

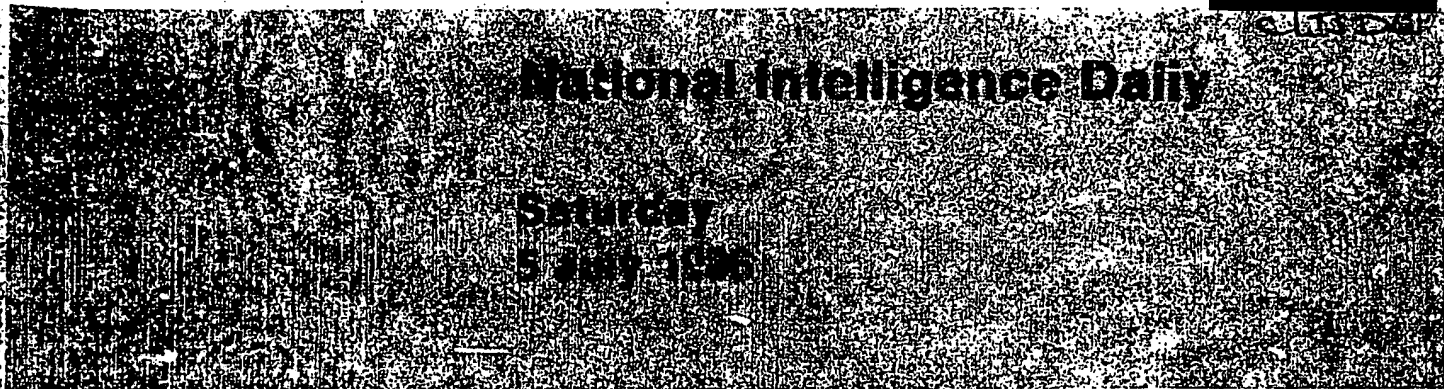


Director of  
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CHILE:

**Strike Post Mortem**

***The strike on Wednesday and Thursday sponsored by the opposition's Civic Assembly coalition was one of the most disruptive ever against the regime of President Pinochet, and protest activity probably will continue unabated in the coming months.***

The press reports at least seven people were killed and about 50 injured—mostly by police and Army gunfire. Over 600 protesters were arrested, and several dozen terrorist bombings were recorded, some blacking out half the country on Wednesday night. Public transportation was crippled and business activity was slowed in major cities, but worker absenteeism was low in most factories and mining areas because workers fear losing their jobs.

The government imposed strict censorship on leading radio stations, filed criminal charges against 17 strike leaders—who are now in hiding—and is prosecuting several journalists for violating national security regulations. Police and Army troops were deployed in large numbers especially in slum areas where they fired on demonstrators. Even in middle-class districts troops used gunfire to silence protesters banging pots and pans, according to the press. Catholic Church bishops issued a statement calling on the armed forces to abstain from excessive force against strikers because this only adds to the spiral of violence.

called the strike a success in terms of furthering the opposition's plan to convince the military that the country is becoming ungovernable. expects the Civic Assembly to call new strikes soon, and a top opposition figure warned that continued government intransigence will spark heightened violence for the remainder of the year.

**Comment:** Although the government did not overreact by closing down the center of Santiago, as it did twice recently, the security forces' heavyhanded methods in slum and middle-class districts, along with press censorship and other forms of harassment, demonstrate that Pinochet is determined to crush all protests. Moderate opposition leaders probably will point to the strong popular reaction to the regime's measures to try to convince senior military that the public is turning against the armed forces. They probably will also call at least one more general strike by 11 September, the 13th anniversary of the regime.

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5 July 1986