

# *Chile will never forget the victims of the military dictatorship*

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By María Josefina Arce

A large part of Chilean society refuses to forget the tens of thousands of victims of the military dictatorship established in the country, after the coup d'état 51 years ago against the Popular Unity government, presided over by Salvador Allende.

The hand of the CIA, the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States, would be behind the coup against Chilean democracy.

The measures adopted by Allende in defense of popular interests and national sovereignty, such as the nationalization of copper, were not to the liking of right-wing groups, parties and the world power elite.

For 17 years, terror and violence took over Chilean society. Torture, murder and disappearances were a constant under the military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet, supported by Washington.

The victims of that dark period in the life of the South American country amount to more than 40 thousand, of which some 37 thousand were tortured and 3 thousand executed or disappeared, of which more than 1,100 have not yet been found.

Added to these figures are some 200 thousand Chileans who were forced to go into exile, after the fierce persecution against intellectuals, unionists, students and left-wing politicians.

Pinochet would also adopt a neoliberal model, which allowed large companies to enrich themselves at the cost of privatizing basic services. Economic control of the country was left in the hands of a small group, which in turn was the civil support of the bloody dictatorship.

Inequality would therefore skyrocket in Chilean territory. More than 5 million citizens would sink into poverty.

More than 50 years after that fateful September 11, 1973, there are still great challenges to obtain full reparation for the victims and families of the Pinochet dictatorship, who died in 2006 without having been convicted for his crimes and human rights violations.

The whole truth has still not been revealed, nor have those responsible for the atrocities committed over 17 years been punished.

For a large part of society, it is necessary to remember the past so that the horrendous crimes of that sad period in Chile's history are not repeated, where many families still mourn for their children, parents and grandchildren.

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