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## Chile: Results Of General Strike

*by John Neagle*

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On April 19, Labor Minister Guillermo Arthur told reporters that the general strike called by the Chilean Workers Unity (CUT) for April 18 was a complete failure, and that it had been used as an excuse to unleash violence. He asserted that most workers did not respond to CUT's strike mobilization because the union was untrustworthy. The foreign press reported that the general strike did not paralyze production or public services, although it sparked numerous clashes between demonstrators and police. Police used water cannon and tear gas to disperse demonstrators. Electricity was cut off throughout most of the country, and explosions and firefights rocked the capital. Officials reported that one civilian, who reportedly belonged to the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front, was killed in the disturbances. At least two persons were injured, and 20 arrested. Next, Interior Minister Carlos Caceres said the government would request the courts to prosecute CUT leaders. He said, "A summons will be presented against the persons who called this illegal strike." The general strike was called to apply pressure on the government to release CUT's president and secretary general, Manuel Bustos and Arturo Martinez, and to demand a 65% hike in the minimum wage to about US\$100 per month. Several important trade unions did not support the strike, including those pertaining to the copper industry. (Basic data from Notimex, AFP, Xinhua, 04/19/89)

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