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STAFF NOTES:

Latin American Trends

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Chile: MIR on the Run

The military government is maintaining the upper hand in its campaign against the extremist Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR).

Still reeling from the death of Miguel Enriquez last month, the MIR has been dealt several additional blows by government security forces. Claudio Rodriguez, [REDACTED] the group's deputy intelligence chief, was killed on Saturday after he threw a grenade at officers attempting to arrest him. Another alleged MIR leader, Felipe Flores, [REDACTED] was captured after a separate armed clash the same day. On Monday, the government arrested Laura Allende de Pascal. Senora Pascal, the late president Allende's sister and the mother of fugitive MIR leader Andres Pascal Allende, had not previously been sought by the security forces and was not in hiding. [REDACTED] however, tend to support government claims that she was involved in MIR activities. 15c

Particularly zealous security officers--perhaps members of the Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA)--may have been responsible for a grisly bit of psychological warfare against the MIR early Sunday morning. The body of a young female MIR member [REDACTED] was thrown into the Italian Embassy residence compound, where nearly 300 leftists, including many MIR members, have sought asylum.

The current round of government successes is partly the result of a bank robbery that took place in early October for which the MIR, ironically, may not even have been responsible. The events leading to Enriquez's death began when security officers searching for the

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bank robbers recognized another MIR leader in a passing automobile. Documents found on Enriquez have provided important leads to various MIR members and activities.

There are indications that Enriquez had decided to launch a MIR offensive, but DINA director Colonel Jose Contreras [REDACTED] told high government officials that Enriquez was not involved in the bank robbery. The government publicly claimed that 15 million escudos found in the house where he died was loot from the bank, however, and later blamed the robbery on an alleged MIR "segment" called the Armed Revolutionary Vanguard (VAR).

Carabinero and Department of Investigations officers [REDACTED] do not believe that the VAR has ever been connected with the MIR. The police have arrested VAR leader Nelson Aramburu and recovered 28 million of the 37 million stolen escudos from his mother's house. They believe the VAR is nothing more than one of a number of small bands of ordinary criminals that feigned political motives for their crimes when Allende was in power. 15c

Whether or not the VAR was an authentic MIR splinter group remains unclear. It is apparent, however, that the MIR is on the run and that security forces have good mental pictures of the fugitives. Claudio Rodriguez met his end after he was recognized by an off duty officer while both men were shopping in a middle-class residential-area supermarket. [REDACTED]

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