

**SALVADOR ALLENDE- NOTES ON
HIS SECURITY TEAM:
THE GROUP OF PERSONAL FRIENDS
(GAP-GRUPO DE AMIGOS PERSONALES)**

Cristián Pérez

This article describes the formation and development of the first strictly revolutionary institution of the Socialist President Salvador Allende: his security team, known as the Group of Personal Friends or GAP, from its origins in 1970 to the fight at the Presidential Palace (La Moneda). In it I intend to trace the different phases of the organisation, the diversity of its functions and its intimate relationships with, on the one hand, the parties and movements of the Chilean Left and, on the other, with Cuba.

CRISTIÁN PÉREZ is studying for his Master's degree at the University of Santiago in Chile.

“Salvador always goes
everywhere with his personal bodyguards”
(Laura Allende)¹

INTRODUCTION²

At one o'clock in the morning of Tuesday September 11th, the 20 young men who were on guard at the President's rest house, known as El Cañaveral, in the upper class area of Santiago, were finishing their traditional game of pool when they heard the voice of "Bruno", the head of the President's security team, who ordering them to go to their dormitories. The news that he brought about the national situation did not cause any undue anxiety, because over the past few months rumours of a coup against the Government had become almost routine, especially after June 29th, the day of the tanks or el tancazo as it was known.³ At the same time, some kilometres towards the centre of the capital, in the house at Tomas Moro No. 200, the official residence of President Allende, "Carlos Alamos", head of the bodyguard section of the President's security team, ordered the guard at the residence to be redoubled and another 20 young men to go to their cabins and rest. The day had been a tense and worrying one: the political situation was complicated, reflected in the drawn faces of the President and his closest collaborators, who were still in a meeting. There were murmurs

¹ This comment was made by the member of Parliament Laura Allende, the sister of the President, in the office of the commander of the training ship, La Esmeralda, which was on an official visit to Havana, Cuba. (See Jorge Edwards, "Persona non Grata", 1991, page 208). Laura Allende was a part of the most intimate circle of people surrounding the President.

² The names of the people in this article that appear in inverted commas are the battle names that were used (either politically or as a nickname) by the members of the Group of Friends of the President (the GAP). In many cases we do not know who they exactly belonged to, as due to their own security measures, the members of this group were not accustomed to using their real names. Those names which appear in inverted commas and italics have been invented by the author so as to hide various identities. The testimonies on which this article is based were recorded by the author in different interviews. The name of those interviewed, together with the place and date of the meeting, can be found in the Reference section at the end of this article.

³ Testimony of "*Raul Marcos*". In 1973 he was one of the most important members of the military apparatus of the Socialist Party. He had a close relationship with the GAP. Whilst he was in exile, his friends in the Security team told him about what was happening. On the 29th of June 1973, the 2nd Armoured Regiment, under its commander Roberto Souper, attempted a coup d'état: they attacked the Presidential palace- La Moneda. This action was known as the day of the tanks or el tancazo.

about the refusal of the Fleet to sail, from its station at Valparaíso to take part in Operation Unitas: there were also comments about some of the regiments in their barracks and suspicions about military lorries that were slipping out loaded with soldiers.⁴

A little later, “Carlos Alamos” took the phone and dialled the number for El Cañaveral: when they answered he asked to speak to “Bruno”, the commander. In the conversation they made a brief analysis of the conversation, discussed the courses of action and emergency measures they could take and finally agreed that they themselves and the men under their command should be on a state of high alert⁵. They did not suspect that would be the protagonists in a transcendental event in the history of Chile:

⁴ Testimony of “Raul Marcos”.

On the refusal of the fleet to sail on September 10th, it is interesting to quote the version of the lawyer Luis Vega, who was Head of Security at the Ministry of the Interior, attached to the Intendancy of Valparaíso. See “The Fall of Allende: the Anatomy of a Coup” by Luis Vega (1983), pages 266-271. Vega says that the Fleet should have set sail at 7 a.m. on Monday the 10th. From his office in the Intendancy he noticed that the Fleet was still in port at 9.30 a.m. According to Vega “I immediately informed Daniel Vergara and Osvaldo Puccio, who informed the President and the Minister of Defence, and they then ordered me to find out why the Fleet hadn’t sailed”. Vega added that, on consulting Admiral Arellano, he was told that the Fleet hadn’t sailed “probably for technical reasons”. Admiral Arellano then said that the fleet would sail within 20 minutes. And it did. “Before 12.30 p.m. the Fleet had sailed”, said Vega. “I verified that this was the case and informed Santiago”. After 17.00 hours, he added “I received some information from Quintero that the Fleet was turning around about 2 kilometres from Ritoque. I advised Daniel Vergara and Osvaldo Puccio and they then informed Salvador Allende and Orlando Letelier”. In his account Vega adds that the head of the Criminal Investigation Department

Juan Bustos “confirmed to me that he had already communicated to Alfredo Joignant (Director General of Investigaciones) the fact of the fleet’s appearance off Ritoque”. As the orderly officer of the Navy was going out I asked him if he knew that the fleet was off Ritoque. He replied “I don’t actually know about it but it could be for a technical reason, like taking on water”. I answered that it was impossible to set sail without water, and even more difficult to take on water 2 kilometres off the coast in a place where there wasn’t an appropriate mechanism for doing it. He smiled, saluted and left”

⁵ Testimony of “Raul Marcos”. Several sources assert that El Cañaveral had no telephone and that the only means of communication was via radio. The truth of the matter is that there was a telephone. Logically the members of GAP also used radios occasionally. The journalist Manuel Fuentes Wendling, a member of the National Executive of Fatherland and Liberty (Patria y Libertad), an extreme Right wing organisation, recounted a conversation he heard on the ether between members of the Presidential security team at Tomas Moro and El Cañaveral, regarding a national emergency. See Manuel Fuentes Wendling “The Secret History of Patria y Libertad and Confessions about the Cold War in Chile” (1999), pages 132 -135. Manuel Fuentes heard the conversation owing to the fact that his organisation made him in charge of communications equipment which allowed him to listen in on civilian and military wave bands. The GAP asserts that this conversation is not true as they used numbers and words which they constantly changed in their communications. Testimony of Isidro García, ex-GAP member.

they had no idea that in only a few hours time they would be having to use all their knowledge to comply with their mission- to protect, risking their lives if necessary, the President of Chile. Later on, “Carlos Alamos” went round the cabins to make sure that his men were sleeping and then went to his own to relax. During the day he had been nervous, he felt that something was going to happen and he was worried. He slept fitfully...⁶

Until at 6.20 a.m. on the morning of Tuesday September 11th, when “Rodolfo” (Hugo Garcia), the officer of the guard at the main gate of Tomas Moro, received an urgent call for Salvador Allende. The call was passed to “Roberto” who then passed it on to the President.⁷ It seems that the call was from the sub-Director of Police, General Urrutia Quintana: it could also have been from Miria Contreras (Payita) who was on guard at La Moneda that night.⁸ Ten minutes later, the President called “Rodolfo” from his room and told him to wake the guards up. At first the men didn’t respond as there had always been jokes about a coup d’état, and they thought that this was one more⁹:

⁶ Testimony of Elsa Pavez, the wife of “Carlos Alamos”. She, together with her months old son, stayed at Tomas Moro until the night of Monday September 10th. During the day, Elsa recalls, her husband had various meetings to do with his job. According to Luisa Catalan Pardo, the wife of “Pato” (Javier Antonio Pacheco Monsalve) and a member of GAP, there were various cabins in Tomas Moro which had been constructed especially for the security team. We do not know how many there were. She used to visit her husband there.

⁷ Jorge Timossi “Grandes Alamedas, President Allende’s Fight” (1974), pages 64-65. The name of Ernesto Ricardo Morit appears in the text, instead of “Rodolfo” (Hugo Garcia), as being the member of GAP who received the communication. I think that this identification is false and it was done so as not to give leads to the security forces of the Military regime.

⁸ Oscar Soto “The Last Day of Salvador Allende” (1999), pages 64-66. Dr. Soto says that the system of guards had been started in the Presidential palace since “the day of the tanks”. He is also inclined to believe that there was not just one phone call alerting the palace. He maintains that members of the Socialist Party of Los Andes and Juan Ferrada, from the southern zone of Santiago, had warned about troop movements. At the same time, the lawyer for the Ministry of the Interior in Valparaiso, Luis Vega, confirmed that he informed Santiago about the sending of troops from the regiments Guardia Vieja of Los Andes and Yungay of San Felipe at 21.00 hours on September 10th. He also recounts that Juan Bustos, in charge of the Criminal Investigation Department (Investigaciones) in Valparaiso, informed his superiors in the capital about the return of the Fleet and maintained communication with them until 7 a.m. on September 11th. See Luis Vega’s book “The Fall of Allende” (1983), pages 271-275. Moreover, Adonis Sepulveda, who was then a senator and sub-secretary general of the Socialist Party (PS), recalls that Carlos Altamirano, the secretary general of the Socialist Party, called President Allende at about 3 in the morning with the same version of events. Testimony of Adonis Sepulveda. But Isidro Garcia, GAP, says that the President did not know. “If he had been well informed, he would have slept at the Moneda (the Presidential Palace) or would have alerted his guards beforehand”.

⁹ Jorge Timossi “Grandes Alamedas” (1974), page 65.

the President had to come in person to convince them that the joke was now a reality.¹⁰

Immediately 20 men got up and hurriedly dressed themselves*. At the same moment “Carlos Alamos” rushed into the President’s room. While he was dressing, and in a few words, Allende made him give a summary of the situation: he told him that the Navy had risen in revolt, and that it was possible that several Marine brigades were on their way to Santiago. The President immediately ordered that “Bruno” be advised of the situation, that the men on guard duty in the house at Tomas Moro take up combat positions, that his escort get in the cars to leave immediately for La Moneda and finally, as if he had a premonition, emphasised “Bring all the weapons”.¹²

Using the emergency frequency, “Carlos Alamos” communicated with “Bruno” in El Cañaveral, informed him of the latest events and of the President’s instructions. He then explained to the GAP that the Navy had occupied Valparaíso, that some troops could be on the way to the capital and that they should be ready to fight. He arranged for some members of the permanent guard to remain at the house to protect the family. Finally he ordered “El Rafa”, a responsible Socialist from the guard, to take a lorry loaded with weapons to the metals factory INDUMET, located at 530 Rivas Street, in the south of the capital, where the military apparatus of the Socialist Party was concentrated and hand them over to “Agustin” who was the commander in chief there.¹³

¹⁰Testimony of Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP.

¹¹ There were in such a hurry that a lot of them left wearing only their trousers. Testimony of Isidro Garcia

¹² Testimony of “Raul Marcos”. The phrase’s origin came from the “Day of the Tanks”. This will be explained in Section 4 of the 2nd part.

¹³ Testimony of “Raul Marcos”, and confirmed by Carmen Castillo Echeverría in “One October’s Day in Santiago” (1979, approx), pages 25-26. Carmen Castillo’s source was her then partner, the secretary-general of the MIR, Miguel Enriquez, who took part in the battles around INDUMET. On the same theme, Andres Pascal maintains that the lorry with the weapons driven by “El Rafa” arrived at INDUMET. In an emergency meeting between the Communists and the Socialists, weapons were also given out to the Miristas who were there. Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende, member of the Political Commission of the MIR and nephew of Salvador Allende.

“El Rafa” had been in the GAP for only a short time, not more than a month. Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

“Agustin” (Arnoldo Camu Veloso), Head of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia (ELN-B), Chilean section, lawyer, legal adviser to the President of the Republic, militant member of the Socialist party, member of the Political Commission and head of the military apparatus of the party. On the 11th of September the men under his command fought in the INDUMET factory and later on in the suburb of La Legua. On the 24th of September he was stopped by armed civilians in the street, put into a vehicle and disappeared. See the extract from “The Report from the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation” published in the newspaper La Nacion of Santiago on the 12th of May 1991.

And so, around 7 o'clock on the morning of September 11th 1973, three blue Fiat 125 cars screeched towards the centre of Santiago.¹⁴ Inside the vehicles were 12 men who formed part of the escort section of the GAP.¹⁵ From the open windows of the Fiats poked out the muzzles of AKA-47 machine guns.¹⁶ The GAP members who accompanied the President had

¹⁴ At this point the various versions do not coincide: for example, according to Jorge Timossi there were 5 cars- 3 blue Fiat 125's, one yellow one and one red. He also says that there was a lorry with guns in the cavalcade (Jorge Timossi "Grandes Alamedas", 1974, page 65). Dr. Soto says that 4 blue Fiats drove to La Moneda, preceded by 2 white police armoured vehicles (see Oscar Soto "El Ultimo Dia" (The Last Day), 1999 page 67). One of the few survivors of the escort detail, Isidro Garcia, recounts that on the 11th of September 1973, he was driving car number 3, i.e. the Fiat that would have to cover anything suspicious that might happen (see Mauricio Carvallo "El Dia Mas Largo"- The Longest Day- in El Mercurio of Santiago, September 12th 1999, section D, page 10). We can safely come to the conclusion that the cavalcade was only composed of three cars.

¹⁵ Jorge Timossi, who put down the whole of Fidel Castro's speech in the Plaza de la Revolucion (Revolution Square) on the 28th of September 1973, recounts that the escort detail was made up of 23 men (see Jorge Timossi "Grandes Alamedas", 1974, page 34). I think that Castro's speech contained many of the facts told to him by Taty (Beatriz) Allende, and her husband Fernandez de Oña ("Demid"), who was one of the most important Cuban agents in Chile: probably Castro had also read the report from Antonio ("Tony") de la Guardia ("Siciliano" or "Jimagua"), a member of the General Directive of Special Operations of the Republic of Cuba (Special Forces). According to the versions given by Daniel Alarcon Ramirez (Benigno) and Elizabeth Burgos, this man was in the Presidential palace on the 11th. In fact, in a conversation with the author in Paris in January 2000, Benigno reconfirmed that Tony de la Guardia was in the Palace on the 11th but in his book he only says that he was in Chile (see Daniel Alarcon Ramirez (Benigno) "Memoirs of a Cuban Soldier: The Life and Death of the Revolution", 1997, page 228). The academic and historian of guerillas in Latin America, Elizabeth Burgos, also says that Tony de la Guardia was in the Palace on the 11th (conversation in Paris in January 2000), the same as Jorge Edwards ("Cuba: 40 Years later" -article in Estudios Publicos no. 76, 1999, page 61). On the same point, the agent for the Cuban Special Forces, Norberto Fuentes, points out that Antonio de la Guardia was at the head of the contingent which left for Chile in 1972. Among other missions he coordinated the delivery of weapons to the Unidad Popular and carried out a military study of Santiago. He also confirms that Tony left Chile in October 1972 (see Norberto Fuentes "Dulces Guerreros Cubanos", 1999, pages 100 and 149: Enrico Mario Santi "Mi Reino por El Caballo: Las Dos Memorias de Lisandro Otero", Estudios Publicos, no. 76, 1999, page 51). Lisandro Otero, ex-Cuban diplomat, says that Tony was to be found in Santiago on the 11th of September and adds that his mission was the security of Salvador Allende (see Enrico Mario Santi, 1999). Both Jean Francois Fogel and Bertrand Rosenthal maintain that the two De la Guardia brothers were in Chile on that day and that their flight from Santiago was like something out of a film (see Fogel and Rosenthal "Fin de Siglo en La Habana: Los Secretos del Derrumbe de Fidel", 1995, page 31). The author believes that Antonio de la Guardia's presence in La Moneda on September 11th was impossible: the most important reason is that Salvador Allende would never have accepted the idea of Cubans participating in the defence of his government. From the numerous testimonies that the author has compiled, he has concluded that the escort for the President on the 11th was made up only of a dozen members of the GAP.

¹⁶ President Allende was carrying an AKA-47 rifle, a gift from Fidel Castro, which had an inscription on the butt saying "To Salvador, from his companion in arms, Fidel". See Oscar Soto "El Ultimo Dia", 1999, page 66. After the 11th the weapon

decided to risk their life for him on his last journey. He, as always, was sitting in the rear seat of the car with the licence plate "1". As was their custom, they made the journey at high speed. The streets seemed to be quiet, but near La Moneda they saw several soldiers in combat uniform and with an extra orange-coloured kerchief around their throat. The police on guard duty were in their place and various of their armoured vehicles protected the Plaza de la Constitucion (Constitution Square): there was peace and apparently calm.¹⁷

At the same time in El Cañaveral, "Bruno" who had been ordered by the GAP to defend the place with the 13 young men accompanying him, dished out the weapons and took the necessary measures so as to go down, without his knowing it for the last time, to take his place by the side of Salvador Allende in the La Moneda Palace.¹⁸

On the 11th of September 1973 the Unidad Popular government was abruptly terminated. Together with the eclipse of democracy, the last possibility of the Chilean Left to make the revolution they had pursued for 70 years faded away¹⁹. That morning the actors were at their posts preparing to play their cards as the tragic end came nearer.

But what had happened in the social and political atmosphere of the 70's which led two groups of fellow countrymen to decide the future of their country in a hail of bullets ?. To answer that, it is necessary to ask the following question: who were the those people who acted as the President's security team, known as the Group of Personal Friends (GAP)? That is the main question which this article will try and answer.

disappeared. The author has gathered together several versions as to the weaponry that the escort was carrying. Dr. Soto says that when he went with the GAP on the "Day of the Tanks" (June 29th 1973) they were carrying their usual weapons, because in the car in which he was travelling there were two machine-guns (testimony of Oscar Soto). Jorge Timossi says that the escort was carrying 23 rifles, two 30 calibre machine guns and three bazookas (see Jorge Timossi "Grandes Alamedas", 1974, page 34). Isidro garcia, GAP, states that the combatants carried 9mm pistols and Walter and Uzi sub-machine guns (see Mauricio Carvallo's report in El Mercurio on Sunday September 12th 1999 "El Dia Mas Largo", in section D). On the evidence of the witnesses the author has concluded that the escort carried AKA-47 rifles, an indeterminate number of machine pistols, two or three Punto 39 machine guns and two or three bazookas.

¹⁷ Testimony of Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP

¹⁸ Testimony of "Raul Marcos".

¹⁹ The Chilean Left, principally made up of the Socialist Party, the Communists and the MIR, had as their objective a Socialist revolution in the country. This idea had been born during the first years of the 20th century. For the formative process of the Chilean Left, see Paul Drake "Socialism and Populism: Chile 1936-1973" (1992); Hernan Ramirez Necochea "Apuntes de Historia de Chile" (no date); Augusto Varas (editor) "The Communist Party in Chile" (1988); Manuel Loyola and Jorge Rojas (editors) "Por Un Rojo Amenecer: Hacia una Historia de los Comunistas Chilenos" (2000); Fernando Casanueva and Manuel Fernandez "The Socialist Party and the Class Struggle in Chile" (1973).

In analysing this the author finds himself at odds with other studies on the Unidad Popular, which, in order to give a global explanation to this period in Chilean history, have taken as their basis the arguments of the chief personal assistant to Salvador Allende, the Spanish lawyer Joan Garcés, converting them into a real interpretative paradigm which closes down any further discussion. According to Joan Garcés' interpretation, the Unidad Popular was simply a democratic Socialist government which was trying to carry out the transformation the nation needed and responding to the wishes of the majority in Parliament. Those who adhere to this point of view seem to not know the fact that President Allende was a Socialist (not a neo-social democrat), a disciplined militant of the Chilean Socialist party, who was pursuing the realisation of a socialist revolution along the lines of Marx and Lenin. During this period, in the author's opinion, important members of the government coalition, especially those tied to the Socialist party and affiliated groups, visualised an alternative scenario which would allow them to carry out the revolution whose first step would be to resolve the question of power. To do this it would be necessary to construct different organisations of authority (industrial belts, popular assemblies, communal commands etc), a paramilitary force which would support those sectors of the Armed Forces who were loyal, and who, if it were necessary, would provide the armed component to confront the right wing military (the coup planners). In the words of Adonis Sepulveda "The Socialist Party didn't have- and could never have-a strategy for fighting alone. Any action it might take was contained within the measures of defence planned by the government. So the government prepared defence plans but the plans were directed by General Pinochet as Commander in Chief. The plans were based around a defence making use of Armed Forces loyal to the government, the Police, whose commanders were considered to be loyal, the Criminal Investigation police, parties and workers. All these forces would respond with a counter coup. It was therefore not a lie to say that at the opportune moment there would be weapons: these would come from those members of the Armed Forces who were loyal plus those which the people would have accumulated"²⁰

In the same way, from the Communist side of the government this strategy was confirmed. In September 1972, the Soviet ambassador-

²⁰ Adonis Sepulveda Acuña "Carta a la Dirección Interior del Partido Socialista, September 8th 1977", in Adonis Sepulveda Acuña's "Problemas del Partido Socialista de Chile Posteriores al Golpe Militar 1974-1981" (1988), pages 36-37. This letter was sent by the author to the internal directorate of the Socialist Party. It is a document of the highest importance because in 1973 Sepulveda was a senator, sub-Secretary General of the Socialist Party and President of the Unidad Popular, and because it is an internal analysis of the organisation which has remained unknown until today.

A.V.Basov - wrote in his diary that he had a meeting with the Communist leaders Volodia Teitelboim and Luis Corvalan: "Volodia Teitelboim told of a conversation he had with the chief of Army Counter-Intelligence, General Sepulveda. In it they came to an agreement about coordinating the security forces and the parties of the Popular bloc... It was decided at the same time to mobilise those forces loyal to the government....It was also understood that this would be done to prevent and stop a military coup.....Corvalan and Teitelboim appeared to entertain no doubts as the loyalty of the High Command, of the officer corps and of General Prats"***. Within this strategy, the author will argue that the Group of Personal friends (the GAP), the first revolutionary institution of the Unidad Popular, would play an important role, as will be seen later. The nature of the GAP, as we shall see, makes a lie of the neo social- democratic pretensions of Allende, expounded by Joan Garces and others after him.

1. THE FORMATION OF THE GAP

1.1. The first friends of Salvador Allende

At the end of 1969 a congress took place in which the coalition of Unidad Popular, made up of Socialists, Communists, Radicals and other smaller organisations, nominated the senator Salvador Allende, 62 years of age, to be their Presidential candidate for the fourth time. He had to face two strong contenders: Jorge Alessandri Rodriguez of the National Party and Radomiro Tomic of the Christian Democrats. During the course of the campaign it appeared that the chances of Allende gaining the Presidency were increasing. This brought about a growing level of polarisation, seen in rallies, marches and other activities where large groups of people and the rivalry between them were creating situations which were putting at risk the physical well-being of the candidate of the Left.²²

At this time the candidate of Unidad Popular had a Peugeot, which was not very suitable for going to farming regions where the roads were usually in a bad state. Enrique Huerta Corvalan (Kique), a family friend of the Allende's, especially of Taty's, had an American taxi which he had never used because he had been living outside Chile. In a meeting, Taty commented that her father did not have a suitable car for his campaigning.

²¹ Recounted by Arturo Fontaine Talavera in "The United States and the Soviet Union in Chile", Estudios Publicos no.72 (1998), page 11. Fontaine quotes from the transcription of the conversation that Ambassador A.V.Basov had with Luis Corvalan and Volodia Teitelboim, reproduced in the document "Chile in the files of the USSR", Estudios Publicos, 72 (1998), pages 441 and 443.

²² See the newspaper "El Clarin" between June and August 1970.

Enrique said that he was willing to lend his. Allende gave his approval and Enrique Huerta began to work as his chauffeur.²³

In most of the activities of his electoral campaign, the Presidential candidate was accompanied by his private secretary, Osvaldo Puccio (Senior): on several occasions Jaime Surez, Augusto Olivares ("Perro") and Eduardo Paredes ("Coco") also went with him. All these were personal friends of Salvador Allende. And it was these people who started a rudimentary personal protection service for him.²⁴

Several friends of the candidate, like "Coco" Paredes and the "Perro", were experienced Socialist cadres. They were used to the check and counter-check techniques which allowed them to discover if they were being followed or subjected to other forms of being watched.²⁵ Although electoral activities were carried out normally enough, because the possibility of an Allende victory was growing and growing, this group of friends began to worry about the possibility of an attempt on the candidate, especially during his visits to the provinces. The phrase that kept on cropping up to show their worry was "Someone has to look after Allende who is

²³ Testimony of Felix Huerta (brother of Enrique), doctor, Socialist Party militant and member of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia (the ELN-B), Chilean section. Felix travelled to Cuba to be trained as a guerilla doctor and to join Che Guevara's group. He was gravely injured in an incident in Havana.

Enrique Huerta worked as a taxi driver. He had to travel to Cuba to bring his wounded brother Felix back to Chile.

Taty (Beatriz) one of the three daughters of Salvador Allende, was a doctor by profession and at this stage was actively participating in politics. At University she established links with the Chilean section of the ELN-B. She married Fernandez Oña ("Demid"), a diplomat who was also a Cuban agent. President Allende named her his private secretary and she had a lot of influence as his adviser. After the coup she went into exile in Cuba and a few years later killed herself with a gun, in the same manner as her father. She left a letter for Fidel Castro, the contents of which are still not known to us. I believe that the Cuban government should publish the text of the letter owing to the importance it has for Chilean history.

²⁴ Based on the testimony of Felix Huerta. Augusto Olivares ("Perro"), journalist and editor of the magazine "Punto Final", and militant Socialist. He was a personal friend of Allende and during his administration was appointed Director of National Television. He was killed on September 11th 1973 in the Presidential Palace - La Moneda.

Eduardo Paredes, doctor, Socialist Party militant and member of the Central Committee of the party. During Allende's administration he was Director General of the Police Criminal Investigation Department and the head of Chile Films. An advisor to the President, he fought in La Moneda. On the 11th of September he was detained with other advisors to the President and later murdered. His body appeared on Patio 29 of the General Cemetery.

²⁵ For the militant Socialists of the 60's these techniques were not a mystery. The organisation put on courses and circulated manuals to this respect. The reader can get an idea of how the Cuban security apparatus carried out following techniques in Norberto Fuentes' "Dulces Guerreros Cubanos" (1999), pages 184 to 192.

going about with only Enrique to protect him”²⁶. And so, though this fear of an attack, there grew a need to create an organisation which would give the candidate effective personal protection.²⁷ Taty was the most interested in the formation of this group as she had seen how efficient the Cubans were using the same idea during her travels to Havana.²⁸

When those closest to Allende analysed the situation, they agreed that it would be necessary to contact members of the National Liberation of Bolivia (the ELN-B), as the Socialist Party did not have many militarily trained cadres.²⁹ The ELN-B was created by Commander Ernesto Che Guevara in the Bolivian mountains on March 25th 1967.³⁰ A short time later the Chilean section was created to collaborate with it. Its leader was the journalist Elmo Catalan. For the most part it was made up of militants from the PS (the Socialist Party). In practice it acted as a part of the Party. Those friends closest to Allende knew the “elenos” (as the members of the Chilean section of the ELN-B were known) since the time when they studied medicine together. Taty had formed a genuine friendship with them and they occasionally developed activities together in the logistical support unit of the organisation.³¹

In the middle of 1970 a group of Chileans who had participated in the guerilla campaign of Teoponte returned to the country.³² Among them stood out a young man, named Francisco Gomez, whose battle group name was “Fernando”. He had been Chief of Security to the officer of the Special Forces of the Ministry of the Interior of Cuba, Dariel Alarcon Ramirez (Benigno), one of the survivors of the group of guerillas who had fought in Bolivia under the command of Che Guevara. “Fernando” was trained especially as a bodyguard: he was an excellent shot and an expert in martial arts. Together with Benigno he had travelled around Europe and Latin America, undertaking confidential missions for the highest authorities in Cuba,

²⁶ Testimony of Felix Huerta

²⁷ as above.

²⁸ Testimony of Adonis Sepulveda, ex Subsecretary General of the Socialist Party.

²⁹ Testimonies of Enrique Ramos, ex GAP, and Felix Huerta.

³⁰ See Harry Villegas (Pombo), “Pombo, Un Hombre de la Guerilla del Che” (1997).

³¹ Testimony of Adonis Sepulveda, ex Senator and Subsecretary General of the Socialist party

³² Testimony of Nieves Ayress, Socialist Party militant and member of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia, Chilean section. He took part in the guerilla fighting in Teoponte. After 1973 he was detained and savagely tortured. He left the country to live in Havana, then Managua, Mexico City and finally New York. There he has become a leader of the Black and Latin minorities in the Bronx.

among which was the secret transfer of both to the Bolivian mountains to continue the guerilla insurgency of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia.³³

The author believes that, because of his experience as a bodyguard, “Fernando” was commissioned by “Augustin”, commander of the Chilean section of the ELN-B, to work with Allende with the idea of setting up the first personal professional security service for him. At the beginning there were only “Feranado” and “Kique” (Enrique Huerta Corvalan), helped by those friends of the candidate who accompanied him on his campaign.³⁴ After a time the following persons were added: 1. “Carlos Alamos” (Jaime Sotelo), ex leader of the copper miners at El Salvador mine. In 1966 he was jailed for his participation in the events that led to the death of various mine workers. When he came out of prison he joined the “elenos”. Later on he visited Cuba where he was trained in urban and rural warfare.

2. “Luisito” (Felix Vargas Fernandez), from a mining family in Copiapo, member of the Socialist Party and an “eleno”, who had fought in Bolivia: he played an active part in rescuing those Cuban guerillas who escaped after the death of Che Guevara.

3. “Bruno” (Domingo Blanco Torres)

4. “Manuel” (Enrique Ramos), young worker, Socialist and “eleno”, who was the civilian ADC to President Allende.³⁵

The first members of the GAP were all “elenos” and young, several of them belonging to the Socialist Party. Apart from the daughter of the President (Taty), the brains in the GAP were “Coco” Paredes, “Agustin” and Rolando Calderon.³⁶

The first duties of the personal guard were to make sure that in some demonstration or other Allende would not be attacked: to maintain a watch over the car in which he travelled: when it was parked to try and detect if they were being followed and to control the meals and drinks that he and his party took.³⁷

A short time later the militants of the MIR arrived on the scene.

³³ These facts were given to the author by Dariel Alarcon Ramirez (Benigno) in a conversation held in a Paris park in January 2000. On the missions which benigno carried out, see Dariel Alarcon Ramirez “Memorias de un Sodado Cubano” (1997), pages 200-210.

³⁴ Testimony of Felix Huerta.

³⁵ Testimonies of Bernardo Vargas, brother of “Luisito”, Enrique ramos, ex GAP and Elsa Pavez, the wife of “Carlos Alamos”.

³⁶ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex GAP.

³⁷ Testimony of Felix Huerta.

1.2 The Revolutionary Left Movement takes charge of the GAP

The Cuban revolution of 1959 and the electoral defeat of Salvador Allende in 1964 forced a process of radicalisation in important sectors of the Chilean Left.³⁸

In 1964 a group of young students at the University of Concepcion, militants of the Socialist Youth Federation (Federacion Juvenil Socialista or FJS), withdrew from the organisation and formed the Revolutionary Marxist Vanguard (Vanguardia Revolucionaria Marxista or VRM).³⁹ The following year, on the 14th and 15th of August 1965, a Congress of Revolutionary Unity was called. About a 100 delegates met and approved a number of political theses, elected a Central Committee of 21 members and appointed as its head Dr. Enrique Sepulveda.⁴⁰

Out of this came the Movement for the Revolutionary Left or the MIR.

Its principal objective was to organise itself “to be the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the working class and the oppressed and exploited masses of Chile, who were looking to break their chains for more than 150 years, fighting for the national and social emancipation which would lead them to Socialism and Communism”.⁴¹ The fifth point of the founding declaration proposed “an audacious revolutionary policy capable of opposing this cynical imperialist violence with a virile and proud response from the armed masses...”⁴²

The new movement was extremely clear in its position and defined itself as the armed vanguard of the oppressed classes: as a result of this it was going to have to define its strategy of confronting the bourgeoisie and the state.

³⁸ The defeat of Allende in 1964 was the deciding factor for changes in the Socialist Party. At the Linares Congress in 1965, the old leadership of Raul Ampuero was replaced and those sectors in the Party who were more in favour of armed struggle took over. The paradox in this is that Senator Aniceto Rodriguez, who did not represent the radical line in the party, was named as Secretary General. For a detailed analysis of this event see Julio Cesar Jobet “The Chilean Socialist Party” (1971).

³⁹ Revolutionary Marxist Vanguard (VRM) “Programme and Statutes of the Party” (1964). Also see Carlos Sandoval Ambiado “The MIR: a History”. Volume 1 (1990), page 13.

⁴⁰ See Carlos Sandoval Ambiado “The MIR: a History” Volume 1 (1990), page 15.

Enrique Sepulveda was an old cadre of the Left, a Trotskyist by origin, who formed part of the Communist Left in the 30’s. After the coup of September 1973, he took refuge in Paris and died there a few years ago. Source: Jorge Maginti, ex member of the Political Commission of the Socialist Party. Notes on this conversation were taken by the author.

⁴¹ First point of the Declaration of Principles. Quoted by Carlos Salvador Ambiado in “The MIR: a History”, Volume 1 (1990), pages 18-19.

⁴² See above, page 37.

In 1967, two years after its foundation, the MIR called a 3rd Congress to evaluate its development. At this congress the organisation purged itself. The group which until then had control - the Trotskyist doctor Enrique Sepulveda as Secretary General, together with Eugenio Cossio and Clotario Blest - were replaced. Instead a group of young men from Concepcion took over, headed by Luciano Cruz, Sergio Zorilla, Edgardo Enriquez ("El Pollo"), Bautista von Schouwen ("Bauchi"), Jorge Fuentes Alarcon ("Trotsko"), Andres Pascal Allende ("El Pituto"), Humberto Sotomayor ("Tonio"), Nelson Gutierrez ("El Guaton"), and Miguel Enriquez.⁴³ This last was the most important of the leadership. Arturo Villavela ("Coño", "Coño Aguilar") took charge of the clandestine units.⁴⁴ The control of the new organisation by these young men signified an acceleration in the implementation of the armed struggle.⁴⁵

The year 1969 saw an intensification of the policy of confrontation towards the Christian Democrat government of Eduardo Frei. Commando groups from the organisation carried out bank raids, like the one on a bran-

⁴³ See above, page 37.

Luciano Cruz died in Santiago on the 14th of August 1974, accidentally inhaling gas. His funeral turned into a huge act of the masses in which all the parties of the Left participated. In the funeral speech, Miguel Enriquez said "We robbed innumerable banks, and always Luciano was there, dressed as a fireman, as an army captain, or a worker at the market. He made himself responsible for recruiting people from the Army, especially from the ranks of the young officers and NCO's. The last job he took on was to strengthen the links between the soldiers and the people and try to incorporate an armed militia into our rich national life". "Que Pasa", 25 Años" (Text from the 1,321st edition of August 3rd 1996, page 15).

Edgardo Enriquez, member of the Political Commission and in charge of the external work of the MIR. In 1975 he was captured by the DINA in Argentina: he was seen for the last time in the middle of that year in a Chilean concentration camp. He remains missing (desaparecido).

Bautista von Schouwen (Bauchi) was detained together with Patricio Munita, her bodyguard, on the 12th of December 1973. She was shot and secretly buried in the General Cemetery where her body was incinerated. See Nancy Guzman "Un Grito Desde el Silencio" (1998).

Jorge Fuentes Alarcon (Trotsko) was detained at the Paraguay-Argentinian border by security agents from Argentina. He was handed over to the DINA. He remains missing (desaparecido).

Miguel Enriquez died fighting against agents from the DINA on October 4th 1974 in a house on Santa Fe street in Santiago. See Carmen Castillo "Un Dia de Octubre en Santiago" (1979 approx). Carmen Castillo was Miguel's partner, participated in the fighting and was wounded.

⁴⁴ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

Arturo Villavela (Coño) was an engineer, son of Republican exiles from Spain, and was until his death the military head of the MIR. He was detained by the FACH (the Chilean Airforce) in 1974, was freed and went into exile. He returned to Chile and in 1983 he was killed in an ambush by the CNI (National Centre for Information) in Fuenteovejuna street, Santiago.

⁴⁵ See "Miguel Enriquez: Con Vista a la Esperanza", Escaparte Publications (1998). Especially the speeches and declarations before September 4th 1973.

ch of the Banco del Trabajo in the Central Market area which they attacked twice.⁴⁶

The confrontation sharpened, especially after the humiliating experience suffered by the right-wing journalist Hernan Osses Santa Maria of the newspaper "Las Ultimas Noticias de la Tarde" of Concepcion at the hands of MIR students.⁴⁷ This allowed the government to start a persecution of the movement, which forced it to go underground.⁴⁸

The same year internal differences arose in the organisation. A group who had criticised the line taken by the leadership of getting closer to mass organisations⁴⁹ left the MIR. The splinter group became the MR-2 (the 2nd Manuel Rodriguez Movement). Among its principal leaders were "El Rafa" and the journalist Jorge Silva Luvecce of the MIR newspaper "El Rebelde". After raids on the Supermarket Portofino in Irarrazabal street and the Armeria Italiana, the organisation was broken up and its members imprisoned.

A little before the elections of September 4th 1970, and while the MIR was still underground, an important meeting took place between Miguel Enriquez and Salvador Allende. The meeting was held in a safe house belonging to the Socialist Party. To get there, in an operation of the highest security, Salvador Allende was taken by different cars to different parts of the city since, it seems, that they were worried about the people's reaction if the news got out that the Presidential candidate of the Unidad Popular was meeting with the guerilla leader most wanted by the Chilean police. At the meeting Allende openly showed his anger at the armed actions which the MIR were carrying out and which were being used by the right-wing press to damage his campaign. Miguel Enriquez maintained that they carried out these raids not because they liked it but because they needed the money to finance the organisation. Allende promised to hand over \$80,000 dollars US (value 1970) to the MIR before the end of the year. At the same time he asked Miguel Enriquez to take charge of his personal security. In the Political Committee this had already been debated and agreed.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende. He confirmed that the newspaper "El Clarin" had the exclusive rights to cover the raid that the MIR carried out. For the Left these raids to get money were known as recuperating or expropriating money from the bourgeoisie.

⁴⁷ One night a commndo of students from the organisation kidnapped Osses, the journalist from the newspaper "Las Ultimas Noticias de la Tarde" and left him naked in the square facing the University of Concepcion. Osses Santa Maria was permanently attacking the MIR (see the Extra Supplement in "El Sur", Concepcion, Saturday June 7th 1969). According to Andres Pascal Allende the event was "more an abduction than a punishment".

⁴⁸ Andres Pascal confirmed that when he had to go underground, he used to hide quite frequently in the house of Osvaldo Puccio, who was Allende's private secretary.

⁴⁹ For the Left, mass organisations were all those social organisations where people like peasants, slum dwellers, students and women came together.

⁵⁰ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

When the MIR arrived to reinforce the security group around Salvador Allende, probably a little before Congress ratified the triumph he had obtained in the Presidential elections of September 4th 1970, a directorate was formed made up of one representative from the MIR and one from the Socialist Party.⁵¹ At the same time the following members of the MIR became part of the GAP: “Ariel Fontana” (Max Marambio) who had experience in this type of activity and became head of the security group, replacing the first one, “Fernando”. The principal reason for this was that “Ariel Fontana”, due to his background as son of a Socialist deputy, had mixed in his youth with that part of the Chilean bourgeoisie with links to the Left. This allowed him to be able to handle “situations” which other members of the group could not do. “Ariel” could manage things so as to accompany Allende wherever he might go, for example to military strongholds, like the Military or Naval Academies, and when the soldiers on guard stopped him from going in, he would push them aside with an air of natural authority and enter. The other members of the Presidential security escort could not do that so easily.⁵² Other members who joined the GAP were Sergio Perez, Nestor Gallardo Aguero (Bolche) and ex- commandos from the Special Forces of the Army, Mario Melo Pradenas and Luis Barraza Rhul.⁵³ Jorge Vi-

⁵¹ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex GAP

⁵² Testimony of Oscar Soto. Max was the son of the Socialist deputy Joel Marambio. When the Unidad Popular government fell, Max went to Cuba. He worked there as an official in the Ministry of the Interior and was known as Carlos Alfonso. (See Jean-Francois Fogel and Bertrand Rosenthal “Fin de Siglo en La Habana...” (1995), page 41.

⁵³ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende. Sergio Perez Molina, known as “El Chico”, and married to Lumi Videla was a member of the Central Committee of the MIR. After the coup he was detained by the DINA and remains missing (desaparecido). See the extract published in the newspaper La Nacion (1991) from the Report of the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation.

Nestor Gallardo Aguero (“Bolche”), student at Valdivia, and militant in the MIR. He used to live in the University of Chile’s hostel. After the coup he was detained and remains missing (desaparecido).

Mario Ramiro Melo Pradenas (27 years of age in 1973), ex- officer of the Paratroop and Special Forces Training School of the Chilean Army. In 1970, together with a group of his companions, he was expelled from the Army for lack of discipline (preaching Marxism). A militant member of the Socialist Party and of the MIR, he worked as an advisor to President Allende. On the 29th of September 1973 he was arrested by members of the FACH (the Chilean Airforce) in the house of a girl friend. He was seen for the last time in the military precinct of Peldehue and remains missing (desaparecido).

Luis Alberto Barraza Rhul (27 years of age in 1973). Ex-Army NCO. Socialist Party militant. Detained on the 29th of October 1973 and taken to the Paratroop and Special Forces Training School. Remains missing (desaparecido).

Data from the Report of the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, published in the newspaper La Nacion (1991).

cente Pierola and Julio Martinez Lara could also probably be added.⁵⁴ I believe that with the incorporation into the GAP of paratroopers who had been expelled from the Army for being known Marxists, Allende was given a clear signal that he could count on some significant support from within the Armed Forces. At the same time the anti-Marxist officers in the Army were being given a warning that it would not be easy to launch an attack against him.

The elections of September 4th were carried out completely normally and Salvador Allende won what could be called a relative victory.⁵⁵ The following period was one of uncertainty about the future, since, according to then current constitutional practice, it would have to be Congress which would decide between the two candidates who had the most votes.⁵⁶ To stop Congress from pronouncing in favour of Allende who had a slender majority over his opponent, a group of extremists linked to the Right and to ex-General Viaux tried to kidnap the Commander in Chief of the Army, General Rene Schneider. Because of the inexperience of his kidnappers, he was killed while offering resistance and trying to take out his gun.⁵⁷

I believe that this was the key event which decided the make-up of the GAP. If the Right could attack the Commander in Chief of the Army, they could also attack the President. With the attack on Schneider The GAP encountered their fundamental argument: the Socialist President of Chile “could only entrust his security to a group of people in whom he had complete confidence and who were absolutely loyal to him personally”.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Jorge Vicente Pierola and Julio Martinez Lara, ex-members of the Special Forces and Paratroop Regiments of the Army. Militant members of the Socialist Party. They were killed after the military coup. Data from the Report of the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, published in the newspaper *La Nacion* (1991).

⁵⁵ Salvador Allende got 1,070,334 votes (36.2%); Jorge Alessandri, 1,031,159 votes (34.9%) and Radomiro Tomic, 821,801 votes (27.8%).

⁵⁶ In the case that no candidate got more than 50% of the vote, the 1925 Constitution gave the National Congress the right to decide between the the first two candidates. This law had allowed the election of Jorge Alessandri in 1958 and Carlos Ibañez del Campo in 1952, among others.

⁵⁷ See Carlos Prats Gonzalez “Memorias: Testimonio de un Soldado” (1987), pages 184-185. Carlos Prates was at that moment Deputy Commander in Chief of the Army. Genral Roberto Viaux’s version of events can be found in “Conversaciones con Viaux” by Florencia Varas, 1972.

⁵⁸ For the militants and leaders of the Left, especially the Socialists, this topic needed no discussion: it was obvious that the security of the President should be in the hands of his own people and not in those of organisations of the bourgeois State, in which they had no confidence. Teatimony of Adonis Sepulveda, ex-Subsecretary General of the Socialist Party.

1.3 The origin of the name: Allende's answer

The first of the GAP used to follow President Allende everywhere, driving a Volkswagen van. They would carry revolvers, pistols, shotguns and Winchester rifles, obtained by Osvaldo Puccio through friends of the President or the MIR⁵⁹.

In one of the first sorties of the group, while they were in a slum area, a diligent journalist who was looking carefully at the armed men surrounding the President, who had already been noted as not belonging to the Police and who were rumoured to be members of the MIR, asked Allende who they were: the President in one of his typical replies answered that "they were some personal friends". From that moment on they were known by the Press as the Group of Personal Friends - the GAP.⁶⁰ They used to drive through the streets at high speed, poking their guns out in a menacing way, without the safety catches on, and prepared to fire at the slightest suspicion of an attack.⁶¹ The way they moved about secretly, without their real names or backgrounds being known, made them famous, loved and hated.

On the 12th of November 1970, a little after assuming the leadership of the nation, President Allende decided to stop the legal processes being conducted against 30 militant members of the MIR, who had been arrested and accused under the Internal Security Law of the State, of carrying out guerilla actions during the government of Eduardo Frei.⁶²

Allende's argument was that they deserved a Presidential pardon as they were only young idealists.⁶³ Several of them joined the GAP when

⁵⁹ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende

⁶⁰ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende. The same version was given by "Raul Marcos", a member of the military apparatus of the Socialist Party.

⁶¹ The escort used to go with the President without him having ordered them, according to Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP. The ways in which the GAP behaved have become something of a legend: accounts gathered together by the press speak of their arrogance, and the menacing manner in which they cleared the way. For them this was only a means of preventing anyone from trying to assault Allende.

⁶² See the article in the newspaper *La Prensa* on the 12th of November 1970, reproduced in "Los Mil Dias de Allende", Volume 1 (1997), page 39 (editors- Miguel Gonzalez Pinto and Arturo Fontaine Talavera).

⁶³ "I stand by the fact that it is my responsibility for having signed these decrees and pardons so that these young comrades in arms can be fully integrated back into normal life. It is obvious that several of them committed crimes which cannot simply be classified as political, but they committed them through a sense of ideological conviction. And other peoples, other countries including Chile itself, have always used this way of pardon even before sentencing people so as to achieve a feeling of peace throughout the country. This is what I want. And incorporating these young idealists into constructive work for the country is completely justified: because of this I have

they were released. I believe that with the inclusion of these people the make-up of the organisation in its first stage had now been completed. It was therefore a small group of bodyguards made up of four members of the MIR and several Socialists, which never exceeded 20 persons.⁶⁴

Among them were:

"Ariel Fontana" (MIR, and head of the group)	Jorge Pierola (ex-paratrooper.Socialist)
Sergio Perez (MIR)	"Mariano" (Socialist)
Nestor Gallardo (MIR)	"Fernando" (Eleno.Socialist)
Jorge Silva (MIR)	"Luisito" (Eleno.Socialist)
Mario Melo (ex-paratrooper. MIR-Socialist)	"Manuel" (Eleno.Socialist)
Luis Barraza (ex-paratrooper. MIR-Socialist)	"Kique" (Eleno. Socialist)
Julio Martinez (ex-paratrooper. MIR-Socialist)	"Bruno" (Eleno. Socialist)
	"Carlos Alamos" (Eleno. Socialist)

1.4 Fidel Castro: the Cuban influence in the GAP

I have said that one of the people who was most concerned about the security of the President was Taty.⁶⁵ She was known in the upper echelons of the Cuban regime, not only as Allende's daughter but also as a real revolutionary. Through her contacts she asked for Cuban help for the GAP.⁶⁶ This help materialised in two ways: the sending of officials from the Cuban Ministries of the Interior (Minit) and the Armed Forces (Minfar), experts in protection major figures, to assess the Allende's escort detail and support their work on the ground and the specialised training of various members of the GAP in Cuba. "We prepared several people...in personal security in which we had experience because we had had to defend ourselves from people who wanted to kill us. And we passed this experience over to anyone that we thought had enemies, so that they could deal with any attempt on their lives".⁶⁷ I believe that the Cuban administrators were important as they were allowed to penetrate the President's entourage, increase their influence in the new revolution and at the same time prepare securi-

granted them pardon, I have signed these decrees and I accept the responsibility for having done so ". Speech made by Salvador Allende at the Socialist Party Congress in La Serena on January 28th 1971, quoted in Jose Martinez Fernandez's book "Salvador Allende: Su Vida, Su Pensamiento Politico", (1988), page 118.

⁶⁴ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

⁶⁵ Testimony of Felix Huerta.

⁶⁶ Testimony of Daniel Alarcon Ramirez (Benigno)

⁶⁷ Words of Fidel Castro in an interview with CNN, reproduced in an article by Lilian Olivares "Juicio Extranjero del Dia 11. La Historia que Cuenta la CNN", from the newspaper La Segunda, Friday September 10th 1999, page 16.

ty for the visit of Fidel Castro which would take place in 1971. One of the first Cubans to arrive in Chile to carry out this work was called Riveros.⁶⁸

At this time a group of ten persons, including among others “Bruno” and “Manuel” went off to Cuba to specialise in the job of protecting the life of President Allende and his entourage.⁶⁹ The course lasted 15 days: basically it consisted of training in personal defence and other questions relating to security.⁷⁰ Later on at the end of 1972, another group would travel to Cuba to take the same course.⁷¹

The practice of sending people to Cuba to train them in paramilitary activities and personal security seems to have been on a frequent basis, right up until the end of the government. In July 1973, a large contingent of militants from the Socialist Party landed in Havana. There they stated that their mission was to acquire the necessary knowledge so that on their return they could join the GAP. The latter opposed this because when the group left Chile, it informed the GAP that they were going to receive preparation in tactics in rural and urban guerilla warfare. When the coup came they were still in Havana.⁷²

For motives of security, Fidel Castro’s arrival in Chile was only announced two days in advance, and there was no mention of where he would arrive: this reflected the worry about security for both Castro and Allende.⁷³ The young men who had participated in the first training course in Cuba had already returned and joined the team in charge of the President’s security.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende. To know exactly who Riveros was is very difficult: most probably this was a false name. Several sources say that he was Antonio de la Guardia. I discount this as the information that I have indicates that he arrived shortly before Fidel Castro.

⁶⁹ This is according to Oscar Soto, who was sure that various members of the GAP were trained in Cuba, and Felix Huerta.

⁷⁰ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP

⁷¹ Testimony of Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP

⁷² Testimony of “Felix”- “El Viejo Alberto” (Old Albert). He was one of the Socialist militants who formed part of the delegation. Months after the coup some members of the group left the Socialist Party and joined the MIR.

⁷³ I should like to remind the reader that at the end of 1970, the Commander in Chief of the Army, General Rene Schneider, was murdered and that in the winter of 1971 the ex-Interior Minister of Eduardo Frei’s government, Edmundo Perez Zujovic, was also assassinated by the Organised Vanguard of the People (VOP). For a complete description of Fidel Castro’s visit to Chile see the Commission of Revolutionary Orientation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, “Cuba-Chile” (1972), pages 6-7.

⁷⁴ To be more precise about the dates of these events is rather difficult as there are no records available and the historian is at the mercy of the frailty of witnesses memories. In spite of this it is possible to say that the young men left for the Caribbean a little after Allende came to power.

Fidel sent a numerous contingent of people to be in charge of his security, as well as Cuban diplomatic personnel to lend their services to Chile. In charge of the group came Antonio de la Guardia⁷⁵, accompanied by various members of the Special Forces, as they were known, equivalent to the American Green Berets.⁷⁶ They made contact with the GAP and together they made a contingency plan which allowed them to complete their mission successfully.

The GAP was divided into two escort teams, one which had to be with Allende and the other which would join up with Fidel Castro's guards, forming a mixed group.⁷⁷

On the route that both the Presidents took from the airport at Puñahuel, in an uncovered car, it can be confirmed that both "Carlos Alamos" and the Cuban officer Riveros were in the car and keeping a careful watch.⁷⁸ I believe this event to be one of the most historically significant in all the years of the GAP. It was their acid test, a show of confidence in the loyalty of their members and in their professionalism and operational capabilities. It is hard to believe that this moment would have happened on other occasions: that a leader so jealous of his integrity as Fidel Castro would allow an important part of his protection to be dealt with by men who were not from his escort team. It is, moreover, a good indicator as to how close were the existing relations between Castro and Allende's security organisations.

During the rest of the Cuban dignitary's extensive visit⁷⁹, there were no particular events which warranted special actions from Allende's securi-

⁷⁵ Antonio and his brother Patricio were the best of the Cuban Special Forces. An interesting profile of them emerges in Jorge Masetti's "El Furor y El Delirio: Itinerario de un Hijo de la Revolucion Cubana" (1999).

⁷⁶ See Norberto Fuentes "Dulces Guerreros Cubanos" (1999), page 100. It is in fact impossible to try and prove how many members of the Cuban security service came to Chile. Castro's government have never handed over numbers. The military authorities who took over after the coup talked of thousands. However this seems to me to be an unrealistic figure. If there were so many, we should be asking why didn't the military detain some of them after September 11 th 1973 ?. Either they were great fighters or there weren't that many in Chile. So as the reader has some idea, between January and June 1973 the Chilean Embassy in Havana handed out 310 diplomatic visas and 212 official visas i.e. a total of 522 visas to travel to Chile. Data compiled from an OEA (Organisation of American States) document, the Special Advisory Commission on Security (CECS), "The Marxist- Leninist Process in Chile", a study prepared by the CECS in its 21st Period of Extraordinary Sessions (March 29th 1974), page 93. The text was studied in the Salvador Allende Memorial archives in Havana.

⁷⁷ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

⁷⁸ See the newspaper El Clarin, front cover photograph, November 11th 1971: and the Revolutionary Orientation Commission of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party's "Cuba-Chile" (1972), page 55. I have confirmed that the person in the photograph was "Carlos Alamos", thanks to the testimony of his wife, Elsa Pavez.

⁷⁹ He stayed in the country almost a month, between November and December 1971. He returned to Cuba a little after the March of the Empty Saucepans (December 1st 1971).

ty apparatus. In activities where the Chilean president was not present, Fidel Castro's team took charge of the mixed escort. During the visit to the port of Valparaiso, the government created security brigades out of the most trustworthy militants from the different parties which made up Unidad Popular and these mixed with the public keeping a watch on what was happening.⁸⁰

Before returning to their country, Fidel Castro's escort, who had brought a larger number of weapons than they usually carried, left an important part of them in Chile, keeping only a bare minimum to assure their leaders's safety. Among them were RPG-7 rocket launchers, AKA-47 rifles, pistols and submachine guns, together with a large quantity of bullets.⁸¹ I believe this donation of Cuban weapons to the Chilean left to be one of the largest during the Unidad Popular period. Part of it was integrated into the GAP arsenal: the other part was handed over to the Socialist Party military apparatus. It is possible that, owing to their opposition to Allende, no weapons were handed over to the MIR.⁸²

Nevertheless, as the Miristas controlled the President's security group at this stage, they also had indirect access to them. Later on, when Osvaldo Dorticos, the President of Cuba, visited Chile, he was also escorted by GAP agents.⁸³

1.5 The expulsion of the MIR (the Movement of the Revolutionary Left).

The way in which "Ariel Fontana" treated the young men of the team caused innumerable difficulties, principally with the militants from the Socialist Party and with those who had greater experience. The men began to lose confidence in him and make difficulties in obeying orders. With the idea of overcoming these problems as quickly as possible, the MIR sent

⁸⁰ Testimony of "Juan Fernandez". He was a member of the Information Apparatus (Counter-intelligence) of the Socialist Party in Valparaiso and was a member of the brigades who kept a watch out while Fidel Castro was speaking.

⁸¹ Testimony of "Raul Marcos". Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP, believes that they left weapons, because "it was logical they would do so". Enrique Ramos is not so sure.

⁸² Testimony of Felix Huerta. He maintains that that the MIR was "very disorganised and rough and ready". Andres Pascal says that Fidel was willing to hand over weapons to the MIR, always allowing that "Allende would authorise it, because he was not going to betray the trust that Allende had in him". Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

⁸³ Testimony of Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP

“Tonio” (Humberto Sotomayor), a member of the Political Commission, to take over the leadership and replace “Ariel Fontana”.⁸⁴

The incorporation of President Allende’s civilian armed guard into national life as a formal institution made it possible for the MIR to carry out a series of undercover activities under the pretence of protecting the leader and his residences. The organisation implemented real paramilitary training courses, helped by “Cuban officials”.⁸⁵ In effect, the leadership of the GAP used the installations constructed in El Cañaveral, where there was a small training ground and the shooting ranges of the Police in La Reina to instill knowledge about guerilla warfare and target practice.⁸⁶ I believe that the use of police installations was made possible because the President’s guard detail and the Police both came directly under the control of the Ministry of the Interior: moreover the Police was the loyalest to the President out of the armed institutions. This is proof of the legal ambiguity in which the GAP surrounded itself. Numerous groups of the MIR, who had no relation to the GAP, visited the institutions and received instructions on the use of weapons and covert techniques and tactics.⁸⁷ It is possible that around 1000 Miristas passed through the installations at El Cañaveral.⁸⁸ Whether it is more or less in terms of numbers, the significant thing is that those who received this training were militants who acquired the basic knowledge to direct and instruct other members of the organisation. And even more importantly that each one of the Miristas could form and direct a combat cell of more or less five people. This shows that the GAP in this period was not just a team for ensuring the security of Allende, but also a school for training fighters. In other words the GAP could be the seed for a revolutionary army.

One of the more fundamental premises for security groups to carry out their work successfully is that they must not have any weak spot on their flanks. From this perspective the actions that the MIR developed in the GAP strengthened its combat capability but increased the risk of infiltration in Allende’s entourage. At this stage, several members of the group began carrying out actions dedicated to “private financing”. These were robberies where the money did not go into the movements or parties of the Left but into the pockets of those who carried them out. Members of the GAP who had left without handing over their credentials, implemented the-

⁸⁴ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

⁸⁵ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

⁸⁶ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

⁸⁷ This can be inferred from the testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

⁸⁸ Testimony of Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP.

se operations and so “when they were caught, they appeared to be still members of the GAP”.⁸⁹

One incident which illustrates the actions of the team at this stage was what happened on Good Friday 1972, in the town of Curimon, which was in the department of San Felipe in Aconcagua province. At dusk, a Chevrolet pick-up, driven by Fernando Amaya Sepulveda, an ex- Army paratrooper, who was drunk and carrying credentials which identified him as a functionary of the Presidency (a mechanic, part of the President’s security team) crashed into a lamppost. Amaya was accompanied by Guillermo Pardo Tobar, ex-Army commando, Mario Perez, about whom very little is known, and Oscar Delgado (“El Negro Puga”), also an ex-commando and paratrooper. After the accident the first two were arrested and plans of military installations were found in their possession, together with an army grenade (of Spanish origin), two clips of ammunition for a Garand rifle, with 15 bullets in each, two clips for pistols with 8 bullets in each and 18 for 45 calibre and 14 for 32 calibre pistols.⁹⁰ Mario Perez and Oscar Delgado managed to escape.⁹¹

I believe that they were looking for Major Arturo Marshall, ex- Army black beret, and also, it appears, making an operational study of the area. Marshall, according to rumours circulating among the militants of the Left, was working as a military instructor for nationalist Patria y Libertad (Country and Freedom), and the MIR thought he was hiding in Yungay regiment at San Felipe.

But all their efforts came to nothing, and they acted completely irresponsibly, drinking and crashing the pick-up. After they were arrested the details of their mission became known. Army intelligence was alerted and the GAP came out badly from the incident, compromising the President. Luis Guastavino, the Communist deputy for Valparaiso, maintained that this was an abnormal event, which should be investigated because “when an action of the ultra Left is carried out, the same action could serve the inter-

⁸⁹ Testimony of Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP

⁹⁰ See the report in the magazine *Que Pasa* “Curimon: paratroopers crash into lamp post”, No. 52, April 13th 1972, page 46.

⁹¹ Ibid. According to the magazine *VEA*, Amaya was also an anti-guerilla instructor. (See the report “Encounter in Curimon: a new ultra commando?”, in *VEA*, No. 1,710. April 6th 1972, page 9).

These men had been expelled from the Chilean Army on April 18th 1970, together with 14 others from the training school, for disciplinary failures. Andres Pascal confirmed that the black berets were militant members of the MIR, and that a lot of times, when they were working underground, looked for refuge in military barracks. Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

ests of the Right”.⁹² Criticism also came from the opposition, asking how members or ex-members of Allende’s security team, protected by the President, could carry out actions at odds with current legislation. In this way doubts were sown about the real nature and objectives of the GAP.

At this point, the Socialist Party decided to take control of the Presidential guard, put it in order and make it more professional. The main Socialist arguments were that as the President was a militant member of the Party, it was logical that they should be in charge of his security, also that the members of the GAP would not be able to operate autonomously because they were Socialist militants themselves and finally that the Party could count on professional people, of absolute trust and unimpeachable character.⁹³

Allende and his entourage accepted the idea and “Tonio”, as well as the majority of the militants of MIR left the GAP. However they also took half the organisation’s arsenal.⁹⁴ Amongst the weapons that were taken were 2 recoilless rifles, several 30 and 50 calibre machine guns, and AK-47 and FAL rifles⁹⁵

The relationship of political trust between the MIR, the Unidad Popular and President Allende had been shattered.⁹⁶ This breach was clearly shown in the confrontation between police and the people of Lo Hermida on the 5th of August 1972. Members of the MIR leadership claimed that some detectives had tortured those people who had been arrested. The accusation, which was specifically directed against “Coco” Paredes, the Director of Criminal Investigation, and Carlos Toro, who was the Deputy Director and a communist, caused bad feeling in the coalition government and with President Allende.⁹⁷

According to Victor Toro, the Communist sections put forward the need to reprimand the MIR.⁹⁸ The MIR leadership made it known that they should remember that the MIR was looking after half the weapons of the GAP.⁹⁹

⁹² See the report in *Que Pasa* “Curimon: paratroopers crash into lamp post”, No.52, April 13th 1972.

⁹³ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

⁹⁴ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

⁹⁵ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

⁹⁶ Despite all this, Allende still continued asking about members of the MIR, especially Miguel Enriquez, about whom he received news from his daughter Taty. Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

⁹⁷ Testimony of Carlos Toro, ex-Deputy Director of Criminal Investigation and Communist.

⁹⁸ Testimony of Victor Toro, who was responsible for the MPR within the MIR (the Movement of Revolutionary People) and a member of its Central Committee. Nevertheless, Carlos Toro emphatically denied that the Communist Party were planning the repression of the MIR (testimony of Carlos Toro).

⁹⁹ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

A few days after the confrontation and the accusations, the President visited Lo Hermida, but several members of the MIR and other groups like USOPO, led by Commander “Raul”¹⁰⁰ tried to stop them going in. According to their version one group of the GAP forcibly entered the social centre and successfully opened the door so that Allende could get in and speak to the people.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, Allende tried to maintain good relations with the MIR, as can be seen by a report from the Latin American Institute of the Academy of Sciences in the USSR which confirmed that “Allende, in spite of some of his declarations about the MIR, where he threatened them with reprisals, aims to put this organisation under his control, rather than weaken or destroy it”¹⁰²

II THE FAITHFUL FRIENDS OF SALVADOR ALLENDE

2.1 The GAP under the control of the Socialist Party

The dream of the Socialist Party to direct the organisation whose mission was to guarantee the security of the President, and which possessed the the largest quantity of weapons and logistical resources, was thus fulfilled. It is thought that by the middle of 1972 Marcelo Schilling was nominated coordinator between the party, the President and the GAP.¹⁰³ Schilling, who was the political commissar of the GAP, had the job in the new structure to put the team in order, give it a political and ideological unity

¹⁰⁰ We are talking about the person known as Osvaldo Romo, who later worked as an agent for the DINA (Directive of National Intelligence, an organism created by the Military Junta after the 11th of September 1973). Osvaldo Romo has since been denounced as a torturer.

¹⁰¹ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

¹⁰² Quoted by Arturo Fontaine Talavera in “The United States and the Soviet Union in Chile”, *Estudios Públicos*, No. 72 (1998), page 13.

¹⁰³ Marcelo Schilling (“Gaston” or “Tribilin”), militant Socialist, survived the events of September 1973. He went into exile and later returned to become a high official in the democratic governments that followed. At the moment of writing this article he has been named Ambassador to France. The author, in a meeting of the Concertación (the grouping of political parties in Chile from the Left to the Centre) asked him for an interview. Schilling agreed. However when this secretary had to fix the hour and the day, she was constantly evasive. The reasons were multiple: “Don Marcelo is very busy”, “His diary is full”, “Phone later” and “I (the secretary) will call you back”. The author honestly feels it to be a great shame that the conversation never took place.

Marcelo Schilling was the “whisky ADC”, the jokey nickname he had in the escort for carrying the the bottle of liquor that the President used to drink at functions

and the professionalism which was required for complying with its commitment.¹⁰⁴ He had to avoid the errors of the Mirista era so as to transform the President's security guard into an organisation which would completely guarantee the safety of the President of Chile.

New members came into the GAP, all militant Socialists, considered to be absolutely trustworthy by the Party leadership and the presidency of the Republic. The GAP leadership was made up of "Bruno", as the highest authority in the team, "Carlos Alamos" who was placed in charge of the President's escort section, "Mariano" (Francisco Argandoña) who continued in charge of the Advance Group, "Kique" who continued heading up logistics as the Intendant of the Presidential Palace (La Moneda) and "Anibal" (Juan Jose Montiglio Murua), who also became part of the leadership.¹⁰⁵

Those responsible now implemented various measures towards reinforcing the security of the team, such as making a change of house easier for several members, with the idea of concentrating them in an area closer to the President's house in Tomas Moro street. Many were moved to houses in a modest area (known as "Poblaciones CORVI"), which was only a few blocks from the house, up towards the mountains in La Reina.¹⁰⁶

Getting the members closer together allowed the leadership to have a greater control over what they did in their spare time, avoiding behaviour which could be considered for the security of the organisation: at the same time the closer they were allowed them to respond rapidly to any emergency and finally they saved money on transport. The principal inconvenience of being together was an increase in the possibility of breaking up the feeling of compartmentalisation.¹⁰⁷

(see Viviana Candia "Ex-GAP in internal war about the Table of Dialogue (La Mesa de Dialogo), face to face", *La Segunda* newspaper, Friday September 10th 1999, pages 10-11). It is difficult to be precise about Marcelo Schilling's arrival in the GAP, those interviewed vary between the beginning and the end of 1972: nevertheless, Andres Pascal's confirmation that after the confrontation in Lo Hermida (on the 5th of August 1972) the MIR had half the GAP arsenal indicates that the MIR had already left. I believe that Schilling joined the team between June and July 1972.

¹⁰⁴ See the report from Cony Stipicic and Gerardo Beltran "The GAP count on the 11th of September: only 24 out of almost 50 men in the group managed to fight on that day", from the newspaper *La Tercera de la Hora*, Sunday October 12th 1999, page 6.

¹⁰⁵ Testimonies of Enrique Ramos, Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP, and Felix Huerta. "Mariano" was in the GAP from the first. He was one of the leaders who survived.

¹⁰⁶ Testimony of Oscar Soto.

¹⁰⁷ Testimony of Oscar Soto.

I believe that under the control of the Socialist Party and through “Bruno”, “Carlos Alamos”, “Mariano”, “Anibal”, “Kique” and the political leadership of “Gaston”, the Group of Personal Friends acquired its definitive character, converting itself into an organisation responsible for the safety of the President, his family and their houses.

The levels of efficiency increased, the members of the organisation became more professional until they converted themselves into an effective paramilitary organisation, whose militant members were trained to carry out the different tasks which revolutionary strategy demanded. They received their training in Chile because “only a few travelled to Cuba, it wasn’t a big thing”.¹⁰⁸ They began to train under people who had experience in this type of job. Among the instructors was Mario Melo, ex paratroop officer of the Chilean army. Several Cubans also arrived to teach them how to handle the cars but the GAP “had a driver who was very good better than the Cubans”.¹⁰⁹ Other people also came to help them train but basically they acquired their knowledge in Chile. What they knew was not much but they stood out sharply because “they were extremely dedicated, very thorough and very good”.¹¹⁰ Most of the training at this stage, like before, was carried out on the small obstacle course at El Cañaveral and in the surrounding hills.¹¹¹

Every two months, a score of young men would come from all round the country trying to overcome the obstacles for joining the group: they had to be members of the Socialist Party, they had to have a constant record as a militant, have clear ideas, the necessary physical requisites and be recommended by someone of importance. The selection was made at El Cañaveral, sometimes in the presence of Allende.¹¹² I believe that the final decision for choosing the new recruits for the GAP was taken by the leadership of the group, but the President had a significant influence and so did his daughter Taty and Doctor Eduardo “Coco” Paredes.¹¹³ Once they were recruited, they were sent to one of the three sections of the organisation. Those who were not selected returned to their original centres where they could apply the paramilitary knowledge they had learned.

¹⁰⁸ Testimony of Felix Huerta.

¹⁰⁹ This refers to “El Patan”. (Manuel Cortes). Testimony of Felix Huerta.

¹¹⁰ Testimony of Felix Huerta.

¹¹¹ Statements made by Isidro Garcia and quoted in a report by Mauricio Carvallo “The return of the GAP: giving their lives for Salvador Allende”, in the newspaper *El Mercurio* of Santiago, Section D, page 8, September 12th 1999.

¹¹² *ibid.*

¹¹³ Testimony of Felix Huerta.

2.2 The legality and financing of the GAP

The Group of Personal Friends (the GAP) was in itself a revolutionary organisation because no President of Chile could count on a group with similar characteristics and, furthermore, it had no recognition whatsoever under the current law. At the beginning there were discussions about a legal initiative so that the members could be contracted as officials of the Police Investigations Department. This idea never materialised. The legitimacy of the group came solely from the support given to it by the President of the Republic. During the MIR stage, it depended exclusively on the Presidency. When the Socialist Party took control, it became dependent on the Party and the Presidency.

Although we do not know the exact way in which it was financed and the amount of money it spent on a monthly basis, I believe that it obtained the funding it needed from the Presidency and the Party: it is also possible that the Cuban government gave it money sometimes. The GAP only received a stipend, as they were sent to the organisation by the Socialist Party as part of their service to the Party.

2.3 The structure of the GAP

From the beginning the organisation had a structure designed to be divided into three specific sections: the Escort Group, the Advance Group and the Garrison.¹¹⁴

The Presidential Escort Group section was the most numerous and important of the divisions upon which the team counted. It was composed of around 20 men, almost half the members of the GAP. Its specific mission was to protect President Allende and drive him to the places where he had engagements. For transport the Escort section had various Fiats at their disposal, most of them blue: they also had several with other colours and pick-ups. All the vehicles had had the carburetor tuned to go at 200 kilometres an hour. Once the Escort got going it was usually formed by three GAP cars and several patrol cars from the Police and Investigaciones. Occasionally there would be fourth car, of a different colour, whose mission was to distract any possible assailants. In the Fiat, designated as Number 1, rode the President: he was accompanied by the head of the Escort and the milita-

¹¹⁴ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

ry ADC who was on duty: if he was not there, a member of the group, known as the civil Adc, would take his place. This person would stay close to Allende and never get separated from him. In the event of an attack, he would have to place his body in front of the President so as to receive the first impact and make it possible for the other members of the security team to react. To accomplish his mission he would carry a pistol and a submachine gun and had no bullet proof waistcoat.¹¹⁵

They had walkie talkies and mobile phones whose batteries would be carried in a suitcase in the car: for the time it was a major technological advance. The communications Centre was in Tomas Moro. From there they controlled the despatches, which were in code, using numbers and letters. The keys were changed after a certain time to avoid being known to any enemy.¹¹⁶

The Advance Group was the most unknown of the sections of the GAP. This division, which had very few people, under the command of "Mariano" (Francisco Argandoña) had the mission of arriving first and taking control of all the places that the President was visiting. They had to coordinate all the initiatives they thought necessary to make the places safe with the Police and the Investigations department.¹¹⁷

On the activities of the Advance Group we can turn to the events of the 21st of May 1971 in Valparaíso. In the morning there was the traditional parade of homage to naval glories. Very early on the security office of the regional Intendancy was alerted by an anonymous phone call: the voice announced that elements belonging to Patria y Libertad (Land and Liberty) had placed explosives under the Prat quay which would be detonated once Allende arrived there. Members of the Advance group of the GAP and agents from Investigations participated in the search for the bomb, under the orders of the Head of Security for the Intendancy of the Province of Valparaíso and Admiral Jose Toribio Merino. The threat turned out to be false.¹¹⁸

The third section of the GAP was known as the Garrison. It was divided into various groups of not more than six people each. Each one of the units had its own responsibility. It depended directly on the central command of the team. Its mission was to carry out guard duties and protest the residences of Tomas Moro, El Cañaveral and the Moneda Palace, where it would keep watch over the President's offices. To carry out its activities

¹¹⁵ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

¹¹⁶ Testimony of Isidro Garcia, ex-GAP

¹¹⁷ Testimony of Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP

¹¹⁸ See Luis Vega "The Fall of Allende...." (La Caída de Allende), 1983, page 208.

in Tomas Moro they built various sentry boxes or watch towers. They carried hand held weapons and occasionally rifles or sub machine guns.¹¹⁹

The key point about the team was its compartmentalisation. When young men joined the organisation, they were handed over a set of credentials from the Presidency of the Republic, which contained a new identity and the pseudonym with which they would be known in the GAP. They received precise instructions about not getting to know their companions, not frequenting their houses and not mixing with their families. The idea was that they had the least possible contact among themselves because this way there would be less weak points. These measures worked reasonably well as the members did not in fact get to know each other. After the coup, if they were arrested, it was impossible for them to betray their companions.¹²⁰ The compartmentalisation was effective: a good example of it are the difficulties the survivors have of joining pseudonyms and real names and therefore identifying their comrades.

Towards the end of Allende's government, when the squad had diminished and the possibilities of a coup were coming closer, many members opted for decreasing their visits to their families. Luisa Catalan, the wife of "Pato", confirmed that he used to go home once a month, sometimes every 90 days and told her that he did not want to compromise her with his activities.¹²¹

Some members of the organisation and their families were treated by doctors from the Presidency. They carried out the treatment at Tomas Moro or in the public hospitals where they worked. The doctors had no idea of the medical history or the real names of their patients.¹²²

2.4 The day of the tanks: the GAP at its peak

The end of the Unidad Popular government began on the morning of June 29th 1973. The day could have been one like any other but fate de-

¹¹⁹ Testimonies of Enrique Ramos, Isidro Garcia, both ex-GAP, and Luisa Catalan Pardo, wife of "Pato" (GAP), of the Garrison section. She was invited by her husband to La Moneda when he was on guard duty. There she got to know President Allende.

¹²⁰ Testimonies of Isidro Garcia and Enrique Ramos. Isidro Garcia confirms that, after the coup, he had no fear of being arrested since he knew nothing about his companions and could not betray them, even under torture.

¹²¹ Testimony of Luisa Catalan. Elsa Pavez, wife of "Carlos Alamos" confirmed that she did not know the other members of the GAP and that her husband never talked about its activities. Moreover, in public he asked her to call him "Carlos Alamos".

¹²² Testimony of Oscar Soto.

creed that it would be of capital importance for Allende's administration and the Chilean revolution.¹²³

At 8.55 a.m. information arrived at the house in Tomas Moro, where the President was to be found. Varios tanks, a tank carrier and two lorries with 40 men apiece in them, from the 2nd Armoured Regiment, which had its base in Santa Rosa street and which were led by Colonel Roberto Souper, the commander of the regiment, had risen and opened fire on the Moneda Palace and the Ministry of Defence.¹²⁴ The Police guard, under the command of Lieutenant Guillermo Perez, fired back and the battle became a general one. The rising was part of an attempted coup in which the soldiers had probably joined forces with Patria y Libertad, a subversive group on the Right.¹²⁵

President Salvador Allende, accompanied by his ADC's, especially Arturo Araya the head of the Military House (La Casa Militar) and a naval captain, established contact with those forces which had remained loyal with the aim of quickly bringing the uprising under control. The government forces obeyed the Commander in Chief of the Army, Genreal Carlos Prats Gonzalez.

The Commander in Chief, accompanied by his escort, decided to dominate the subversives personally so as to avoid blood shed. He approached the tanks which were firing on La Moneda, and, imposing his authority, ordered them one by one to return to their regiment. They all obeyed, except one which proceeded to try and flee and was pursued by forces loyal to the government.¹²⁶

While these events were unfolding in the centre of the capital, the President, in the house at Tomas Moro, was desperate to go down to La

¹²³ Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende. According to Pascal, this moment was the critical one for the Chilean revolution. The main political error of the Left and the MIR was not to have unleashed an armed uprising to seize power on the 29th of June.

¹²⁴ See the report "Rising of an armoured unit against the Government. Attack for 2 hours on La Moneda" in *El Mercurio* of Santiago (June 30th 1973), reproduced in "Los Mil Dias de Allende" (The Thousand Days of Allende), edited by Arturo Fontaine Talavera and Miguel Gonzalez Pino (1997), pages 714-715.

¹²⁵ See the report "Allende informs the people in an impressive demonstration", from the newspaper *Las Noticias de Ultima Hora*, of the 30th of June 1973, reproduced in "Los Mil Dias de Allende" (The Thousand Days of Allende), edited by Arturo Fontaine Talavera and Miguel Gonzalez Pino (1997), pages 717-719.

Also see Manuel Fuentes "Memorias Secretas de Patria y Libertad" (The Secret Memoirs of Patria y Libertad), 1999, pages 262-263. Those who found refuge in the Embassy of Ecuador were Pablo Rodriguez, John Schaeffer, Juan Eduardo Hurtado, Benjamin Matte and Manuel Fuentes. They were all among the highest leadership of Patria y Libertad. Manuel Fuentes discounts the participation of Patria y Libertad in the conspiracy, but admits that they had had contact with the soldiers who had risen.

¹²⁶ See the report "Allende informs the people in an impressive demonstration", from the newspaper *Las Noticias de Ultima Hora*, of the 30th of June 1973, reproduced in "Los Mil Dias de Allende" (The Thousand Days of Allende), edited by Arturo Fontaine Talavera and Miguel Gonzalez Pino (1997), page 718.

Moneda and personally snuff out the uprising. The leaders of the GAP stopped him. Their strategy was to gain time until the Armed Forces could take charge of the situation and if this did not happen, then to go to La Moneda with a strong escort and fight their way through. Allende was obliged to wait in his room while “Bruno” and the other leaders planned the action. The President ordered a helicopter to come to the house and pick him up to overfly the zone. The leadership of the GAP opposed this and the helicopter left. Those responsible in the GAP were convinced that if they joined battle, Allende would also fight. Moreover they confirmed that he was a good marksman.¹²⁷ The President was proud of being a revolutionary and he liked to shoot, as can be shown in the following anecdote: “During Fidel Castro’s visit, they were making a trip on board one of the Navy’s ships and during the journey the Commander began to shoot at some birds. The President immediately asked for a rifle and began to do the same- he wasn’t going to be left behind”.¹²⁸

When they could not restrain the President any more, “Anibal” one of the leaders of the team, got everyone together and told them they were all going to La Moneda and that they needed four volunteers to go first in a car, in the vanguard, whose mission would be to open the way for the others. “Anibal” himself, the brothers Isidro and Hugo Garcia and one of their companions, unidentified, all offered.

The delay in the President’s departure had allowed those responsible in the GAP to prepare the most numerous and the best armed escort in all its history. In effect 50 men, commanded by “Bruno” left for La Moneda in a caravan of 10 vehicles, among them various support pick-ups which had .30 machine guns mounted on them? Several Police cars also left, led by the Deputy Director of the Police, General Urrutia, together with an escort from Investigations. The men carried AKA-47 rifles, RPG-7 rocket launchers and numerous sub machine guns. In the car designated 1 went Allende, General Urrutia and “Manuel” his civilian ADC. The President carried a Walther and “Manuel” his present from Fidel Castro, the AKA-47 rifle: he had the order to pass it to the President if something unforeseen should happen.¹²⁹

On the way the group encountered a patrol of soldiers in front of the National Television building. The “companions” in the car in the vanguard held them up at gunpoint and kept them there until all the group was out of

¹²⁷ Testimonies of Isidro Garcia and Enrique Ramos, ex-GAP.

¹²⁸ Testimony of Oscar Soto.

¹²⁹ Testimony of Isidro Garcia.

¹³⁰ Testimony of Enrique Ramos.

reach. The soldiers were loyal ones but, in spite of that, the GAP did not trust them as they feared treachery.¹³¹

Arriving in the centre of the city the group divided into two, one going to the Palace to take up combat positions to secure the arrival of the President and the other, with Allende, to the headquarters of Investigations, in General Mackenna street. There the Director General, Alfredo Joignant, was waiting for them together a large group of detectives who could be trusted.¹³²

When they arrived at Investigations, Allende alighted from the car and told the escort not to get out: at this moment the ADC of the President, Arturo Arata, contradicted the Head of State by saying "No. All of you get out with your guns". The ADC, who was carrying a P-40 machine gun from the GAP's arsenal, understod the gravity of the situation they were facing, thanks to his military experience. In a clear gesture of committment to the revolutionary process of the Unidad Popular, he assumed command of the group. A little later on, when there was still firing, the group arrived with the President at La Moneda. Arturo Araya ordered everyone "to get their guns out and protect him". The escort obeyed and fired everything they had.¹³³ During the following days this event was profusely commented on by militants of the Left.

The behaviour of Captain Artro Arraya on the 29th of June was only a reflection of the attitude adopted by many of the officers, NCO's and troops throughout the Armed Forces who did not obey the instructions of those who led the attempted coup and march on La Moneda. Andres Pascal Allende believes that there were more officers committed to the uprising but that when the orders arrived for fighting, the officers, NCO's and troops refused to obey. It was for him, without any doubt at all, the greatest show of support for the Unidad Popular government from within the Armed Forces.¹³⁴ I believe that apart from those officers who were known to support the Unidad Popular (Prats, Sepulveda Galindo, Urrutia), one who was of particular importance was the Police General Ruben Alvarez, one of the oldest pillars of the institution. Probably he was the man who was the most loyal and the most trusted by the Unidad Popular and the Socialist Party.

¹³¹ Testimony of Isidro Garcia.

* Testimony of Adolfo Arrieta, ex member of the Investigations department of the Police. Alfredo Joignant, in a conversation with the author, confirmed this version of events. He also maintains that he ordered a patrol to open the way for the group on their way to the Moneda.

** Testimony of Adonis Sepulveda, ex-Senator and Sub-Secretary General of the Socialist Party and Isidro Garcia. Isidro Garcia confirms that the GAP were waiting for the Police and Investigations to fire first, i.e. the institutions which were in charge of maintaining public order.

*** Testimony of Andres Pascal Allende.

Why Allende never named him as Director General- as the Unidad Popular asked - is a mystery and one of the keys to the fall of the government.

In the crushing of this attempted coup, the GAP did not have a decisive participation. Nevertheless from the detailed analysis made after the event, those responsible for the government's security, drew several important conclusions: redouble the permanent night guard at the Presidential Palace,**** increase the number of doctors in La Moneda, install an emergency clinic there and reinforce the defences to include more machine guns and bazookas. At the same time they understood that another coup attempt could be a massive one, involving a larger number of military forces, and that they had to be prepared for them. Ten members of the team, realising the magnitude of such a confrontation with military forces, deserted the GAP. "To protect the President was an honourable thing to do, but not to the point of risking so much"¹³⁶

2.5 The assassination of Captain Araya: the attempt to blame "Bruno"

One month later, another event caused enormous difficulties. On the night of July 26th there was a reception at the Cuban Embassy to celebrate the anniversary of the assault on the Moncada barracks.¹³⁷ Allende attended, accompanied by his escort, with "Bruno" this night in charge, and as head of the Casa Militar (the Military House), the Naval Captain Arturo Araya. A few minutes after the officer returned to his house, a group of people carried out anti-government demonstrations outside and made threats against his life. The captain came out of the house onto the balcony, and, carrying a Czech P-40 machine pistol which belonged to the GAP, confronted the demonstrators. They opened fire and killed him.¹³⁸

On the 27th of July Chile woke up to face the daunting question - who killed Captain Arturo Araya ?. Agents from the police, in civilian clothes and in uniform, carried out intensive patrols and searches looking for the assassins. Allende was devastated. It was a mystery to nobody that

¹³⁵ Oscar Soto "El Ultimo Dia de Salvador Allende " (The Last Day of Salvador Allende), 1999, page 63

¹³⁶ Testimony of an ex-GAP, quoted by Cony Stipicic and Gerardo Beltran "The GAP count on the 11th of September: only 24 out of almost 50 men in the group managed to fight on that day", from the newspaper La Tercera de la Hora, Sunday October 12th 1999, page 6.

¹³⁷ The date marks the the day in 1953 when a group of guerrillas, led by Fidel Castro, attacked a military garrison. One of the landmarks of the Cuban revolution.

¹³⁸ See the report by Victor Vaccaro "El Ultimo Invento de la Derecha: Como un Policia Fabrica un Asesino" (The Last Invention of the Right: How a Policeman Fabricates an Assassin), in the weekly magazine Chile Hoy, No.60, August 3rd to August 9th 1973, page 7.

Arturo Araya had become one of his most appreciated collaborators and friends.¹³⁹

The event shook the country. Allende ordered CONSUENA¹⁴⁰, and the intelligence services of the Armed Forces, together with the Plice and Investigations, to form a commission to investigate what had happened. Several days later, the Right wing press informed its readers in front page headlines that the Police had arrested one of the participants in the assassination: he was a worker and an electrician, named Jose Riquelme Bascuñan, a militant member of the Socialist Party. He was charged by German Esquivel, who was an intelligence captain in the Police. Riquelme had “confessed” that the commando which had assassinated the ADC Arturo Araya was led by a Mr. Blanco (Domingo Blanco Tarres, “Bruno”), a member of the GAP, accompanied by three Cubans and other militants from the Revolutionary Workers Front of the MIR and the Socialist Party.¹⁴¹

The revelation caused by this accusation was tremendous. The Left were being blamed for the assassination, not just the Left but especially the GAP, the group of people closest to the President of the Republic. For the Director General of Investigations the police investigation was conclusive: Detective Arrieta expressed the same view¹⁴² and the ex-GAP, Isidro Garcia confirmed that on the night of the assassination, “Bruno” was acting as head of the escort team to the President, i.e. they were travelling in the same car.¹⁴³ I believe that the strategy was to try and belittle the organisation of Presidential security, to hurry the process up of separating the Armed Forces from the Government and to deprive the Unidad Popular of the only officer who could have led sailors from the Navy in its defence.¹⁴⁴ Moreover it made the acquisition of Soviet weapons for the Chilean Army collapse. General Nikolai Leonov, ex Vice-Director of the State Security

¹³⁹ See the report from Monica Gonzalez “Quienes Asesinaron al Comandante Araya” (Who killed Commander Araya) in the bi-monthly magazine *Cauce*, No.15, from June 26th to July 9th 1984, page 24.

¹⁴⁰ Consejo Superior de Seguridad Nacional (The State Security Council), an organisation that advised the President on security matters.

¹⁴¹ See the report by Victor Vaccaro “El Último Invento de la Derecha: Como un Policia Fabrica un Asesino” (The Last Invention of the Right: How a Policeman Fabricates an Assassin), in the weekly magazine *Chile Hoy*, No.60, August 3rd to August 9th 1973, page 7.

¹⁴² Testimony of Alfredo Joignant, ex-Director of Investigations, and Adolfo Arrieta, ex-detective

¹⁴³ Testimony of Isidro Garcia

¹⁴⁴ Testimonies of Luis Ayala, Guillermo Castillo and Rodolfo Claros, all members of the Navy. They, together with other sailors, were detained in August 1973, accused of conspiring to carry out a coup in support of the Unidad Popular.

Committee of the USSR (KGB), confirms that the boats with the Soviet weapons (tanks), which had been asked for by General Prats and which were on their way, received the order to turn back since in the highest Soviet echelons “the reaction of President Allende to the assassination of his naval ADC produced a very negative reaction: Allende didn’t take advantage of this moment to mobilise the masses and take to the streets”¹⁴⁵

The name and photograph of “Bruno” appeared in the headlines of all the papers of the opposition press.¹⁴⁶ In that way the secret was broken and so was the compartmentalisation of the GAP, therefore putting at risk the President’s security. But, who was Domingo Blanco Tarres?. He was the head of the Group of Parsonal Friends, He was descended from a French-Italian immigrant family and in 1973 he was 32 years of age and married with a daughter.¹⁴⁷ He worked as an employee in a family shop in the north of the capital. He studied medicine and it was there that he contacted the National Liberationm Army of Bolivia, Chilean section (the ELN). Before entering the GAP he was a well known Socialist activist, had a long experience as an organiser of the people and “was responsible”.¹⁴⁸ He was sent by the Socialist Party to Cuba to receive paramilitary training, specifically in security.¹⁴⁹

After the assasination of Commander Araya, “Bruno” remained permanently hidden for a time while the crime was being investigated. He stopped accompanying Allende on his visits, and dedicated himself to improving the conditions for the defence of the presidential residences, before the imminent arrival of new coup attempt.¹⁵⁰

After June 29th 1973 and especially after the assassination of Captain Araya, the GAP were put on full alert. Salvador Allende ordered them to carry loaded weapons.¹⁵¹ All the members already could see a military uprising coming.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ Nikolai Leonov “La Inteligencia Sovietica en America Latina Durante la Guerra Fria” (Soviet Intelligence in Latin America during the Cold War), Estudios Publicos, 73 (1999), page 55.

¹⁴⁶ Especially see the newspaper La Segunda at the end of July and the beginning of August 1973.

¹⁴⁷ “Report” of the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, an extract from the newspaper La Nacion (1991).

¹⁴⁸ The expression is Felix Huerta’s.

¹⁴⁹ Conversation with Maria Soledad Blanco, daughter of “Bruno”.

¹⁵⁰ Testimony of Isidro Garcia.

¹⁵¹ See the report by Mauricio Carvallo “The return of the GAP: giving their lives for Salvador Allende”, in the newspaper El Mercurio of Santiago, Section D, page 8, September 12th 1999.

¹⁵² Testimony of Enrique Ramos.

At this stage, there existed a consensus of opinion in the Left that a military coup was imminent. The different organisations only disagreed about the form it would take: for the Left it would be a weak coup which would put the government in the hands of the Christian Democrats (testimony of Andres Pascal), while Alfredo Joignant, the then Director General of the Police Investigations department says that in answer to a report about a possible coup d'état which he made available to the President, Allende replied "Your report's very good but tell your detectives not to speculate about a weak coup because a strong Left will give it a knockout blow".¹⁵³

Maybe the most novel event of the time was the petition of General Carlos Prats that the GAP send some men for his personal protection. "He asked us for help because he trusted us. It was very flattering because we realised that he saw that the work we were doing was serious, efficient and loyal".¹⁵⁴ Evidently, from August 1973, the general no longer trusted his subordinates.¹⁵⁵ This break, in my opinion, was responsible, to a great extent, for the fall of Salvador Allende's government.

A little before the military coup materialised the GAP diminished in numbers: in no way did it exceed 50 members. To the group who had deserted after the day of the tanks on June 29th 1973 were added others, who fled principally to Chuquicamata, where "Fernando" was, together with other ex members. They went "because of the high wages they were paying there".¹⁵⁶ Although I do not possess testimonies as to the activities they were involved in, it is not difficult to imagine that in some way they were security related. Enrique Ramos- ex-GAP- thinks the "elenos" (the members of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia, Chilean section) wanted to disarm the GAP but there are no reasons to justify this claim. At the same time the Socialist Party took Wagner Salinas and Francisco Lara out of the team and integrated them into their military apparatus: both of them became involved in security for the Party leaders and were known as "gapitos".¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Testimony of Alfredo Joignant.

¹⁵⁴ Testimony of Manuel Cortes, ex-GAP, quoted by Viviana Candia in her report "Ex-GAP in internal war about the Table of Dialogue (La Mesa de Dialogo), face to face", *La Segunda* newspaper, Friday September 10th 1999, page 10.

¹⁵⁵ At the end of the month he had to resign as he could no longer count on the support of the generals

¹⁵⁶ Testimony of Enrique Ramos.

¹⁵⁷ The "gapitos" were known militants of the Socialist Party who were in charge of security for the principal party leaders. For example, Adonis Sepulveda had two of them. They used to sleep in his apartment and carry weapons, They were proven to be totally loyal.

2.6 The battle for La Moneda

At 7.35 a.m. on the morning of September 11th 1973, the three blue Fiats which were carrying the President of the Republic, Salvador Allende, and a part of the GAP escort team, screeched to a halt outside the main door of the Moneda Palace in Santiago. The drivers left their charges and went to park their cars in their respective garages, while being prepared at any moment to abandon the place. Allende alighted, carrying a AKA-47 rifle, with a round in the chamber. He was dressed in a bullet proof waistcoat, a grey jersey with dark grey patches on the collar, dark grey trousers and black shoes - his combat dress.¹⁵⁸ Protected by his escort he went into the Moneda to his office on the second floor. He immediately ordered that the GAP take up combat positions on the wings of the palace that looked over the Plaza de la Constitucion (Constitution Square) and Morande street: he also demanded that "Carlos Alamos" and two of his men should be always at his side. These would not allow armed troops to enter the President's office as he was afraid of being betrayed.¹⁵⁹ The GAP obeyed and put in place two .30 machine guns. Then they waited.

Allende's main worry was to discover if he could count on military forces who would be willing to confront the sailors who had revolted in Valparaiso. At that time this was the only thing that the President knew.¹⁶⁰ At about 8 a.m. the group of the GAP who came from El Cañaveral and Tomas Moro approached the palace: it was made up of various vehicles which contained around 14 people. Under the command of "Bruno" they had come to reinforce their companions in the defence of La Moneda. They brought with them automatic weapons and ammunition clips. When they got to the corner where the Intendancy of Santiago was, in front of the Presidential palace, "Bruno" in act of imprudent confidence, thinking that the police who were on guard there were loyal to the Unidad Popular, went up to them to enquire about the situation. Suddenly the police pulled out their guns and disarmed the group.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Oscar Soto "El Ultimo Dia..." (1999), page 66.

¹⁵⁹ Jorge Timossi "Grandes Alamedas" (1974), page 77.

¹⁶⁰ That morning in his first speech to the nation, Allende said that "There are confirmed reports that elements of the Navy have isolated Valparaiso and that the city has been occupied" and he added that "as a first stage we have to see the response, which I hope is a positive one, of the soldiers of the Republic who have sworn to defend the established regime...". Quoted by Oscar Soto in "El Ultimo Dia", pages 67-68.

¹⁶¹ On this point witnesses accounts are very imprecise, but they all coincide in the fact a group of the GAP was detained outside the Intendancy. Enrique Roper Contreras, son of Miria Contreras (Payita) suffered a similar experience. What is not clear is whether he was detained along with "Bruno's" group or afterwards. There are photographs witnessing his capture.

The person with the chief responsibility in the GAP and the reinforcements he commanded had been taken prisoner, paradoxically, without offering any resistance. That part of the group could not comply with their commitment to reunite with Allende. With their detention, an important part of the combat capability of the team had been wiped out. When Allende heard of the situation he ordered the man he recognised as Director General of the Police, General Jose Maria Sepulveda Galindo, to go to the Intendancy and free "Bruno" and his companions. The general went through the motions but they resulted in nothing.¹⁶² The police at the Intendancy did not obey Sepulveda Galindo but the new command of General Mendoza. The key factor in the controlling the police force was, it seems, the capture by the coup organisers of the Central Communications building of the police (CENCO). From there they issued all their instructions by radio. The fate of the GAP group was sealed.

A little afterwards a group of 7 detectives, who formed part of the Investigations group of the Presidential escort and who were under the command of Juan Soane, arrived to reinforce the Moneda.¹⁶³

At about 8 o'clock in the morning, through a voluntary chain of radio stations, led by Radio Agricultura and Radio Minería and preceded by martial music and the national Anthem, the Military Junta gave out Proclamation No.1 which effectively deposed the Unidad Popular government. In the Moneda all doubts disappeared into smoke. They were in the presence of a coup which had united the Armed Forces and the Police. The last hope that Salvador Allende had was to see if he could count on some units of the military who could begin a counter coup and put in place the alternative strategy of the Unidad Popular. For a while the Moneda thought that Maipo Regiment in Valparaíso was loyal to the government.¹⁶⁴ The Socialist Party was convinced that that in the event of a coup, there would be an immediate military counter coup. This was confirmed by Eric Schnake in a meeting of the Unidad Popular on Saturday September 8th in the Moneda Palace.¹⁶⁵ The panorama was a bleak one: not one regiment came out to defend the UP. The President knew that the paramilitary forces of the Socialist Party and the MIR, even though they were in quarters and were in a state of combat readiness with modern weapons, could only use their power to support units of the Army, and in no way take on a rising of all the Armed

¹⁶² Jorge Timossi "Las Grandes Alamedas..." (1974), pages 33-35.

¹⁶³ Ibid, page 34.

¹⁶⁴ See Luis Vega "La Caída de Allende..." (1983), page 275. This information Vega obtained from Juan Busros, the prefect of Investigations in Valparaíso, who remained in permanent contact with his superiors in La Moneda.

¹⁶⁵ Orlando Millas "Memorias 1957-1991" (Memories), 1996, page 363.

Forces. We know that the elite group of the MIR, called the Fuerza Central (Central Force), stayed in its quarters on that day and the days which followed without receiving orders to fight.¹⁶⁶ The alternative scenario therefore remained in pieces as no division of troops from any of the military institutions ever materialised. In the words of Adonis Sepulveda “The chance of a possible counter coup failed because the head of a possible defence force was directing the attackers. That is the tragi-comic part of our defeat.”¹⁶⁷

The author of this investigation has heard it mentioned insistently that General Pinochet was considered by Allende and his more influential supporters to be loyal and resolute defender of the President, along the lines of General Prats. It was a known fact that during the uprising on June 29th, he participated, together with General Prats, in putting it down. Even further than that, sources who have asked not to be revealed, indicated that he had been present and had intervened, giving instructions and laying out the locations of armed civilian groups who were loyal to the President, as late as the first days in September. This would explain not only the words already quoted from Adonis Sepulveda, but also those of Allende early on September 11th “What about poor Augusto?”. One cannot understand the attitudes of the high command of the MIR and the Socialist Party on the 11th if this is not taken into account. “Bruno”’s mistake, for example, can only be explained if one supposes that he trusted the Army and the Police. It is clear that the Government’s intelligence network did not detect any conspiracy apart from that of the Navy’s. If the Armed Forces were divided, then the armed revolutionary groups of the GAP, the Mir and the Socialists would have fought together with the forces loyal to President Allende. If, as had happened in June, the uprising had been crushed, the democratic bourgeois order would have also been overcome and the door opened to advance the creation of a revolution.

But the battle had been lost before the first shots were fired. The President had opted to fight, in fact he had already decided on it: not to give up power without fighting and thinking that this would, at least, be an example to future generations.¹⁶⁸ For the last defence of the Unidad Popular, a plan had been formulated which consisted of getting the President out

¹⁶⁶ Testimony of Fernando Alarcon, who was then a member of the Fuerza Central of the MIR.

¹⁶⁷ Adonis Sepulveda “Carta a la Direccion Interior del Partido Socialista, 8 de Septiembre de 1977” (Letter to the Internal Leadership of the Socialist Party, September 8th 1977), page 37, quoted in “Problemas del Partido Socialista de Chile Posteriores al Golpe Militar 1974-1981” (Problems facing the Chilean Socialist Party following the Military Coup, 1974-1981), 1988.

* See his last speech in Oscar Soto’s “El Ultimo Dia..” (1999)

of La Moneda, taking him to the basement of the State Bank, and hanging on there long enough in the hope that the workers in the industrial belts, with the addition of the military apparatus of the Left and a hypothetical loyal military force, would begin a counter coup. For this reason a group of the GAP had moved to the Ministry of Public Works and from the floors above, opened fire on the soldiers who were attacking the Palace. But the idea of getting Allende out was finally rejected, since the circle around the centre of Santiago had narrowed: it would be too costly, in fact it was impossible, to get out of the Moneda and into the State Bank building. The final decision of Allende was to stay where he was and fight.¹⁶⁹

As soon as there had been an exchange of fire and tanks were seen advancing towards the Moneda, Allende ordered that the women who were in the palace, together with those of his supporters who had no weapons or did not know how to use them, to abandon the place.¹⁷⁰ He forced his daughter Taty to go and find her husband "Demid" at the Cuban Embassy.¹⁷¹ He told her that she must survive to lead the Chilean people in future battles. It seems that Allende hoped that Taty would continue as the leader of a national Left.

A little before the bombardment of the Palace of La Moneda, Elsa Pavez, the wife of "Carlos Alamos", the highest of the GAP leaders who was present, managed to communicate with him. He seemed to be calm, asking her if she could hear the shots and the explosions and telling her to go to her mother's house and look after "the kid".¹⁷²

At 11.55 a.m. the Palace was bombarded by planes from the Chilean Airforce. In the century old building, crouching down, with gas masks and helmets, The President of the Republic continued the resistance, together with his advisors, several detectives and 16 men from his security team. The President, protected by a table, fired various rounds at the military forces with his AKA-47 rifle and, with "Carlos Alamos", loosed off an RPG-7 missile against a tank.¹⁷³

A little after 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th of September 1973, Salvador Allende, on hearing that military forces commanded by General

¹⁶⁹ Those who were most strongly opposed to the idea of Allende leaving the Moneda were "Carlos Alamos" and "Coco" Paredes. See Oscar Soto "El Ultimo Dia..." (1999), page 90.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, page 84

¹⁷¹ Speech of Beatriz Allende in the Plaza de la Revolution (Revolution Square), on the 28th of September 1973 in Jorge Tomassi's "Grandes Alamedas.." (1974), page 55

¹⁷² Testimony of Elsa Pavez. The "kid" was their son, who was only a few months old.

¹⁷³ Testimony of Oscar Soto.

Palacios had occupied the first floor of the Palace, ordered his men to go downstairs: he fooled them into believing he would go down last. The last ones who were going down the stairs heard two shots and later a cry from “Kique” the Intendant of the Palace “Allende is dead. Long live Chile !”. He then took up a rifle to continue the fight but Ricardo Pincheira snatched it away from him and told him it would be useless sacrifice.¹⁷⁴

The group which abandoned La Moneda with their hands in the air were forced to line up facing the building from Morande street. They consisted of “Carlos Alamos”, “Anibal”, “Kique” and 16 companions of the team which had defended the Chilean revolution and President Allende to the death.¹⁷⁵ The GAP had two wounded, who were taken to the Central Hospital: they had fulfilled their mission. Apart from the GAP, the others who abandoned the Moneda were the detectives of the escort, advisors to the President and a group of doctors from the Presidency: there was also Miria Contreras, the only woman who disobeyed Allende’s orders and stayed in the place. From the Ministry of Public Works building, the six members of the team stayed dug in and continued firing at the military who fired back. The frequency of the exchange of bullets slowly began dying away.¹⁷⁶ When their echoes finally ceased, the battle for La Moneda was over. A group of 40 men had fought for several hours against superior military forces. The Unidad Popular government had fallen and the Chilean revolution had vanished away, forever.

2.7 The day after

The 16 members of the Group of Personal Friends, under the command of “Carlos Alamos”, “Anibal” and “Kique” stayed for a long time stretched out on the ground. Later they were taken to the barracks of the Tacna Regiment, where they were put in the regiment’s stables.¹⁷⁷ There they were bound hand and foot and savagely beaten and tortured.¹⁷⁸ After

¹⁷⁴ See Oscar Soto “El Ultimo Dia..” (1999), page 93. Ricardo Pincheira (a doctor) was the information advisor to the President. He was detained with the other advisors: he remained missing until the middle of the 90’s when his body was found in Patio 29 of the General Cemetery. See the Report from the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, extract from the newspaper La Nacion (1991). An interesting summary of this report can be found in Estudios Publicos No. 41, (Summer 1991), pages 293-448.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, page 94.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, page 95.

¹⁷⁷ Testimony of Pablo Zepeda, ex-GAP. Interviewed by the journalist Osvaldo Zamorano in his programme “Curto Poder” on Radio Nuevo Mundo, Friday May 19th 2000.

¹⁷⁸ As above.

that all trace of them is lost. It is possible that they were taken out on the 13th of September and transferred to the military precinct of Peldehue, where they would have been shot. However, like the other members of the group, “Carlos Alamos” later appeared buried in Patio 29 of the General Cemetery. The fate of the group is still confusing today. For example, in October 1973, detectives from the Investigations Service arrived at the house of Elsa Pavez and her family looking for “Carlos Alamos”. For a long time they kept a watch on the house hoping that he would return. The detectives had no idea what had happened to him and thought that he was still alive and highly dangerous.¹⁷⁹

Out of the group led by “Bruno” (head of the GAP and detained on the corner of the Intendancy), which was composed of more or less 14 GAP members, three were summarily executed and their bodies thrown in the river Mapocho.¹⁸⁰ According to the Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, “Bruno” was transferred to the Centre for Preventive Detention in Santiago by State agents, taken from there and remains missing.¹⁸¹ Another version is that he was shot in the Intendancy.¹⁸² The only thing that is certain is that from there all traces of him disappear. Nobody knows what happened to the rest of the group who was detained with him.

The 6 GAP members who had fought during the day, shooting from the Ministry of Public Works, managed to escape the military cordon, pretending to be employees who were leaving the building. The soldiers asked for their identities but let them go. In the confrontation at the Presidential house in Tomas Moro street, “Luisito” (Felix Vargas Fernandez), who was then the political commissar of GAP, was wounded by shrapnel from mortar. He managed to survive for some time in houses of friends. He was then arrested by the DINA, taken to Tejas Verdes and from there, in 1974, all trace of him has been lost.¹⁸³

Two ex-members of the group were in Talca visiting their families: when they heard what was happening, they obeyed instructions and tried to reach the capital. They were arrested by police in the town of Curico and shot there a few days later. Their names were Wagner Salinas Muñoz and Francisco Lara Ruiz.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Testimony of Elsa Pavez, wife of “Carlos Alamos”

¹⁸⁰ Report of the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, extract from the newspaper *La Nación* (1991).

¹⁸¹ As above.

¹⁸² Testimony of Maria Soledad Blanco.

¹⁸³ Testimony of Bernardo Vargas Fernandez, brother of “Luisito”.

¹⁸⁴ Testimony of Isidro Garcia and Enrique Ramos, both ex-GAP. Also see the Report of the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, extract from the newspaper *La Nación* (1991).

Others who were nothing to do with the GAP, like the ex-paratrooper Mario Melo, advisor to the President, were detained by the military and remain missing.¹⁸⁵

The members of the GAP who were arrested were treated with violence and cruelty. The behaviour of the police and the military can be explained - but in no way justified - principally because the soldiers at that time were expecting fierce government resistance. In its defence there were supposed to be civilians and soldiers from the MIR and the Unidad Popular. There is only one more thing to note: the insurgent troops, who were in battle dress, tied an orange handkerchief around their neck, the objective of which was to distinguish themselves from other soldiers who had the same battle dress but who supported the Unidad Popular. Such was the fear of a ferocious resistance, house to house and street to street, as had been announced repeatedly before, that this set off the violence in the victorious soldiers.

Some members of the GAP (The Group of Personal Friends)

Antonio Aguirre Vasquez. Wounded in the fighting at La Moneda, transferred to the Central Hospital, taken out from there and remains missing

Fernando Amaya. Ex-commando, arrested, disappeared.

Francisco Argandoña ("Mariano"). Head of the Advance Group. Survived Oscar Aviles Jofre.¹⁸⁶ Fought in the Moneda. His remains were found in Patio 29 of the General Cemetery.

Luis Barraza Rhul. Retired Army NCO. Detained and missing since October 1973

Domingo Blanco Tarres ("Bruno"). Head of the team. Detained on the corner of the Intendancy and still missing.

Fidel Bravo Alvarez. Detained and remains missing.

Jose Carreño Calderon. Detained together with "Bruno" at the Intendancy. Executed on the 19th of September 1973. His body was secretly buried in Patio 29 of the General Cemetery.

Manuel Castro Zamorano. Fought in La Moneda. Remains missing

Manuel Cespedes ("Osvaldo"). Belonged to the Garrison. Fought at Tomas Moro. Survived.

Julio Chacon Hormazabal. Arrested and remains missing

¹⁸⁵ As above.

¹⁸⁶ At the moment of his arrest he was part of the security team guarding Pedro Vuskovic, the ex-Minister of the Economy. He accompanied him to La Moneda on the 11th of September.

Ezequiel Contreras Carrasco. Died October 1973.

Carlos Cortes ("El Patan"). Driver. Fought in the Ministry of Public Works. Survived.

Carlos Cruz Zavala. Detained at the Intendancy alongside "Bruno". His body was found in the river Mapocho in September 1973.

Oscar Delgado Marin. Executed September 1973.

Miguel Fuentes. Survived.

Jose Freire Medina. Fought in La Moneda. Remains missing.

Luis Gamboa Pizarro¹⁸⁷. Disappeared from El Cañaveral. Was executed on the 19th of September and secretly buried in Patio 29 of the General Cemetery.

Nestor Gallardo Agüero ("Bolche"). Militant of the MIR, Remains missing.

Juan Garces Portagliati. Detained with "Bruno" at the Intendancy. Remains missing.

Isidro Garcia ("Roberto"). Driver Fought in Ministry of Public Works. Survived.

Hugo Garcia. Survived, resides outside the country.

Francisco Gomez ("Fernando"). First leader of the team. Survived, lives outside the country.

Daniel Gutierrez Ayala. Fought in La Moneda. Remains missing.

Leonardo Enriquez ("Ignacio"). Belonged to the Advance Group. Survived.

Enrique Huerta ("Kique"). First of the GAP and intendant of the Palace. Fought in La Moneda. Remains missing.

Gonzalo Jorquera Leighton ("Ramon"). Detained with "Bruno" at the Intendancy. His body was found in the Mapocho in September 1973.

Oscar Lagos Rios. Fought in La Moneda. Remains missing.

Francisco Lara Ruiz. Shot in the town of Curico, September 1973.

Ricardo Loyola ("Daniel"). Survived.

Max Marambio ("Ariel Fontana"). Chief of the first stage. Survived

Mario Melo Pradenas. Ex-paratrooper, GAP instructor. Detained and missing since October 1973.

Edmundo Montero Salazar. Detained with "Bruno" at the Intendant. Remains missing

Julio Moreno Pulgar. Telephonist in La Moneda. Fought there on the 11th of September. Remains missing.

Juan Jose Montiglio Murua ("Anibal"). One of the leaders. Fought at La Moneda. Remains missing

¹⁸⁷ Es posible que fuera uno de los GAP que se quedó para defender El Cañaveral. No existe claridad al respecto. Desde allí se pierde su rastro y fue ejecutado en el puente Bulnes del río Mapocho.

Jorge Ojeda Jara. Was detained and taken to Tejas Verdes. Missing
 Manuel Ojeda Disselkoen. Militant in the MIR. Died in the INDUMET
 factory in September 1973.

Juan Agustin Orellana ("Patricio"). Operative and part of the escort. Sur-
 vived.

Javier Pacheco Montsalve ("Pato"). Died in October 1973.

Sergio Perez. Member of the Central Committee of the MIR. Arrested
 and died in 1974.

William Ramirez Barria. Fought in La Moneda. Detained and remains
 missing.

Oswaldo Ramos Rivera ("Manuel"). Civilian ADC to the Presi-
 dent. Survived.

Luis Rodriguez Riquelme ("Mauricio"). Fought in La Moneda.
 His body was found in Patio 29 of the General Cemetery.

Rafael Ruiz ("El Rafa"). Was ordered by the leadership to take
 weapons to the INDUMET factory. Survived.

Wagner Salinas Muñoz. Ex-boxer. Shot in the town of Curico
 September 1973.

Marcelo Schilling ("Gaston"). Political commissar. Survived.

Jaime Sotelo Ojeda ("Carlos Alamos"). Head of the Escort. Com-
 mander at the battle of La Moneda. His body was found in Patio 29 of
 the General Cemetery.

Humberto Sotomayor. Member of the Political Commission of the
 MIR. Was sent by this organisation to sort out the problems in the
 GAP. Survived.

Julio Tapia Martinez. Fought in La Moneda. Remains missing.

Hector Urrutia Molina. Fought in La Moneda. His remains were
 found in Patio 29 of the General Cemetery.

Oscar Valladares Caroca. Fought in La Moneda. Remains mis-
 sing.

Felix Vargas Fernandez ("Luisito"). Last political commissar of
 the team. Was wounded at Tomas Moro. For a while was detained and
 then taken to Tejas Verdes. Remains missing.

Juan Vilches Yañez. Was detained. Remains missing.

Joaquin Walker Arangua. Was detained in September 1973. Re-
 mains missing.

Pablo Zepeda. Fought in La Moneda. Survived.

¹⁸⁸ Según la autopsia, tenía signos de la acción de fuego en su cuerpo.

REFERENCIAS

Publicaciones

- Alarcón Ramírez, Dariel (Benigno). *Memorias de un Soldado Cubano: Vida y Muerte de la Revolución*. Barcelona: Tusquets editores, 1997.
- Candia, Viviana. "Ex GAP en Guerra Interna por la Mesa de Diálogo, Frente a Frente". *La Segunda*, viernes 10 de septiembre de 1999, pp. 10-11.
- Carvalho, Mauricio. "El Regreso de los GAP: La Vida por Salvador Allende". *El Mercurio*, Domingo 12 de septiembre de 1999. Cuerpo D, pp. 1-10.
- Casanueva V., Fernando; Fernández C., Manuel. *El Partido Socialista y la Lucha de Clases en Chile*, Santiago: Editorial Quimantú, 1973.
- Castillo E., Carmen. *Un día de Octubre en Santiago* (aproximadamente 1979).
- Comisión de Orientación Revolucionaria del Comité Central del Partido Comunista de Cuba. *Cuba-Chile*. La Habana: Ediciones Políticas, 1972.
- Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación (Comisión Rettig). "Informe". Extra del diario *La Nación*, Santiago, 12 de marzo de 1991. Un extracto del informe apareció en *Estudios Públicos*, 41 (verano 1991).
- Drake, Paul. *Socialismo y Populismo: Chile 1936-1973*, Valparaíso: Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Primera edición, 1992.
- Edwards, Jorge. *Persona non Grata*. Barcelona: Tusquet Editores, primera edición, 1991.
- . "Cuba: Cuarenta Años Después". *Estudios Públicos*, 76 (1999).
- El Clarín*. Edición del 11 de noviembre de 1971.
- El Sur*, Suplemento *Extra el Sur*. Concepción, sábado 7 de junio de 1969.
- Escaparate Ediciones. *Miguel Enríquez: Con Vista a la Esperanza*. Santiago: Escaparate Ediciones, 1998.
- Fogel, Jean-François; Rosenthal, Bertrand. *Fin de Siglo en La Habana: Los Secretos del Derrumbe de Fidel*. Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, tercera edición, 1995.
- Fontaine T., Arturo. "Estados Unidos y la Unión Soviética en Chile". *Estudios Públicos* N° 72, primavera (1998), pp. 5-16.
- Fuentes, Norberto. *Dulces Guerreros Cubanos*. Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral Los Tres Mundos, 1999.
- Fuentes Wendling, Manuel. *Memorias Secretas de Patria y Libertad y Algunas Confesiones Sobre la Guerra Fría en Chile*. Santiago: Editorial Grijalbo, segunda edición, 1999.
- González, Mónica. "Quiénes Asesinaron al Comandante Araya". *Cauce*, N° 15, quinceña del 26 de junio al 9 de junio de 1984, p. 24.
- González Pino, Miguel; Fontaine Talavera, Arturo. *Los Mil Días de Allende*. Dos volúmenes, Santiago: Centro de Estudios Públicos, 1997.
- Guzmán J., Nancy. *Un Grito Desde el Silencio: Detención, Asesinato y Desaparición de Bautista von Schouwen y Patricio Munita*. Santiago: Lom Editores, primera edición, 1998.
- Jobet, Julio César. *El Partido Socialista de Chile*. Santiago: Prensa Latinoamericana, 1971.
- Leonov, Nikolai. "La Inteligencia Soviética en América Latina durante la Guerra Fría". *Estudios Públicos*, 73 (verano 1999).
- Loyola, Manuel; y Rojas, Jorge (compiladores). *Por un Rojo Amanecer: Hacia una Historia de los Comunistas Chilenos*. Santiago: Editado por Centro de Estudios Nacionales de Desarrollo Alternativo CENDA, 2000.

- Martínez Fernández, José. *Salvador Allende: Su Vida, su Pensamiento Político*. Santiago: Ediciones Palabra Escrita, 1988.)
- Masetti, Jorge. *El Furor y el Delirio: Itinerario de un Hijo de la Revolución Cubana*. Barcelona: Tusquets Editores, primera edición, 1999.
- Millas, Orlando. *Memorias 1957-1991*. Santiago: Ediciones Chile América CESOC, 1996.
- Olivares, Lilian. "Juicio Extranjero del día '11'. La Historia que Cuenta la CNN". *La Segunda*, viernes 10 de septiembre de 1999, p. 16.
- Opaso, Cristián (compilador y traductor). *Informes del Senado de los Estados Unidos. Frei, Allende y la Mano de la CIA*. Santiago: Las ediciones del Ornitorrinco, S/F.
- Organización de Estados Americanos. Comisión de Consulta Sobre Seguridad (CECS). *El Proceso Marxista-Leninista en Chile*. Estudio preparado por la CECS en su Vigésimo Primer Período de Sesiones Extraordinarias (29 de marzo de 1974).
- Prats González, Carlos. *Memorias: Testimonio de un Soldado*. Santiago: Pehuén Editores, tercera edición, 1987.
- Qué Pasa*. "Curimón, Paracaidas se Enredó en el Poste". Crónica. *Qué Pasa*, N° 52, 13 de abril de 1972, p. 46-47.
- Qué Pasa*. "Qué Pasa 25 años". Texto anexo en la edición N° 1.321, 3 de agosto de 1996.
- Ramírez Necochea, Hernán. *Apuntes de Historia de Chile*. (S/F)
- Sandoval Ambiado, Carlos. *M.I.R.: Una Historia*. Santiago: Sociedad Editorial Trabajadores, tomo I, 1990.
- Santí, Mario Enrico. "Mi Reino por el Caballo: Las dos Memorias de Lisandro Otero". *Estudios Públicos*, N° 76 (primavera de 1999).
- Sepúlveda A., Adonis. "Carta a la Dirección Interior del Partido Socialista, 8 de septiembre de 1977". Publicada por el autor en *Problemas del Partido Socialista de Chile Posteriores al Golpe Militar 1974-1981*. México D. F.: agosto de 1988.
- Soto, Óscar. *El Último Día de Salvador Allende*. Santiago: Aguilar Chilena de Ediciones, 1999.
- Stipicic, Cony; Beltrán, Gerardo. "Los GAP Cuentan el 11 de Septiembre: Sólo 24 de los Casi 50 Hombres del Grupo Lograron 'Combatir' ese Día". *La Tercera de la Hora*, domingo 12 de septiembre de 1999, p. 6.
- Timossi, Jorge. *Grandes Alamedas, el Combate del Presidente Allende*. La Habana: Editora de Ciencias Sociales, Instituto Cubano del Libro, segunda edición, abril de 1974.
- Vaccaro, Víctor. "El Último Invento de la Derecha: Cómo un Policía Fabrica un Asesino". *Chile Hoy*, N° 60, semana del 3 al 9 de agosto de 1973, p. 7.
- Vanguardia Revolucionaria Marxista (VRM). *Programa y Estatutos del Partido*. Santiago: Ediciones Vanguardia, 1964.
- Varas, Florencia. *Conversaciones con Viaux*. Santiago: editado por Florencia Varas, 1972.
- Varas, Augusto (compilador); Benavides, Leopoldo; Daire T, Alonso; Durán B., Luis; Fernandois H., Joaquín; Gómez, María Soledad; Moulian, Tomás; Torres, Isabel; Puccio H., Osvaldo; Vergara E., Jorge; Yopo H., Boris. *El Partido Comunista de Chile*. Estudio multidisciplinario. Santiago: CESOC-FLACSO, 1988.
- VEA. "Choque de Curimón: ¿Nuevo Comando Ultra?" N° 1.710, 6 de abril de 1972, pp. 9-10.
- Vega, Luis. *La Caída de Allende: Anatomía de un Golpe de Estado*. Jerusalén: La Semana Publicaciones Ltda., primera edición, 1983.
- Villegas, Harry. *Pombo: Un Hombre de la Guerrilla del Che*. La Habana: Editora Política, segunda edición, 1997.

Zamorano, Osvaldo. Entrevista a Pablo Zepeda, ex GAP, para su programa “Cuarto Poder”, de Radio Nuevo Mundo, edición del viernes 19 de mayo del 2000.

Entrevistas y conversaciones*

Alarcón, Fernando. Militante del MIR, miembro de la Fuerza Central. (Nueva York, mayo de 1999.)

Alarcón Ramírez, Dariel (“Benigno”). Electricista, ex coronel del Ministerio del Interior de la República de Cuba. Participó en la guerrilla del Che Guevara en Bolivia. (París, enero del 2000.)*

Arrieta, Adolfo. Durante la Unidad Popular se desempeñó como detective de la policía política del servicio de Investigaciones de Chile. (Santiago, diciembre de 1998.)

Ayala, Luis. Ex marinero de la Armada de Chile. (Liege, Bélgica, noviembre de 1999.)

Ayress, Nieves. Militante socialista, elena y del MIR. Participó en la guerrilla de Teoponte en Bolivia. Fue detenida por la DINA y llevada a Tejas Verdes. (Nueva York, mayo de 1999.)

Blanco, María Soledad. Hija de “Bruno” (Domingo Blanco Tarrés). (Santiago, junio del 2000.)

Burgos, Elizabeth***. Académica venezolana, experta en el tema de las guerrillas latinoamericanas. Múltiples conversaciones. (París, enero-febrero del 2000.)

Castillo, Guillermo. Ex marinero de la Armada de Chile. (Liege, Bélgica, noviembre de 1999.)

Catalán Pardo, Luisa. Esposa del GAP “Pato” (Javier Pacheco Monsalve). (Santiago, junio del 2000.)

Claros, Rodolfo. Ex marinero de la Armada de Chile. (Liege, Bélgica, noviembre de 1999.)

“Juan Fernández”. Ex miembro del aparato de informaciones (contrainteligencia) del Partido Socialista en Valparaíso. (Valparaíso, marzo de 1999.)

García, Isidro. Ex GAP, chofer, militante del Partido Socialista. Participó en el combate de La Moneda, disparando desde el edificio del Ministerio de Obras Públicas.

Huerta, Félix. Doctor en medicina, militante del Partido Socialista y miembro del Ejército de Liberación Nacional de Bolivia (sección chilena). (Santiago de Chile, septiembre de 1995.)

Joignant, Alfredo****. Militante socialista, ex Director General de la Policía de Investigaciones de Chile. (Santiago, agosto de 1998.)

Maginti, Jorge*****. Doctor en medicina, ex miembro de la Comisión Política del Partido Socialista. (París, noviembre de 1999.)

* Los nombres entre comillas y cursivas han sido inventados por el autor para proteger algunas identidades. Las fechas de las entrevistas aparecen entre paréntesis.

** De esta conversación efectuada en un parque de París no existe grabación, sólo hay notas. Testigo de que la reunión se efectuó es Elizabeth Burgos, quien además realizó los contactos para la charla.

*** De estas conversaciones solamente hay notas tomadas por el autor.

**** Sobre esta conversación efectuada en su oficina, solamente hay notas del autor.

***** De esta conversación sólo hay notas. Al autor lo acompañó la señorita Sophie Rousell Nattaff, quien fue testigo del encuentro.

- “Raúl Marcos”*. Miembro del aparato militar del Partido Socialista. (Santiago, mayo de 1994.)
- Pascal Allende, Andrés. Sociólogo, ex secretario general del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR). (La Habana, Cuba, julio de 1999.)
- Pavez, Elsa. Esposa de “Carlos Álamos” (Jaime Sotelo Ojeda). (Santiago, junio de 2000.)
- Ramos, Enrique. Ex GAP, militante del Partido Socialista. Formó parte de la escolta, fue edecán civil de Salvador Allende. (Santiago, junio de 2000.)
- Sepúlveda, Adonis. Senador, subsecretario General del Partido Socialista. (Santiago, invierno de 1994.)
- Soto, Óscar. Doctor en medicina, ex militante del Partido Socialista y miembro del Ejército de Liberación Nacional de Bolivia (sección chilena), médico personal de Salvador Allende. (Segovia, España, octubre de 1999.)
- Toro, Víctor. Poblador. Miembro del Comité Central del MIR. (Nueva York, mayo de 1999.)
- Toro, Carlos. Ingeniero, militante del Partido Comunista, ex subdirector de la Policía de Investigaciones. (Santiago, abril de 1999.)
- Vargas, Bernardo. Ex dirigente de la Confederación de Trabajadores del Cobre, militante socialista, hermano de “Luisito”. (Santiago, junio del 2000.)
- “El Viejo Alberto”, “Félix” (nombre de batalla; desconocemos su verdadero nombre). Ex militante del Partido Socialista y del MIR. (La Habana, agosto de 1999.) ☐