

The 1973 Chilean Military Coup: Remembering the Other September 11

Global Research News Hour Episode 36

By [Michael Welch](#), [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#), and [Peter Kornbluh](#)

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For much of the population, September 11 marks the anniversary of the infamous terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

But for the people of Chile, much of Latin America, and democratic reformers at large, it marks another significant anniversary.

On the morning of September 11, 1973, all branches of the Chilean Armed Forces had conspired to wrest control of the country from democratically-elected leader Salvador Allende. Allende, having been tipped about the military's activities, held his ground in his Presidential palace, La Moneda.

After Allende refused to negotiate or surrender, General Augusto Pinochet ordered a siege on the compound accompanied by military helicopter gunships and Air Force bombers. Salvador Allende died during the melee, apparently by his own hand, and a military junta took power headed by General Pinochet.

It is well documented that the US government, through the CIA, played a key role in the overthrow of the Allende government.

The new order in Chile saw massive economic reforms take effect. An alarming number of people were imprisoned and tortured under his rule. Over three thousand people are estimated to have been killed during Pinochet's 17 year reign.

Pinochet himself was eventually arrested in London in 1998, and faced with the unpleasant prospect of having to answer for his crimes.

The 40th anniversary of Chile's 9/11 is an occasion to ask what have been the impacts of

the coup, and the dictatorship that followed?

These questions are explored in depth by two people knowledgeable about the coup.

Michel Chossudovsky was a visiting Professor of Economics in Chile at the time of the coup. In this week's radio show, Chossudovsky reflects on his memories of the coup, and looks at how it served as a dress-rehearsal for the use of macro-economic reform as a weapon for disarming governments worldwide.

Peter Kornbluh then recounts the US role in the affair. He is the author of *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*, recently updated to mark the 40th anniversary of the coup. Not only does he elaborate on the proof of the US connection with the coup, he explains his conviction that the arrest of Pinochet marks a major turning point in terms of holding past and present state criminals accountable.

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