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Walter Foote

Grand Valley State University

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Adiós a Pinochet: Chileans Talk about the Plebiscite of 1988

WALTER FOOTE

“Every moment of the day, the Chileans speak of Chile. Their hearts bursting with anguish, anxiety, and nostalgia, they never stop speaking of Chile.” So begins Jacobo Timerman’s book Chile: Death in the South (Knopf, 1987), the Argentine writer’s condemnation of the Pinochet years — 1973 to the present — the fifteen years of military dictatorship in South America’s former bastion of democracy. After living in Chile through the plebiscite of October 5, 1988, the vote which said No to another eight years of Pinochet, I can add to Timerman’s observation. The Chileans almost never stop speaking of Chilean politics, even to a gringo college English professor who at first wasn’t too sure what they were talking about.

I do not analyze the plebiscite. Because of the Chileans’ willingness to talk about the issues and about their hopes and fears, I decided to shut up and let them talk. My model is Studs Terkel. It is also Timerman. Imprisoned himself by the Argentine military government, he writes most affectingly when he allows the victims of the Pinochet regime’s tortures and other varieties of “human rights violations” to speak for themselves. The persecution of some who disappeared or died is described by their relatives and friends.

My examples are less dramatic. The people who talked to me are less drastic victims, or at least I assume so. They are all still alive. Most were voting No, despite rumors of severe reprisals. A few did not see themselves as victims at all. They saw themselves, and all Chile, as beneficiaries of the regime’s economic advances and feared the uncertainties of change, particularly a return to the chaos and economic deprivations of the Allende years, leading to the military coup which brought Pinochet to power. They were voting Yes.

I came to Santiago on six weeks’ notice with my wife, Rachel Calderón, she as a Fulbright Teaching Fellow at a Jesuit school, I as a dependent. The political situation here was and is confusing. How many dictators allow their people a chance to vote them out of office? There are, at last count, seventeen opposition political parties. While reporters were being jailed and beaten for reporting anti-Pinochet demonstrations, the opposition was given fifteen minutes TV time a night for a month. “Fifteen minutes to answer fifteen years,” they complained, but these programs, although subject to censorship, are widely credited with swinging the vote. They have been analyzed world
wide as one of the most successful TV political campaigns in history. While reporters continued to be jailed and beaten, Timerman’s book was published in Santiago and rose to the best-seller lists. But, with ten weeks in Chile before the plebiscite, I had time to learn, to gain some perspective.

A note on my method. I did not set out to write this. I did not use a tape recorder. Most of the time, I did not even ask questions. I made mental and written notes and translated from Spanish what the Chileans said. I will not swear to total accuracy in translating or reporting. I was pro-No, but I never told any Chilean this before October 5. If my bias shows, it is not in the heavily anti-Pinochet “sampling,” because it is not a sampling. I never sought out anyone to talk about politics, let alone to try to balance the opinions expressed. The Chileans and the two Americans who speak below are all people my wife and I met in the normal course of establishing and leading our lives in Santiago and in traveling a bit. Some we talked to once. Others are colleagues or friends. They all simply volunteered what they had to say. Instead of “changing names to protect the innocent,” I use job titles. The parentheses in the direct quotations are my responses or interpolations, not the thoughts of the speaker. The “we” of some of these parentheses is my wife and I. I depart a bit from the basic format by reporting on the political graffiti and the demonstrations. They formed a backdrop of public language that was an essential part of the scene in which the individuals made their statements.

WAITER: About forty years old. He works at a downtown Santiago restaurant which, like many, has an English name. The restaurant is in the financial district. We’re obscenely early for lunch by Latin standards — noon — so there are no other customers. He pauses at the table after delivering our beers. He turns our conversation to the plebiscite. You can be sure how I’m voting. You can’t make a decent living under this government. They jailed union leaders. They took away the minimum wage. They took away the requirement that employers contribute to our health insurance. What’s the minimum wage in the U.S. anyhow? (“$3.65”) Not bad for a day, plus tips! (Forgetting that few American waiters get the minimum wage anyway, we tell him it’s $3.65 an hour, not a day. Stunned, he falls silent for several seconds.) Ya, well I’m getting 20,000 pesos (about $70) a month, and I’m luckier than a lot of people. My wife and I have four kids. But, at least I still have a job. My countrymen don’t tip the way you do, but I do get some tips. (He searches in his pockets and pulls out a business card. The name of a catering service. “Is it yours?” we ask.) Sure. This is what my brother and I do at nights and on weekends to make ends meet. (He pauses as if every guest is impatiently pressing for the next battle cry.)

GRADUATE: Well groomed. Lives in a south Santiago neighborhood without a car. He has already made up his mind. Do you remember my brother and me? He has no car. I had the knowledge without the car. We have family in Santiago’s Portland area, so we would vote No.

Excuse me, but I can’t understand English. Do you have a tape recorder? I have to listen to English news just for the questions. Oh yes, I enjoy a coffee if you have one.

Sure. (Graduate)
GRADUATE STUDENT: In his mid-twenties. Jeans, leather tennis shoes, sweat shirt. Well groomed, despite the "sloppy" dress. He would not be out of place on any U.S. campus. He has already asked me for money the day before and the day before that, but he fails to remember my previous contributions. It has become impossible to move about the neighborhood without being stopped by begging students. We are outside the Cafe Roma, in Santiago's Providencia district, one of the better-off areas of the city, one of three districts that would vote for Pinochet on October 5. Two blocks from my apartment. He begins his spiel.

"Excuse me, do you have any spare change? I'm a student. Here's my ID. Do you understand Spanish? If not, I can explain it in English. Or German? (I finally realize I have to come to some understanding with these people in order not to go broke just for the right to walk down the street unmolested — "OK, but I want to buy you a coffee if you'll explain why all you students are begging.")

Sure. (Graduate student in petroleum engineering. Tired from studying for midterms. Lives in a rooming house. He names a part of town miles away. The steaming expresso arrives.) We don't want to beg. It's demeaning as hell. But, the government has yanked our subsidies right in the middle of the semester. Two thirds of what we live on. I guess it's not that bad if you have family in Santiago, but I'm from Temuco (675 kms. south) and I don't know anybody here I can fall back on. If you're wondering why I don't work, I do, running messages for Western Union, but they don't pay me enough. ("Are these 'subsidies' loans, scholarships, or what?") They're loans. We have to pay them back after we graduate. If you miss a couple of payments, they arrest you.

I guess a lot of us are doing this begging partly as a protest; I mean, it really looks bad in the national capital to have students out begging in the streets. But, Pinochet is ruining the universities. The government doesn't care if people from the lower classes get any education. It's not what you know or what you can contribute, it's whether you can pay for it out of your own pocket. They won't be satisfied until nobody but the rich is going to college, the people that support the government. Less than ten percent of Chileans go to college. Personally, if the No's don't win, I'm out of here. I don't care what it takes, I'll get to Argentina or some other democracy.

VINEYARD OWNER: Near sixty. Houndstooth jacket with cravat. At the conclusion of
a tour of one of Chile's world famous wineries, we are ushered into his panelled office. The stone fireplace is surrounded by pictures of our host posing with international stars and politicians. We sign the guest book. He speaks to us in polished English about travels, French and California wines, our impressions of Chile. Unexpectedly, he turns to politics.

You know, Pinochet campaigns as a champion of business, but I want you to know it doesn't always work that way. I'm losing business in Europe and in your country because of politics. I just got off the phone with an important dealer in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He told me, "Nothing personal, but we just can't sell your fascist wine!"

CHILEAN GRAFFITI, THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

— Say No to Pin8. (8=ocho, thus, Pin8=Pinocho, i.e., Pinochet, and thus a rhyme: "Say no to Pin ocho.")
— Yes to Chile! No to Cuba!
— A business suit does not make a democrat! (During the campaign, Pinochet stopped appearing in public in military uniform.)
— Free the political prisoners! No to censorship and torture!
— Si=Sida (Sida is the Spanish acronym for AIDS.)
— Don't return to the past. Yes to Pinochet!
— (In very official looking, stenciled letters.) Writing on this Wall in Favor of Pinochet is Prohibited.
— Marxists, watch yourselves. We know who you are.
— He is the chaos! (Reference to Pinochet's statement that Chile had two alternatives, him or chaos.)
— Allende lives!
— Yes to democracy and economic progress!
— Without hatred, without fear, without violence — we're saying No!
— Chile, la alegría ya viene. ("Chile, happiness is on its way." The first line of the immensely popular No campaign song.)

TWO RURAL TRUCKERS and VETERINARIAN: A small town in the south, three hours from Temuco, near the Pacific, population 3000, two hours by gravel road from the nearest highway. The scenery is straight from Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The veterinarian, wife of one of the truckers, joins the conversation over a glass of wine in the couple's kitchen. All are in their mid thirties.

It's hard to work for the No campaign in this town. The police have made it their business to know who is in town and where they are spending their time. The town has one telephone line, and it's a corner, they're stopping everyone, checking. People who have been stopping here seem to really all have political reasons. The government propaganda is everywhere, and I bet that every time you look around they're looking at you. The police are really watching everything, especially the young people. You can bet there is a shadow of witch-hunt in town. They're really trying to get rid of us, but we know what we're up against. A lot of sarcasm, and I mean a lot. They have to, as well get some fight out of us. We're a successful and growing movement.

Right after we were married, my wife and I, an engineer in electronics, we moved to this town just over a year ago. After a few years, it was obvious that the government was trying to stamp out the present government.
business to know everybody's politics. They hassle everyone identified with No. This town has one taxi. The driver is working for a No victory. Every time he goes around a corner, they're laying for him with a ticket for some trumped up violation. We know people who have already been laid off because it's known they're No supporters. People are really afraid that if the No's win, there's going to be lots of layoffs for political reasons. The government has pumped hundreds of thousands of pesos into political propaganda in this area. Our No organization has gotten a grand total of 4000 pesos (about fifteen dollars) from one of the opposition parties in Santiago. But, you can bet that everybody they don't really intimidate is going to vote No.

ENGINEER: In his early sixties. Dress slacks topped by short leather jacket. Greying black hair slicked back. He never removes his aviator-style sunglasses. Valdivia, a city in Chile's south, population 100,000, known for the influence of its German residents, descendents of nineteenth-century immigrants. Although he is of Spanish background, the engineer sprinkles his Spanish with German words and idioms, and spices that mix with occasional English. As we walk, he gestures with a rolled copy of Santiago's Fortin Diario, Chile's most left-leaning newspaper, which he calls his Bible.

My wife and I must have moved at least once a year for the last fifteen years, and you can bet I'm not talking about "upward mobility." The house we're in now is a shadow of what we had before the coup, but we're still here; the bastards couldn't get rid of us, but you better believe they tried. We've even put in for a housing subsidy from the present government. (He pronounces the words "present government" with sarcasm, and like many No supporters I talked to, never uses the name Pinochet.) Might as well get something out of them, but I'll believe we get it when I see it. The list of successful applicants is supposed to be in the paper this weekend.

Right after the coup in '73 I got to work one morning at the university — I was an engineer in the plant department — and my boss came up to me and said, as if he was asking me for the time of day, "You have two choices: quit or get fired." They didn't like it that I had been an outspoken socialist — I supported Allende and all — but I was never a communist. Maybe that saved me. We went to Argentina, a small town just over the border, a wonderful country, you have to go there. But then, after a few years, it looked like sure war between Argentina and Chile, and the Argentine government threw us out and we wound up back here. With a No victory, we'll finally know we're back in our own country for good, but that will never undo what the present government has done to Chile.
SECOND-GRADER: Engineer's grand daughter. She has been walking with us, listening intently.

You better stop talking politics, Grandpa. The police are right across the street.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR: She heads a private school in Santiago's wealthy Las Condes district. We talk over onces, Chile's version of England's tea time. In her mid fifties, but looks younger. An avid jogger and tennis player, still in her warmup suit from the afternoon's workout at her private athletic club. Fluent in English, she is well read and up on politics all over the world, especially in the United States, which she has visited often.

Well, I guess you could say I'm for Yes, but without Pinochet. (“Unfortunately, that's not one of the options,” I remind her.) That's the shame of it. I just don't know how to reconcile the evil I know this regime is responsible for with my conviction that Yes is the right direction for my country. It's a dilemma. The dead and the disappeared should never be forgotten. Right after the coup, some very evil men went crazy. I would like to think that Pinochet and the other generals didn't know what was happening, but it's probably not true.

But, these kids who are so avid in their support for No weren't around during the last government, or they at least weren't fully aware of the mess Allende made of this country. Allende has been canonized by the left, but there were human rights violations in his regime too. It's true the poor have too little now, but back then, nobody had anything! Those pictures of people standing in breadlines in the early 70's, my generation was there. At least with a capitalist system, we are on the way to a kind of economy that can support democracy, but it has to go slowly. This is not France. Patricio Aylwin (she names the Christian Democrat who heads the No campaign) is not Mitterrand. This country is not politically mature enough to be democratic and socialist at the same time. So I guess I will vote Yes, even with Pinochet. We need the slow transition to full democracy promised by the government. If No wins, who knows what will happen? What will the opposition do about the communists? At least we know what Yes holds in store. I guess it's like you say in U.S. politics, (in English) "the lesser of two evils."

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER: Male. Around forty-five. We are driving on a back street. We approach a wall with the message "Sí to Pinochet!"

(In English.) I hate that son of a bitch!
ON THE METRO: We board Santiago’s modern subway at the Los Heroes station, a couple of stops from downtown. Everyone knows anti-government demonstrations have broken out again, right where they usually do, a couple of stops up the line at Alameda, the city’s main boulevard, and the pedestrian street, the Paseo Ahumada, the intersection served by the University of Chile Metro stop. (Public address voice, airline steward tone) “Passengers are hereby advised that this train will not be serving the University of Chile station. For your greater comfort, you might wish to close the windows.” (No reason is given for the decision not to stop. Everyone knows why. We also know why the windows should be closed. Tear gas is leaking into the station from the Alameda above.)

ON THE ALAMEDA: I’m headed for the subway. Suddenly I’m part of a march. It’s just kids from a couple of nearby high schools, but the usual police response — armored cars, tear gas, water cannon, busses to haul away the arrested demonstrators — is at the ready. I want out of this, I think, and decide to cross the Alameda. Standing next to a cop, I feel the rock-filled tin can whiz past our heads, hear it crunch into a parked car. The cop and I exchange quick glances of relief before he resumes his regulation combat-ready stare. I have forgotten the first law of survival in Chile: stay the hell away from the police.

PASEO AHUMADA: The pedestrian street is soaked. Recently discharged water cannon in intersections, looking now like exhausted prehistoric beasts. (People call the cannon guanacos, a cameloid cousin of the llama, known for its habit of spitting at people. In Bolivia, the water cannon are called “pinochets.”) Shattered rubble from the demonstration that had just ended lines the street. The rubble is not the usual broken cardboard signs. It is styrofoam, one side black, the other white, some of it in large pieces, some of it ground to a sodden gray mash. Police are loading into a truck still whole surviving pieces of this styrofoam. The styrofoam is cut into life-sized outlines of human beings, the backs white, the fronts black. There is white lettering on the black fronts. The first one I can read says: “Ronnie Moffitt,” and gives a date in the mid 1970’s, and asks “Me olvidaste? (Have you forgotten me?) Sí_____? No_____?” Each of the hundreds of styrofoam forms represents the body of one of the victims of the regime; the date is the date of that person’s death or disappearance. The next morning’s papers say that, at the start of the demonstration, hundreds of
styrofoam bodies lined the street. The demonstration was the work of a group called Women for Peace. They have all been arrested for “disturbing the peace” by resurrecting the dead and disappeared. Risen again, and before their styrofoam bodies could be beaten and hosed into rubble, they have made the campaign’s most touching statement against Pinochet.

THE JESUITS: Two Americans and one Chilean. Long-time residents in Chile, the American priests are very interested in the plebiscite. Foreigners in Chile for more than five years, even if they do not become citizens, have full suffrage.

FATHER A: Well into his 60's. Despite his forty years in Chile, his New Jersey accent remains, only slightly altered by four decades of speaking Spanish. He teaches computer science at one of the most exclusive private prep schools in Santiago, located on a pine-lined campus in the foothills of the Andes.

Being here as long as I have, I've seen governments come and go. We live such a sheltered life out here. When the coup came in '73, we didn't really know the severity of what was happening downtown. A couple of days after the 11th (Sept. 11, 1973, the date of the coup), I had to go downtown. When we got to the Plaza Italia, I glanced out the side window and saw a human head lying in the gutter. The rest of the body was up on the parkway. My driver and I exchanged glances but no words. I remember saying to myself, "this is going to be very different." We drove on.

FATHER B: A Chilean in his mid-thirties. Handsome, stylishly dressed, eloquent, humorous, enormously intelligent. He is an official in the Jesuit school system in Chile. His Spanish is cultured. The rumors say he will soon be promoted to a post with responsibilities for several South American countries.

We have had a program in the Jesuit schools for the past few years called the Factory Trimester. One of the biggest problems in Chile is the almost total separation of the social classes. The better-off kids who attend our schools, for example, just have no idea of what a poor person's life is like. You can even talk to well-to-do Chileans who will tell you straight out that the poor are subhuman. Even those who would never go to that extreme definitely feel that the poor are none of their responsibility. The Jesuits feel there will never be social justice for everyone until these attitudes are changed. The Factory Trimester is the culmination of a program we designed to get our students and the poor together. Starting in the upper elementary grades, we have get-togethers with poor kids, social exchanges, and athletic competitions. In the sopho-
FATHER C: A handsome American in his early forties. Ex-football-player build. He is a parish priest in Arica, Chile's northernmost city. In Chile for twenty years, he gets back to the U.S. fairly often and is as interested in talking about Bush vs. Dukakis as he is about Chile. His parish is mostly poor, with much unemployment, and he has just lost hours of sleep working on the parish ramada, a food booth at the Independence Day carnival that parishioners are counting on to raise funds. On the door of his parish office hangs a poster that reads “Campaign for Truth and Justice. Crimes against the People Should Not Be Forgotten!” I ask him if being an American ever interferes in his work.

Not at all, but sometimes my political leanings do. There’s a guy in my congregation, better off than most, who’s an outspoken Sí supporter. He comes to me one day and says, “Father, I feel like your sermons are personal attacks on me.” Not so, I assure him. I’m just urging you to bring your vote to prayer. This doesn’t help. “Father, how would Jesus have voted?” he asks. I hesitate, then say that Jesus probably would have voted No because he was concerned about the outsiders in society. “So,” the guy says, “you’re telling me I have to change my vote.” No, I tell him. Just bring your decision to prayer. That’s what Jesus would want. The guy never understood. I guess he really needs someone like Pinochet.

FATHER C called the Factory Trimester a program designed to get students who would otherwise drop out of school, we have had a few who opt out to return to work in different factories. They see what it takes to scratch out a living. Needless to say, their societal attitudes change.

The government’s response to this program was predictable. We were all branded communists and accused of practicing liberation theology. Actually, some of our students were so radicalized by the factory experience that we sent them to counselors specifically to help them deal with that experience without turning from Christ to Marx. Still, the government subsidy our schools received was cut ninety percent. There was even talk of closing our schools. You will find some people who still refer to us as “the communist fathers.” Naturally, you won’t find too many supporters of a Yes vote in our schools.

GROUP called the American five years, the Jersey accent computer science lined campus

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more year of high school, our students go and live for a week with a poor family. In the junior year, during the Factory Trimester, all but a few who opt out go to work in different factories. They see what it takes to scratch out a living. Needless to say, their societal attitudes change.

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CAB DRIVER: Middle-aged male; talkative. He is taking us on a tour of Antofagasta, fourth largest city in Chile, copper port in the desert north. We are driving along the beach.

There’s the casino. And that’s a swimming complex, with a freshwater pool. Tennis club. Squash and racquetball there. Soccer stadium. Restaurant. Of course we, you,
can't go to these things. They're all for the armed forces. ("Ah, yes, we've noticed that the nicest spots in Chile seem to be reserved for the military.") True. But that will all change after the plebiscite!

REAL ESTATE AGENT: An attractive, lively redhead in her late twenties. She is very pregnant. We meet in the living (Chileans use the English word) of her elegant contemporary house in Vitacura, a wealthy suburban district of Santiago. We are there to sign the lease on our apartment. Cathedral ceilings and a stone wall with fireplace frame our conversation.

I own a nice apartment in Providencia that I've been thinking of selling, but I don't know why I mention it. I'm not touching it until after the plebiscite. That's getting to be the motto with the business people I know — "we'll wait and see after the plebiscite." I'm scared, what with the baby on the way and all. We just don't know what's going to happen if No wins. I think the communists will be back in control. The people who made it under Pinochet are going to be in big trouble. Oh, I don't know. Let's talk about something else.

MAID: Dark hair, mid forties, intelligent, neatly dressed in clothes she makes herself. She lives in one of Santiago's poblaciones, poor outlying areas characterized by high crime rates, over fifty percent unemployment, teen prostitution, and almost non-existent public services. She commutes two hours one way to work. The poblaciones were settled by emigrants from the country, but they have been maintained by Pinochet government policy, which has included forcibly uprooting poor people from better areas of the city and transporting them to the poblaciones. Nana's real name is not Nana. All Chilean maids are called "Nana," their real identities not being a necessary qualification for the job, once it has been established they are punctual, cook well, have a way with kids, and won't steal.

(It is the day before the plebiscite.) Down where I live there were tanks in the streets last night. They want to keep us from getting out of hand. ("You mean the water cannon? I saw those downtown too.") No, Don Walter, I mean real tanks with cannons and machine guns. You'll never see those up here; you're very well located. ("Very well located" is a code phrase for Nana. It's her nice way of saying that people who live in Providencia don't live in the real Chile.) In my neighborhood, we see people shot in the streets and taken away in the middle of the night. I'm praying that No will win tomorrow and that this stuff will end. I just hope too many people don't end up dead before it's all over with.

PLEBISCITE MORNING: a few selling for a few places stop at. I'm carrying no papers, they want to, people a.

UNEMPLOY is dressed from. Her Spanish is a polling place, something.

This whole thing is ruined my life. Nobody at my work. This whole, think so, do, hours later, show she has believe print, say having a something.

ANONYMO is now later i.

Hello. Well, that's despite all the of something. this election is our debt. The country.
I've noticed a change. But that's getting ahead of the conversation. We don't know what's getting ahead of the plebiscite. The people don't know.

She is dressed from head to toe in black, topped by a purple shawl. Her clothes look expensive. Her Spanish is cultured but jumbled. She mixes in occasional English words, not to show off, but because she seems to think of the English word first. We meet across the street from a polling place. She is extremely nervous, visibly confused, upset. We wonder if she is on something.

This whole thing is just driving me insane. I went in early to vote and there was nobody at my table. Now, these lines. Do you think I'll ever get back in there? I have to. This whole Pinochet — I don't even like to say the name — this whole thing has ruined my life. My family, uh, well, they don't recognize me, because, you know, I'm against the government. My father was a minister in the government before Allende. (She mentions a name I recognize.) I can't find work. They say I'm crazy. You don't think so, do you? I'm going back in to try to vote. I hope I run into you again. (Three hours later, she is smiling, calmer. She holds up a thumb stained with green ink to show she has voted. Voters are finger printed to avoid vote fraud, although many believe prints will be used to trace and punish No voters. I tell her, "In English we say having a green thumb means you can make things grow.") I didn't know that.

Maybe after today, we'll say that in Chile too.

ANONYMOUS WOMAN VOTER #1: Well dressed. Older. She eyes my camera. It is now later in the afternoon. Lines at the polling place have become shorter.

Hello. What country do you represent? ("I'm an American, just representing myself.") Well, that's fine. I'm glad you've come to take a look. The elections are peaceful, in spite of all the rumors to the contrary. It's good to have foreigners taking pictures of something positive going on in Chile. If Pinochet were so bad, would he have allowed this election? You Americans should be proud of us. This is a democracy. We're paying our debts. Nobody is starving. Inflation is low. We got rid of the communists. The country isn't being run by drug rings or guerrillas. Compare us with the rest of
Latin America and tell me which is better. How could anyone vote No. Tell your friends back home things in Chile are fine. America should be proud of us!

ANONYMOUS WOMAN VOTER #2: She is interchangeable in appearance with woman voter #1. Same street. Five minutes later. Same opening dialogue.

We're going to throw out dictatorship. In spite of everything the government said about violence and chaos, this election is going off without a hitch. We're voting No to eight more years of Pinochet. No more human rights violations. Free elections. An end to censorship and exile. Restoring Chile's tradition as a strong democracy. We are rejoining the free nations of the world. We can hold our heads high again. The United States should be proud of us!

AFTER THE FALL. OCTOBER 6, 1988

OLD MAN: Walking alone on Almirate Barrios Street, downtown Santiago, an old residential neighborhood, somewhat in decline, just off the Alameda. He is dressed nattily — for the 1940's — in an expensive but old-fashioned wool suit, much too heavy for the temperature, a straw fedora, elegant black hightop shoes, a silk tie. Thin, white mustache. He carries a walking stick, with which he gestures, and talks to passers-by or to the air when there are no people in sight.

Mark my words. This street is going to go communist. You just watch. This street will go communist! Listen! All communist, I tell you! (Pinochet's closest advisor admits he had rigged polls to predict a Sí victory. Shocked by his defeat, Pinochet had evidently believed the polls. Later, he will say, “The people have once again voted against Christ and for Barabbas.”)

YOUNG MAN: In victory parade, brandishing a huge poster of martial arts star Bruce Lee, who, thanks to a photographer's trick, is holding a miniature No poster.

We won! Chile won! (Sings, to the tune of the No campaign song.) Chile, la alegría ya llego! (Chile, happiness is here!)

MIDDLE-AGED CHILEAN COUPLE: Also in the victory parade.

(In English.) Hey, American friend, how do you like our Chile now?

MAN IN EARLY THIRTIES: Watching parade. Steps into the street and embraces a carabinero, who is policing the parade route. Carabinero returns the embrace. Both smile.
No. Tell your father of us!

The government said we’re voting No again. The elections. An end of democracy. We will try again. The

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