

Chileans Commemorating September 11th Coup Attacked by Police



Santiago de Chile, September 12 (RHC)-- At least 25 people were arrested in Chile's capital after a march to remember the 44th anniversary of the 1973 coup. Chilean police attacked protesters as they marched through the streets of the capital of Santiago to commemorate the 44th anniversary of the violent military coup that saw General Augusto Pinochet oust President Salvador Allende.

Water cannons and tear gas were employed by security forces against demonstrators who responded with rocks, bottles, and other objects, according to Euro News, leading to at least 25 arrests.

The clashes followed a march where thousands gathered at the General Cemetery to remember those killed by the Pinochet military dictatorship after the coup on September 11, 1973. Official government figures put the death toll at 3,000 people who either were killed or disappeared in the ensuing decades. However, human rights organizations contest those figures, saying the actual number is much higher. Thousands of Chileans were also forced into exile.

Those tortured during the regime are estimated to be roughly 30,000 people. Alicia Lira Matus, president of the Executed Political Prisoners Group, said the Chilean government has an "outstanding debt" with the

victims of the dictatorship, 20 Minutos reported. She also criticized former Chilean president, and current presidential candidate, Sebastian Piñera for his “criminal complicity” by supporting the brutal dictatorship.

The 1973 coup bore witness to the death of socialist Allende inside La Moneda Palace. A slew of declassified CIA documents have since been released detailing the agency's involvement in the coup.

Former CIA agent Jack Devine, who was based in Chile during the coup, claimed that the decision to proceed with the coup against Allende was handed to the intelligence agency by U.S. President Richard Nixon, who was later forced to resign his post.

During the siege of the presidential palace, which included aerial bombardment and shelling by tanks, Allende spoke to the nation for one last time during a live radio broadcast. He said, in part, “I will pay for my loyalty to the people with my life and I say to them that I am certain that the seeds that we have planted in the good conscience of thousands and thousands of Chileans will not be shriveled forever.” He concluded that “great avenues will open again” where all Chileans will be able to walk and “build a better society.”

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