The Unión Demócrata Independiente and the Poor (1983–1992): The Survival of Clientelistic Traditions in Chilean Politics

by Marcus Klein*

Abstract. – This article discusses the activities of the Unión Demócrata Independiente (Independent Democratic Union, UDI) in the *poblaciones* of Greater Santiago, specifically looking at the period between the party's foundation in September 1983 and the first democratic elections at the local level after the return to democracy in June 1992. It is argued that during the period under consideration, the UDI laid the foundations for its subsequent electoral successes in the shantytowns. The Independent Democratic Union, the first party of the Chilean right actively to seek the support of the poor, built up this support by exploiting anti-Marxist feelings and appeals to order, social work amongst shantytown dwellers, and, most importantly, clientelistic networks. It was able to establish these networks, which helped the UDI lastingly to win over significant sectors of the urban poor to its cause because of its close collaboration with the military regime of General Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990).

INTRODUCTION

In early July 2002, seven months after its impressively strong showing in the congressional elections of 2001, in which the Unión Demócrata Independiente (Independent Democratic Union, UDI) had turned into the strongest party in Chilean politics with 25 per cent of the popular vote and 31 deputies in the 120-headed lower house of parliament, the party disclosed its new slogan. Reflecting the confidence of an organisation that had almost doubled its popular vote as well as

its representation in the Chamber of Deputies since the general elections of 1997,[1] and thereby relegated the Partido Demócrata Cristiano (Christian Democratic Party), the party that had come first in every single election since the return from military rule to democracy, to second place, the UDI self-assuredly described itself as the new and truly "Popular Party". Especially because of its following amongst the poorer sectors of the Chilean population, this slogan, as Patricio Melero Abaroa, the party's secretary-general, wrote, was no longer a "myth", nor wishful thinking or just a "marketing strategy", as some of its opponents claimed. It was an indisputable "fact", for the UDI represented the interests of the Chilean people, not least the socially and economically most disadvantaged sectors living in the *poblaciones*.[2]

In accounting for the strength of the UDI, in the shantytowns in particular and a considerable number of electoral districts with the highest percentage of poor people in general, which, as the municipal elections of 2000 had exemplified, was indeed significant and could not be easily dismissed as baseless propaganda,[3] Melero Abaroa emphasised his party's allegedly selfless and devoted work at the local level since its foundation in late September 1983. With its "idealism", emphasis on solidarity, "special sense of public service", courageous defence of "Western Christian Humanism", and "firm adherence to the social market economy", the UDI, according to the deputy representing one of the poorest electoral districts of the Metropolitan Region (Greater

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[1] In the 1997 elections for the Chamber of Deputies, the UDI had received 837,736 votes (or 14.45 per cent) and elected 17 deputies. Four years later, it received 1,547,209 votes (or 25.18 per cent). For different explanations of the UDI's rise, see Carla Lehmann/Ximena Hinzpeter, "¿Nos estamos derechizando? Análisis sobre la base de resultados electorales y encuestas CEP": *Serie Puntos de Referencia* 240 (Santiago 2001); Genaro Arriagada, *Resultados de la elección 2001 y su proyección estrátegica* (Dec. 26, 2001), at www.asuntospublicos.cl/detalle.php?id=168; Carlos Huneeus, *¿Dónde se fueron los votantes del PDC?* (Jan. 22, 2002), at www.asuntospublicos.cl/detalle.php?id=175; and Alfredo Joignant/Patricio Navia, "De la política de individuos a los hombres del partido. Socialización, competencia política y penetración electoral de la UDI (1989–2001)": *Estudios Públicos* 89 (Santiago 2003), p. 129–171.

[2] Melero Abaroa, "Rompimos el mito: el partido popular hoy es una realidad": *Realidad* XII, 65 (Santiago 2002), online edition at www.revistarealidad.cl/2002/n65/politica1.htm.

[3] Cf. Mauricio Morales/Rodrigo Bugueño, "La UDI como expresión de la nueva derecha en Chile": *Estudios Sociales* 107 (Santiago 2001), p. 215–248, here: p. 240.

Santiago) since the founding elections of 1989,[4] had provided the only real alternative to the left, which for years had only contaminated the poor with its destructive message of class struggle. Because of this message, his party also had overcome the initial reluctance of the *pobladores*, who had been disappointed with traditional party politics and politicians who had only been interested in them as voters immediately before elections. Not even the violent resistance of the "most radicalised left" against the attempts on the part of UDI militants to gain a foothold in the slum area could prevent its progress.[5]

Melero Abaroa's description of events is not without its merits; but it tells only one part of the story. Indeed, the UDI's work at the grassroots level would not have shown any lasting impact if it had just relied on its idealism and struggle against the extreme left. The party's opposition to the latter, and particularly to militant Communist activists working in the shantytowns, while helping to explain the initial support of some sectors opposed to the extreme left's strategy of violently confronting the military regime, cannot account for the persistent adherence of *pobladores* to the UDI. It certainly does not help to understand the relations after the return to democracy, which coincided with the decline of the extreme left, a result of the breakdown of the Eastern Bloc as well as strategic mistakes of the Chilean Communists during the process of re-democratisation.[6] The main reason for the success of the UDI can be found in the network of clientelism and patronage it built up during the 1980s and early 1990s.[7] This is a fact Melero Abaroa, the representative of a party that had always underlined its rejection of traditional party politics and its commitment to solving what it termed the real problems of people, conveniently passed over. And it was the substantial involvement of UDI militants in local politics during the military regime of General Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990), when many of its members were appointed to mayoral-

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[4]   He is deputy for the 16th electoral district, representing the municipalities of Colina, Lampa, Pudahuel, Quilicura, and Tiltil.

[5]   Melero Abaroa, "Rompimos el mito" (note 2).

[6]   Cf. Kenneth M. Roberts, *Deepening Democracy? The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru* (Stanford 1998), p. 130–134.

[7]   See Patricia Hipsher, "The New Electoral Right in Chile and the Poor: Strange Bedfellows": *South Eastern Latin Americanist* 39, 3–4 (Spartanburg 1996), p. 17–34, especially: p. 26–31.

ties, which provided the basis for its subsequent attainment of electoral victories.

This article discusses the relationship between the UDI and the poor, focusing on the crucial period between the party's foundation and the first democratic elections at the local level after the return to democracy in late June 1992. Following an overview of the municipal policies of the authoritarian regime, which profoundly and lastingly reshaped the power structure at the local level and turned the municipalities into important instruments of its endeavours to change the face of Chilean politics and society, the article will subsequently focus on its main civilian political supporter, namely the *gremialista* movement of Jaime Guzmán and the Independent Democratic Union, its political wing. In a third step, attention will turn to the start of the UDI's work in the *poblaciones* and the rationale behind this decision. In addition, the party's means of enlisting a following amongst the *pobladores* will be identified. The focus will be on its struggle against the left and its identification with the regime as well as its network of clientelism and patronage, the latter more important than the former. At the same time, the article argues that the crisis of the extreme left since the 1980s and the simultaneous retreat of the centrist and leftist opposition forces united in the *Concertación* from the shantytowns are also important for understanding the success of the Chilean right, for it opened up new political space which the UDI could occupy.

The Municipal Politics of the Pinochet Regime

Less than a week after assuming power in the coup of September 11, 1973, and even prior to the dissolution of the national congress and the de facto ban of those parties that still existed at the time, the military junta led by the Commander-in-Chief of the army, General Augusto Pinochet, started acting at the local level. Striving for "a rigorous control over the local population and over community organisations", which had reached an unparalleled degree of mobilisation during Salvador Allende's Popular Unity administration (1970–1973), it suspended all mayors and aldermen from their posts and transferred their authority to newly designated men (and some women) it confided in.[8]

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[8]   Hernán Pozo, *La situación actual del municipio chileno y el problema de la municipalización* (Santiago 1981), p. 5; and Alfredo J. Rehren, "El impacto de las políticas

A series of decree-laws, *inter alia* the comprehensive administrative reform imposed in July 1974, which brought the territorial re-organisation of the country,[9] and the Constitutional Law of Municipalities of January 1976, formalised this new, centralised and hierarchical power structure. Mayors were turned into the prolonged arm of the central government in their *comunas*. Moreover, as of July 1974, their nomination and stay in office effectively depended on the goodwill of the president, and not the *Junta de Gobierno*.[10] The mayor was, as Pinochet stated in no uncertain terms during the First National Congress of Mayors in 1978, "the representative of the President of the Republic at the local level".[11]

At the same time, while subordinating mayors directly to the president and thus substantially limiting their autonomy, the various decree-laws greatly strengthened them *vis-à-vis* their communities. As the highest authorities of their municipalities, the mayors' prerogatives were extensive. They not only officially directed their *comunas*, but exercised the immediate supervision of all their institutions, offices, services, employees and workers; formulated their policies, plans, programs, and budgets; supervised and coordinated the functioning of their public services; and presided over the two advisory organs set up by the military regime, the Local Development Council (CODECO), the substitute for the elected local council, and the Municipal Secretariat for Planning and Coordination. Further underlining the mayors' dominant positions on the one hand, and the limited influence and participation of the people living in the communities, who no longer chose their representatives in free and fair elections but had to accept those imposed by the regime on the other, the Local Development Councils were not in the position to take decisions; they were only allowed to submit non-binding proposals and recommend changes to

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autoritarias a nivel local: implicaciones para la consolidación democrática en Chile": *Estudios Públicos* 44 (1991), p. 207–246, here: p. 209.

[9] It divided the country into 13 regions, 51 provinces, and 318 communes. Seventeen more municipalities followed in 1981, all in the Metropolitan Region (Greater Santiago), bringing the total to 335.

[10] Cf. Blas Tomić/Raúl González, *Municipio y estado: dimensiones de una relación clave* (Santiago 1983), p. 17–51.

[11] As quoted in Rehren, "Impacto" (note 8), p. 224.

the mayors' plans and programs.[12] Because of this centralisation of power in the hands of mayors, some members of CODECOs subsequently stated that they had become "something like 'a little Pinochet' in his [or her] municipality".[13]

If the *comunas* had remained as powerless and short of financial means as they had been up until 1973, the increased authorities of mayors would have been without major consequences. This was not the case, however. On the contrary, "[t]he municipality was transformed into an important power centre".[14] During the 1970s and early 1980s, the military regime substantially increased their budgets and competence, and accordingly the influence of mayors over the people living in the communes, justifying this process with the need to disarticulate the brokerage networks that had dominated local politics until September 1973, thereby making them more efficient and responsive to the needs of the local population.[15] Firstly, through various fiscal reforms, the military regime provided them with unprecedented resources. Between 1979 and 1983 alone, the municipal budgets quadrupled. By 1983, the *comunas* controlled around 19 per cent of all public spending, up from only four per cent four years earlier.[16] Secondly, under the cloak of *municipalización*, which was an integral part of the overall neo-liberal transformation of Chile, it transferred a number of areas of responsibility previously exercised by the central government to the local level. Starting in 1980, the administration of education and health were little by little handed over to the municipalities. One year later, in addition to the politically motivated eradication of camps illegally set up by squatters, which were removed from more affluent areas, they began to play important roles in the construction of council houses for low-income families, too.[17]

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[12] See Pozo, *Situación actual* (note 8), p. 17–34; Tomi?/González, *Municipio y estado* (note 10), p. 114–127; and Rehren, "Impacto" (note 8), p. 237–240.

[13] Gilberto Villarroel E., "Alcaldes con 'new wave'": *Hoy*, 7 Nov. 1988 (Santiago), p. 20–21, here: p. 20.

[14] Carlos Huneeus, *El régimen de Pinochet* (Santiago 2000), p. 373.

[15] Rehren, "Impacto" (note 8), p. 210; 218–219.

[16] Isabel Hohlberg, "Una experiencia critica": *Hoy*, 22 April 1985 (Santiago), p. 13–14, here: p. 13.

[17] Tomić/González, *Municipio y estado* (note 10), p. 74–81.

The distribution of housing and family subsidies, as well as the administration of various employment schemes set up by the military regime to alleviate the rising poverty, especially amongst the *pobladores*,[18] had also been turned over to the municipalities, expanding their areas of responsibility and impact on the daily lives of poorer Chileans even more. The Minimum Employment Program (PEM) was the most significant and visible instrument. By 1976, one year after is creation, the program, "which gave idled workers a nominal wage [well below the minimum wage] and free medical aid in return for paving roads, tending parks, or preparing school lunches", had enrolled more than 210,000 men and women.[19] After the second economic crash of the early 1980s, the PEM, initially only set up as a temporary program, and the Occupational Program for Heads of Households (POJH), the second emergency job scheme established in late 1982, employed more than half a million people. In view of the fact that in the early 1980s, Chile only had an economically active population of slightly more than three and half million, the percentage of people having found work in these programs was considerable; almost 15 per cent of the entire Chilean labour force was enrolled in either the PEM or the POJH.[20]

With some justification, *pobladores* opposed to the military regime considered the wages paid by both schemes as "miserable", deemed the activities workers were asked to do infuriating and purposeless and described the conditions they had to endure as humiliating.[21] Further-

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[18] See, for instance, Eugenio Tironi, *Autoritarismo, modernización y marginalidad: el caso de Chile 1973–1989* (Santiago 1990), p. 130–227; Ricardo French-Davis/Dagmar Razcynski, *The Impact of Global Recession and National Policies on Living Standards: Chile* (2nd ed., Santiago 1987); and Jorge Rodríguez, *La distribución del ingreso y el gasto social en Chile, 1983* (Santiago 1985).

[19] Pamela Constable/Arturo Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies: Chile under Pinochet* (New York/London 1993), p. 224.

[20] Javier Martínez/Alvaro Díaz, *Chile: The Great Transformation* (Washington DC/Geneva 1996), table 4-4, p. 120.

[21] Julia Paley, *Marketing Democracy: Power and Social Movements in Post-Dictatorship Chile* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 2001), p. 77. See also the statement by the shantytown leader from La Cisterna (Metropolitan Region) in Rodrigo Baño, "Lo social y lo político: consideraciones acerca del movimiento popular urbano, vol. II, Jornadas con dirigentes": *Documento de Trabajo* 206 (Santiago 1984), p. 9–10; and Pablo Azócar, "Después del estallido: PEM y POJH": *Mensaje* 328 (Santiago 1984), p. 180–182.

more, the programs did not address the fundamental causes of poverty in the poor quarters but only attempted to lessen it, and as a result "literally thousands of organizations […] emerged in the *poblaciones* of Santiago" alone, the majority of them "devoted to economic self-help".[22] Yet, at the same time, for many of Chileans who lived in extreme poverty in the mid-1980s, the jobs offered by both the PEM and the POJH, together with the subsidies handed out by the regime, did provide lifelines under increasingly harsh economic and social conditions.[23] Moreover, under these circumstances, for many Chileans ideological disputes or the confrontations about the nature of a democratic Chile, which began to dominate the political discussion after a new constitution had been approved in a rigged plebiscite in September 1980, were less important than the satisfaction of their basic needs.

> "Facing hunger, coldness, [and] unemployment, the grand speeches about alternative political projects and about the future forms of democratic institutions seem[ed] abstract to them, disconnected from real life".[24]

"The immediate pressing need", as one opposition shantytown leader from the municipality of Pudahuel in the Metropolitan Region stated it in 1984, was "the question of hunger"; "a project for an alternative society falls on deaf ears".[25]

The desperation of many poor Chileans, together with the violent suppression and persecution of organisations that had traditionally controlled municipal politics, namely the Christian Democratic, Socialist and Communist parties, and the individualised, discretionary and

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[22] Philip Oxhorn, "The Popular Sector Response to an Authoritarian Regime: Shantytown Organizations since the Military Coup": *Latin American Perspectives*, 18, 1 (1991), p. 66–91, here: p. 72, italics added. For a general discussion of these base-level organisations, see Philip Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society: The Popular Sectors and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile* (University Park 1995); Cathy Lisa Schneider, *Shantytown Protests in Pinochet's Chile* (Philadelphia 1995); Ton Salman, *The Diffident Movement: Disintegration, Ingenuity and Resistance of the Chilean Pobladores, 1973–1990* (Amsterdam 1997); and Patrick Guillaudat/Pierre Mouterde, *Los movimientos sociales en Chile 1973–1993* (Santiago 1998).

[23] According to a study carried out by an opposition think tank, 32 per cent of the population lived in extreme poverty at the time. See O.M., "Huella de los marginados": *Hoy* 2 Sept. 1985 (Santiago), p. 13.

[24] Hernán Pozo, *Partidos politicos y organizaciones poblacionales I: una relación problemática* (Santiago 1986), p. 63.

[25] Baño, "Lo social y lo político" (note 21), p. 11–12.

temporary nature of the subsidies,[26] provided ideal preconditions for a realignment of forces at the local level. With the growing amount of money at their disposal, and the control over areas of responsibility and programs that affected the daily lives of people, mayors interested in enlisting the support of the population living in their communities did have the means to do so. At the same time, and thereby putting this adherence on a firmer and more lasting basis, they could establish new networks of clientelism and patronage. The fact that these were practices the military regime and its civilian supporters had fiercely criticised, and identified as one of the main reasons for the inefficiency and politicisation of local services prior to 1973, which had been characterised by political brokers,[27] was less important than the actual benefits that could be gained from them. No civilian group loyal to, and supportive of, the military regime was more willing, determined and able to take advantage of these opportunities than the *gremialistas*.

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JAIME GUZMÁN, THE *GREMIALISTAS*,
AND THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP

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Under the spiritual guidance and undisputed political leadership of Jaime Guzmán, who, while reading law at the Catholic University of Chile in the 1960s, had founded the *movimiento gremial* in reaction to the progressive university reform proposed by Eduardo Frei's Christian Democrat government (1964–1970) and rapidly turned it into the dominant student organisation at the institution and other universities across the country,[28] the movement focused its energies on local governments ever since the coup. Besides the increasingly significant General Secretariat of the Government, which was eventually respon-

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[26] Joaquín Navasal, "La maraña del poder": *Hoy*, 23 May 1988 (Santiago), p. 25–27, here: p. 26.

[27] See Arturo Valenzuela, *Political Brokers in Chile: Local Government in a Centralized Polity* (Durham 1977).

[28] Cf. José Joaquín Brunner, "La Universidad Católica de Chile y la cultura nacional en los años 60. El tradicionalismo católico y el movimiento estudiantil": José Joaquín Brunner/Gonzalo Catalán (eds.), *Cinco estudios sobre cultura y sociedad* (Santiago 1985), p. 263–414; and Cristián Cox, *La reforma en la Universidad Católica de Chile* (Santiago 1985).

sible for the control of the media as well as the mobilisation of popular support for the military regime, and the Office of National Planning (ODEPLAN), "the seedbed for neoliberal economic restructuring",[29] the municipalities attracted the greatest number, and strongest interest, of *gremialistas*. Many of the predominantly young men formed at the Catholic University, who had earned their first practical experiences in politics while working in the Youth Secretariat, a branch of the General Secretariat of the government's Office of Social Organisations, were entrusted with the control and administration of *comunas* in the principal cities of the country, namely Santiago, Valparaíso, Viña del Mar, and Concepción.[30]

The appointment of *gremialistas* to influential administrative posts in general, and numerous mayoralties in particular, underlined their significance for the military regime, as well as the considerable amount of trust the latter had in their loyalty. This was due to a number of factors. Firstly, as members of an organisation that, as Guzmán himself later justifiably stated, had been "the civic vanguard in the struggle against the Popular Unity" administration,[31] their anti-Marxist reputations were impeccable. They had proven their uncompromising willingness to face Allende and his supporters, if necessary with uncivil and violent means,[32] and to save the country, as the armed forces and all civilian opponents of the Marxist administration subsequently stated, from chaos and destruction. To them, "the military coup [w]as the beginning of a salvational crusade to wrest *la patria* from the abyss".[33] Secondly, as against the politicians of the traditional right organised in the National Party,[34] the *gremialistas*' image and reputa-

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[29] Roberto Barros, *Constitutionalism and Dictatorship: Pinochet, the Junta, and the 1980 Constitution* (Cambridge 2002), p. 65.

[30] Huneeus, *Pinochet* (note 14), p. 330–331; and Marcelo Pollack, *The New Right in Chile 1973–97* (Basingstoke/New York 1999), p. 54–55.

[31] Jaime Guzmán, *Escritos personales* (Santiago 1992), p. 63.

[32] See Detlef Nolte, "Zur sozialen Basis konterrevolutionärer Massenbewegungen. 'El paro de octubre' in Chile, 1972": *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv* 10, 4 (1984), p. 393–448.

[33] Brian Loveman, *Chile: The Legacy of Hispanic Capitalism* (2nd ed., New York 1988), p. 314, italics in the original.

[34] The party had been formed in 1966 through the amalgamation of the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, and some marginal nationalist groups and individuals. Cf. Ángel M. Soto Gamboa/Marco Fernández Ulloa, "El pensamiento político de la derecha en los '60s: el Partido Nacional": *Bicentenario* 1, 2 (Santiago 2002), p. 87–116.

tion had not been tainted by their involvement in party politics, so reviled by the new military rulers. Indeed, they showed as much disdain for, and dislike of, parties and traditional politicians as the men of the armed forces.

Thirdly, and most importantly, Guzmán and his devoted followers had the political expertise that *los Chicago Boys*, the Chicago-trained economists who by 1975 had gained the upper hand over sectors within the heterogeneous government-coalition that advocated the gradual transformation of the economy, lacked. The *gremialistas*, who discarded their original corporativist convictions and increasingly embraced the neo-liberal economic principles of the Chicago Boys,[35] had a political project that promised both a break with Chile's traditional political system and ruled out the repetition of the dreaded experience of the Popular Unity. This vision about Chile's new democracy – limited, protected, and authoritarian – was established in the Constitution of 1980. The constitution substantially limited the influence of parties and parliament over the political process, banned Marxist organisations outright, considerably strengthened the position of the president *vis-à-vis* the legislature as well as the judiciary, and ascribed to the armed forces the role of the constitution's guardians.[36] The new institutional framework, on which a committee that had been set up by the military regime immediately after the coup had worked on the best part of the 1970s, clearly bore Guzmán's mark. Pinochet's most influential civilian adviser of the 1970s had "provided the intellect, the political will, the ideas and [above all] the personal and ideological link between the General and [the] commission".[37]

With the enactment of the new constitution, which signalled the start for Chile's slow and protracted return to limited democracy and

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[35] For this process, see Pollack, *New Right* (note 30), p. 47–67; and Carlos Huneeus, "Technocrats and Politicians in an Authoritarian Regime. The 'ODEPLAN Boys' and the 'Gremialists' in Pinochet's Chile": *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32, 2 (2000), p. 461–501.

[36] Barros, *Constitutionalism* (note 29), p. 167–254. The ban of Marxist parties was only lifted with the constitutional reforms approved in 1988.

[37] Pollack, *New Right* (note 30), p. 76. See also Mario Sznajder, "Jaime Guzmán, Pinochet y la ideología de la 'democracia limitada' en Chile": *Ciclos en la historia, la economía y la sociedad* 8, 16 (Buenos Aires 1998), p. 105–123; and Renato Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán. Autoridad y libertad* (Santiago 2000), p. 77–160.

eventually the re-emergence of parties and electoral competitions, Guzmán, seconded by his collaborators, focused his energies on politically organising the *gremialista* movement and its sympathisers. They had to adapt to the changed circumstances and prepare themselves for the post-authoritarian era. In late September 1983, at a time when the country was rocked by massive protests against the dictatorship and the latter's violent reactions to them and parties began to re-emerge, the Unión Demócrata Independente was finally set up. The faction brought together *gremialistas*, Chicago Boys, as well as other members of the military regime's technocratic elite, predominantly young men who had not been involved in party politics prior to the coup of 1973. Besides Guzmán, who chaired the party's executive committee, Sergio Fernández, a former and future minister of the interior of the military regime, Luis Cordero and Pablo Longueira, both ex-collaborators of the Youth Secretariat, were amongst the exclusively male founding members of the organisation. Reflecting the ideology of the neo-liberalised *movimiento gremial*, the UDI was a socially and politically extremely conservative but economically very liberal party that tirelessly warned of the dangers of communist subversion.

At the time of the UDI's foundation, the relations between Guzmán and Pinochet had (temporarily) cooled down; the general had not been informed about the establishment of the new organisation.[38] Yet, the *gremialistas* did not vacillate in their support for the military regime, nor their commitment to the new institutional framework their leader had shaped and helped to bring about. The assertion made in its founding manifesto that it would also make "a constructive criticism" of those aspects of the government's measures which, from its points of view, deserved to be criticised, was always overshadowed by the "firm defence of its stability" and "the loyal contribution to all its initiatives for the common good".[39] The party, for instance, rejected the National Pact, a cross-party pact signed in August 1985 that strove for a more rapid return to democracy. With its intransigent position, while shared by the politically marginalized Communists and right-wing extremists

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[38] Alejandro San Francisco/Ángel Soto [Gamboa], *The UDI in Chile, 1983–2001: From Work in the 'poblaciones' to the Consolidation of the Popular Party* (unpublished manuscript, 2003), p. 4, 6.

[39] UDI, *Unión Demócrata Independiente* (Santiago 1983), p. 8. See also "UDI: un hecho político": *Realidad* 5, 53 (1983), editorial, p. 3–5, here: p. 3.

organised in National Patrol,[40] the UDI was even at odds with fellow rightist supporters of the regime, if not Pinochet, namely Andrés Allamand, the secretary-general of the Movement of National Union who had been one of the signatories of the agreement.[41]

The Independent Democratic Union was, moreover, the most outspoken and dedicated supporter of Pinochet in the run-up to the plebiscite of 1988, which was to decide about the general's stay in power for another eight-year term, and which he eventually lost to a united opposition front. Members of the party tirelessly campaigned on behalf of the general, describing the referendum in apocalyptic terms as a decision between "a model of a free society" and "different ranges of socialism: renewed socialism, communitarian socialism, Marxist socialism".[42] Indeed, leaving aside some more extremist organisations on the right fringe of the political system like National Patrol, the Unión Demócrata Independiente was "the only unconditional political 'Yes'" on which Pinochet could rely on.[43] Its unwavering adherence to the general was also the main reason why the attempt to unite the dispersed forces of the right in one party, Renovación Nacional (National Renovation, RN), foundered in the (Chilean) autumn of 1988, only fourteen months after its foundation.[44] If not in name, in spirit the UDI was the de facto "governmental party (*partido oficialista*)", Guzmán's disclaimer notwithstanding.[45]

The party was not satisfied with its role as the civilian arm of Pinochet however, nor did it simply want to defend and strengthen "the

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[40] Cf. Ascanio Cavallo, "Sólo los extremos se excluyen": *Hoy*, 2 Sept. 1985, p. 6–9, here: p. 9.

[41] See "Acuerdo Nacional para la Transición a la Plena Democracia": ibidem, p. 10–13; "Javier Leturia: La Constitución, hasta el fin": ibidem, p. 14–15; Jaime Guzmán, "Seminario *Qué Pasa*: 'El traspaso del poder'": *Qué Pasa* 19 Sept. 1985 (Santiago), p. 19–20; and "Editorial", *Boletín Informativo* 9 (Santiago 1985), p. 1.

[42] Hernán Chadwick, "Contrapunto a quince días del candidato": *APSI*, 8 Aug. 1988 (Santiago), p. 9–12, here: p. 9.

[43] F.P.R., "La Guerra no ha terminado": *Análisis* 25 April 1988 (Santiago), p. 9.

[44] Milena Vodanovic, "El quiebre de Renovación Nacional": *APSI*, 21 March 1988, p. 4–7; Luisa García, "La operación Guzmán": *Qué Pasa*, 24 March 1988, p. 8–10; Luisa García, "Proceso a la UDI", *Qué Pasa*, 28 April 1988, p. 9–11; and Andrés Allamand, *La travesía del desierto* (Santiago 1999), p. 104–147.

[45] Gloria Stanley, "Jaime Guzmán: 'Soy escéptico frente a posibilidades de un acuerdo politico'", *Qué Pasa*, 6 Oct. 1983, p. 33–36, here: p. 34.

various social modernisations" the military regime had allegedly
brought about with the dedicated collaboration of the Chicago Boys
and the *gremialistas*.[46] In its founding manifesto, the UDI also laid
claim to contribute "to the indispensable renovation" of Chilean poli-
tics; it wanted to overcome "classical party structures", which were
"for the most part dominated by rigid discipline and obsolete assem-
blies (*trasnochadas asambleísmos*)", and present "a new style of
making politics".[47] Contrary to all other political parties, the UDI
embodied a "renovated political style", characterised by "direct lang-
uage" and concrete ideas, the emphasis on "serious reasoning" over
"dialectical sophistry", and "organised political action" instead of
"electoral despotism" and "personal ambitions". In addition, "the
responsible and technical study of problems would constitute the basis
for [its] political debates and options".[48] The Independent Democratic
Union was, in other words, only interested in solving problems and
providing solutions. Right from its establishment, therefore, the Inde-
pendent Democrats presented themselves as the one political force that
listened to the people and promised to help them overcome their diffi-
culties.[49]

THE UDI'S WORK IN THE *POBLACIONES*

Imbued with the conviction that it represented a younger generation of
politicians, not tainted by the vices of the pre-1973 era but looking to
the future, the UDI set out to spread its message to the Chilean people.
As a party that wanted to transcend social classes and reach sectors of
the population which had been ignored by earlier rightist organisa-

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[46] UDI, *Unión Demócrata Independiente* (note 39), p. 6.

[47] Ibidem, p. 3, 8.

[48] Ibidem, p. 8–9.

[49] In other words, the origins of Joaquín Lavín's "*cosismo* (doing things)" can be
seen in the founding manifesto of the UDI. This strategy, which was and is the hallmark
of the UDI's only narrowly beaten presidential candidate in the elections of 1999/2000,
was not, as Alfredo Joignant states, adopted on the occasion of the Congreso Doctrina-
rio "Jaime Guzmán E.", held by the UDI in September 1991 in honour of its founder,
who had been assassinated in Santiago earlier that year. See his *Los enigmas de la
comunidad perdida. Historia, memoria e identidades politicas en Chile (2000–2010)*
(Santiago 2002), p. 15, n. 1.

tions, the *poblaciones* were one of its main targets. The UDI's activities amongst the urban poor, which it channelled through its youth centres, soon bore fruits. As early as mid-January 1984, less than four months after the organisation's establishment, the first executive committee was set up in a shantytown of the Metropolitan Region, namely in José María Caro (municipality of Pedro Aguirre Cerda). During the following months, the Independent Democrats succeeded in creating more and more slum area committees in the region, *inter alia* in the *comunas* of San Bernardo, San Miguel, La Pintana, La Granja, and Conchalí.[50] By March 1985, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Shantytown Section of the Metropolitan Region, Pablo Longueira, at the time leader of the branch, claimed that in his area of responsibility alone 76 "Shantytown Committees" were working, each with "at least 200 militants". In addition, 68 smaller "Organising Committees" were running. Overall, the UDI was active in around seventy per cent of all municipalities in Greater Santiago.[51]

According to Longueira, the advances of the UDI amongst the urban poor, which even an opposition magazine accepted as "a reality in various sectors",[52] were essentially due to two factors; they were the result of the party's appeal to anti-Marxist sentiments and its political style. The Independent Democratic Union, Longueira stated, was the only party that opposed "Marxism in the slum areas in an organised and valiant way". It rallied those sectors that had suffered from Communism "more than anybody else". Moreover,

> "[...] these broad shantytown sectors [...] respect the regime of the Armed Forces and see in us a movement that declares without hesitation (*no tiene complejos*) its loyalty to these institutions, the postulates of September 11 and the bases of the Constitution of 1980".

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[50] Ángel Soto Gamboa, *La irrupción de la UDI en las poblaciones 1983* (unpublished Paper prepared for delivery at the 2001 Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association [LASA], Washington DC, 6–8 Sept. 2001), p. 15. Hipsher's claim that the UDI only "began to actively organize urban poor dwellers" in "shantytown committees" in 1988, "before the plebiscite on whether or not Pinochet should remain President through 1997", has to be corrected. "New Electoral Right" (note 7), p. 27.

[51] "Pablo Longueira: 'Hemos superado con creces nuestras propias metas'", *Boletín Informativo* 8 (1985), p. 2.

[52] Patricia Collyer, "La UDI quiere armas": *Análisis*, 5 Nov. 1985, p. 14–15, here: p. 14.

On the other hand, they appreciated its approach to politics, which set it apart from other parties. The *pobladores*

> "[...] always emphasise that they see the UDI as a movement distinct from tradition-al politicians; that they see in the UDI something morally healthy, renewing and idealistic. That it does not promise them anything, nor is it demagogic (*ni hace demagogia*), but invites them to struggle together in the service of Chile and for our principles".[53]

Anti-Marxism, and its identification and intimate relations with the military regime, certainly does help to explain the initial support for the UDI in some areas at least partly, as Longueira justifiably pointed out. Ricardo Rojas, president of the independent committee of an encampment in the *población* of La Victoria (municipality of San Miguel), for instance, underlined the crucial role the Independent Democrats had played in breaking the control of Communists over his *campamento*. Local activists of the UDI, who he had approached, help-ed to establish contacts with the authorities, which listened to "their needs" and brought "peace" to the camp by imprisoning the Commu-nist militants who had forced payments from the settlers for the site they occupied, and the water and electricity they consumed.[54] Sonia Cerda, a *pobladora* from the shantytown of La Pincoya (commune of Huechuraba) declared, on the other hand, that she had joined the party because of her sympathy for the military regime and her loathing of the Popular Unity, which in 1988 she still associated with "hunger" and "queues".[55]

The mobilisations of *pobladores* in support of the military regime and against the wave of popular protests that shook Chile in the mid-1980s which UDI organised in La Pincoya as well as the slum area of Juan Antonio Ríos (municipality of Independencia) in mid-October 1985, are additional examples for the party's appeal to anti-Marxist senti-ments and consequently order. On both occasions, leading representa-tives of the UDI, namely Guzmán and Longueira, underlined their rejection of violence and terrorism, which they, tellingly enough, ex-clusively identified with Communists. Guzmán, who during his

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[53] "Pablo Longueira" (note 51), p. 2.

[54] María Ester Roblero, "Cuando está al 'rojo vivo'": *Qué Pasa*, 19. Sept. 1985, p. 10–12, here: p. 11.

[55] "Una contienda manzana a manzana": *Qué Pasa*, 19 May 1988, p. 30–32, here: p. 31.

speech in La Pincoya promised that the Independent Democrats would fight them "inch by inch" in the *poblaciones*, exemplarily stated that his party was the force that unified "decent men and women" who wanted to defend "their own security". The dictatorship's brutal repression of the opposition protest movement, and the numerous victims it claimed were dutifully ignored, however. Neither Guzmán nor any other member of the party who addressed the counter-demonstrations showed any sympathy for the opponents of the dictatorship, mainly youngsters from slum areas.[56]

The participation of slightly more than 2,000 shantytown dwellers in these rallies, although it faded in significance to the tens of thousands of people that took to the streets against the military regime, may have been as much the result of genuine support for the UDI and the dictatorship as an expression of the "yearning for security that in turn nourished the desire for a 'firm hand'".[57] Especially older people viewed the protests with scepticism, doubting the "constructive potency" of the increasingly violent confrontations and fearing that they, by interrupting transport, further jeopardised already fragile jobs. One could even argue that the angst they experienced because of the *carabineros*' and other state institutions' arbitrary responses to the protests, which, in order to regain control over slum quarters, "would shoot with live ammunition, sometimes without even looking",[58] overshadowed their rejection of the dictatorship. They rallied around an organisation that portrayed itself as a mainstay of law and order amidst a sea of seemingly uncontrollable upheavals. To some extent, then, the Independent Democratic Union skilfully took advantage of the *pobladores*' anxieties the military regime had created through its campaign of terror and the exaggerations of servile mass media about the threats of communist subversion. Hence, the victims sought the protection of the civilian arm of their tormentors.

The UDI's activities in the shantytowns did not rest on the exploitation of these feelings alone, however. Indeed, since the protests were temporary phenomena, easing off after the mid-1980s, the party's

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[56] "En la Pincoya": *Boletín Informativo* 10 (1985), p. 2; and "Homenaje a victimas del terrorismo": ibidem. For involvement of youngsters, see Gonzalo de la Maza/Mario Garcés, *La explosión de las mayorías: protesta nacional, 1983–1984* (Santiago 1985).

[57] Norbert Lechner, *Los patios interiores de la democracia* (Santiago 1988), p. 96.

[58] Salman, *Diffident Movement* (note 22), p. 190–191.

lasting success depended on its social work, a point Longueira had conveniently forgotten to mention. The activities in this area show the same ambiguity that characterised its stand on order; it exploited the desperation of many poor Chileans by offering help and providing support. On the one hand, the UDI seconded the creation of micro-industries (*mini-empresas*), as in the commune of Pudahuel, where it helped to set up an enterprise that produced sweaters.[59] On the other hand, and more importantly, because a greater number of people could be reached, they informed slum dwellers about the various social programs that had been implemented by the regime in response to the rising rate of poverty. Alfredo Galdames, president of the UDI's Shantytown Department in the 1980s and himself a *poblador* from Juanita Aguirre (municipality of Conchalí), subsequently remembered that militants of the party, when going into the slum areas, "didn't talk about politics" but "emphasised solving social problems". They "advised [people] about the government's new social program – how to enroll for a family subsidy, […] a housing subsidy, an employment subsidy, how to benefit from the PEM and POJH programs".[60]

A less innocent aspect of this social work involved the UDI's control over many of these programs through the mayors appointed by the military regime – by the late 1980s, around 27 per cent of them were card-carrying members of the party.[61] At a time of extreme economic hardship and precarious living standards, granting people jobs in the emergency employment programs certainly was, as one female shantytown leader from La Victoria who opposed the regime stated with unconcealed bitterness in November 1985, a powerful tool that brought the party new members. In addition, the Independent Democrats enlisted militants by paying water and electricity bills, offering plots of land, and even houses.[62] The latter often implied the forced transfer from illegal camps to new settlements, against the bitter resistance of some dwellers; but they also did lead to a certain improve-

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[59] Hipsher, "New Electoral Right" (note 7), p. 28.

[60] As quoted in ibidem, p. 27.

[61] Patricia Verdugo, "Fin del sandwich autoritario": *APSI*, 23 March 1992, p. 18–21, here: p. 18. The real figure may have been even higher, because 103 mayors were listed under the heading "Independents", a self-description members of the UDI used more frequently than militants of National Renovation, the second party of the mainstream right.

[62] Collyer, "La UDI" (note 52), p. 14.

ment in living conditions. Rafael Casas Cordero, an UDI militant who had assumed the leadership of the encampment committee of Raúl Silva Henríquez (municipality of Quilicura) while the previous governing body (*directiva*) had been relegated to Pisagua, and who had subsequently collaborated in the resettlement of the *pobladores* under his command to the commune of Pintana, pointed out, for instance, that he finally had running water and sanitation facilities in his new home.[63]

THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY AND THEREAFTER

The congressional elections of December 1989, which had been called after Pinochet's defeat in the plebiscite one year earlier, were the first litmus tests for the UDI's activities in the *poblaciones*, and the party passed it with unexpected bravura. The Independent Democrats, who nation-wide obtained slightly less than ten per cent of the vote, received the second best result of all parties in the shantytowns. Indeed, in stark contrast to the other right-wing party, the RN, which had its strongholds in wealthier sectors, "[n]early all of UDI's [fourteen] parliamentarians were elected from working class districts [in the Metropolitan Region], such as Recoleta, San Joaquín and La Granja".[64] Only the Christian Democrats of Patricio Aylwin, the victorious candidate of the opposition *Concertación* in the simultaneously held presidential elections, surpassed the de facto party of the outgoing military government. This surprising achievement vindicated Guzmán's strategy of working in the *poblaciones* and it certainly outweighed the fact that the Christian Democrats, who the natural leader of the UDI regarded both as the great rival of his party and, because of its sense of mission, as a role model,[65] had done even better. It also indicated that the autho-

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[63] Mario Romero, "Antes que llegue el Papa": *Hoy*, 23 Feb. 1987, p. 23–24, here: p. 24. For a more detailed account of events in the encampment, see Roel Klaarhammer, "The Chilean squatter movement and the state": Frans Schuurman/Ton van Naerssen (eds.), *Urban Social Movements in the Third World* (London/New York 1989), p. 177–197, here: p. 186–194. For a brief overview of the housing policies of the Pinochet regime, see Ben Richards, "Proprietors Not Proletarians. The Politics of Housing Subsidies under Military Rule in Chile": Will Fowler (ed.), *Authoritarianism in Latin American Since Independence* (Westport/London 1996), p. 133–148.

[64] Hipsher, "New Electoral Right" (note 7), p. 23.

ritarian regime's "politics of exclusion" at the local level were not more damaging to the parties close to it than to the opposition.[66] On the contrary, they had created the preconditions on which the UDI's subsequent achievements were based.

The successful candidacies of various mayors in the congressional elections clearly attest to this fact. More than 70 per cent of all UDI deputies had been designated mayors at some point during the military regime.[67] They had been able, as one of them subsequently stated, "to establish very strong contacts with the people", built up a reputation of someone "interested in helping to solve their problems" and thereby gained their support.[68] Amongst them were, for example, Carlos Bombal Otaegui, mayor of the municipality of Santiago between 1981 and 1987, and elected to the Chamber of Deputies as representative of the 22nd district (Santiago); Francisco Bartolucci Johnston, mayor of Valparaíso between 1982 and 1987, and successful parliamentary candidate in the 13th district (Valparaíso, Juan Fernández, and Isla de Pasqua); Patricio Melero Abarao, mayor of Pudahuel between 1985 and 1989, and victorious candidate in the 16th district (Colina, Lampa, Tiltil, Quilicura, and Pudahuel); and Jaime Orpis Bouchon, mayor of the commune of San Joaquin between 1987 and 1989, and elected to the Lower House of Parliament in the same year for the 25th district (La Granja, San Joaquín, and Macul).[69] Although only Bombal received a relative majority of votes in his district, none of his fellow colleagues had to rely on the peculiarities of the electoral system, which was tailored to the needs of the military regime's civilian supporters, to be elected to the Chamber of Deputies.[70]

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[65] See Guzmán, "Análisis crítico de la Democracia Christiana chilena": *Realidad* 5, 53 (1983), p. 29–45.

[66] Rehren, "Impacto" (note 8), p. 244.

[67] Joignant/Navia, "Política de individuos" (note 1), p. 155, n. 13.

[68] Jaime Orpis Bouchon, quoted in Hipsher, "New Electoral Right" (note 7), p. 28.

[69] See Huneeus, *Pinochet* (note 14), p. 374; San Francisco/Soto [Gamboa]*, UDI in Chile* (note 38), p. 18; and homepage of Orpis under "Senadores" at www.sendado.cl.

[70] For a discussion of the system, see Peter Siavelis/Arturo Valenzuela, "Electoral Engineering and Democratic Stability: The Legacy of Authoritarian Rule in Chile": Arendt Lijphart/Carlos H. Waisman (eds.), *Institutional Design in New Democracies: Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Boulder 1996), p. 77–100; Siavelis, "Continuity and Change in the Chilean Party System. On the Transformational Effects of Electoral

Inspired by its successes in the parliamentary elections, not least in the poor communes of Pudahuel, La Granja, and San Joaquín, the UDI continued its activities in the *poblaciones* after the return to democracy. It still focused its energies on social questions, obviously seeing them as the most promising way to strengthen its adherence amongst shantytown dwellers. In the commune of La Cisterna (Metropolitan Region), for instance, the Independent Democrats set up new housing committees, provided them free legal aid and other material and moral support.[71] At the same time, the faction also adapted its strategies to the changed situation, developing "a new kind of rightwing populism". In August 1990, five months after becoming an opposition party, the UDI organised three illegal land seizures in which approximately 800 families took part. With this initiative, the most loyal supporters of the military regime not only "hoped to embarrass [President] Aylwin by highlighting his administration's inability to solve the desperate housing situation", but also attempted to weaken

> "the government's human rights position by forcing a violent confrontation with the police. It even sent what the police and government condemned as outside 'provocateurs' to one of the land seizures when the participants refused to vacate the land peacefully, and had to be dislodged by the [*carabineros*]".[72]

While the party took advantage of the structures it had established at the local level during the military regime, two additional factors greatly facilitated its work after March 1990. Firstly, municipal elections only took place in late June 1992. This delay was the result of the right's obstructive position regarding the democratisation of local politics. Both the UDI and National Renovation, the more moderate and, in terms of deputies and senators, the bigger of the two right-wing parties, successfully delayed the reforms advanced by the ruling *Concertación*, knowing that elections would drastically decrease their

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Reform": *Comparative Political Studies* 30, 6 (1997), p. 651–674; Eric Magar/Marc R. Rosenblum/Davis J. Samuels, "On the Absence of Centripetal Incentives in Double-Member Districts: The Case of Chile": *Comparative Political Studies* 31, 6 (1998), p. 714–739; and Gideon Rahat/Mario Sznajder, "Electoral Engineering in Chile: The Electoral System and Limited Democracy": *Electoral Studies* 17, 4 (1998), p. 429–442.

[71] Cf. Hipsher, "New Electoral Right" (note 7), p. 29–30.

[72] Philip Oxhorn, "Understanding Political Change after Authoritarian Rule. The Popular Sectors and Chile's New Democratic Regime": *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26, 3 (1994), p. 737–759, here: p. 747–748.

influence. For more than two years after the change of power at the national level, then, the overwhelming majority of mayors designated by the outgoing military could stay in power and continue their work, strengthening the links with the population in their municipalities. President Aylwin only had the right to personally name those sixteen mayors who headed the most populous communes of the country;[73] the rest, more than three hundred, was in the hands of the rightist opposition, at least 84 of them "were UDI members, all of whom controlled very large budgets".[74]

Secondly, and just as significantly, the UDI benefited from the fact that other parties lost their ability or interest in grassroots level politics. The leftist groups organised in the Popular Democratic Movement, especially the Communists and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), both suffering from the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as well as their failed insurrectionist path, were significantly weakened at the time. The centrist and leftist parties united in the *Concertación*, on the other hand, had intentionally turned away from the popular sectors, arguing that the attempt to depose the military government by means of protests had been unsuccessful and that insisting on this approach would only lead to more violence. Moreover, after March 1990, they also feared that meeting the social demands of the popular sectors would derail the precarious process of re-democratisation and endanger its reformist economic program. In the end, their "rejection of a mobilisation strategy in the 1980s" and their turning to a negotiated return to democracy on the basis of the Constitution of 1980 "resulted in distance between political parties vying for power at the national level and social movements in urban popular sectors". By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the UDI was "the one party with a grassroots organizing strategy".[75]

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[73] These were the municipalities of Arica, Iquique, Antofagasta, Valparaíso, Viña del Mar, Santiago, Conchalí, La Florida, Las Condes, Ñuñoa, Concepción, Talcahuano, Temuco, Puerto Montt, Coihaique, and Punta Arenas. See Villarroel, "'New Wave'" (note 13), p. 21.

[74] Pollack, *New Right* (note 30), p. 117.

[75] Paley, *Marketing Democracy* (note 21), p. 103; and Paul W. Posner, "Popular Representation and Political Dissatisfaction in Chile's New Democracy": *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 41, 1 (1999), p. 59–85, here: p. 62–68. For a discussion of this strategic change, and the rationale behind it, see Edgardo Boeninger, *Democracia en Chile. Lecciones para la gobernalidad* (2nd ed., Santiago 1998),

When the first democratic elections at the municipal level after two decades finally took place in late June 1992, the UDI confirmed its strong presence at the local level in general and the shantytowns in particular. With slightly more than ten per cent of the national vote, it elected 184 aldermen throughout Chile, only surpassed by the Christian Democrats, by far the strongest party, and National Renovation. More importantly, the Independent Democratic Union placed a number of council members in various popular communes of Greater Santiago, namely Conchalí (three), Peñalolen (one), San Joaquín (two), Renca (two), and Lo Barnechea (one).[76] As subsequent elections showed, this was only the start of the Independent Democrats' successful development into a party that provided the political home for many poor Chileans.

FINAL REMARKS

Contrary to the UDI's official account of events, which identifies the party's allegedly selfless and devoted work during the regime of Augusto Pinochet as the main reason for its success amongst the *poblaciones*, its strong support was due to a more complex and not always altruistic set of factors. While the party did indeed focus on the shantytowns since its establishment, attempting to break the dominance of centrist and leftist parties over these sectors, *pobladores* did not adhere to it just because of its social work. Rather, the UDI, which united the most loyal and trusted civilian supporters of the military government, exploited the precarious social situation of many poor Chileans, advising them about subsidy programs and offering them access to emergency job programs that had been created in an attempt to alleviate the rising poverty. Because of the control of many municipalities, whose powers and financial resources had been greatly increased after September 1973, it was even in the position to directly control these schemes, thereby exerting considerable influence over the

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p. 328–340. For a fierce critique of Boeninger, a leading member of the Christian Democrats who had proposed this change, see Felipe Portales, *Chile: una democracia tutelada* (Santiago 2000), p. 25–33.

    [76] See "Municipales 1992" at Sitio Histórico Electoral, www.elecciones.gov.cl.

livelihood of many people. Moreover, the party skilfully presented itself as a force of order amidst the wave of social protests that rocked the country in the early and mid-1980s. For many people, the UDI emerged as a bulwark against extreme leftist groups that were active in the slum areas.

In the end, the network of clientelism and patronage, which the party was able to establish because of its privileged position during the military regime, primarily explains the UDI's electoral successes in the shantytowns since 1989. That these were exactly those practices its leading representatives had harshly criticised and identified as one of the main reasons for the inefficiency of pre-1973 local politics was less important than the actual benefits it could gain for its own political objectives. The Independent Democrats, while consistently emphasising that they were different from other politicians, do follow certain traditions of Chileans politics. The rhetoric used by the UDI to portray and justify its policies may be different, but the strategies it employed, and still employs, are after all in many ways reminiscent of those used by various centrist and leftist political parties prior to the coup.[77]

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[77] Oxhorn, "Political Change" (note 72), p. 747.