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## **Chile: Telephone Workers Union Objects To Australian Company's Layoffs**

*by John Neagle*

*Category/Department: General*

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Spokespersons for the Australian Embassy in Santiago told AFP on Feb. 8 that union representatives of the Chilean Telephone Company (CTC) ended a 24-hour occupation of the Embassy after the firm's Australian-controlled management agreed to talks about planned layoffs. The CTC is controlled by Australian investor Alan Bond. The five union members said they were trying to persuade the Australian government to prevent the Bond Corporation from firing phone company employees. According to union officials, the company plans to fire 1,000 people this year as part of a restructuring plan. Embassy officials said the mission could not mediate the conflict but agreed to give information on the dispute to appropriate officials in Australia. On the same day, nearly 4,500 telephone company workers threatened to go on strike if the CTC does not rehire 250 employees it had dismissed, union leaders said. The union said the workers were fired after Bond paid \$300 million for a 52% stake in the company in 1987 and 1988. (Basic data from AFP, 02/08/89)

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