to reform the Constitution of 1833.

6. Both Army and Navy will give their word of honor to support the government according to the law.

7. Grant amnesty to those who took part in the revolt of January 23.²

This compromise placed the executive power on a triumvirate representing the three major forces: the civilians, the Army, and the Navy, each of whose representatives would have to be acceptable to the other two. The cabinet would be composed of the two major civil power blocs, which incidentally, found their counterparts in the Navy and Army: the National Union and the Liberal Alliance. Thus, the four major competing forces

1. United States, Department of State, . . . Foreign Relations . . . 1925, loc. cit.

2. Bello Codesido, op. cit., pp. 71-73.

were represented: the Army, Navy, liberals, and conservatives. The constitutional reform was, in actuality, a concession to the liberal demands of the September revolt.

It was upon the third point of the Edwards compromise that disagreement became evident. The Navy was willing to accept the compromise en toto, but the Army would not do so without the approval of Alessandri.¹ The President insisted that he would have to return to Chile, and that any other arrangement would be unsatisfactory to him.² Having received this reply, the Army remained firm on the commitment to the return of Alessandri, causing an impasse in the negotiations.

Fully aware of the implications of another civil war, neither the Army nor Navy desired a breakdown in the negotiations.³ Therefore, Edwards and the two services discussed a compromise which, in the end, seemed to favor the Army and the liberals. This compromise would have returned the whole situation to the status quo ante the resignation of Alessandri. However, upon further examination, the compromise proved unsatisfactory to all.⁴ At the time of the status quo ante, the head of the cabinet had been the deposed General Altamirano, obviously unacceptable to the Ibáñez forces. In addition, at that time the liberal, do-nothing Congress which precipitated the whole revolt had still been convened, which proved unacceptable to both services. The final solu-

1. Ibid., p. 73.

2. Ibid., pp. 74-75.

3. Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, op. cit., p. 275.

4. Bello Codesido, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

tion, to which both services agreed, provided for the return of Alessandri and the creation of a new Junta de Gobierno, headed by Bello Codesido with liberal General Dartnell and Conservative Admiral Ward as members. This junta would rule through a cabinet approved by the Comité Revolucionario until such time as Alessandri could return.¹

Due to his role in the revolt, and in obvious deference to his power, Ibanéz became Minister of War in a cabinet headed by Jaramillo.²

Although the conservative naval forces were not able to stop the Army, the conservative politicians, one of the four functioning political forces in the country at that time,³ made an attempt to do so. Soon after the agreement between the Army and Navy was reached, the conservatives started a campaign among the enlisted men of the garrisons throughout the country. According to a police report given to Bello Codesido, the conservative forces headed by Errázuriz⁴ attempted to subvert the enlisted men with bribes and to use them to foment a revolt against Bello and Ibanéz. This plan was designed so as to bypass

1. Ibid., pp. 77-78; United States, Department of State, . . . Foreign Relations. . . 1925, op. cit., p. 585; and "Chile," Current History, XXI, No. 6, op. cit., p. 933.

2. Correa Prieto, op. cit., p. 104. Ibanéz indicates that he was close to Jaramillo during the events of January 23. See Ibid., p. 112.

3. The author considers the Army, Navy, National Union, and Liberal Alliance as the four major forces, although it must be noted that the working classes were also striving for an independent voice.

4. Carlos Sáez Morales, Recuerdos de un soldado: genesis y derrumbe de la dictadura (Vol. II; Santiago de Chile: Biblioteca Ercilla, 1933), p. 10.

the young officers. Additionally, some conservative officers who had been retired by the Junta Militar were offered reincorporation into the Army after the planned revolt.

The revolt was scheduled for February 28, 1925. It was planned that the non-commissioned officers and cabos (corporals) would march on the "Moneda" at 0300 in a show of force. These new forces would then escort a number of liberal politicians to the Argentine border. The Regiment of Valdivia was prepared to revolt in order to hold that province.² Pedro N. Donoso had printed large quantities of conservative propaganda, which was to be distributed after the coup. According to the police report, the following important conservatives were key men in the plot: General Harnas and General Julio del Solar, who were to take command of the Army; Ladislao Errázuriz, Rivas Vicuña; Concha Molina, and Pedro N. Donoso.³ In addition to these, officers from each unit were involved.

As a result of the police report, however, the conspirators were arrested and exiled.⁴ Although this mass arrest in Santiago was able to destroy the plot in the capital, the Regiment of Valdivia, whose

1. Bennett Argandoña, op. cit., p. 296. For a time, the Junta Militar dictated retirements from the Army, but never from the Navy.

2. Bello Codesido, op. cit., p. 121.

3. Ibid., p. 123.

4. Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, op. cit., p. 277. See also Bello Codesido, loc. cit. In addition to these men, Arturo Lejón, Elías Errázuriz, Emilio Tizzoni, Roberto Huneeus, and Ismael Edwards were exiled. See Sáez Morales, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 10.

communications with Santiago had been cut,¹ did mutiny on the twenty-eighth. This action caused the government to declare a "state of siege" in the provinces of Santiago, Valdivia, Valparaíso, and Aconcagua on March 2.² It was soon apparent that the revolt was doomed to failure, with the heads of the movement having been arrested. Upon discovering its isolation, the Regiment ended its resistance.

While there was no formal punishment administered, the government, through the Minister of War, Ibáñez, took immediate action to prevent a new occurrence of revolt. The non-commissioned officers involved were sent to various parts of the country in order to prevent their continued plotting. Four were sent to the Juan Fernández Islands for five years, four to Puntas Arenas for four years, and twenty-four others to various remote locations, for a total of 116 man-years of remote duty. All of the men involved were dismissed from the service, including four lieutenants. Of the Valdivia Regiment, only six non-commissioned officers were allowed to remain in the service. Finally, the Regiment was dissolved, and its remaining officers and men were reassigned.³

With this unsuccessful attempt at revolution by the conservatives, the last threat to the return of Alessandri ended, and the Government, led by the Junta, gained firm control of the situation.

1. Bello Codesido, op. cit., p. 122.

2. "Chile," Current History, XXII, No. 1 (April, 1925), p. 122; and Cabero, Chile y los chilenos, op. cit., p. 277.

3. Bello Codesido, op. cit., pp. 128-142.

The conservatives, left leaderless by the exile of so many of their key members, were relatively powerless. According to Bello, "The revolt of the Regiment of Valdivia was without a doubt the gravest breach of order which faced the Junta de Gobierno in 1925."¹ When that revolt was broken, the path was cleared for Alessandri's return.

The revolt of the Regiment had, however, awakened Ibanez to the need for progressive legislation for the Army. Such reforms would, he realized, do more to restore discipline to that organization and to fulfill the obligations of the September revolt than any number of coups d'etat. During the tenure of the Junta de Gobierno, from January 23, 1925, to Alessandri's return on March 20, 1925, Ibanez decreed six major laws.² These laws all were concerned with legislation for both officers and enlisted men, and were designed to improve their social and economic position. In contrast, the Minister of the Navy, conservative Admiral Braulio Bahamondes, decreed but three major laws during the same

1. Ibid., p. 128.

2. The laws were: 1) Decree-law no. 259--Enlargement of career opportunities for non-commissioned officers of the Army; 2) Decree-law no. 262--Regulation for retirement in the Army; 3) Decree-law No. 263--Law dealing with promotion of personnel in the Army; 4) Decree-law no. 280--Establishment of a minimum number of railroad officers; 5) Decree-law no. 289--Establishment of a minimum number of personnel for management duties and fix their salaries; 6) Decree-law no. 291--Establishment of minimum number of dentists and their salaries. In addition, there were four other minor decree-laws pertaining to the Army. See Bello Codesido, op. cit., pp. 156-157.

period.¹ These laws applied almost totally to officers and specific units. This comparison of the work done by the two services would seem to reaffirm the differences in leadership between the two groups. The progressive attitude of the Army representatives on the cabinet of this second Junta de Gobierno probably helped to tie the Army even closer to its younger leaders.

It was with the triumphal return of Alessandri to Santiago on March 20, 1925, that the revolution of September, 1924, seemed to reach its goal. Having never acknowledged the acceptance of his resignation by the first Junta de Gobierno, Alessandri returned from his "leave of absence" with eight months yet to serve on his first term of five years. It was during these months that Alessandri accomplished the major works of his first term. With the Army behind him, the Navy not sympathetic, but at least passive, much of the conservative leadership out of the country, and the recalcitrant Congress no longer in session,

. . . he was able now to embark upon a program of solid achievements. A permanent electoral registry was created to enroll voters and to guarantee the honesty and freedom of elections, a nominal tax was placed on incomes that exceeded ten thousand pesos per year, and upon the recommendation of the United States financial commission headed by Edward Kemmerer a Central Bank was established, with one of its functions being to peg the peso at the equivalent of \$0.1217.²

1. The laws were: 1) Decree-law no. 260--Modification of the retirement law for Navy personnel; 2) Decree-law no. 293--Modification of the law of promotion; 3) Decree-law no. 393--Formation of a register of officers of the coastal artillery. In addition, there were three other minor decrees-laws for the Navy. See ibid., p. 158.

2. Pike, op. cit., p. 182.

These feats, combined with the bills which the military had forced through the Congress at the start of the revolt, comprised no mean part of the whole liberal program of the era. Although in the specific achievement of these reforms it could not be said that the Army intervened, certainly the prior actions of the Army aided in establishing the environment.

Perhaps the most important single accomplishment of this era was the writing and ratification of a new constitution. In the passage of this constitution, however, the Army, without moving so much as a company of soldiers, was an important force. Soon after his return to the country, Alessandri called a constitutional convention to draft a new document.¹ He lobbied for a stronger Executive at the expense of Congress, a stronger labor posture, and a separation of Church and State.²

There was, as might be expected, some resistance to these changes. The Radicals, for example, were against the document for its emphasis on executive power: "the party justified its stand by charging that the instrument contained the seeds of executive tyranny."³ The conservatives did not feel the emphasis on social justice was wise, and many of them were in accord with religious groups who opposed the separation of Church and State. As late as the middle of July, 1925,

1. For the minutes of this conference see Chile, Comision consultiva de reformas constitucionales (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Universitaria, 1925).

2. Pike, loc. cit.

3. Ibid., p. 184.

Alessandri could get no cooperation from the convention in spite of the fact that the Army and the majority of Chilean citizens wanted a new constitution.¹

Feeling his own frustration mounting, and sensing the similar feeling of the Army, Alessandri asked General Navarrete, Inspector General of the Army, to accompany him on July 23, 1925, to observe a session of the convention. Once at the convention, Alessandri greeted the delegates and--so Navarrete claims--to Navarrete's surprise, introduced the General, stating that he had an announcement to make which had made a great impression on him (Alessandri). Claiming that he spoke extemporaneously, the General told the convention,

The Army, understand it well, gentlemen, has a horror of politics and for that reason will never mix in your activities; but you may also be sure that neither will it look with indifference while its ideals of national purification are ignored.²

Following so closely upon two revolts and a near-civil war, such an announcement was calculated to galvanize the convention into action. Although there were undoubtedly other factors involved, it is interesting to note that little more than one month later, on August 30, the convention reported out Alessandri's constitution. The Constitution was then presented to the electorate, which approved it. It went into effect in October, 1925.³

1. Silva Espejo, op. cit., p. 88.

2. Saez Morales, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 17.

3. Haring, op. cit., p. 14.

With this last quiet intervention in 1925, the revolution of September, 1924, was brought to its logical conclusion. The progressive demands of the young, liberal Army officers had not been silenced, in spite of several attempts to do so. Although the President had been forced into exile, he had returned triumphant, and had accomplished his major reforms only after that return. The military, with all of its power, was still a force. All of what Alessandri accomplished was done without its open intervention, yet as the delegates to the constitutional convention could testify, the Army was but a shadow away. The military demanded results, and preferred that they be obtained by volition. But no one could forget that, twice before, when volition had availed nothing, pronunciamiento had obtained the desired results.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

The Presidency of Arturo Alessandri, and more precisely, the year 1924, marked the culmination of a long series of irritations in Chile. The economy, closely tied to export trade, reacted to the world depression as did few others. The people felt such economic hardship as they had seldom, if ever, known before. The governments since the days of the civil war of 1891 had looked upon the problems of Chile with a detached, olympian view, not conscious of the needs of the country. The indifference of the Congress and the impotence of the President frustrated every attempt to solve the problems.

In this atmosphere of lethargy, the masses, wanting corrective action instead of sonorous debates, attempted to take matters into their own hands. By using the strike, the workers registered protest. The government, which used armed force to end the strikes, widened the breach already existing between it and the people. By 1920, social discipline was weakened, as a great many people no longer accepted the omnipotence of a government which was ruled by the wealthy for the wealthy.

Within the military, and especially the Army, a change had also taken place. The excellent, disciplined fighting machine of Chile, victorious in several wars and numerous campaigns, had interfered little in government during the country's first one hundred years of independence. In spite of this, in the years following the civil war, a change took place within the Army. After this fratricidal war,

the conservative and wealthy officers advanced faster and received other benefits which their increasingly more numerous middle class compatriots did not enjoy. Within the Navy, however, such deep division did not exist in such large numbers. The Navy had always attracted the scions of the wealthy, who were normally conservative in political philosophy. The forces which the Navy had supported in the civil war, the congressional, had won; and with that victory, most members of the Navy had benefitted.

Thus, by 1920, the two military forces had internal structures which differed greatly. The smaller Navy was dominated by conservative officers and had many conservatives spread throughout its ranks. This is not meant to imply that there were no liberal naval officers, for there were. Most of the engineering officers, for example, were from middle class backgrounds and did not usually espouse conservatism. They were, nevertheless, a minority within the Navy, as the conservative officers of the line formed the bulk of command officialdom.

In the Army, a different situation obtained. The senior officers--general officers and colonels--were, for the most part, conservative, although there were exceptions such as Generals Dartnell and Navarette and Colonel Ahumada. Within the ranks, the more junior field grade and company grade officers were considerably more liberal and to the political left. This situation created a division between the older officers and the junior officers and made it difficult for either to understand the actions of the other. Again, there were

also conservatives among the lower ranks, but they were relatively few and inactive.

There appeared within the military hierarchy another problem related to and yet separate from the divergence of political philosophies. Generals Bennett and Sáez Morales, Colonels Ibáñez and Silva Maturana, and Admiral von Schroeders all indicate in their several works the deep separation between ranks which existed in the Chilean armed forces. This division, or "social distance" is perhaps more pronounced in the Hispanic militaries than in that of the United States. "Social distance" separates the generals from the colonels and the colonels from the majors, and it can cause a blindness and complete breakdown in communications and confidence, although it does not always do so. It was Ibáñez who stated that the major lived in comfortable quarters while the captain and lieutenant lived in markedly poorer ones.¹ Even at the company level this distance was pronounced, and made it difficult for the field commanders to "know" their junior officers. When officers were assigned to the War Ministry in Santiago they had almost no contact with the officers in the units. It was, perhaps, greatly due to this lack of communication between junior officers and their commanders, that the commanders in no way understood the feelings of the younger men, and, in fact, were little aware of the existence of any unusual discontent whatsoever.

1. Boizard, op. cit., p. 13.

With the election of Alessandri to the Presidency, all the disaffected segments of the population, both civil and military, expected a miracle which would return the country to prosperity and produce social justice for all. This did not happen in 1920, nor had it happened by the beginning of 1924.

In the political realm, neither the conservatives nor the liberals understood the forces which were abroad within Chile. The conservatives looked upon the Alessandri phenomenon as the rise of a dangerous man who was inciting the masses to an ugly action, while it is far more likely that his strength sprang from the existing discontent. Alessandri was, in a sense, part of a world-wide awakening, fruit of the stresses of the times in which he lived. It must be admitted that he gave promises he had little chance of keeping, and that he put in the masses a fire which might otherwise not have been kindled for several years. Yet, what the conservatives did not understand was that Alessandri was not the cause of the turmoil: he was but the spearhead of a larger popular movement.

The liberals, although they appeared to understand that social reform was needed, did not grasp either the extent of the social ferment or the depths of change necessary to stem it. They did not even judge properly the strength of the liberal feelings of the armed forces. When, with the collapse of his program in March, 1924, Alessandri went to the barracks and berated the Congress before the young

officers, he seemed to do so with little understanding of the forces with which he was dealing: he did not understand that when the spark of desire for "national regeneration" was ignited in progressive spirits, it could only be quenched by the attainment of that goal.

When Alessandri used military influence in the elections of March, 1924, he committed two grave errors. First, he forced the military into politics and gave it a role in helping to "save" the nation. He awakened in this body an awareness of its potential political power. The second error was that after having made an easy truce with the conservatives in January, 1924, he broke it in March. One of the conditions for the truce was Alessandri's guarantee that he would not interfere in the March elections. When he did so, he alienated what little conservative support he enjoyed, and further, ruined any possibility of achieving a modus vivendi.

Thus, the ground had been prepared in advance for the intervention of September. The liberal elements in the Army felt they could save Chile from the hands of the weak parliamentary Congress, and that this act would automatically create the proper atmosphere for reform. The conservatives, on the contrary, with their slight understanding of the social forces of the day, saw only the person of the "dishonest" Alessandri as the cause of the social turmoil. Thus, when the officers of the Santiago Garrison made their demands upon Alessandri, both the liberals and conservatives welcomed it, but for entirely different reasons.

In the first military intervention, the young Army officers wrested true control of the Army away from their superiors by taking the initiative at once. The senior Army officers, many of whom were conservatives, mistakenly assuming that "the 400" shared their own repugnance with Alessandri, smugly allowed these officers to speak for all the Army. The Club Militar, almost from the very first moments of revolt, spoke for the Army and gained the adherence of nearly all its units. All of the senior officers, whatever their political persuasions, committed a cardinal error in thus permitting the chain of command to be bypassed. Those who sympathized--or thought that they sympathized--with the goals of the revolutionaries should have joined and led them. Those who opposed should have used the great power inherent in high rank to break the revolt immediately. It is true that on September 5, General Altamirano spoke in favor of the actions of "the 400" to the cabinet. But throughout the period, it is notable that Altamirano was but an observer of actions initiated by others. Meanwhile, with the exception of General Dartnell, who, it may be added, took little active part in the decision-making of the Club Militar or the Junta Militar, no major military figure attempted to correlate the direction of the revolution with the hierarchical structure of the Army. In the Navy, by contrast, senior officialdom determined from the outset the degree and nature of Navy participation in the revolt. The high ranks never abdicated the privileges of

command.

It was only after their error became obvious to the older army officers that they realized the damage their "social distance" had wrought. Altamirano and Bennett did not "know" the men under their command. They were in no way "close" to them. When it became obvious, on September 11, the day the Junta Militar issued its manifesto of aims to the country, that the revolt was not against Alessandri, but against conservatism itself, Altamirano and Bennett were surprised. They seemed to have had neither communication with nor understanding of the younger officers. Thus, when the movement began to drift to the left, neither the Junta de Gobierno nor the individual leaders could do anything to stop it. The officers with whom the generals were dealing might as well have been from another country. The author feels that this lack of empathy between the two groups greatly helps to explain the subordination of the Junta de Gobierno to the Junta Militar during the first weeks of the revolt.

Within the Junta Militar, however, there seems to have been little unanimity regarding the proper program to accomplish the ends to which it was pledged. The young officers ranged in their beliefs from mildly progressive to fully communist, as Major Grove was later to demonstrate in his Socialist Republic of Chile.¹ With this diver-

1. See Jack Ray Thomas, "The Socialist Republic of Chile," Journal of Inter-American Studies, VI, No. 2 (April, 1964), pp. 203-220. This entire article is devoted to this short-lived experiment.

gence of views within the Junta Militar, any prolonged, unified attack upon the actual problems of the day was at best difficult. In addition, when the Junta Militar approved Altamirano's Junta de Gobierno, by default it gave tacit approval to programs undertaken by that government. If the Junta Militar disagreed with the Government's actions, it had but two choices. First, it could ask the government to be sympathetic to its views and opinions, as it did in November. The only other method by which it could reorient the government to its views was by forceful change of that government, which was finally done in January, 1925.

The Junta de Gobierno was able to remain in power only so long as it enjoyed the support of a powerful group which additionally was prepared to use that power in its defense. At first, before it became clear that the Government was conservative, it enjoyed the support both of the Army, represented by the Junta Militar, and of the Navy, represented by the Consejo Naval. The Consejo Naval, completely conservative, gave the Altamirano Government support throughout its existence. By the time the Junta Militar was prepared to terminate its support of the Government sometime in November, the Government was fully supported by both the Navy and the National Union. Thus, the two main power blocs came face to face in disagreement on both the ends and means of the revolution. Such confrontation had but two possible outcomes. First, the two blocs could agree, which under the circum-

stances was nearly impossible. Second, one or the other bloc could dissolve.

It was to this second solution that each group looked for the answer. The Navy and National Union started public and private agitation for dissolution of the Junta Militar. In retrospect, it can, of course, be seen that the formal, organized Junta Militar was not the motive power of the revolt but was, rather, simply the forum in which the prime movers worked. Thus, its dissolution could accomplish nothing more than to force the liberal officers to act and plot in other places. The liberal Army group began to plot the overthrow of Altamirano--significantly, the plot was not formed in the Junta Militar. The visit of Blanche and Ibáñez to Bello Codesido in December can be viewed as an attempt to break the deadlock between the liberal and conservative forces.

With the Junta Militar reduced to little more than a debating society by December, 1924, the Navy was victorious in forcing its dissolution, although in that act, it sealed the fate of the Government. By seeing the locus of Army power in the Junta Militar rather than in the young officers themselves, the Navy misjudged the efficacy of their action: they won the battle and lost the campaign. It is, perhaps, significant that, if anything, the Navy helped to unify the Army. Concomitant with the end of the Junta Militar was the end of a parliamentary form of leadership in Army circles. The control of the movement passed from the collective controls of the junta into the

able hands of Ibáñez, Grove, and Blanche.

It can now be seen that the events of January could have been foretold in December. With the conservatives "victorious" over the liberals, they immediately moved to consolidate their positions. The nomination of Errázuriz in January, 1925, was only the external manifestation of the "victory." It was also adequate testimony to the conservatives' complete misreading of the events of September. To believe that the ad hoc grouping of officers known as the Junta Militar was the only cause of discontent within Chile and the only threat to stable government showed incredible insensitivity to the realities of the 1920's.

The revolt of January 23, 1925, seems the logical conclusion of the events of the previous September. The liberal officers, this time aided by Alessandri's supporters, again saw the country in the hands of forces counter to the currents emerging in the nation's life. The Altamirano Government with its espousal of the Errázuriz candidacy was as unacceptable in January, 1925, as had been the "do-nothing" Congress of September, 1924. The young men seized the initiative for the second time and deposed the Government.

There seems to have been one major reason for the Navy's accession to the Army's demand for the recall of Alessandri: they knew that the Army was sincere and was ready to fight for his return. The civil war had been fought within the lifetime of most of the senior

officers, and they appeared unready to repeat the bloodshed which it had engendered. In addition, the author believes that within the Navy itself there was no little liberal support. The engineering officers immediately announced in favor of the January movement. Although no important naval officer has admitted it, there does seem to have been reason to doubt the loyalty of some of the segments of the Fleet.¹ This may also have influenced the officers in their decision to accede to Army demands.

The plot by the civilian conservatives to subvert the non-commissioned officers of the Army was their frightened reaction to the revolt of January. This plot was not based upon the noncommissioned officers' loyalty to the National Union or its programs, but, simply, upon large outlays of cash payments to them. There is little doubt that had the plot not been uncovered, it would have met with at least some success. But the feature which makes it unique was that far from being a popular action, it was simply a business deal between the National Union and the enlisted men. This, perhaps, helps to explain why it was so easily crushed and why, when the leaders of the National Union were arrested and exiled, their erstwhile fellow conspirators did absolutely nothing to protect or rescue them.

On September 1, 1931, the enlisted men of the Chilean Fleet mutinied and imprisoned all of their ships' officers. The mutiny was only put down after the Chilean Air Force was ordered to--and did--attack the ships, especially damaging the cruiser Almirante Latorre. For the memoirs of the Admiral sent to subdue the mutiny (which mission failed) see Edgardo von Schroeders, El delegado del gobierno y el motin de la escuadra (Santiago de Chile: Soc. Imp. /sic./ y Litografia Universo, 1933).

With the return of Alessandri, the Army stepped back from, although not out of politics. Ibáñez, the liberal revolutionary and leader of the January revolt, stayed in the new cabinet as Minister of War. Through him, the Army retained a voice in the government. It was, however, during the constitutional convention that the Army, in the person of General Navarrete, removed its kid gloves and plainly asserted its interest in the affairs of Chile. His admonition to the delegates clarified the Army's continuing concern, if, indeed, it had ever been in doubt.

With the ratification of the new constitution, the series of events which demanded a new form of government ended. Unfortunately, the years immediately following that ratification demonstrated that more than a change of form was necessary.

The events from September, 1924, through the following September were more than a military coup. They were the external manifestations of a greater change through which Chile was starting to pass. They signalled the end of the paternalistic creole-dominated Chile, and were the first attempts to take faltering steps into the modern era of socially-oriented government.

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