Limitless Land and the Redefinition of Rights: Popular Mobilisation and the Limits of Neoliberalism in Chile, 1973–1985

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Abstract. In 1985, the Pinochet dictatorship reversed radical neoliberal urban development policy in response to economic crisis and political pressure mounted by the urban poor in alliance with the Catholic Church and the Left. The regime's free-market policies conflicted with a popular sector political culture that considered housing a right which the state must uphold. To implement its radical policies, the regime sought to change the understanding that housing was a right and the state a legitimate target of demand. However, it was unsuccessful. In the early 1980s, organised *pobladores* successfully brought the affordable-housing crisis to the forefront of public attention via the resurrection of pre-coup forms of direct action and pressured the dictatorship to back down from neoliberal dogmatism.

Keywords: neoliberalism, protest, public housing, social movements, pobladores, urban development

Introduction

In 1979, the Pinochet dictatorship decreed a new urban development plan, the Política Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano (National Urban Development Policy, PNDU/79), declaring that urban land was not a scarce resource.[1] PNDU/79 overturned 1974 legislation that froze city limits to save agricultural land from urban encroachment. The logic behind PNDU/79,

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[1] Important related legislation was DS no. 420/79, Modificación del Plan Intercomunal de Santiago.

rooted in neoliberal ideology, was that urban land only seemed scarce because state regulation distorted the functioning of the market. Consequently, the regime removed the limits on urban expansion and deregulated the urban land market, arguing that if the supply of urban land increased, real estate prices would fall, ameliorating the affordable-housing crisis. In other words, the 'natural' functioning of the free market would produce housing options commensurate with demand, if only the state would cease 'distorting' it. In practice, the opposite occurred: deregulation encouraged rampant private-sector speculation and drove real estate prices upward, exacerbating the affordable-housing deficit.[2]

Meanwhile, at the height of the Chilean 'economic miracle' (1978–81), widely lauded as proof of the radical neoliberal model's success, land invasions (*tomas*) reappeared for the first time since the coup.[3] Between 1978 and 1983, Santiago witnessed nearly 20 tomas. Heavy repression usually prevented their consolidation, but they drew public attention to the dictatorship's short-comings and suscitated solidarity with the *pobladores*' plight.[4] Then, in September 1983, in the context of national protest centred primarily in the *poblaciones*, 30,000 pobladores carried out the largest toma in Chile's history.[5]

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[2] Rodrigo Hidalgo Dattwyler, *La vivienda social en Chile y la construcción del espacio urbano en el Santiago del siglo XX* (Santiago: DIBAM, 2005), pp. 366–71; Patricio Gross, 'Santiago de Chile (1925–1990): planificación urbana y modelos políticos', in Carlos de Mattos et al. (eds.), *Santiago en EURE: huellas de una metamorfosis metropolitana 1970/2000* (Santiago: Instituto de Estudios Urbanos y Territoriales/PUC, 2006), pp. 159–68; Francisco Sabatini, 'Reforma de los mercados de suelo en Santiago, Chile: efectos sobre los precios de la tierra y la segregación residencial', in de Mattos et al. (eds.), *Santiago en EURE*, pp. 401–40.

[3] The Chilean dictatorship is known for its radical dogmatic neoliberalism between approximately 1974 and 1982. As analysts point out, the state is central to the implementation and maintenance of neoliberal systems despite political rhetoric to the contrary. See David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Marcus Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way: Neoliberalism and Social Transformation in Chile* (London: Pluto Press, 2006).

[4] Pobladores are residents of *poblaciones* or *campamentos*. Poblaciones are urban poor and working-class neighbourhoods, usually resulting from a combination of public housing programmes and tomas. Campamentos are organised squatter settlements resulting from tomas. The pobladores movement has included struggles for affordable housing and infrastructure, economic subsistence and political influence. It reached mass proportions during the 1960s and early 1970s. See Mario Garcés, *Tomando su sitio: el movimiento de pobladores de Santiago, 1957–1970* (Santiago: LOM, 2002); and 'Construyendo "Las Poblaciones": el movimiento de pobladores durante la Unidad Popular', in Julio Pinto Vallejos (ed.), *Cuando hicimos historia: la experiencia de la Unidad Popular* (Santiago: LOM, 2005), pp. 57–79; and Vicente Espinoza, *Para una historia de los pobres de la ciudad* (Santiago: SUR, 1988).

[5] See Sergio Wilson, *El drama de las familias sin casa y los allegados* (Santiago: AVEC, 1985), p. 126; and *La otra ciudad: de la marginalidad a la participación social* (Santiago: Editorial Jurídica, 1988), pp. 109–10; and Verónica Salas, 'Rasgos históricos del movimiento de pobladores', in Luis Vitale et al., *Para recuperar la memoria histórica: Frei, Allende, y Pinochet* (Santiago: CESOC, 1999), p. 373.

Despite violent eviction attempts, the pobladores held their ground, forcing the dictatorship to negotiate a solution. As was historically the case, the pobladores did not expect free housing: they demanded state action to assure supply of housing and mortgages appropriate to the realities of low-income households. This expectation directly contradicted the neoliberal prescriptions that defined the regime's approach to urban planning and housing programmes. Between 1973 and 1985, influence and political pressure ran in both directions – albeit in unequal measure – as pobladores insisted that housing was a right and sought more state participation in the economy on their behalf even as the regime denied this right and attempted to further curtail state participation in urban planning and low-income housing. Amidst economic crisis and national protest, after the largest toma in Chilean history, and in contradiction to prevailing neoliberal ideology, between 1983 and 1985 the regime expanded public housing programmes and reversed PNDU/79. It declared urban land a scarce resource of 'inelastic' supply and decreed that state planning and regulation be brought to bear on all aspects of urban development.[6]

This paper makes three interrelated arguments. First, the regime's free-market policies conflicted with a popular sector political culture that considered housing a right and the state responsible for enforcement of it, including, if necessary, fulfilment via public programmes. To implement the radical neoliberal urban development policies of the 1970s and early 1980s, the regime sought to change the understanding that housing was a right and the state a legitimate target of demand. It was unsuccessful in changing this view, although it did eliminate tomas for a few years through repression. Second, in the early 1980s and in combination with the broader national protest movement, organised pobladores brought the affordable-housing crisis to the forefront of public attention via the resurrection of pre-coup forms of direct action, especially tomas. In doing so, they successfully pressured the dictatorship to back down from earlier neoliberal dogmatism in urban development. Although during the mid- to late 1980s the regime deepened neoliberal transformation in other social welfare sectors, especially health care, education and pensions, it curtailed further radical state retrenchment in low-income housing and reversed PNDU/79. It is worth noting that there were similar crises of access to health care and education, but mass protest and direct action did not target these areas as intensively as housing; this could account in part for the difference in the state's reaction. In the case of housing, the dictatorship, while extremely repressive and dogmatic, responded to popular pressure, although it did not return state involvement to pre-coup levels and maintained the basic neoliberal framework. Third, in this case the limits of

[6] Gross, 'Santiago de Chile', pp. 167–8.

radical neoliberal policy were set by the limits of pobladores' tolerance and their capacity for organisation in the face of repression. Although the pobladores failed to overturn the neoliberal model as a whole, through the resurrection of pre-coup forms of direct action they successfully pressured the dictatorship to change course in at least one major area of market liberalisation.

Literature and methodology

The literature on neoliberalism, popular sector organisation, poblaciones and urban development is fragmented across several disciplines. Existing studies of neoliberalism in Chile treat the political economy of the shift from the industrialising *estado benefactor* to the neoliberal state, scrutinise the elite economists who implemented the radical neoliberal model, and analyse ideological and political conflicts among the post-coup military elite regarding economic development policy.[7] Studies of the urban popular sectors incorporate the neoliberal economic model in terms of the repression required to implement it, the economic crises it generated, and the crises' role as catalysts for subsistence organisations in the poblaciones and the outbreak of national protest in 1983.[8] Others focus on post-1990 neoliberalism, limited democracy and its implications for socio-political organisation.[9] With few

[7] J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela (eds.), *Military Rule in Chile: Dictatorship and Oppositions* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Eduardo Silva, 'The Political Economy of Chile's Regime Transition: From Radical to "Pragmatic" Neo-liberal Policies', in Paul W. Drake and Iván Jaksic (eds.), *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), pp. 98–127; Patricio Meller, *Un siglo de economía política chilena (1890–1990)* (Santiago: Andrés Bello, 2007); Juan Gabriel Valdés, *Pinochet's Economists: The Chicago School of Economics in Chile* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Verónica Valdivia, *El golpe después del golpe: Leigh vs. Pinochet, Chile 1973–1980* (Santiago: LOM, 2003); Guillermo Campero, 'Entrepreneurs Under the Military Regime', in Drake and Jaksic (eds.), *The Struggle for Democracy*, pp. 128–58; Judith A. Teichman, *The Politics of Freeing Markets in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and Mexico* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*.

[8] Philip D. Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society: The Popular Sectors and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1995); Cathy Lisa Schneider, *Shantytown Protest in Pinochet's Chile* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995); Alison J. Bruey, 'Neoliberalism and Repression in *Poblaciones* of Santiago de Chile', *Stockholm Review of Latin American Studies*, 5 (2009), pp. 17–27; Gabriel Salazar and Julio Pinto, *Historia contemporánea de Chile*, vol. 2: *Actores, identidad y movimiento* (Santiago: LOM, 1999). See also Luis Razeto et al., *Las organizaciones económicas populares* (Santiago: PET, 1983), and other PET studies of the 1980s.

[9] See Tomás Moulian, *Chile actual: anatomía de un mito* (Santiago: LOM, 2002); Peter Winn (ed.), *Victims of the Chilean Miracle: Workers and Neoliberalism in the Pinochet Era, 1973–2002* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); Gabriel Salazar and Julio Pinto, *Historia contemporánea de Chile*, vol. 1: *Estado, legitimidad, ciudadanía*

exceptions, the extant literature emphasises neoliberalism's negative effects on democracy, income distribution and popular sector socio-political power.[10] Neoliberalism is presented as a steamroller that popular sector organisations, labour and the Left were unable to stop.

Most studies of the pobladores movement during the Pinochet dictatorship are in the fields of political science and sociology, and were researched and produced in the 1980s, when pobladores' unexpected political protagonism attracted social scientists' attention. Historians have focused almost exclusively on the pre-1973 period.[11] Some social science literature is historically well-grounded, but most privileges immediate political junctures and lacks historical analysis, especially of popular sector political culture and tradition.[12] Neoliberalism and state programmes often appear in these studies as background context or mechanisms of oppression. The affordable-housing movement is generally elided in favour of 'new' social movement organisations for women, youth, human rights and/or *organizaciones económicas populares* (popular economic organisations, OEPs).[13] Housing committees were OEPs but were not 'new'. Their explicitly class-based concerns, their connections to political parties and their obvious roots in pre-coup political culture and practice did not fit the 'new' social movement paradigm. Other studies provide

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(Santiago: LOM, 1999); Julia Paley, *Marketing Democracy: Power and Social Movements in Post-Dictatorship Chile* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001); James Petras and Steve Vieux, 'The Transition to Authoritarian Electoral Regimes in Latin America', *Latin American Perspectives*, 21: 4 (1994), pp. 5–20.

[10] An exception is Joaquín Lavín, *Chile, revolución silenciosa* (Santiago: Zig-Zag, 1988). Heidi Tinsman explores neoliberalism's mixed legacies in 'More than Victims: Women Agricultural Workers and Social Change in Rural Chile,' in Winn (ed.), *Victims of the Chilean Miracle*, pp. 261–97.

[11] Exceptions are Mario Garcés and Sebastián Leiva, *El golpe en La Legua: los caminos de la historia y la memoria* (Santiago: LOM, 2005); and Alison J. Bruey, 'Organizing Community: Defying Dictatorship in Working-Class Santiago de Chile, 1973–1983', PhD diss., Yale University, 2007. Others provide overviews – for example, Gabriel Salazar and Julio Pinto, *Historia contemporánea de Chile*, vols. 1–5 (Santiago: LOM, 1999–2002).

[12] Exceptions are Schneider, *Shantytown Protest*; Gabriel Salazar, *Violencia política popular en las 'Grandes Alamedas': la violencia en Chile (1947–1987). Una perspectiva histórico popular* (2nd edition, Santiago: LOM, 2006); and Paley, *Marketing Democracy*.

[13] Exceptions to the former are Guillermo Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia y la acción política: las organizaciones de pobladores en Santiago* (Santiago: ILET, 1987); Teresa Valdés, 'El problema de la vivienda: políticas estatales y movilización popular', Working Paper no. 195 (Santiago: FLACSO, 1983); and Vicente Espinoza, 'Los pobladores en la política', Working Paper no. 27 (Santiago: Ediciones SUR, 1985). For a 'new social movement' focus, see especially Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*. On OEPs and other organisations, see Razeto et al., *Las organizaciones económicas*; and Teresa Valdés and Marisa Weinstein, *Mujeres que sueñan: las organizaciones de pobladoras en Chile 1973–1990* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1993); and Teresa Valdés, 'El movimiento de pobladores: 1973–1985. La recomposición de solidaridades sociales', in Jordi Borja et al., *Descentralización del estado: movimiento social y gestión local* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1987).

a counterpoint by analysing the importance to poblador organisation of 'old' social movement actors, specifically the Communist Party.[14]

Urban policy studies of the period do not generally discuss political culture or the relationship between popular pressure and policy shifts. A few studies produced during the dictatorship analyse housing policy, popular organisation and liberalisation, but because of the conditions under which they were produced they are somewhat disjointed and primarily descriptive.[15] In policy studies, pobladores frequently appear as objects of programmes rather than social and political protagonists. With few exceptions, urban development studies treat housing as a technocratic issue.[16] Nevertheless, these studies are important for their technical details.

This study builds upon the extant literature by interrogating the political and politico-cultural nature of neoliberal land and housing policy and its intersection with popular sector mobilisation during the dictatorship. It utilises the historical method as one qualitative approach to explicate the interaction between government policies, political culture and housing-related socio-political organisation. It is based primarily on archival field-work conducted in Chile and the United States.[17] These archives yielded government, Catholic Church, NGO and political party documents, ephemera and opposition media. Documents such as the military junta's meeting minutes and the annual reports of the Ministerio de Vivienda y

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[14] See Schneider, *Shantytown Protest*.

[15] See Valdés, 'El problema de la vivienda'; Sergio Rojas R., 'Políticas de erradicación y radicación de campamentos, 1982–1984: discursos, logros y problemas', Working Paper no. 215 (Santiago: FLACSO, 1984); Wilson, *La otra ciudad*; Espinoza, 'Los pobladores en la política'; and Eduardo Morales and Sergio Rojas, 'Relocalización socio-espacial de la pobreza: política estatal y presión popular, 1979–1985', in Jorge Chateau et al., *Espacio y poder: los pobladores* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1987), pp. 75–121. The last paper is more about campamento eradication and socio-spatial polarisation than popular pressure.

[16] See Dattwyler, *La vivienda social*; Alan Gilbert, 'Power, Ideology and the Washington Consensus: The Development and Spread of Chilean Housing Policy', *Housing Studies*, 17: 2 (2002), pp. 305–24; Sabatini, 'Reforma de los mercados'; and essays in Joan MacDonald (ed.), *Vivienda social: reflexiones y experiencias* (Santiago: CPU, 1983). See also the *Revista Latinoamericana de Estudios Urbano Regionales* (*EURE*) and *Revista INVI*. One exception is Fernando Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policies under Chile's Military Dictatorship, 1973–1985', *Latin American Perspectives*, 53: 14 (1987), pp. 157–86. However, this piece ignores the cumulative effect of the pre-1983 tomas.

[17] In Chile, the Archivo Nacional de la Administración, Biblioteca del Congreso – Santiago, Biblioteca Nacional, Biblioteca del Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo, Biblioteca San Ignacio, Biblioteca de la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile – Lo Contador, Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Biblioteca José Martí, Educación y Comunicaciones, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales – Chile, Corporación de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo, SUR Corporación de Estudios Sociales y Educación, and individuals' private collections. In the US, the University of Florida's Latin American Collection, the Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and Yale University's libraries.

Urbanismo (Ministry of Housing and Urbanism, MINVU) provide information related to state policies, ideology and positions. Church, NGO and party documents, opposition media and ephemera provide alternative perspectives, particularly as relates to the popular sectors.

Detailed theoretical discussion of the sources' utility for historical analysis is impossible to provide here. However, two notes are in order regarding mainstream newspapers and oral history. During the period in question, Chile's two mainstream dailies – *El Mercurio* and *La Tercera*, both right-wing, pro-government newspapers – toed the regime's line and spread its propaganda. This is their primary methodological utility in this case. *La Tercera* is more useful than *El Mercurio* when considering the regime's approach to the popular sectors. *La Tercera* was geared towards popular audiences, unlike its competitor.[18] It also reported more frequently and consistently on the poblaciones. Oral history is a rich methodology offering intriguing possibilities for further research, but this study analyses historical processes primarily through archival sources produced during the period under consideration. Oral history interviews, when they appear, are used qualitatively.

The Perennial Problem

Historically, Chilean state action benefiting urban popular sectors responded to popular organisation and pressure, but the 1973 coup interrupted this cycle. The popular sectors' traditional political organisations – political parties, labour unions, neighbourhood councils, housing committees and so on – were heavily repressed. Thus from 1973 until about 1980, state policy-makers made urban development decisions in a relative vacuum of popular participation or concern for the 'social cost' of policies. By 1975, the Chicago Boys – neoliberal economists trained at the University of Chicago and Chile's Universidad Católica – were solidly ensconced in the powerful economic, finance and planning ministries, with Pinochet's blessing and carte blanche to implement their programmes.

Despite the dictatorship's claims to apolitical technocracy, housing and urban land use were political issues for both pobladores and the regime. Throughout the twentieth century the movement for affordable housing was both political and focused on material demands. Politicians used the promise or provision of housing for political purposes, and pobladores mobilised to pressure the state to act in their interests. The pobladores movement was a crucible for grassroots community activists and party militants, and the tomas challenged the socio-spatial order of the city and structures of socio-economic

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[18] Kristin Sorensen, *Media, Memory and Human Rights in Chile* (New York: Macmillan, 2009), pp. 114–16.

disparity inherent in traditional urban land and real estate regimes.[19] Thus, the urban housing crisis and the traditions of collective action in the poblaciones presented the dictatorship with a conundrum. Urban development was a long-standing issue of proven volatility that required both political and economic management. The affordable-housing shortage in particular could not be repressed out of existence or confined to the realm of 'apolitical' technocratic prescriptions.

The housing crisis was of immediate concern to the junta: it presented enormous economic challenges, and severe crowding and lack of infrastructure contributed to social problems and disease outbreaks. Previous administrations had attempted to reduce housing deficits by incentivising private capital, prioritising state financing and construction, and subsidising self-construction. When the dictatorship took power, 73,356 public housing units remained unfinished, many pobladores lacked property titles, and the total deficit was 627,000 units.[20] In Santiago alone a reported 500,000 to 632,397 people inhabited *campamentos*.[21] The junta considered the housing crisis and pobladores a national security threat – the pobladores movement, which had pressured the government for housing programmes for decades in cooperation with political parties, labour unions and student organisations, was a force to contend with. The housing shortage and related upheaval, a thorn in the government's side since the late nineteenth century, became acute in the mid-twentieth century. Despite attempts to co-opt and repress it during the 1960s, the pobladores movement had managed to free itself from state control entirely by 1968, when popular sector mobilisation far outstripped housing programmes' capacity to deliver. Although low-income housing construction increased during the Unidad Popular (Popular Unity, UP) years (1970–3), so did the number of tomas. The junta was well aware that mobilisation for affordable housing, most often organised by the Left, had survived the anti-Communist repression of the 1940s and 1950s and violent repression of the 1950s and 1960s. It seemed that the pobladores movement might be difficult to repress for long, given historical precedent. Legacies of politicisation and leftist tradition in the poblaciones gave cause for

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[19] The Communist Party's involvement in tomas dates to the 1940s. The Socialists, the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria and the Christian Democrats also organised tomas in the pre-coup period. See Schneider, *Shantytown Protest*; and Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983); and 'Movimiento de pobladores y lucha de clases en Chile', in de Mattos et al. (eds.), *Santiago en EURE*, pp. 299–340.

[20] Actas de las Sesiones de la Honorable Junta de Gobierno (ADJ), Act 143a, 1974, p. 9, Biblioteca del Congreso-Santiago (BCS). Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policies', p. 172; in 1974 MINVU estimated a national deficit of 600,000 units. ADJ, Exposición del Ministro de Vivienda y Urbanización, Act 143a, 1974, p. 1, BCS.

[21] *La Tercera*, 23 Nov. 1973; Morales and Rojas, 'Relocalización', p. 83.

concern.[22] Campamentos were especially troubling, imbued as they were in the social imaginary with revolutionary connotations derived from the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria's (Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR) activities in this sector. In January 1974 junta member Admiral José Toribio Merino argued, 'when all Chileans have a house, there won't be problems in Chile'.[23] Thus the regime sought to manage the housing crisis on both the material and politico-cultural levels, through policy and public discourse.

Despite Merino's opinion that homeownership would solve Chile's problems, through mid-1974 the junta had no coherent housing plan. Even as it relied on repression to demobilise the pobladores, it attempted to garner support and calm the waters in the face of a potentially explosive housing crisis.[24] Poblaciones became stages for political theatre. High-ranking officials made widely publicised visits, promising services and infrastructure. In late 1973 the authorities began granting property titles, with media fanfare – for example, 'In less than 90 days, the new Housing authorities achieved what in three years of governance the deposed Marxist regime did not.'[25] The press made spectacular reports of housing construction, such as, 'MINVU will build and deliver 40 thousand houses during 1974' and 'In only six months the current Government has built 12 thousand houses.'[26] Such reports were not meant to be accurate – rather, they were intended to create the illusion that the regime prioritised the poor. The 1974 housing plan called for 25,000 new units (20,000 of them transitory); the regime began construction on only 3,297.[27] Even in combination with private sector construction and completion of UP-era housing starts, the plan could not stabilise the deficit, much less reduce it. More quietly, the regime 'regularised' invaded properties, returning them to the owners or selling them at market rates to those able to pay.

[22] Before 1973, pobladores affiliated primarily with the Left and the Christian Democrats; the Right's presence in the poblaciones was relatively insignificant. Daniel Goldrich, 'Political Organization and the Politicization of the Poblador', *Comparative Political Studies*, 3: 2 (1970), pp. 176–202; Alejandro Portes, 'Occupation and Lower-Class Political Orientations in Chile', in Arturo Valenzuela and J. Samuel Valenzuela (eds.), *Chile: Politics and Society* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1976), pp. 201–37; Verónica Valdivia, 'Lecciones de una Revolución: Jaime Guzmán y los gremialistas, 1973–1980', in Verónica Valdivia et al., *Su revolución contra nuestra revolución: izquierdas y derechas en el Chile de Pinochet (1973–1981)* (Santiago: LOM, 2006), pp. 63, 88.
[23] ADJ, Act 78, 22 Jan. 1974, p. 1, BCS.
[24] See Karen L. Remmer, 'Political Demobilization in Chile, 1973–1978', *Comparative Politics*, 12: 3 (1980), pp. 275–301; Bruey, 'Neoliberalism and Repression'.
[25] *La Tercera*, 5 Dec. 1973.   [26] *La Tercera*, 28 Feb. and 15 March 1974.
[27] ADJ, Act 143a, 1974, Annex 4: ODEPLAN, 'Programa de viviendas sociales', BCS; Vicaría de la Solidaridad (VS), 'Informe Mensual/Informe Confidencial', Oct. 1978, vol. 2 (Santiago: Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad), p. 26. Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', p. 172.

By April 1974, this approach's inadequacy was apparent. That month, the comptroller general expressed his concern to the junta: 'I've seen you, on television, visit poblaciones on many occasions … But Mr. President [Pinochet], it concerns me … that, together with this, there's not a social policy that goes beyond this preoccupation, which I would call social action.'[28] The underlying causes of poverty and its effects – the housing crisis was but one – remained unaddressed. The regime's initiatives were but patches on a larger problem it could not mask as the housing deficit grew. In mid-1974 it passed Decree Law 519, *Disposiciones sobre poblaciones de emergencia*, establishing campamento eradication guidelines and placing responsibility for the law's implementation on municipalities.[29] This formalised a process already under way: in November 1973 the junta, the mayor of Las Condes (Santiago's wealthiest municipality) and MINVU had discussed removing poor families from upper-class areas.[30] In addition to classism and security concerns, the issue was land value. Las Condes' mayor later stated with respect to the municipality's 30,000 low-income residents: 'The land within the municipality is private or, if it's public, it's already allocated. In addition, emergency housing construction cannot be justified on such expensive sites with high-cost infrastructure.'[31] Although, theoretically, pobladores would be relocated within their home municipalities, in practice wealthy municipalities purged themselves of low-income residents, shoring up land value, speculative prospects and property tax revenue by pushing pobladores to the urban periphery.[32]

'Eradication' – that is, mass relocation of occupants of campamentos and other housing deemed unfit – would be the predominant low-income housing programme throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, reaching its peak in 1979–85, while PNDU/79 was in force.[33] The housing authorities focused on transitory ('semi-permanent' or 'emergency') homes for rental or sale, to be occupied until inhabitants could buy more expensive, 'definitive' housing.[34] They enacted cuts in quality and size, allowing them to minimise cost as public expenditure on housing dropped precipitously (Table 1). Between 1973 and 1982, housing construction decreased significantly from historical levels (Table 2); of social programmes targeted for curtailment, housing was the hardest hit.[35] Relocating squatters served several purposes. First, it dispersed

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[28] ADJ, Act 113a, 16 April 1974, pp. 1–2, BCS.

[29] *Poblaciones de emergencia* included campamentos and legal poblaciones lacking urbanisation.

[30] ADJ, Act 33, 12 Nov. 1973, p. 2, BCS.   [31] *La Tercera*, 29 Aug. 1975.

[32] See Morales and Rojas, 'Relocalización'.

[33] Between 1979 and 1985 the state eradicated 30,000 families to the urban periphery. None were relocated to wealthy municipalities. Dattwyler, *La vivienda social*, pp. 371, 381–2.

[34] ADJ, Act 33, 12 Nov. 1973, p. 9, BCS.

[35] Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, p. 79.

Table 1. *State Expenditure on Low-Income Housing*

Year	1973	1974	1975
Million US$ (1976)	237.08	180.86	70.27

Source: Vicaría de la Solidaridad, 'Informe Mensual/Informe Confidencial', 2, Oct. 1978, pp. 25–6.

Table 2. *Housing Starts Per Year, 1965–1982*

Administration	Public	Private	Total combined annual average
Frei (1964–70)	22,056	17,803	39,859
Allende (1970–3)	39,089	13,043	52,132
Pinochet (1973–82)	5,828	24,051	29,879*

* Author's calculation based on Kusnetzoff's data.
Source: Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', p. 172.

thousands of people considered a political threat, removing them to the urban periphery and dismantling their socio-political networks. Second, it transferred these individuals into formal housing and utility markets. Third, new units were located far from wealthy districts and central thoroughfares, masking poverty and bolstering the mirage of prosperity.[36]

In October 1974, intra-government contention continued as the junta met with two housing policy advisers.[37] One argued that compliance with the government's 'line of action' would require 92,000 housing starts annually from 1975 to 1985. He asserted that even if 20 per cent of public expenditure went to housing, the plan would not be feasible and the deficit would reach 780,000 units by 1985. He criticised privatisation: 'If the Private Sector is expected to absorb vegetative growth and obsolescence, this would require cumulative, 25 per cent annual growth in this sector, impossible to achieve.'[38] The other consultant argued that the regime needed a completely new system to adjust housing policy to its economic platform, one that would reduce state participation in the housing market, privatising it to the greatest extent possible.[39] He outlined a subsidy programme to apply in combination with state retrenchment. As he put it, 'A significant sector of the population doesn't have the economic capacity to pay for housing of minimum standards, not even in thirty years … It's therefore necessary to establish a subsidy regime,

[36] Jorge Scherman Filer, *Techo y abrigo* (Santiago: PET, 1990), p. 39; Alfredo Rodríguez, *Por una ciudad democrática* (Santiago: Ediciones SUR, 1983), pp. 21, 26; Morales and Rojas, 'Relocalización', pp. 77, 113–14, 117; Bruey, 'Neoliberalism and Repression', pp. 24–5.
[37] ADJ, Act 164a, 29 Oct. 1974, pp. unnumbered–4: Exposiciones del Sr. [illegible], 'Necesidad de un nuevo esquema habitacional', and Emilio Recabarren S., 'Plan 1975 y Su Proyección para el Decenio – Presupuesto 1975', BCS.
[38] ADJ, Act 164a, 29 Oct. 1974, p. 4, BCS.   [39] *Ibid.*, unnumbered.

controlled via the Fiscal Budget, that resolves the difference even as it promotes systematic saving by beneficiaries.'[40]

The recommendations reflect the influence of the Chicago Boy-dominated Oficina de Planificación Nacional (National Planning Office, ODEPLAN), which that year instructed other ministries to adjust their policies to the neoliberal model.[41] Importantly, the proposed subsidy programme bears close resemblance to the 'New Housing Policy' debuted in 1978 to '[direct] the demand of those needing subsidies towards the market'.[42] The subsidy programme's exact origins are disputed, but the central precepts of the 1978 policy – state withdrawal, but with demand-side subsidies to entice the private sector and reward those able to save – were clearly already in circulation in 1974.[43]

At that time the programme had yet to be fleshed out, however, and contention within the government continued. In November 1974, MINVU's minister argued that transitory housing would not alleviate the crisis and that MINVU should allocate resources to 'definitive' housing.[44] The finance minister was receptive to MINVU's requests for foreign loans if they were to be transferred to the private sector, in accordance with neoliberal ideology. MINVU, in a difficult position, assured that it sought to 'transfer the system from the public sector, and the state will only subsidise'.[45]

From Right to Privilege

State retrenchment would require drastically changing the way in which home-ownership was understood in popular sector political culture. The attempt to change political culture dovetailed well with the social engineering objectives of neoliberal ideology and the cultural project that the junta launched in 1974. Neoliberalism's appeal resided in its double-edged promise of economic and political change. Proponents believed it would end economic crises and depoliticise society by 'obliterating the circumstances in which politics had become a means for attaining political and social ends'.[46] The technocratic, depoliticising, individualistic, market-based model promised to revolutionise Chilean society such that past economic and political crises would never recur, which is precisely what the junta sought.[47] Notwithstanding intra-junta

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[40] *Ibid.*, p. 3. Subsidies were not new or exclusive to neoliberalism, but their application in the context of 'retrenchment of universal social policies' was. Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, p. 81.   [41] Gilbert, 'Power, Ideology', p. 313.

[42] *Ibid.*, quoting Cámara Chilena de la Construcción, *Cuarenta años de progreso* (Santiago: Cámara Chilena de la Construcción, 1991), pp. 90–1.

[43] Gilbert, 'Power, Ideology', p. 311.

[44] ADJ, Act 172a, 14 Nov. 1974, p. 53, BCS.   [45] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

[46] Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, p. 41.

[47] On neoliberal social engineering and the theory's political appeal, see *ibid.*, pp. 7, 40–1.

disagreements over economic development policy, it could also further the junta's politico-cultural plan to enhance its staying power by establishing a political 'trademark' and creating a 'new Chile' inextricably associated with the new government. The campaign included a government cultural adviser to imbue programmes with 'socio-political and psychological-warfare ideas' and 'indoctrinate' Chileans against Marxism.[48]

The 'new Chile' was a reaction to an 'old Chile' that was perceived as a chaotic den of dangerous Marxists and arrogant poor and working-class folks who forgot their place and rebelled against the 'natural' social order. The attitude that the poor were lazy and sought to live off the state, and that the Left encouraged and promoted this behaviour, circulated widely in main-stream media. For example, *La Tercera* quoted the interior minister as saying, 'we aren't willing to encourage vice and laziness ... you have to do things, not wait for someone to give them to you'. The report continued: 'he added that if the housing situation remains the same for much longer, it will be the fault of the pobladores who don't cooperate'.[49] Such reports propagated the discriminatory attitude that poverty was caused by laziness, not structural unemployment or the miserable wages that employers paid in order to maximise their profits. This perception served the neoliberal precept that the state should withdraw from social programmes: if poverty was the poor's fault, the state's refusal to further enable 'bad' behaviour was not only justifiable, it was beneficial. The trope of the lazy poor expecting government handouts was a red herring: housing had never been a 'free concession of the state', despite MINVU minister Arturo Troncoso's assertion to the contrary during an August 1974 meeting with the junta. In a sharp departure from historical precedent, Troncoso counselled that 'it's not reasonable to suppose that every family ... acquires a home'.[50]

The neoliberal push ran up against the socio-economic reality of the housing crisis, pobladores' sense of dignity as citizens and *gente de trabajo* (working people), and the entrenched belief that housing – specifically homeownership, *la casa propia* – was a right. The definition of housing as a right for all – as opposed to a privilege for some – was a relatively long-standing tradition. Most recently, the Frei and Allende administrations expanded state programmes to provide affordable housing for low-income families. The Allende administration declared housing an inalienable right that the state was obliged to fulfil.[51] In 1973 the Pinochet dictatorship echoed the idea that housing was a right: 'Every Chilean family will have the option to

[48] ADJ, Memorandum Confidencial, 27 June 1974, pp. 11–17, BCS.
[49] *La Tercera*, 29 and 20 Jan. 1974.
[50] ADJ, Act 143a, 1 Aug. 1974, Exposición del Ministro de MINVU, p. 2, BCS.
[51] Edwin Haramoto, 'Políticas de vivienda social: experiencia chilena de las tres últimas décadas', in MacDonald (ed.), *Vivienda social*, p. 101.

solve its housing problem; to achieve this, the Family and the State will share responsibilities and efforts.'[52] Indeed, this differed little from previous administrations whose programmes combined state and family resources.

A first formal indication of change was MINVU's 1975 annual report, which 'clarified' the regime's position, setting it apart from those of its predecessors. The report stated, 'This is a necessary clarification corresponding to the country's housing and socio-economic reality and also the subsidiary principle the Supreme Government supports: it has been formulated with the goal of establishing that access to housing is a right that should be achieved through individual effort.'[53] As Teresa Valdés observed in 1983, the new policy redefined housing as an individual problem rather than a collective one, in an attempt to truncate decades of collective action.[54] In addition, the state would merely subsidise individual buyers, not take responsibility for housing supply more generally. This had profound implications when combined with the clause 'to be achieved through individual effort'. 'Individual effort' meant personal financial contribution. Defining access to housing as a 'right that should be achieved through individual effort' meant that housing ceased to be a 'right' as traditionally understood. It was no longer a right that accrued to people in their capacity as Chilean citizens or human beings. Rather, housing became a species of 'membership right' in an exclusive club restricted to those with the financial wherewithal to participate in the private market.

In 1975 neoliberal shock measures threw Chile into deep recession, and many pobladores could not afford even basic household expenses as industries closed and unemployment rose; saving for housing thus became impossible. The junta declared that it accepted the 'social cost' of structural adjustment, meaning it would sacrifice the well-being of the poor and working class in pursuit of neoliberalisation as the Chicago Boys rapidly implemented widespread deregulation and privatisation.[55] The new economic ideology called for state withdrawal from the housing sector. Amidst ongoing crisis in the popular sectors, in April 1977 Pinochet announced, 'You should forget this thing about a Daddy State solving everyone's problems. That's over.'[56] In July 1977, MINVU minister Edmundo Ruiz publicly announced a housing deficit of 2,280,300 units. He stated that MINVU would solve the deficit 'when it can', suggesting it was not a priority, and added, 'it isn't the state's role to build houses … family income should be a preponderant factor in the acquisition of housing', placing responsibility on individuals and private industry.[57]

[52] MINVU, Memoria 1975, p. 10.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] Valdés, 'El problema de la vivienda', pp. 46–7.
[55] *La Tercera*, 12 May 1975.
[56] *La Tercera*, 8 April 1977.
[57] *La Tercera*, 29 July 1977. This estimate is extremely high; it perhaps included housing to be razed or renovated to meet safety and hygiene standards.

In 1978 the regime initiated the 'New Housing Policy' subsidy programme that had, since 1974, been further developed by economist José Pablo Arellano and a USAID-funded University of Chile study.[58] It delegated responsibility for low-income housing to the private sector, including land acquisition, project planning, financing, construction and administration. The state would remain involved in planning, supervision and eradications. It would subsidise individual buyers, but qualification for subsidies required land, savings and access to credit.[59] The policy's objectives were state withdrawal from and further privatisation of the housing market, in order to 'adjust the supply and demand of houses to the current economic scheme'.[60] These objectives derived from neoliberal ideology, not socio-economic reality, and nowhere do the basic principles refer to housing as a right. The policy called for 'impersonality' and 'non-discretionary' criteria in the housing sector, meaning that the state would not take social and political pressure into account.[61] This was a direct reference to the traditional popular sector strategy of seeking redress through direct action. Were the state to negotiate with pobladores who exerted political pressure, the market's 'invisible hand' would be unable to work its magic.

In 1979, the regime officially declared housing 'a good acquired through the family's effort and savings. The State recognises and shares this in a subsidiary manner.'[62] It changed the word 'right' (*derecho*) to 'good' (*bien*) and emphasised 'family effort and savings' (income), thereby removing housing from the realm of rights and placing it squarely within the private marketplace. The new 'general principles' explained: 'Housing is no longer a gift from the State, the product of the sacrifice of many in benefit of a few privileged ones … It is the private sector's responsibility to obtain the resources and instruments to solve the demand for housing.'[63] Housing was never free ('gift' implies free of charge): this represents a deliberate distortion of history to serve political purposes. Presumably, the 'privileged ones' were homeless families who benefited from earlier programmes. Transferring responsibility for production, financing and distribution to the private sector represented an attempt to remove the state from social welfare and from its position as a target of political pressure, in accordance with neoliberal precepts.

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[58] Gilbert, 'Power, Ideology', pp. 311–12.

[59] MINVU, Memoria 1978, pp. 9, 12; Valdés, 'El problema de la vivienda', p. 48; Rodríguez, *Por una ciudad*, p. 35.   [60] MINVU, Memoria 1978, p. 9.

[61] MINVU, Memoria 1979, p. 10.

[62] *Ibid.* In the context of generalised state retrenchment, the 'subsidiary principle' allowed the regime to claim that it was alleviating poverty and inequality even as its policies created them. Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, p. 81.

[63] MINVU, Memoria 1979, p. 10.

That same year, the regime used PNDU/79 to deregulate the urban land market. PNDU/79 comprised five basic principles: urban land is not scarce; land use is defined by its greatest profitability; the spatial concentration of the population generates comparative advantages; land use should be governed by flexible regulations according to market requirements; and the state should protect the common good.[64] Zoning would be subject to market forces; the city would be allowed to expand in the directions and to the extent dictated by pursuit of profit. PNDU/79 referenced poverty in very general terms without proposals to address it.[65] The legislation sought to promote the private construction and real estate industries: the state had already begun selling urban land reserves to private capital, and the new policy allowed subdivision of agricultural land into commercial residential plots.[66]

PNDU/79 was related to the housing crisis. The authorities knew the extent of the problem: a 1978 MINVU survey found 234 campamentos with 44,789 families in Santiago alone, and this represented only a fraction of the shortage.[67] In 1978, Chicago-school economist Arnold Harberger presented a report to MINVU on adjusting urban development policy to meet the needs of the dictatorship's 'market-[based] social economy'. Of most interest to MINVU's Urban Development Division was the idea that 'there is a "natural" form of occupying space … that often does not concur with traditional urban planning ideas'.[68] Harberger argued that 'horizontal growth is a natural economic phenomenon' and that trying to curb it was 'foolish'.[69] Market signals, not urban planning, should define land use: 'When urban users offer a higher price for the terrain than its value as agricultural land, this means the natural economic use of that ground is urban, and it should pass from agricultural to residential use.'[70] Chilean policy-makers deduced that lifting urban limits and allowing unfettered horizontal expansion would increase the supply of urban land, thereby lowering prices and supplying low-income demand.[71] Their task was to 'capture this natural form of development, through market signals'.[72] In addition to its economic implications, the emphasis on defining the market as a 'natural' phenomenon served the political purpose of quelling dissent, as one analyst noted at the time: 'Any arguments challenging this logic are discredited as results of foolish or

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[64] MINVU, Memoria 1980, p. 10.   [65] Gross, 'Santiago de Chile', p. 163.
[66] Rodríguez, *Por una ciudad*, p. 30.   [67] Dattwyler, *La vivienda social*, p. 326.
[68] Arnold C. Harberger (trans. M. Jimena Eliz Becerra), *Problemas de viviendas y planeamientos de ciudades*, Monografías y Ensayos, series 1, no. 103 (Santiago: MINVU, 1978). Quotes from División de Desarrollo Urbano, 'Presentación', unnumbered.
[69] Harberger, *Problemas de viviendas*, p. 1.   [70] *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[71] Dattwyler, *La vivienda social*, p. 371.
[72] Harberger, *Problemas de viviendas*. Quotes from División de Desarrollo Urbano, 'Presentación', unnumbered.

demagogic behavior, as attempts to revive obsolete experiences that resulted only in disorder and anarchy.'[73]

Subsidies and massive demand for low-income housing provided incentive for construction, but subsidies were also available to wealthier buyers on the market for more expensive units. Investors were interested in profit, and wealthier real estate markets held more promise. The outcome was perhaps predictable: between 1978 and 1983, 67 per cent of state subsidies went to the middle and upper middle classes, even after a shift to 'variable' subsidies in 1980–1 in order to target low-income families.[74] Meanwhile, accelerated relocation of squatters via publicly financed eradications (often onto land made available via PNDU/79) and lifting urban limits freed up valuable terrain, encouraging speculation and private sector concentration on high-end residential and commercial construction. The private sector had little interest in building low-profit housing or making high-risk mortgage loans to low-income borrowers. As one businessman put it: 'If I can build an expensive house, what philanthropic vocation obligates me to build a cheap one? ... Let's be realistic, my duty as a businessman is to maximise profit margins.'[75] Deregulation led to rampant speculation, driving prices upward across the city. Under these conditions, the much-anticipated diversified housing supply did not materialise and the affordable-housing crisis escalated. The 1981–3 financial crash further exacerbated the crisis: the 1982 census reported a deficit of 800,000 units.[76]

Return of the Tomas

Even as policy-makers activated the New Housing Programme and PNDU/79, pobladores staged the first tomas since the coup. Organised pobladores had long been influential urban social actors, occupying a central role in Santiago's edification and expansion from the late 1940s onward. After 1973 and despite fierce repression, activist pobladores organised for economic subsistence and against the dictatorship and its political and social policies. The process of socio-political reorganisation in the poblaciones during the 1970s is too extensive to discuss in detail here.[77] However, oppositionist

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[73] Rodríguez, *Por una ciudad*, p. 29.

[74] Dattwyler, *La vivienda social*, p. 394; Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', p. 174.

[75] Interview with Patricio Vergara, Carlos Figueroa and Máximo Honorato, *Estrategia*, Santiago, 23–9 Dec. 1980, pp. 54–9. Quoted in Rodríguez, *Por una ciudad*, p. 32.

[76] Gross, 'Santiago de Chile', p. 165; Dattwyler, *La vivienda social*, pp. 393–7.

[77] See Garcés, *Tomando su sitio* and 'Construyendo "Las Poblaciones"'; Salazar, *Violencia política popular*; Schneider, *Shantytown Protest*; Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*; Espinoza, *Para una historia*; Valdés and Weinstein, *Mujeres que sueñan*; Bruey, 'Organizing Community'; and Margot Olavarría, 'Builders of the City: *Pobladores* and the Territorialization of Class Identity in Chile', in William L. Alexander (ed.), *Lost in the*

organisation in the poblaciones during the 1970s and early 1980s was not reducible to party activists and their underground networks or to new social organisations lacking a strong party presence, as social movement debates about the period – which revolve around this binary – suggest.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, the 'old' and 'new' were closely intertwined. Luis, a poblador and Communist militant, explained: '[The priest] helped a lot with a clandestine thing we had called *taller laboral* [labour workshop] … Of course, it was just a facade, and there we met [politically]; that's why it was called taller laboral'.[78] The Church knew who it was helping, as Juan, a consecrated layman Church worker in Luis' parish, emphasised: 'one knew who one was relating with, we knew who the Communists were, we knew who the Socialists were, we knew who the radicals were …'[79] Juanita, a pobladora and MIRista, recalled that militants 'were free in the rooms [the priests] had for us to organise ourselves as we could', as long as they supported Church activities and did not bring weapons onto Church grounds.[80] Thus, in the 1970s and early 1980s, much socio-political reorganisation took place in poblaciones under the shelter of the Catholic Church through active cooperation between Catholics and leftist militants. Housing committees were no exception.[81] These and similar organisations addressed collective problems and provided opportunities for discussion, solidarity, political education and anti-regime socialisation.[82] The post-coup housing movement arose from and was embedded within this much larger process in which grassroots activists – both party militants and non-militants – worked to meet subsistence needs, weave social fabric and mount political challenges to the regime.

In the housing sector the regime focused resources on campamento eradication, although one of the most urgent problems in both campamentos and poblaciones was *allegados*: families living under other people's roofs because they could not afford their own homes. This meant that one-family homes sheltered multiple households, causing severe overcrowding. The allegado problem reached crisis levels in the late 1970s. Authorities pressured relocated families to take allegados with them, transferring overcrowding to new locations.[83] Allegados in legal, urbanised poblaciones were excluded from eradication programmes, and most could not afford the subsidy programme. Homeowning pobladores – many sheltering allegados – struggled to pay their

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Long Transition: Struggles for Social Justice in Neoliberal Chile (New York: Lexington Books, 2009), p. 153–68.

[78] Interview with L. D., Santiago, 18 May 2005.
[79] Interview with J. R., Santiago, 21 June 2005.
[80] Interview with J. M., Santiago, 22 April 2004.
[81] See Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia*; and Wilson, *La otra ciudad*.
[82] See Schneider, *Shantytown Protest*; Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*; and Razeto, et al., *Las organizaciones económicas*.   [83] Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, p. 121.

utility and mortgage bills, facing service shut-off or eviction. Crowding and unsanitary conditions led to illness and psychological stress.[84] As one woman explained:

I was in a house where four families lived … we lived on top of one another, completely piled up, beds in the dining room, separated by curtains, the children couldn't do anything that might annoy the homeowner, and there's no … intimacy! … I have two children, others have four, there was one family with eight children, so there are all kinds of problems living as allegados.[85]

Her situation was not unusual. Pobladores had many reasons to seek la casa propia. In addition to the stress of overcrowding, these included expectations and desires such as reaching the adult milestone of 'homeowner', raising healthy children in dignified conditions and defining one's own household environment.

Housing committees re-emerged around 1977 with the initiative and organisational know-how of the Catholic Church and CP- and MIR-affiliated grassroots organisers, many with pre-coup experience in housing struggles. Housing committees were especially numerous in western Santiago and successfully renegotiated utility debts with the Church's assistance. These limited successes spurred both hope for the organisations' efficacy and frustration with the authorities' intransigence. From this point on, pobladores pressured authorities through both official and extra-official channels. Tension between meeting immediate material necessities and targeting the broader economic and political situation was a constant among participants of diverse political backgrounds and priorities. As before the coup, tomas were linked to the CP or MIR. Organisers closer to the political centre privileged legal channels, 'pre-cooperative' groups and self-help projects.[86] The Church encouraged poblador organisation, provided venues for housing committees, publicised the housing crisis, mediated between pobladores and the state, and provided technical and legal assistance through the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Zonal Vicariates, and the Fundación para la Acción Vecinal y Comunitaria (Foundation for Neighbourhood and Community Action, AVEC).[87] The Church did not promote tomas but provided assistance in their aftermath.[88]

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[84] Typhoid cases more than tripled in Santiago from 1973 to 1978. See *Cauce*, 15, June–July 1984, p. 44. The regime later instituted the relatively successful Programa de Mejoramiento de Barrios to address such problems. See Rubén Sepúlveda et al., 'Algunos aspectos relevantes del Programa de Mejoramiento de Barrios', *Boletín del Instituto de la Vivienda*, 8: 17 (1993), pp. 5–19.

[85] Comité de Solidaridad, Comisión Nacional Pro-Derechos Juveniles, *Correo Solidario*, p. 4, Centro de Documentación ECO (hereafter ECO), Santiago.

[86] Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia*, p. 175.   [87] Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, pp. 66–9.

[88] See, for example, Manuel Camilo Vial R., 'Declaración del Obispo Auxiliar de Santiago y Vicario de la Zona Sur del Arzobispado', 23 June 1980, Doc. 0070000, VS; Arzobispado de

Notwithstanding obvious political differences and strategic approaches within the housing movement, by 1980 5,000 families had joined housing committees in western Santiago alone.[89] Meanwhile, leftist and centrist organisers cooperated to form the Comisión de Vivienda de la Región Metropolitana (Metropolitan Region Housing Commission) in 1979. MIR-related sectors within the Comisión formed Comités de Vivienda de Base (Housing Base Committees, COVIBs) that privileged direct action over official channels.[90] Following a split between the Left and centre in 1981, the Comisión became the CP's Coordinadora Metropolitana de Pobladores (Metropolitan Coordinator of Pobladores, METRO), and the COVIBs gave rise to the MIR's Coordinadora de Agrupaciones Poblacionales (Coordinator of Población Groups, COAPO). METRO and COAPO formed the Comisión Nacional de Pobladores (National Commission of Pobladores) to coordinate demands and activities.[91] As tomas and mass protests intensified and political parties moved further above ground, in 1983 political activists formed two more coordinating groups: Dignidad (Christian Left) and Solidaridad (Christian Democrats).[92]

Historically, the frequency and number of tomas rose and fell with national political conjunctures: they hit a peak before the 1970 presidential elections and continued during the UP government as activists judged the political climate favourable for successful direct action. The political climate in 1978 was not favourable, but it was less unfavourable than it had been. The organisation of tomas in the late 1970s and early 1980s occurred in the context of the end of the state of siege, improvements in consolidation and activation of left-wing party structures, the Christian Democrat Party's move into the opposition, significant human rights mobilisations and revelations, labour unrest related to the 1979 'Labour Plan', and a turn within the Left towards more direct confrontation with the regime. However, 1978–81 was also a time of crisis, reflection and reorientation in oppositionist sectors, as the economy improved (1978–80) and the regime appeared to successfully institutionalise its rule. Sectors of the housing movement linked to the Left responded with radicalisation. Leftist activists pushed housing committees to develop 'more global questioning of the military regime' and organised the first tomas of the post-coup period.[93]

Successful preservation and dissemination of pre-coup political culture and tradition, especially the idea that housing was a right, was key to the

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Santiago, Departamento Opinión Pública, 34/80, 'Declaración del Arzobispado de Santiago', 25 June 1980, Doc. 0083100, VS.

[89] *Solidaridad*, 90, April 1980, p. 7.   [90] Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia*, p. 170.

[91] *Ibid.*, pp. 170, 176; Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, pp. 93, 128.

[92] Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia*, p. 185; *Solidaridad*, 216, Dec. 1985–Jan. 1986, p. 19.

[93] Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia*, p. 169.

organisational process. In January 1979, 'The Resistance' issued a communiqué calling utility and mortgage debtors to join housing committees, reject collective settlements with the authorities and resist evictions. The document defined 'housing, electricity, water, education, work and health' as rights.[94] The following month, the MIR urged mortgage debtors to default on overdue payments and again declared housing a right.[95] The idea that housing was a right was not confined to the MIR. The CP, the party with the most historical weight and experience in poblador organisation, declared: 'With demonstrations before the Housing Ministry and the toma of vacant lands ... [pobladores assert] their condition as human beings with rights, among which is that of a secure roof over their heads'.[96] The Church agreed. In March 1980, organised pobladores and Bishop Enrique Alvear held the First Meeting of Western-Zone Homeless Committees and 'created an alternative housing plan, in which the State assumes the historic role it has always had', declaring, '[the] right to a home is as just as the right to food'.[97] Thus two of the most important socio-political actors involved in anti-regime poblador organisation since the coup – the Left and the Catholic Church – insisted that housing was a right, couching calls for state action in a broader criticism of the regime's market-based policies.[98]

Pamphlets that circulated in the poblaciones also demonstrate the survival and use of local knowledge and pre-coup political culture. One read 'Operación Sitio Now!' – a demand for the return of a pre-coup sites and services programme – and encouraged youth to support allegados seeking homeownership.[99] In others, pobladores narrated histories of their neighbourhoods, including experiences with tomas and socio-political organisation.[100] In Campamento 14 de Enero (established in 1981), residents elected a directorate and formed security, sanitation and cultural committees in an exercise of internal governance redolent of pre-coup, MIR-organised campamentos.[101] Handmade circulars pilloried state authorities. One depicted Maipú's mayor seated behind a desk, in a suit and tie, smoking a cigarette. A caption above his

[94] MIR/MAPU, 'La resistencia se hace responsable ...', Jan. 1979, Fondo Eugenio Ruíz Tagle-FLACSO (FERT-FLACSO), Santiago.
[95] *El Rebelde en la Clandestinidad*, 146, Feb. 1979, p. 4, FERT-FLACSO.
[96] *¡Basta!*, 12, Nov. 1980, p. 9, FERT-FLACSO.
[97] *Solidaridad*, 90, April 1980, p. 7.
[98] See also *Policarpo*, 15, Nov. 1982, p. 7, Biblioteca San Ignacio (BSI), Santiago; Corporación de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo, *CODEPU*, 1, June 1982, p. 21; Arzobispado de Santiago, Vicaría de Pastoral Obrera, 'La organización poblacional', n.d., pp. 15–16, 31, VS; and *Solidaridad*, 90, April 1980, p. 7.
[99] 'Operación Sitio Ahora!', pamphlet, c. 1980s, ECO.
[100] See *Fe y Solidaridad*, 32, Sep. 1980, Archivo Nacional de la Administración (ARNAD), Santiago; and *El Poblador: Boletín Poblacional Nuevo Amanecer*, ECO.
[101] *Policarpo*, 2, Aug. 1981, pp. 13–14, BSI.

head read: '"Sir" Mayor of Maipú said of the problem of allegados: "It's not the government's or municipality's fault there are allegados, rather [it is the fault of] homeowners who let allegados into their houses"'.[102] A clandestine Catholic newsletter ran an article denouncing Pinochet's new luxury home – 'The Pinochet family installs itself like the Shah' – alongside a report on a toma.[103] In 1981, posters announced METRO and COAPO's First Metropolitan Congress of Pobladores, which produced a public petition, the 'Pliego de Pobladores', demanding a living wage, an end to repression and an aggressive sites and services programme. Targeting the regime's social and economic policies, the petition stated that the programme should privilege 'social, not mercantile, criteria' and 'reject incorporation into market policy'.[104]

From 1978 to 1983 tomas steadily increased in number and size; most occurred in southern and western Santiago (Table 3). These areas had dense socio-political networks and the most accumulated historical experience with tomas. As before the coup, when official channels failed, political and community activists planned tomas. They identified terrain and relied on the element of surprise. Participants arrived with sticks, Chilean flags and blankets to stake their claims, and they cultivated alliances with sympathetic outsiders. Traditionally, left-wing politicians played this latter role; in the post-coup period the Catholic Church assisted, as did members of the vast solidarity networks of anti-regime activists, which included Catholics, leftist militants and non-party community activists. Several tomas, especially those of 22 July 1980, 14 January 1981 and 22 September 1983, garnered significant public attention for their duration and size and for the strategies pobladores used to exert political pressure, including occupying embassies, government buildings and churches.

During this period only three tomas 'succeeded' in the sense that pobladores overcame initial eviction attempts and established campamentos. However, holding territory was not their only objective: they set a political example and called public attention to the crisis.[105] From 1981 to 1983, as the economy crashed and popular discontent rose, political activists radicalised their approach. As one analyst noted, 'proposed actions no longer have as their immediate horizon the solution of the housing problem, but rather confrontation with the Government'.[106] In one housing activist's estimate,

[102] 'Operación Sitio Ahora!', pamphlet, c. 1980s, ECO.
[103] *No Podemos Callar*, 49, May 1980, pp. 3–9, BSI. Note the comparison with the recently overthrown Shah.
[104] Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, p. 93; '1er Congreso Metropolitano de Pobladores', poster, ECO; 'Pliego de Pobladores', reproduced in Valdés, 'El problema de la vivienda', pp. 71–4.
[105] Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia*, p. 174; Espinoza, 'Los pobladores en la política', p. 45.
[106] Rodríguez, *Por una ciudad*, p. 62.

Table 3. *Tomas: Santiago, 1978–1983*

Year	Date/location/number of families
1978	• Two tomas/unspecified
1979	• February/Campamento Nuevo Amanecer, La Granja/58
1980	• 30 June/San Pablo alt. 9.200/12 or 57*
	• 22 July/Paradero 27 Gran Avenida (La Bandera)/300 or 800*
	• October/Paradero 18 Santa Rosa/80
1981	• 14 January/Pudahuel/320 or 350* (consolidated: Campamento 14 de Enero)
	• 5 March/San Pablo con Neptuno/200
	• October/Las Condes (apartments)/110
1982	• January/San Ricardo (apartments)/unspecified
	• 20 January/5 de Abril con Gral. Velázquez/150
	• 6 March/Paradero 33.5 Gran Avenida/380
	• 10 October/Calle La Feria, La Victoria/300
	• Campero lists six 'mid-year' tomas, without details: SERVIU apartments, Zona Oeste, La Victoria, Lo Valledor Norte, Villa 14 de Enero, Villa Macul
1983	• 17 February/Villa Guarén, Ochagavía S., Lo Sierra/100
	• 20 February/Las Industrias con Departamental/80
	• 25 March/Franklin/40
	• 23 August/Paradero 27 Gran Avenida/300 (consolidated: Campamento 23 de Agosto)
	• 22 September/Lo Blanco, Paradero 38 Santa Rosa and Lo Blanco con San Francisco/8,000 (consolidated: Campamentos Monseñor Juan Francisco Fresno and Cardenal Raúl Silva Henríquez)
	• 26 September/sector La Legua/unspecified

* Campero and *Hechos Urbanos* occasionally disagree on the number of families; I list both estimates.
Sources: Campero, *Entre la sobrevivencia*, pp. 170–85; *Hechos Urbanos*, 26, Oct. 1983, SUR; *La Tercera*, 7 Feb. 1979; *Boletín CODEPU*, 1, June 1982, p. 21, CODEPU; *Solidaridad*, 208, Aug.–Sep. 1985, p. 20; *Policarpo*, 2, Aug. 1981, pp. 13–14, BSI; *Solidaridad*, 164, Sep. 1983, p. 5; Morales and Rojas, 'Relocalización', p. 96.

in 1981 the poblador movement's transformative potential overshadowed that of organised labour.[107] Nevertheless, housing activists struggled with repression, impatience and dispersal. Not all considered the housing movement a vehicle for broader struggle against the dictatorship, and many preferred to focus narrowly on housing acquisition.[108] In addition, as one organiser recognised at the time, confrontational tactics were divisive: 'In most committees proposing tomas divided people; many expressed that they preferred remaining as they were to losing their jobs.'[109]

Tomas monopolised activists' energies and drained committees of participants, but they spurred mobilisation elsewhere – another reason the regime sought to repress them. As María, an anti-regime Catholic activist who eventually joined the MIR, recalls: 'We [Christian Community members] did

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[107] *Venceremos* (MAPU), Aug. 1981, p. B-2, FERT-FLACSO.
[108] *Ibid.*, p. B-1.   [109] *Ibid.*, p. B-2.

a great deal of solidarity work ... for example, I came to [La Bandera] when they did the toma ... we brought things, we held *peñas* in solidarity ... So there was also movement out of one's own población, and community coordination among youth.'[110] Collective crises elicited cooperation among disparate religious and political sectors, as Juan, a Communist militant, explained: 'sectarianism, that's political blindness, because if we agree on the end, why disaggregate when the other band proposes something beneficial to that end?'[111]

State repression of tomas was fierce, and their results were mixed. However, they catalysed mobilisation in other sectors, and they demonstrated that the regime had not successfully changed the prevalent belief that housing was a right which the state must uphold. The idea that 'the market', liberated from state intervention, would 'naturally' provide supply commensurate with demand was magical thinking. At its core, neoliberal theory considered people 'isolated creatures of the marketplace, devoid of history, cultural traditions, political opinions and social relationships beyond simple market exchanges'.[112] In Chile, the model's economic aspects clashed with socio-economic reality, and its social engineering aspects with socio-political tradition, such that the state was ultimately unable to withdraw from housing and urban development in the face of economic decline and rising political challenge.[113]

The Regime's Responses

The broader context – especially of increasing public protest and economic crisis from 1981 onward – must be taken into account when considering the regime's response to the pobladores' demands. The regime responded to tomas and related mobilisation with a combination of repression, programme adjustment and accelerated campamento eradication.[114] In 1979 it staged mass ceremonies to grant 164,500 property title agreements.[115] In 1980 it adjusted the subsidy programme to accommodate applicants without savings. The title agreements were rife with irregularities, some requiring pobladores to repay, under pain of eviction, debts that had already been paid.[116] The new subsidy programme fared little better: in 1981, despite 117,000 applicants,

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[110] Interview with M. T. D., Santiago, 5 Nov. 2004.
[111] Interview with Juan, Silvia, Margarita and Alba, Santiago, 12 March 2005.
[112] Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, p. 38; John Brohman, 'Economism and Critical Silences in Development Studies: A Theoretical Critique of Neoliberalism', *Third World Quarterly*, 16: 2 (1995), p. 297, cited in *ibid.*, p. 35.
[113] On 'the irrationalities of neoliberalism', see Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, pp. 45–51.
[114] *Hechos Urbanos*, 18, Jan.–Feb. 1983, SUR.   [115] Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, p. 71.
[116] *Ibid.*, p. 74; Víctor Muñoz Tamayo and Patricia Madrid Herrera, *Herminda de la Victoria: autobiografía de una población* (Santiago: Libros La Calabaza del Diablo, 2005), p. 86.

only 535 subsidies were disbursed.[117] MINVU's 1981 annual report reflected some exasperation, as mobilisations intensified and organised pobladores and their allies insisted that housing was a right, calling the state to intervene in the market on their behalf. The regime's general principles reproduced the usual refrain that 'housing is a good acquired with a family's effort and savings. The State recognises this effort and shares it in a subsidiary manner ... *eschewing paternalistic donations* [emphasis added].'[118] The dictatorship reiterated the private sector's responsibility for supplying housing, but even if it were willing, the private sector was unable to address low-income demand as the economy contracted. That year only 50 of the nearly 700 construction companies established in 1980 remained in business.[119] In 1982, tomas continued and popular sector protest increased as the economy rapidly declined. By 1983 national unemployment was at 30 per cent and was concentrated in the popular sectors, reaching 73 per cent in western Santiago.[120] Thus even the cheapest housing was inaccessible to most pobladores. Meanwhile, 14,500 middle- and upper-class housing units stood vacant for lack of buyers as the speculative bubble burst.[121]

Amidst economic crisis and rising public protest, oppositionists planned a national protest for May 1983. In the poblaciones, the protests rapidly outstripped national coordinating bodies' direction. After the second national protest in June 1983, the junta, aware that protesters sought its ouster, worried that the regime could fall. Junta member General Fernando Matthei assessed protest in wealthy sectors as 'absolutely grotesque' and worthy only of ridicule. However, the junta was extremely concerned with the CP's involvement in 'other, completely different areas and with other people' – in other words, the poblaciones, where protest was most intense and widespread. Matthei stated: 'They'll never quit. Corks will sink and stones will float, but these guys will never stop.' Distinguishing between those 'who have legitimate problems with this government ... and would like something else' and 'others who will never forgive us', the junta proposed negotiating with the former and repressing the latter.[122] It would use a 'carrot and stick' approach with pobladores and the opposition in general, repressing some activist sectors while enticing others with programmes and negotiations.[123]

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[117] Rodríguez, *Por una ciudad*, p. 36; Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', p. 175.
[118] MINVU, Memoria 1981, p. 9.   [119] Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, p. 91.   [120] *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[121] *Hechos Urbanos*, 18, Jan.–Feb. 1983, SUR.
[122] ADJ, Act 14/83a, 16 June 1983, pp. 13–15, BCS.
[123] See Verónica Valdivia, 'Los guerreros de la política: la Unión Democrática Independiente, 1983–1988' and '"Cristianos" por el gremialismo: la UDI en el mundo poblacional, 1980–1989', in Valdivia et al., *Su revolución contra nuesta revolución*, vol 2: *La pugna marxista-gremialista en los ochenta* (Santiago: LOM, 2008), pp. 139–230; and 'Lecciones de una Revolución'. See also Laura Moya et al., *Tortura en poblaciones del Gran Santiago (1973–1990)* (Santiago: Corporación José Domingo Cañas, 2005); and Lois Hecht Oppenheim,

The same month, organised labour, students and business and professional associations formed the Comando de Protesta (Protest Command) to coordinate opposition and guide protest strategy. Poblador organisations were excluded, allowed a voice but no vote.[124] For political activists in the housing movement, the protests provided an opportunity for more aggressive, multi-edged actions aimed at rejecting neoliberal policy, acquiring housing solutions and destabilising the regime. Organised pobladores were marginalised from the Comando on one side and regime negotiations on the other, despite constituting the largest, most active protest sector. A regime change could mean a more amenable government, even revolution; or the current regime could decide to negotiate, a significant shift. Either way, a massive toma combined with the national protests could change the panorama. Under the circumstances, political activists prioritised direct action to both topple the regime and its policies and meet material needs.[125]

In the aftermath of the fifth national protest, on 22 September 1983, 30,000 pobladores carried out the massive toma that established Campamento Cardenal Raúl Silva Henríquez and Campamento Mons. Juan Francisco Fresno.[126] Eviction attempts and violent confrontation ensued. Ultimately evictions failed because of the pobladores' tenacity, the toma's sheer size and the volatile political atmosphere. This toma constituted the 'explosion' of the housing crisis onto the national scene, where it garnered extensive press coverage and public attention.[127] As one analyst later reported, '[this toma] could not be "solved" with violent eviction'.[128] The regime, already facing internal division and severe scrutiny from the Church, the international community and opponents with whom it sought to negotiate, backed down. On 23 September the mayors of San Bernardo and La Granja announced that the squatters could stay until a solution was found.[129] The campamentos' residents subsequently experienced repression and a multitude of other problems; they were eventually enrolled in eradication programmes and dispersed throughout the city.[130] However, the damage was done: the market's inability to provide for the people's needs and the regime's retreat in the face of mass direct action were clear for all to see.

Politics in Chile: Socialism, Authoritarianism, and Market Democracy (3rd edition, Boulder, CO: Westview, 2007), p. 157.
[124] Espinoza, 'Los pobladores en la política', pp. 59–60.
[125] *Ibid.*, pp. 43–4, 59–60; Programa Urbano y Taller Vivienda Social Sur, 'Cardenal Raúl Silva H. Mons. Fco. Fresno: Experiencia Asistencia Técnica', Jan. 1984, p. 13, Biblioteca José Martí (BJM), Santiago.   [126] Programa Urbano, p. 19, BJM.
[127] Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, p. 109.   [128] Scherman Filer, *Techo y abrigo*, p. 118.
[129] *Ibid.*, pp. 23–7.
[130] By mid-1987, 130 families remained in Campamento Cardenal Raúl Silva Henríquez. *Solidaridad*, 246, May–Jun. 1987, p. 15.

Criticism arose within pro-regime circles as the economy imploded and civil unrest increased. Powerful capitalists demanded expansionist, protectionist measures, as did sectors of the military.[131] The radical neoliberal model had failed, but to overturn it in the midst of civil unrest stoked fear of chaos (or revolution). Pinochet and the junta pulled back from earlier monetarist radicalism. They placed expansionist-friendly appointees in the economic and finance ministries, socialised private sector debt and took over major private banks.[132] Proponents of the neoliberal model saved it from further dismantling thanks to IMF and World Bank backing and the private sector's fear, in the face of widespread civil unrest, of 'a return to the chaos of the Popular Unity period'.[133] For the remainder of its tenure, however, the regime backed away from its earlier monetarist radicalism and instituted more heterodox policies within a general neoliberal framework.[134]

In response to poblador mobilisation, the regime expanded low-income housing programmes.[135] In 1984 it expanded state regulation of low-income housing application and sales, housing subsidy savings and loans, and mortgage debt systems.[136] The dictatorship avidly pursued the privatisation and liberalisation of health care, education and pensions, which mass protest and direct action did not target as intensively and insistently as housing despite similar crises of access. At the same time, however, it rolled back radical state retrenchment in housing and urban planning, which suggests that it responded at least in part to popular pressure in this sector. Meanwhile, tomas spread to Renca, Puente Alto and La Florida even as repression intensified and national protest became more violent and concentrated in the poblaciones.[137]

The regime responded to the ongoing upheaval by 'alternating violence with concessions'.[138] In an interview with *El Mercurio* that September, MINVU minister Miguel Angel Poduje announced an upcoming concession aimed at placating mobilised pobladores and those who feared the destabilisation that continued tomas could bring:

The city is made by its inhabitants, exercising their liberties, driven by their desires and interests, and limited by their resources … In the adjusted policy we recognise that market mechanisms alone are not sufficient to produce harmonic, efficient, egalitarian,

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[131] Teichman, *The Politics of Freeing Markets*, p. 78.
[132] *Ibid.*, pp. 78–9; Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, p. 69; Meller, *Un siglo de economía*, pp. 234, 246–9.
[133] Teichman, *The Politics of Freeing Markets*, p. 79.
[134] Taylor, *From Pinochet to the Third Way*, p. 72; Winn (ed.), *Victims of the Chilean Miracle*, p. 42.
[135] Espinoza, 'Los pobladores en la política', p. 54; Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', pp. 175, 179; Morales and Rojas, 'Relocalización', p. 95.
[136] MINVU, Memoria 1973–1989, pp. 30–1.
[137] *Solidaridad*, 177, May 1984, p. 116.
[138] Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', p. 181.

and lasting urban development. Development with these characteristics can only be achieved through adequate and strict urban planning. This [planning] should be familiar with and use market forces but in no case blindly subordinate itself to them.[139]

The inhabitants 'exercising their liberties, driven by their desires and interests, and limited by their resources' included the pobladores. The above announcement of what would ultimately be the reversal of PNDU/79 acknowledges pressure and responds at least in part to the pobladores' demands for state intervention in the interest of increased 'egalitarianism' in urban development (that is, access to land and/or housing). The state did not bestow the liberties (free association and collective action, among others) that the pobladores exercised in pursuit of their interests; rather, it opposed them. By exercising those liberties despite opposition, the pobladores successfully pressured the regime to reverse the more radical aspects of neoliberal urban policy by expanding housing programmes and regulating urban development, contradicting neoliberal prescriptions that had exacerbated rather than ameliorated the housing crisis.

    In 1985, further events provided additional impetus for policy revision. The March earthquake increased the housing deficit.[140] The mainstream opposition overtly incorporated the right to housing into its political agenda, as reflected in the Acuerdo Nacional para la Transición a la Plena Democracia (National Agreement for Transition to Democracy, ANTPD), which singled out the violation of the right to housing as a principal obstacle to national reconciliation.[141] Later that year, activist pobladores from across the capital, backed by the Church, collectively called for housing, socio-economic justice, political freedom and an end to dictatorship.[142] In the midst of ongoing protest and an estimated housing deficit of nearly one million units, the authorities expanded housing programmes and reversed PNDU/79.[143] PNDU/79 underlay the neoliberal urban development model responsible for the price increases and extreme state retrenchment and deregulation that had driven the housing crisis to unprecedented levels. The timing suggests that land price increases were not solely responsible for the reversal. Prices, and the housing deficit, increased well before 1985, yet the regime only reversed its policy after social and political unrest, especially the tomas, had escaped its control. In response to the burgeoning crisis and related mass mobilisation, the

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[139] *El Mercurio*, 2 Sep. 1984.
[140] Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', pp. 180–1.
[141] ANTPD, Aug. 1985; reproduced in Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, p. 415.
[142] 'Planteamiento Poblacional para la Reconciliación y la Democracia en Chile', Dec. 1985, reproduced in Wilson, *La otra ciudad*, pp. 420–26.
[143] Kusnetzoff, 'Urban and Housing Policy', p. 173; Morales and Rojas, 'Relocalización', p. 95.

authorities declared that urban land was in fact a scarce resource and all aspects of urban development must be subject to 'strict' state regulation.

Conclusions

Most immediately, pobladores gained expanded housing programmes and limited, but under the circumstances significant, revision of radical neoliberal policy in the urban land and housing sector. Subsequent civilian governments accepted the post-1983 'pragmatic' neoliberal framework despite continued tomas (such as Esperanza Andina in 1992 and the Toma de Peñalolén in 1997), but they eschewed the extreme radicalism of the 1970s and early 1980s. Poblador mobilisation was not solely responsible for policy revision during the dictatorship, but it was an important factor. With the implementation of the radical neoliberal model the regime sought to transfer responsibility for low-income housing provision to the private sector. To do so, it attempted to eliminate the entrenched beliefs that housing was a right, that the state was a legitimate target of demand, and that applying grassroots political pressure to that end was an appropriate practice. Countervailing currents coalesced in the resurrection of the pobladores movement for adequate housing in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The tomas, in particular, laid bare the failure of the economic model, repression and politico-cultural campaigns to replace decades of popular sector organisational tradition, knowledge and political culture with the belief that 'the market' would provide for the needs of the people. Severe clashes between the economic model and socio-economic reality, and the model's socio-political prescriptions and popular sector political culture and tradition, motivated grassroots organisation and popular protest that ultimately circumscribed the regime's neoliberal push. Although the pobladores' success in this instance should not be exaggerated, through the use of collective action they successfully pressured the dictatorship to change course in at least one major area of market liberalisation.

Spanish and Portuguese abstracts

Spanish abstract. En 1985, la dictadura de Pinochet revirtió la política radical neoliberal de desarrollo urbano en respuesta a la crisis económica y a la presión política ejercida por los pobres urbanos en alianza con la iglesia católica y la izquierda. Las políticas de libre mercado del régimen entraron en conflicto con la cultura política del sector popular que consideraba que la vivienda popular era un derecho que el Estado debía mantener. Para implementar sus políticas radicales, el régimen buscó modificar los entendimientos de que la vivienda era un derecho y el Estado un blanco legítimo para hacer demandas. Sin embargo, no tuvo éxito. A principios de los años 80 los pobladores organizados llevaron exitosamente la crisis de vivienda accesible a la cabeza de la atención pública a través de una resurrección de formas previas al golpe de acción directa, y presionaron a la dictadura para que se retractara del dogmatismo neoliberal.

Spanish keywords: neoliberalismo, protesta, vivienda pública, movimientos sociales, pobladores, desarrollo urbano

Portuguese abstract. Em 1985, a ditadura de Pinochet reverteu políticas neoliberais radicais de desenvolvimento urbano em resposta à crise econômica e pressão política colocada pelos pobres urbanos em aliança com a Igreja Católica e as forças de esquerda. As políticas de livre mercado do regime conflitavam com a cultura política do setor popular que considerava a moradia como um direito que o estado tinha obrigação de garantir. Para implementar suas políticas radicais, o regime buscou alterar o entendimento de que a moradia era um direito e que o estado era alvo legítimo desta demanda. No entanto, não obteve êxito. No início da década de 1980, *pobladores* organizados conseguiram trazer a crise do acesso a moradia para o primeiro plano através da retomada de formas pré-golpe de ação direta, pressionando a ditadura a recuar em seu dogmatismo neoliberal.

Portuguese keywords: neoliberalismo, manifestação, moradia popular, movimentos sociais, *pobladores*, desenvolvimento urbano