



CHILE NEWS

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HUNGER IN CHILE



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HUNGER IN CHILE

BREAD * LAND * JUSTICE * TRUTH

Hunger in Chile exists at many different levels. At the most basic level, Chile is suffering from real, physical hunger. As the article entitled, "Hunger for Bread" will inform you, almost half of the children between the ages of 2 and 5 years old suffer from the effects of extreme poverty. This is an alarming statistic and even more frightening when one considers the impact that this situation might have on the next generation of Chileans. The future of Chile is indeed at stake, and we need to look for ways to support the Cadel centers, and their efforts to reach out to this most vulnerable group.

The stories collected in To Begin Again reflect a second type of hunger - the desire to live in one's homeland. The book review gives an idea of the struggles that are involved in leaving one's country, either forcibly or otherwise, in adapting to another culture, and then in returning and learning to live again where one began. Chile certainly will seem different to those returning after these long years of military rule which have changed the nature of life here.

To Live Without Fear is based on a recently-released report by the Chilean Commission for Human Rights, which cites the increase in the number of torture cases that were reported during 1986. In spite of all the sanctions, condemnations, and visits from Amnesty International, this practice is still common.

Perhaps the deepest hunger, that for justice and truth, is reflected in the interviews with two women who are members of the Association of Families of the Detained and Disappeared. Their un-remitting search for their families, their commitment to try to work non-violently, and their commitment to justice for all Chileans gives evidence of the depth of spirit and the sincerity of their struggle to improve life for all.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied." (Matthew 5:6) Hopefully, their hunger and thirst will be satisfied here on this earth, in the not-too-distant future.

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Editor-Chile News

*** Please send any letters, suggestions, ideas, and contributions to Serpai-Chile, Casilla 139, Santiago 3, Chile

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HUNGER FOR BREAD

Close to 90,000 Chilean children between the ages of 2 and 5 years live in extreme poverty. This fact was confirmed in an article written by Francisco Poblete, which appeared in the Epoca on May 29th. It is based on a report prepared by Unicef and the National Conference of Kindergartens and Nurseries. It is reprinted with the author's permission.



statistics. The population living in extreme poverty has risen to one million, 546 thousand, 868 persons. Of these, 188 thousand are children between the ages of 2 and 5 years, and of those, 86 thousand, 868 lack any type of governmental help.

This reality motivated Unicef to promote the realization of a project that contemplates the creation of Centers for Direct Assistance and Language Development, whose name in Spanish is Cadel.

The work of these organisms will be to give direct nutritional assistance as well as to stimulate language development.

The pilot program

The 46% of Chilean children living in extreme poverty, whose ages range from two to five years, are not attended by any governmental program. This fact was established in a report prepared jointly by Unicef and the National Conference of Kindergartens and Nurseries, whose objective is to create

a system of direct assistance for this abandoned group. The document indicates that in general, these age groups are the most vulnerable, given their social and economic marginalization, to physical, mental, emotional, and social retardation.

According to the official

was put into practice at the beginning of this year, and it is hoped that

50 Cadel centers will be in operation in the 4th, 6th, 7th, and 8th regions of Chile (La Serena, Libertador

Bernardo O'Higgins Maule, and Bio Bio), that will directly affect some 2,000 children who live in dire poverty. The centers will function with preference in city and suburban areas where there are no other programs of attention to pre-schoolers.

The total cost of the program is estimated at \$111,965 (US), 45 thousand of which will be provided by Unicef and the rest by the Chilean government.

The functioning of each of the centers will be directed by a child-care professional with the collaboration of volunteer



mothers, who will receive previous training. Their work will be supervised by educational assistants, nutritionists, and social workers.

The selection of the children will be based upon consideration of the extent or risk of malnutrition.

Together with the help of the educational assistants, the Cadel projects will involve the mothers of the children in various activities. They will be trained in certain aspects of education, in the proper rationing of the food provided by the program, and in

the constant evaluation of the results of the program, with the aid of the professionals who are in charge.

The first objective of the program is to provide a sufficient quantity of nutritious food to the children who are in danger in order to prevent malnutrition.

The full execution of the program is planned for next year, 1988. In this way, by 1989, 40% of the children in need will be benefitting by government help, which is a total of 34,667 children.

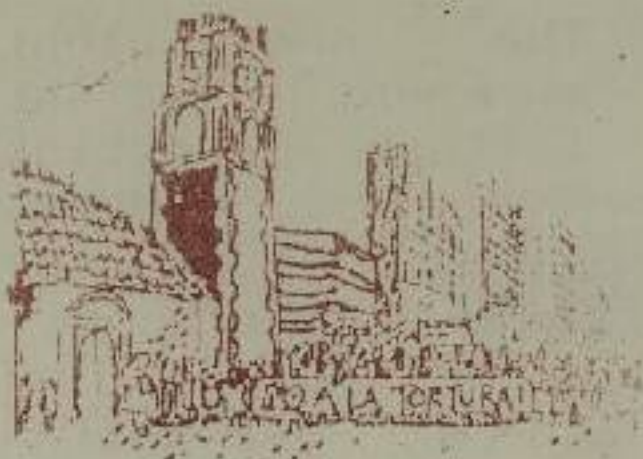
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You can help this situation by sending contributions to Unicef, earmarked for Chile and the Cadel project.
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TO LIVE WITHOUT FEAR

A greater number of condemnations of torture were registered with the Chilean commission of Human Rights during 1986. This fact was revealed in a recently-released report. The condemnations—only those with sufficient, verifiable evidence—involve cases than occurred between the first of January and the 8th of October during 1986. The number of cases for this period was 256.

During the months of October, November, and December, another 90 cases were reported. After the report was released, 52 new cases were presented.

The total number of cases, greater than those report-



ed during the previous two years, rose to 398 persons who were tortured in CNI precincts and in other institutions, or in secret prisons and clandestine places maintained for this purpose.

The information presented by this report clearly demonstrates that the CNI (National Center for Information) is one of the principal instruments of control maintained by

the military regime, directed toward those sectors of the populace which are most active and best-organized

The facts confirm that torture is applied systematically and does not occur in isolated cases.

The increase in data about the increasing use of torture does not help us to realize the suffering incurred by the victims. The report indicates that the practice of torture was put into practice after 1975-76. Before that it was the practice to make the victims disappear. "Since then we have received testimonies of the most barbaric

¡NO A LA TORTURA!

MOVIMIENTO CONTRA LA TORTURA SEBASTIAN ACEVEDO.

DENUNCIA:

and inhuman cruelties. There are doctors who are part of the torture, who stand by and measure the degree of resistance that the victim is able to withstand.

This report about torture is not the first to appear in Chile, and reflects another type of hunger, the

hunger to live in one's own country without fear of being tortured.

The non-violent movement against torture, Sebastian Acevedo, is dedicated to the denouncement of torture and the promotion of life. We participate in demonstrations against the CNI, and

whenever there is a reported case of torture or other affront to human life and dignity. We denounce the cases of torture as a way of arousing the conscience of the people of this country and of the world to stand up and demand an end to this practice.

HUNGER FOR ONE'S HOMELAND

TO BEGIN AGAIN is a series of testimonies collected by Maria Angelica Celedón and Luz Maria Opazo.

The book presents the stories of eight Chilean women who lived in exile and have returned to Chile. Each story is prefaced by a brief introduction about the author, but is told by the author herself, who presents to the reader her experiences of daily life in exile and after her return



to Chile.

These eight women relate varied and often dramatic experiences, most of which were motivated by the effects of the coup in 1973.

The principal aim of the collectors is to bridge the gap that exists in Chile between those who fled or were forced to leave and those who remained in the country, and to bring about greater understanding of the experiences of both groups.

If you would like to obtain a copy of the book, please send \$10(US) to Serpaj-Chile Casilla 139 Santiago 3 Chile.

HUNGER FOR JUSTICE

In the interests of investigating another type of hunger, hunger for justice and the truth, I interviewed two members of the Association of Families of the Detained and Disappeared. To date, there are more than 750 registered cases of people who have disappeared during the 13 and 1/2 years of the military regime of Augusto Pinochet.

Why do you belong to the Association?

Carmen: In 1974, after many people had begun to search individually for their disappeared relatives, a Committee for Peace was formed, to try to organize the search and to gain strength for the search. With the expulsion of a Lutheran Minister, Edmund French, the Vicariate of Solidarity helped to organize the families.

Berta: The major reason for our organizing was to gain strength in numbers and to begin to demand the truth about our relatives.

C: We needed to establish the right to habeas corpus in the courts,



in order to prevent further disappearances.

What does justice mean to you?

C: First of all, it means the right to habeas corpus. We always have to wait and see if the courts will take us seriously in regard to this demand. To date,

we have not had one clarification of a case of a disappeared person. Last year, Judge Carlos Cerda began investigating the disappearance of 10 people who were arrested in 1976. He arrived at the conclusion that there were people responsible for these and another 40 disappearances. Judge Cerda was subsequently removed from his position and his salary was cut in half. Justice will occur for us when the courts declare: "We have found the responsible persons and we know what happened with your families". We want those responsible to be punished, and the courts to pass sentence. At this moment, the courts are acting as compli-ees of the mili-

tary regime. Democracy will help us to achieve justice, but democracy alone is not enough. We will continue to insist that the truth be told. There will be justice when all the people demand justice.

B: Under a military regime, all is under the hand of the dictator. They will not allow the guilty to be prosecuted.

Are you prepared to search for justice through non-violent means?

C: All of our actions and our demands have been presented without violence.

We are constantly denouncing the violence that has been inflicted upon us, but we have not initiated the violence.

We have been treated violently at every turn by the police.

We have been arrested, beaten with sticks, wet with sewer water, attacked with tear-gas

bombs. Once in a while, we return the violence. When occasionally we hit the police or kick one of them, they say that they are the victims of the people, and they punish us more severely.

I'm afraid that someday I will be able to pick up a stick and hit a policeman for all that they have done to my family and the families of the others.

(Editor's Note: Carmen has 5 members of her family among the disappeared, including her son and her husband.)

How do you deal with the anger that you must feel as a response to what you have suffered?

B: We have been strengthened by the struggle that we are engaged in. We are trying to redeem our families from what they have suffered. We are showing

our country and the world that we are prepared to stand up for our beliefs.

C: We're not only struggling for this one issue, but against all the injustices that exist among our people: hunger, unemployment, etc. We express our anger when we march and demonstrate.

It is then that we are manifesting our discontent with the regime. We share our sufferings with the families of the political prisoners, and have formed networks of solidarity with other people.

B: The people have been changed.

They used to be happy and optimistic. Now they are depressed, angry, and afraid. We are especially conscious of the damage that has been done to the youth, who have grown up in the midst of the violence of this regime. Our struggle is for them - that they might have a better future.