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John Neagle

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## Chile: Election Run-up

by John Neagle

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Dec. 8: In Washington, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), a group affiliated to the US Democratic Party, announced it was sending 30 observers to monitor the Dec. 14 elections in Chile. The goal of the mission is "to provide delegates from nations in transition an opportunity to learn from the successful Chilean experience and to demonstrate international support for the democratic transition under way in Chile," NDI said. NDI president Brian Atwood and delegation head, said, "Chile has been a model for those interested in successful democratic transitions. The delegation's presence in Chile reflects our belief that free and fair elections are a critical factor in a successful democratic transition." The delegation includes political party leaders and election experts from Argentina, Bolivia, El Salvador, Haiti, Hungary, Liberia, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Tunisia, the US, Zambia and Zimbabwe. NDI is financed by the National Endowment for Democracy. The Endowment is funded by the US Congress.

Dec. 10: Hundreds of thousands attended a rally in Santiago marking the end of opposition candidate Patricio Aylwin's presidential campaign. Rally for Democracy spokespersons said one million supporters participated. The election will take place Thursday, Dec. 14. Opinion polls indicate Aylwin is expected to capture between 50% and 60% in the first round of voting.

Dec. 11: At a press conference in Santiago, Aylwin said that he would like to see Gen. Augusto Pinochet resign as army commander-in-chief, but could not obligate him to do so. Aylwin emphasized the importance of "knowing the truth" on human rights in Chile before considering a new amnesty or pardon. Recently, Pinochet warned he would not tolerate any prosecution of military officers accused of human rights violations in the wake of the 1973 coup. In 1978, the military government decreed an amnesty for all those accused of human rights violations. According to human rights groups, up to 30,000 people have died or disappeared since the coup. Aylwin said that, if elected, he would do his utmost to maintain adequate relations with the armed forces but would not negotiate with them over the selection of the future defense minister. A Gallup poll published Monday gave Aylwin 50.9% of the vote; pro-government candidate Hernan Buchi, 28.5%; and, businessperson Francisco Javier Errazuriz, 20.6%. Police in Santiago used tear gas and water cannon to disperse rival groups. Several injuries were reported. Television reporters said police intervened after allegedly being pelted with stones by Aylwin supporters. The incidents occurred at the end of a huge rally attended by tens of thousands of militants loyal to Buchi. According to AFP, the Buchi rally was dwarfed by the mammoth meeting of Aylwin supporters late Sunday.

[If no candidate obtains an absolute majority in the Dec. 14 voting, a runoff is scheduled for late January or early February. The presidential election will be the first since 1970. Chileans will also cast votes for 120 elected members of the Chamber of Deputies, and 38 members of a 48-seat Senate. Ten members of the Senate are appointed by the current regime. The congressional election will be the first since 1972. Aylwin's Rally for Democracy coalition is comprised of 17 parties, ranging from the left to moderate right. Buchi's candidacy is supported by the following parties and political groups: National Renovation (RN), Independent Democratic Union (UDI), Radical Democracy (DR), Independent Center Movement (MIC), Social Democrat Movement, and the Free Democratic Center (CDL). Errazuriz's campaign was marked by populist defense of the dictatorship, and criticisms of Pinochet's political errors such as human rights violations. His candidacy is supported

by the Liberal, Southern, National, and Chilean Socialist parties, and the National Union of the Center Movement, Chilean Front, Authentic Nationals, Retirees Party, and the Nationalist Legion. According to Notimex, the Legion is a neo-fascist group.] (Basic data from AFP, 12/08/89, 12/11/89; DPA, 12/10/89; Notimex, 12/11/89)

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