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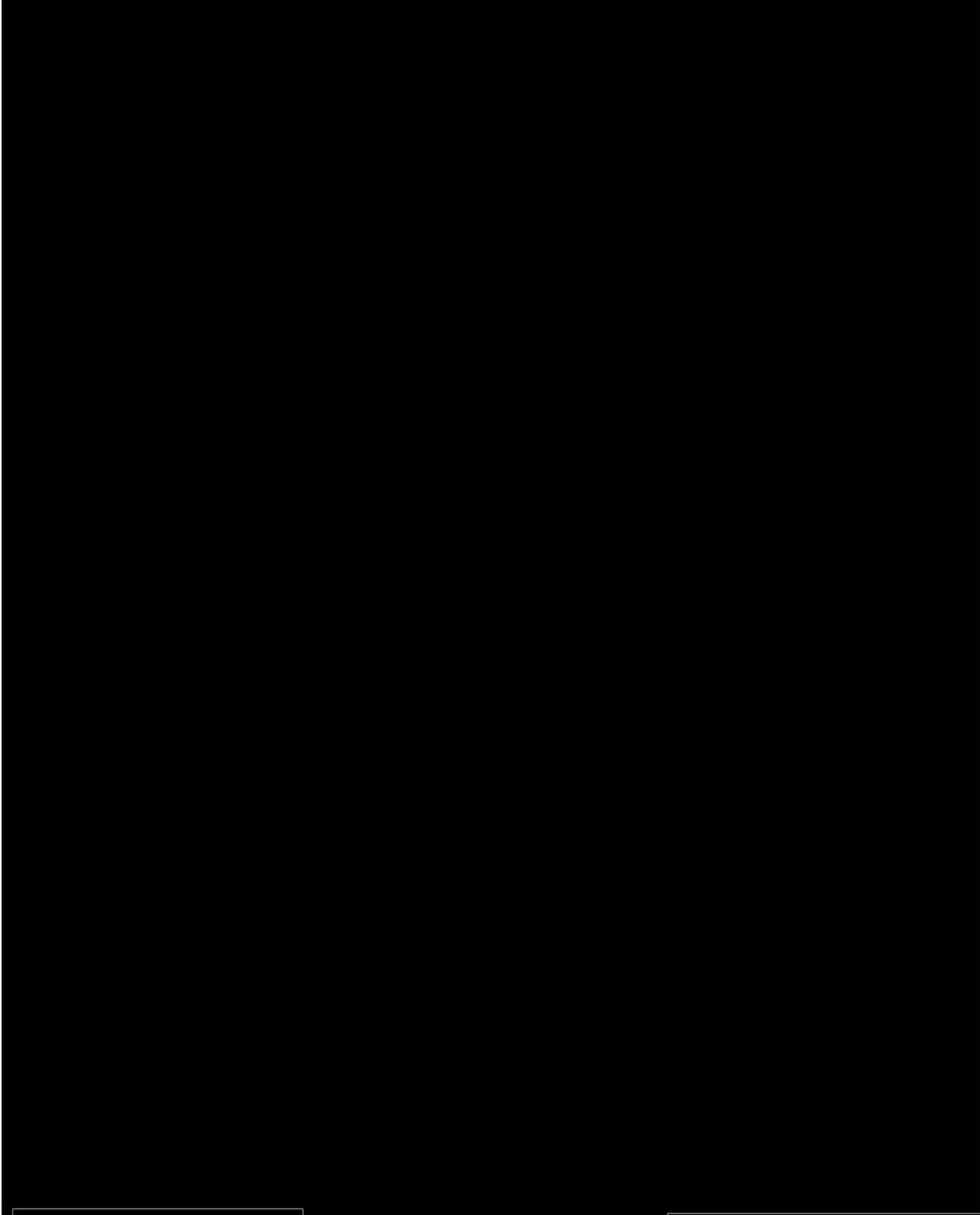
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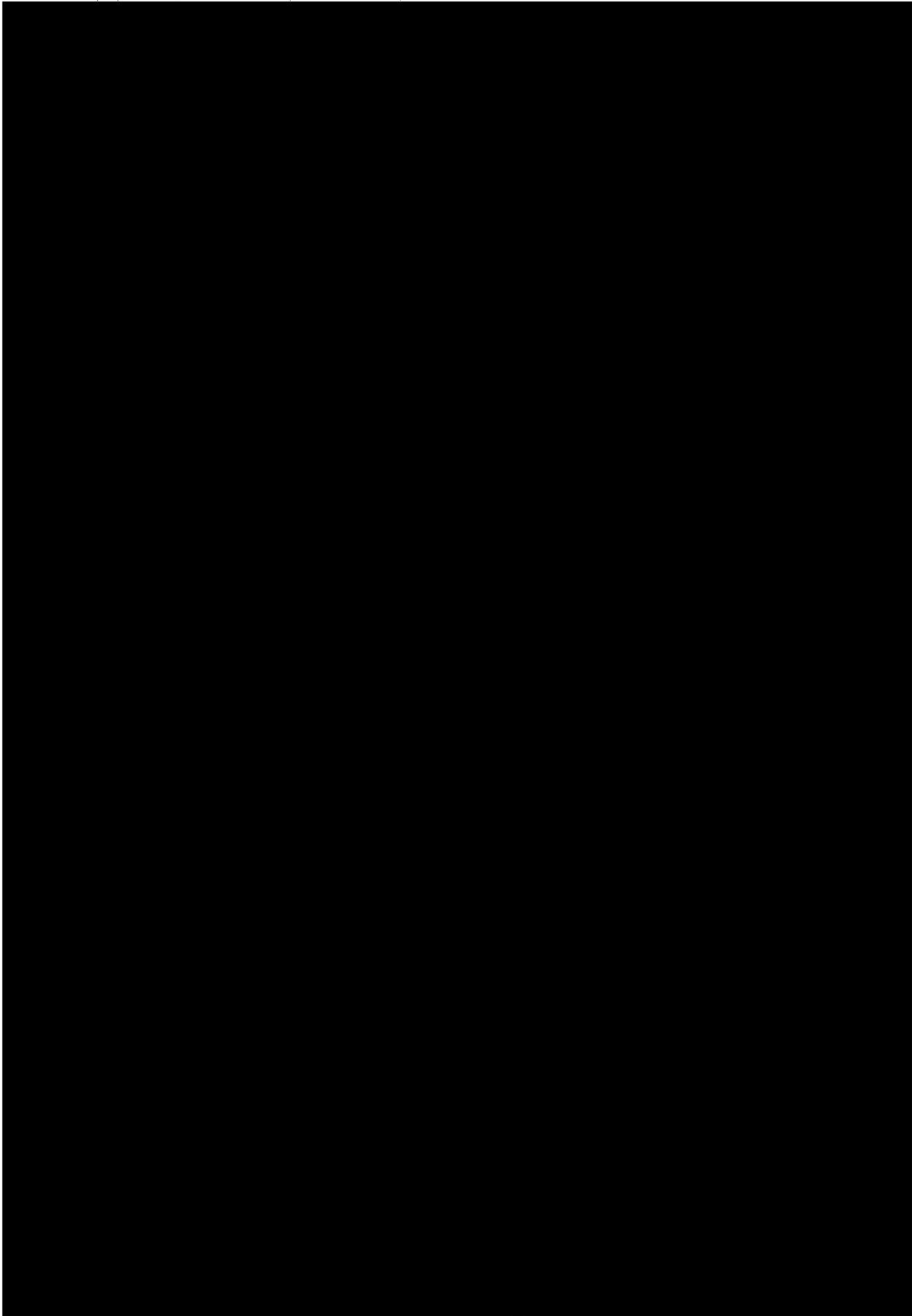
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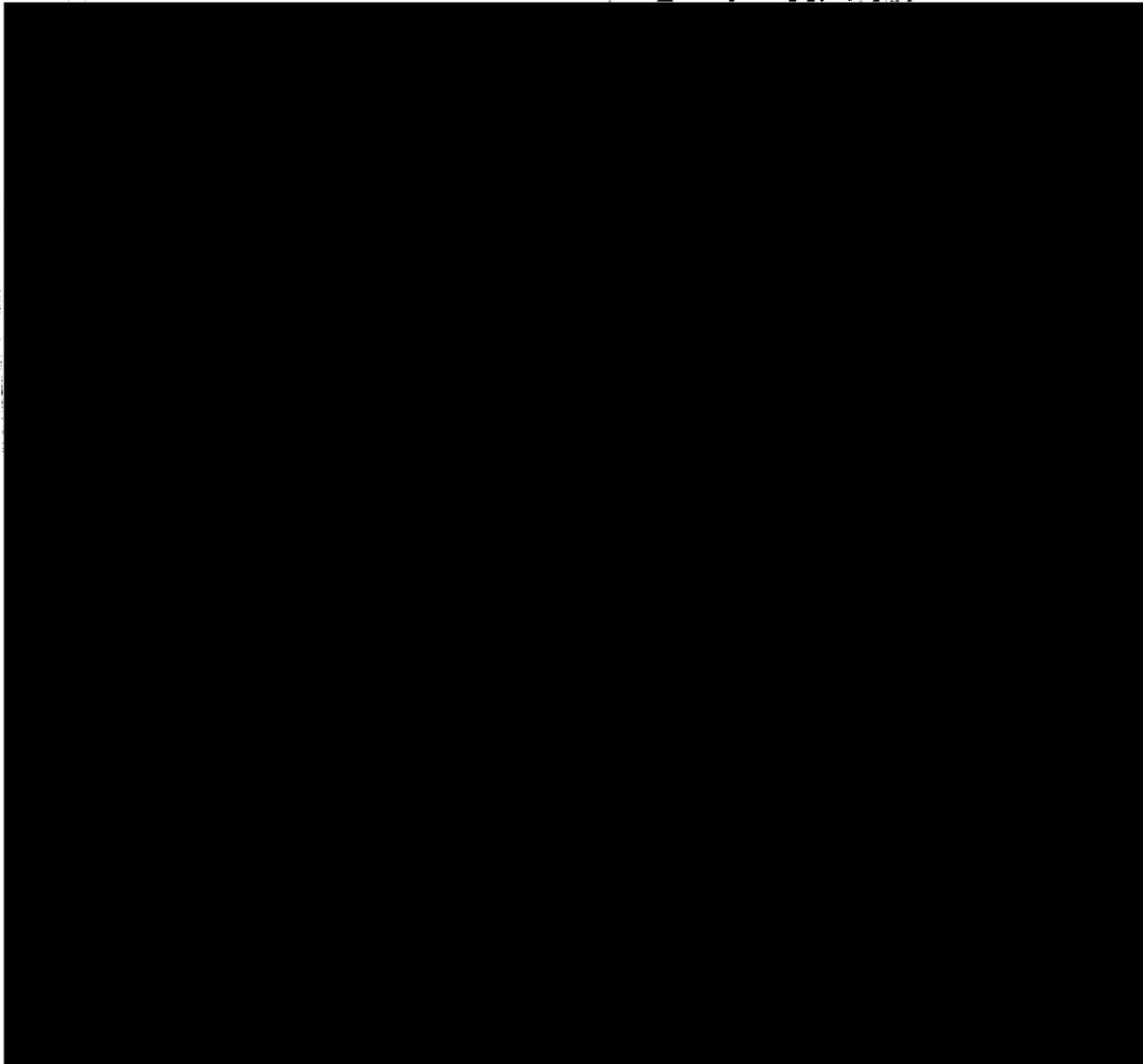
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Chile: Referendum Planned

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Chilean President Pinochet said in a broadcast address last night that he would submit to a national referendum the recent UN General Assembly resolution condemning his military government for human rights violations.

The announcement of such an extraordinary step, following passage of the UN resolution last Friday, is the latest sign of Pinochet's irritation over continued foreign criticism of Chile's human rights performance. The Chileans have also made strong diplomatic representations to the US over its joint sponsorship of the resolution.

Pinochet believes his critics have ignored the substantial progress Chile has achieved in releasing some 4,000 political prisoners—dramatically reducing the

number of reports of illegal detentions, torture, and disappearances—and in dissolving the country's dreaded secret police.

Several weeks ago, Pinochet asked his Foreign Ministry to assess the consequences of a Chilean withdrawal from the UN, but it now appears that he was persuaded that calling a referendum in hopes of vindicating the government's human rights record would be a more prudent course.

Because the government retains the support of a majority of the population, it most likely will win such a referendum. The date of the voting, the first to be held in Chile since the overthrow of the Allende government in September, 1973, is expected to be announced shortly.

