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Interview with ~~Chilean Cardinal Raul~~ Silva Henriquez by Rev. Torgier J. Havgar, September 11, 1976, "Frankfurter - Rundschau", September 25-26, 1976, Weekend Edition

This interview was given by Chilean Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez, September 11, 1976 - 3rd anniversary of the military overthrow of the constitutional government of Chile - to the Norwegian Minister Torgier J. Havgar in Santiago, Chile. Rev. Havgar was a member of a Norwegian delegation of politicians, jurists and trade unionists who have just returned from that country. The interview is as follows:

Havgar:

How can one explain the contradictory position of the Catholic church of Chile, when on the one hand, on the anniversary of the military take-over, a Catholic Bishop took part in an junta religious service and delivered a pro-junta sermon, and on the other hand, the Cardinal refused to hold a service celebrating that occasion?

Silva:

Many people think of the Catholic church as a pyramid with the Pope at the top and beneath the faithful masses. However, in reality, the church is a community in which every Bishop is a Vicar who has leading responsibilities within his respective realm. But only the Pope is responsible for the church as a whole, and not some Bishop or Cardinal. Therefore, the military Bishop works in his sphere under his own responsibility. So, there are Christians in all parties. Nonetheless, I am very happy that the Chilean Bishop's Conference has taken a very clear and firm stand against the danger which is presently upon us: the military dictatorship.

Havgar:

What per cent of the population according to your opinion is against the junta?

Silva:

At least 85% of the population is against the government of the junta. But we must remember that many are afraid to express their position. Here in Chile tyranny reigns. The secret police take people away whenever and wherever they choose. Under the guise of "Patriotism and freedom", people are treated in an extremely brutal and arbitrary way.

Havgar:

How is it possible that in a country with such a long democratic tradition, a government could arrest and expel two internationally well-known lawyers and fighters for human rights like Jaime Castillo and Eugenio Velasco?

Silva:

Here we must remember again that the military junta is composed of politicians. Their handi-work is war, and the only possible way for them to govern is to make war. They see everything either in black or white. Those who are not with them are against them, and therefore against the interest of the nation. Every opposition will be silenced and it seems that in war everything is permitted. On this ground the government thinks that its action is justified. This is a dangerous situation for the Chilean people.

Havgar:

What did the dissolution of the Committee for Peace and the formation of the Vicariate of Solidarity mean?

Silva:

The dissolution of the Committee was a hard blow for us. However, the Committee for Peace could not have continued to work in the same way as before even if Brother Bishop Frenz had not been expelled. The organization had some weak points. The ecumenical spirit was good and authentic, but many Protestant churches had problems which would have created difficulties for joint actions. Besides, the Protestant churches are far more dependent on the government's good-will. They needed an agreement which probably would not have been renewed. That is why the Catholic church decided to assume the responsibility for continuing the good work of the Committee by organizing the Vicariate of Solidarity in the diocese of Santiago.

Havgar:

Are there any indications that the junta intends to impede the work of the Vicariate of Solidarity?

Silva:

No. We do everything in the open. Our work suited the government. Evidently, the junta was happier with the work of the Committee when it took care of the refugees. But when it began to help the persecuted Chileans, this was no longer the case. But now the Vicariate will not stop its work as long as the Church considers it so important. Perhaps, we will not have enough financial means to continue to work in the same proportions.

Havgar:

Is there any basis to assume that the junta will loosen its grip?

Silva:

If at all, not too much. Recently, they have even more strongly attacked the existing political forces. On the other hand one would have expected today (September 11, 1976) the announcement of much harsher measures. However this has not happened. This could suggest that the junta is taking a more cautious course. Probably, they sense that in the international sphere they are being more strongly criticized. We must not forget that here in Chile the law of war rules. Under this law people are arrested in the middle of the night when no one is there to notice. Now the nation lives under intolerable circumstances.

Havgar:

And the more than 200 prisoners who were freed from "Tres Alamos"?

Silva:

That was a great gesture that is certainly grounds for great joy for the prisoners and their families. But we should not let ourselves be misled. In the long run this has no significance. The oppression of the population continues and the arbitrary manipulation of law and justice continues as before. You should think that those who were freed could be imprisoned again without grounds, or perhaps, they could simply disappear.

Havgar:

If the junta would stop persecuting people, would stop expelling people, put an end to terror and arbitrariness, then would the church support such a military government?

Silva:

Then we surely would be more content. But then why should such a junta like this keep absolute power? Then we would be returning to an elective democratic government. But if the present military government rules for a long time to come it will destroy our people in an incredible way - a people with strong democratic traditions.

Havgar:

Excellency, we are extremely impressed with the work of the Vicariate of Solidarity. This work is like a glimmer of light in a dark time. Can we tell about it outside Chile?

Silva:

Of course, Because what we do happens openly and publically.

Entrevista al Cardenal chileno Raúl Silva Henríquez por el Rev. Torgier J. Havgar, el 11 de septiembre de 1976, para el "Frankfurter-Rundschau", 25-26 de septiembre de 1976, edición de fin de semana.

Esta entrevista fué concedida por el Cardenal chileno Raúl Silva Henríquez, el 11 de septiembre de 1976, tercer aniversario del derrocamiento militar del gobierno constitucional de Chile- al Måstor noruego Torgier J. Havgar en Santiago, Chile. El Rev. Havgar era miembro de una delegación noruega de políticos, juristas y sindicalistas que han regresado recién desde ese país. La entrevista es la siguiente:

Havgar:

Cómo puede uno explicar la posición contradictoria de la Iglesia católica de Chile, cuando por una parte, en el aniversario del golpe militar, un Obispo católico participó en un servicio religioso de la junta y dijo un sermón pro-junta, y por otro lado, el Cardenal rehusó officiar un servicio que celebraba esa ocasión?

Silva:

Muchos creen que la Iglesia católica es una pirámide con el Papa en la punta y abajo las fieles masas. Sin embargo, en realidad la Iglesia es una comunidad en la cual cada Obispo es un Vicario que tiene responsabilidades directivas en su ámbito respectivo. Pero sólo el Papa es responsable por la Iglesia como un todo, y no algún Obispo o Cardenal. Por lo tanto, el Obispo militar trabaja en su esfera bajo su propia responsabilidad. Hay cristianos en todas las posiciones. Sin embargo, me alegra mucho que la Conferencia Episcopal chilena ha adoptado una posición muy clara y firme contra el peligro que está actualmente sobre nosotros: la dictadura militar.

Havgar:

Qué porcentaje de la población está -en su opinión- contra la junta?

Silva:

Por lo menos el 85% de la población está contra el gobierno de la junta. Pero debemos recordar que muchos tienen miedo de expresar su posición. Aquí en Chile reina la tiranía. La policía secreta se lleva a la gente cuando y donde se le antoja. Bajo el pretexto de "Patriotismo y libertad", se trata a la gente de un modo extremadamente brutal y arbitrario.

Havgar:

Cómo es posible que en un país con una tradición democrática tan

larga, un gobierno pudiera detener y expulsar a dos abogados tan conocidos internacionalmente y luchadores por los derechos humanos como Jaime Castillo y Eugenio Velasco?

Silva:

Debemos otra vez recordar que la junta militar está compuesta por políticos. Su ocupación es la guerra, y la única forma posible que tienen para ~~trabajar~~ gobernar es la guerra. Todo lo ven como blanco o negro. Quienes no están con ellos están en su contra, y por ende contra el interés de la nación. Toda oposición es silenciada y parece que en la guerra todo está permitido. Sobre esta base, el gobierno piensa que su acción se justifica. Es una situación peligrosa para el pueblo chileno.

Havgar:

Qué significaron la disolución del Comité para la Paz y la formación de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad?

Silva:

La disolución del Comité fué un duro golpe para nosotros. Sin embargo el Comité para la Paz no habría podido continuar su trabajo en la misma forma que antes aún si el hermano Obispo Frenz no hubiese sido expulsado. La organización tenía algunos puntos débiles. El espíritu ecuménico era bueno y auténtico, pero muchas Iglesias protestantes tenían problemas que hubieran creado dificultades para acciones conjuntas. Además, las Iglesias protestantes son mucho más dependientes de la buena voluntad del gobierno. Ellas necesitaban un acuerdo que probablemente no se hubiese renovado. Fué por eso que la Iglesia católica decidió asumir la responsabilidad de continuar el buen trabajo del Comité organizando la Vicaría de la Solidaridad en la diócesis de Santiago.

Havgar:

Existen indicios de que la junta pretende impedir el trabajo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad?

Silva:

No. Lo hacemos todo abiertamente. Nuestra labor le acomodaba al Gobierno. Evidentemente, la junta estaba más contenta cuando el trabajo del Comité se encargaba de los refugiados. Pero cuando comenzó a ayudar a los

chilenos perseguidos, su actitud varió. Pero ahora la Vicaría no cesará en su tarea mientras la Iglesia la considere tan importante. Es posible que no tengamos suficientes medios financieros para continuar el trabajo en la misma proporción.

Havgar:

Hay alguna base para suponer que la junta aflojará su control?

Silva:

No mucha, si la hay. Recientemente, han atacado aún con más fuerza a las fuerzas políticas existentes. Por otra parte, se podía haber esperado hoy el anuncio de medidas mucho más duras. Esto no ha ocurrido, sin embargo. Ello podría sugerir que la junta está adoptando un curso más cauteloso. Probablemente, intuyen que en la esfera internacional están siendo criticados más fuertemente. No debemos olvidar que acá en Chile gobierna la ley de la guerra. Bajo esta ley, se detiene a la gente en medio de la noche cuando nadie está ahí para saberlo. La nación vive ahora bajo circunstancias intolerables.

Havgar:

Y los más de 200 prisioneros liberados de Tres Alamos?

Silva:

Ese fué un gran gesto que ciertamente producirá gran felicidad a los prisioneros y sus familias. Pero no nos debemos dejar engañar. En el largo plazo ésto no tiene significancia. La opresión de la población persiste y la manipulación arbitraria de la ley y la justicia sigue igual que antes. Podría usted pensar que los recién liberados podrían ser apresados otra vez sin motivo, o quizá podrían simplemente desaparecer.

Havgar:

Si la junta dejara de perseguir a la gente, dejara de expulsarlas, pusiera fin al terror y la arbitrariedad, apoyaría entonces la Iglesia a un gobierno militar así?

Silva:

Seguramente estaríamos más contentos. Pero entonces, por qué razón querría una junta así tener poder absoluto? Estaríamos volviendo entonces

a un gobierno por elección democrática. Pero si el gobierno militar actual sigue en el poder por mucho tiempo, destruirá a nuestro pueblo de una manera increíble -un pueblo con fuertes tradiciones democráticas.

Havgar:

Excelencia, estamos extremadamente impresionados con el trabajo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad. Esta labor es como un rayo de luz en tiempos oscuros. Podemos hablar de ella fuera de Chile?

Silva:

Por supuesto, porque lo que hacemos sucede abierta y públicamente.

FIN DEL TEXTO

19 - 10/11/76

## CHILE CALLED NAZI-STYLE DICTATORSHIP (210)

ROME (NC) -- A leftist Catholic weekly here has quoted Cardinal Raul Silva of Santiago, Chile, as saying that the Chilean government is a "dictatorship modeled on Nazism."

The weekly Com-Nuovi Tempi said that the quote was from an interview given by Cardinal Silva to Norwegian Evangelical Pastor Torgeir Havgar.

The cardinal has been consistently cautious in commenting publicly on the Chilean regime.

According to Com-Nuovi Tempi, the cardinal declared that 35 percent of the Chilean people were against the current regime, but were keeping silent for fear of reprisals.

"Under the pretext of 'patriotism' and 'freedom,'" the weekly quoted the cardinal as saying, "men are treated with an unprecedented arbitrariness and brutality."

"The rules of war are in force here," the cardinal reportedly said. "According to these rules people are arrested at night if no one pays attention. As things stand today, the nation is living under intolerable conditions."

"When in 1973 a military junta took power, we were aware that parliamentary activity would undergo some restrictions, as has happened in other Latin American countries," the interview continued.

"But none of us knew we would get a dictatorship modeled on Nazism."

20 - 10/11/76

(With NC Photo to come)

## FILIPINO BISHOPS REJECT MARTIAL LAW REFERENDUM (240)

ROME (NC) -- Fourteen Filipino bishops have protested the upcoming national referendum on martial law in the Philippines as a "vicious farce" and a "mockery of the dignity" of Filipinos.

In a communique received here, the bishops called martial law "a regime of coercion and fear, of institutionalized deception and manipulation."



19 - 10/12/76

(With 19-10/11, ROME -- Chile called Nazi-style...)

CARDINAL DENIES COMPARING JUNTA IN CHILE WITH NAZI RULE (230)

SANTIAGO, Chile (NC) -- Although critical on other issues of the military rule in Chile, Cardinal Raul Silva of Santiago has emphatically denied calling it a "dictatorship modeled on Nazism."

The cardinal's information office here said that during an interview of the cardinal by Pastor Torgeir Havgar, Lutheran minister from Norway, "problems relating to the Christian community in Chile were discussed; but the political judgment attributed to the cardinal is in substance and form a total misrepresentation of his remarks."

The office further said that "his real thoughts can be found in recent statements Cardinal Silva has made in public."

The statement was issued after local papers quoted the West German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine, on a version of the interview provided by Pastor Havgar.

The story also appeared in Com-Nuovi Tempi, a Rome-based leftist Catholic weekly.

Havgar, who presided over a church group visiting Chile, said Cardinal Silva told him that some 35 percent of the Chileans were against the military junta, but were afraid to protest openly against "the rule of tyranny."

In answer to the question how Chile, with a long tradition of democratic rule, could have become a dictatorship, Pastor Havgar quoted the cardinal as answering:

"There is no political participation in the junta, whose force rests on martial law. It can only rule in a warlike atmosphere, which means they (the generals) look at Chile's reality with dark glasses."

"None of us knew we would get a dictatorship modeled on Nazism."

At recent public ceremonies for Independence Day, Cardinal Silva told government officials to return the country to its traditional freedoms and peace, from the present climate of hate, injustice and conflict.