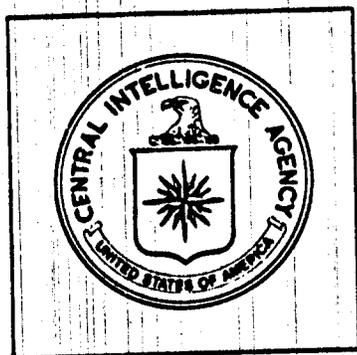


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[REDACTED]

Chile: The Church And Human Rights

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Two Chilean bishops have privately informed Supreme Court President Eyzaguirre that church leaders are skeptical of his recently published findings on inspection visits to detention centers for political prisoners. The prelates, who claim that the Catholic Church has learned of new human rights violations, appear to be exploring ways to step up pressure on the government to improve procedures dealing with the treatment of detainees.

In talks with the high court official, who has a mandate from President Pinochet to investigate human rights conditions, the bishops said that the church has documented extensive evidence of torture by intelligence services at the notorious Villa Grimaldi interrogation center. They disputed the justice's public statement that he had uncovered no signs of mistreatment. While Eyzaguirre admitted to them [REDACTED] that he had verified past human rights abuses, he made it clear that he preferred to withhold such information rather than go on the public record with horror stories that might jeopardize his efforts to clean up the system and prevent future excesses.

The church would like to get the matter before the public in hopes of compelling the junta to act more forcefully in enacting reforms.

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The most serious charge by the bishops was that intelligence organizations have established new installations for detainees in violation of Decree Law 187 which supposedly lists the locations of the official centers. One of the alleged camps is said to be in an area south

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of Santiago occupied by a colony of German immigrants, mostly Nazis, who settled there after World War II. The leader of the colony is head of the Chilean National Socialist Party, the country's Nazi group.

[REDACTED] access to the colony, which is fenced and heavily guarded, is controlled by officers of the National Intelligence Directorate.

If this report surfaces in the press, there will probably be a new clamor on the international level to condemn the Chilean junta. That, in turn, would seriously challenge the veracity of recent government moves intended to signal a relaxation in domestic security practices and improve guarantees for the protection of human rights. Moreover, it would probably cloud the atmosphere for the OAS meeting in Santiago in June.

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