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BRIEF 13 DIRECTOR  
TO: PRIORITY LATIN AMERICA BRIEF.

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SUBJECT: LATIN AMERICA BRIEF [REDACTED] FOR 13 MARCH 1987.  
FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

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July 2000

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2. CHILE: EFFECTS OF NEW LAW ON NON-MARXIST PARTIES

CHILEAN PRESIDENT PINOCHET HAS PROMULGATED A LONG-AWAITED LAW THAT WILL ALLOW NON-MARXIST POLITICAL PARTIES TO BEGIN STEPS TO GAIN LEGAL STATUS.

PINOCHET PORTRAYED THE LAW AS THE LATEST ADVANCE IN HIS PROGRAM TO ESTABLISH LIMITED DEMOCRACY DURING THE NEXT TWO YEARS. LEADERS OF THE MAIN ALLIANCE OF MODERATE OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE SHARPLY CRITICIZED THE LAW'S HIGHLY RESTRICTIVE PROVISIONS, SUCH AS GOVERNMENT REGULATION OF THE PARTIES' INTERNAL FINANCES. THEY NONETHELESS STOPPED SHORT OF SAYING THAT THEY WILL NOT SEEK ACCREDITATION UNDER THE LAW.

THE CHILEAN PRESIDENT INTIMATED IN A PRESS CONFERENCE LAST WEEK THAT HE WILL RUN FOR REELECTION IN A SINGLE-CANDIDATE PLEBISCITE IN 1989; HE DISMISSED THE IDEA OF AN OPEN ELECTION.

IN A MAJOR SPEECH ON WEDNESDAY, PINOCHET'S SPOKESMAN EMPHASIZED THE COMMITMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ARMED FORCES TO CONTINUE BEYOND 1989 THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT THE "INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS" SPELLED OUT IN THE AUTHORITARIAN CONSTITUTION OF 1980.

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE NON-MARXIST PARTIES REALIZE THEY HAVE NO REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE TO REGISTERING UNDER THE NEW LAW, THEY PROBABLY INTEND TO CONTINUE CRITICIZING THE LAW AS PART OF A CAMPAIGN THEY PLAN TO START SOON IN SUPPORT OF DIRECT ELECTIONS AND IN OPPOSITION TO PINOCHET'S REELECTION.

THE LAW WAS PROBABLY PROMULGATED NOW PRIMARILY TO SHOW PROGRESS ON POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION PRIOR TO THE VISIT TO CHILE BY POPE JOHN PAUL II NEXT MONTH. PINOCHET IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, TO ALLOW THE PARTIES FULL FREEDOM TO OPERATE, FOR EXAMPLE, BY GIVING THEM READY ACCESS TO TELEVISION, OR TO HEED THEIR CALL FOR OPEN ELECTIONS. INSTEAD, HE PROBABLY WILL CONCENTRATE ON ENSURING THAT HE BECOMES THE SOLE CANDIDATE IN THE PLEBISCITE.

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