

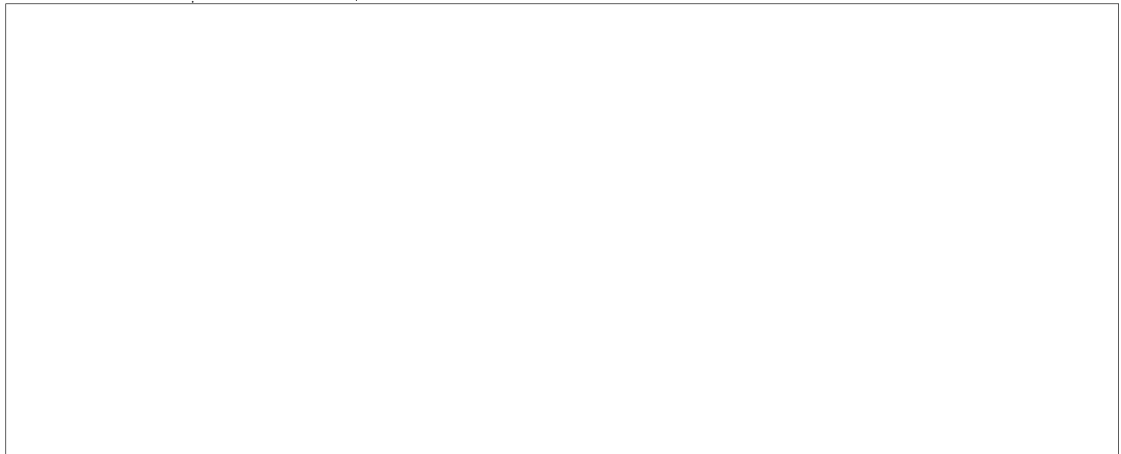
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NEWS, VIEWS and ISSUES

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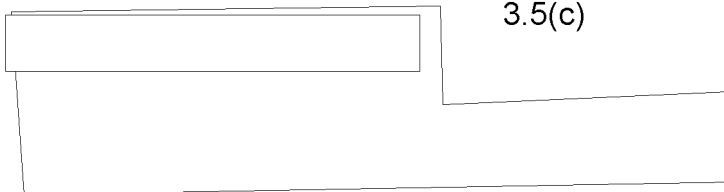
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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
4 August 1975

Details conflict

Chile leftists 'vanish' in Argentina

By James Nelson Goodsell

Latin America correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Buenos Aires

Some sort of collusion between Chilean security officers and groups in Argentina is thought to lie behind the mysterious deaths in Argentina of 119 Chilean leftists, who were known to have been under arrest in Chile.

The bizarre and complex details of the case, which could mushroom into a trans-Andean scandal, are coming to light here and in Santiago, the Chilean capital.

The case may well have been a factor in the decision last month of the Chilean military government to bar the planned visit to Chile of a United Nations human rights committee.

In the past months articles have appeared in Chile's controlled press indicating that the 119 were killed in guerrilla skirmishes in Argentina. But there is no word in these reports on how the Chileans got to Argentina while supposedly under arrest in Chile.

The information for these articles was said to come from two sources: an Argentine magazine, Lea, which put out its first and only issue on July 15 and a Brazilian newspaper that sources in Rio de Janeiro indicate does not even exist.

The same Chilean newspapers also reported in late July that the bodies of at least two of

those on the list had turned up in Buenos Aires.

But when family members of the two came to Buenos Aires to check the stories, they discovered that the bodies were not those of their loved ones. Further investigations disclosed that the identity cards with the bodies were not those of the missing Chileans and probably were fabrications.

The 119 were, in the main, one-time members of the now outlawed extremist Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR). They were arrested at various times in 1974. Most were under 30, and at least one-fourth of them were women.

Once arrested, the majority simply dropped out of sight despite strenuous efforts by their families, human rights organizations, and others to get information on their whereabouts. In a few cases, information did come from specific sources — the International Red Cross, released prisoners, and, in at least one instance, from the Chilean Foreign Ministry.

The Foreign Ministry last year wrote the British Embassy in Santiago confirming that Christian von Yurick was being held under "preventive arrest" and that he was in "normal" health. But it made no mention of Mr. von Yurick's son, Edwin, and the son's wife, Barbara, who also were missing. All three now appear on the lists of those killed in Argentina. The British Embassy had inquired about the von Yuricks at the request of relatives in England.

The newspaper accounts of the Argentine deaths suggest that the Chileans in question were killed fighting with guerrillas in northwestern Argentina, but the battle is said by Argentine military sources never to have taken place.

Yet Chilean authorities continue to talk of the guerrilla skirmish as a major one. Chilean newspapers quote the Curitiba, Brazil, newspaper O Dia, as mentioning a battle near the Argentine city of Salta. But sources in Rio de Janeiro say there is no newspaper O Dia in Curitiba.