

COLONIA DIGNIDAD TIMELINE

Grzegorz Ziółkowski



2026

COLONIA DIGNIDAD: TIMELINE

Grzegorz Ziolkowski¹

Last updated: 4 September 2026

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DOI: [10.60629/cw5q-va87](https://doi.org/10.60629/cw5q-va87)

This document is one of the results of the author's research project "The Performative Realm of 'Colonia Dignidad,' a German Enclave in Chile, in Historical and Political Contexts" (*Performatywna strefa „Kolonii Godności”, niemieckiej enklawy w Chile, w kontekście historycznym i politycznym*), financed by grant no. 2021/43/B/HS2/00360 from the National Science Centre (*Narodowe Centrum Nauki*, NCN) under its OPUS 22 Programme.

See also other files containing research data resulting from the project:

- *Colonia Dignidad*: Annotated Catalogue of Archival Audiovisual Recordings from the Colonia Dignidad Progress Film Collection
 - *Colonia Dignidad*: Collaborators, Supporters and Sympathizers
 - *Colonia Dignidad*: Photographs
 - *Colonia Dignidad*: Sources
 - *Colonia Dignidad*: State Authorities in Chile and (West) Germany (1950s–2025)
- In Spanish / *En español (castellano)*:
- *Colonia Dignidad*: Catálogo comentado de las grabaciones audiovisuales de archivo de la colección Colonia Dignidad Progress Film
 - *Colonia Dignidad*: Cronología

All files are available at the Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU) Research Portal: <https://researchportal.amu.edu.pl/info/author/UAM85171?affil=&tab=researchdata&title=Person%2Bprofile%2B%25E2%2580%2593%2BGrzegorz%2BTomasz%2BZi%25C3%25B3%25C5%2582kowski%2B%25E2%2580%2593%2BAdam%2BMickiewicz%2BUniversity%25C2%2BPozna%25C5%2584&lang=en&pn=1> and at the website of the document's author: https://grzeg.web.amu.edu.pl/?page_id=4917.

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¹ Grzegorz Ziolkowski is a full professor of the anthropology of performances at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. He has authored *A Cruel Theatre of Self-Immolations: Contemporary Suicide Protests by Fire and Their Resonances in Culture* (Routledge, 2020) and Polish monographs on the work of Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowski. He has also co-edited special issues of *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training (Martial Arts Revisited)*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2022), *Polish Theatre Perspectives (Voices from Within: Grotowski's Polish Collaborators, 2014)*, *Performance Research (On Performativity)*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2008), and *Contemporary Theatre Review (Polish Theatre after 1989: Beyond Borders)*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2005). See: https://grzeg.web.amu.edu.pl/?page_id=4917; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1888-9023>.

² If you would like to share any comments or make corrections to this document, please contact the author (e-mail: grzegorz.ziolkowski@amu.edu.pl). All improvements are most welcome and would be greatly appreciated.

Introduction

This timeline contains not only facts from the history of *Colonia Dignidad* (CD), but also selected events from the history of Chile, Germany and the world that influenced many of the activities of the group or provided a contextual background for them. The chronologies of CD available in Chilean³ and German⁴ studies were useful reference points, but due to the different purposes of these volumes, they are necessarily concise and contain data only up to the date of their publication. This document was conceived as a research tool to outline the area of investigation and set priorities. Thus, events related to the performative realm of CD have been prioritised. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this timeline may prove valuable in research on other aspects of the multifaceted phenomenon of the German enclave in Chile.

The author wishes to thank Hernán Fernández Rojas, Winfred Hempel Malessa, Evelyn Hevia Jordán, and Jan Stehle for their invaluable support. The following persons are due the author's most sincere words of thanks: Paulina Acevedo Arenas, Joaquín Alarcón Cares, Paul Allain, Jerzy Borowczyk, Philipp Brendel, Edison Cajas, Sergio Francisco Campos Jiménez, María Castillo, Karen Cea Pérez, Daniela Contreras López, Justyna Czaja, Giulio Ferretto Salinas, Mane Garces, María Francisca García Gutiérrez, Dietlinde Gert, Martin Gruber, Marianne Hougén-Moraga, Rodolfo Ibarra Soto, Sebastián Jatz Rawicz, Mikołaj Jazdon, Marek Kaźmierczak, Krzysztof Kozłowski, Katarzyna Kuczyńska-Koschany, Svenja Kunze, Rafael Alexis Labrín González, Iris Leiva Arévalo, Harald Lindemann, Katarzyna Lisiecka, Elizabeth Lira, Orlando Lübbert, Holle Ameriga Meding, Tomasz Mizerkiewicz, Mariana Najmanovich Sirota, Claudia Olguin Marchant, María Luisa Ortiz Rojas, Wojciech Otto, Piotr Pławuszcwski, José Manuel Rodríguez Leal, Jorge Rodríguez Seguel, Margarita Romero Méndez, Rafał Rosół, Gabriela Salazar, Claudio Santana Bórquez, Jorge Soto Gutiérrez, Britta Stamm, Jürgen Szurgelies Selent, Monika Trętowska, Myrna Troncoso Muñoz, Astrid Tymm, Jesús Urqueta Cazaudehore, Luis Alexis Urrea Candia, Estephan Wagner, and Laura Wayth.

○ Sources

The timeline is based on numerous academic, activist, archival, journalistic and testimonial sources.⁵ In case of discrepancies regarding dates and facts found in those sources, the information provided by Jan Stehle in his groundbreaking monograph *Der Fall Colonia Dignidad* (2021),⁶ the most comprehensive academic publication on the subject to date, was given precedence. Many of the facts were

³ Among them: Salinas, Claudio Muñoz, and Hans Stange Marcus. *Los amigos del "Dr." Schäfer. La complicidad entre el Estado chileno y Colonia Dignidad*. Santiago de Chile: Debate, 2005, 265 pp.

⁴ Among them Dieter Maier's valuable books (*Colonia Dignidad. Auf den Spuren eines deutschen Verbrechens in Chile*. Stuttgart: Schmetterling Verlag, 2nd updated edition 2017, 249 pp.; and Heller, Friedrich Paul [Dieter Maier]. *Colonia Dignidad. Von der Psychosekte zum Folterlager*. Stuttgart: Schmetterling Verlag, 1993, 306 pp.) and an important collection of interviews with female colonists conducted by the German journalist Heike Rittel (Karwelat, Jürgen, and Heike Rittel (editors). *Lasst uns reden: Frauenprotokolle aus der Colonia Dignidad*. [With photographs by Andreas Höfer.] Stuttgart: Schmetterling Verlag, 2018, 272 pp.). The timeline in the latter volume was produced by Jürgen Karwelat, who more than 40 years earlier co-edited with Maier an influential Amnesty International brochure titled *Colonia Dignidad: Deutsches Mustergut in Chile – ein Folterlager der DINA* (Frankfurt am Main: AI, 1977, 61 pp.).

⁵ See: Ziolkowski, Grzegorz. "Colonia Dignidad: Sources." 2025, 194 pp. DOI: [10.60629/wp6b-j758](https://doi.org/10.60629/wp6b-j758).

⁶ Stehle, Jan. *Der Fall Colonia Dignidad. Zum Umgang bundesdeutscher Außenpolitik und Justiz mit Menschenrechtsverletzungen, 1961–2020*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2021, 642 pp. See also the book's edition in Spanish: Stehle, Jan. *El caso Colonia Dignidad. La política exterior y el Poder Judicial en la República Federal de Alemania frente a las violaciones a los Derechos Humanos (1961–2020)*. Trans. Liliana Seelmann G., Mariella Albrecht S. and Reglindis Weingart. Santiago: Lom Ediciones, 2025, 768 pp.

verified thanks to Evelyn Hevia's insightful dissertation *Del Hospital 'El Lavadero' al Hospital 'Villa Baviera'* (2024).⁷ Selected consulted sources are listed in the bibliography. Sources related to performative events are indicated in and after individual entries, and the list of references is provided before the bibliography.

◦ **Editorial note**

In the case of Chilean and Spanish persons, only paternal surnames (*apellidos paternos*) are provided in the main text (with some exceptions to avoid ambiguity). Where it was possible to determine them, both surnames (paternal and maternal) are listed in the index of names, which includes maternal surnames of German-Chileans and Germans born in *Colonia Dignidad*. With regard to the three Germans bearing the same first name and surname 'Wolfgang Müller', in the case of one of them, his wife's surname 'Kneese', which he adopted after their marriage in 1983, is provided, and for the other two, their maternal surnames are added.

The identity of one person who was a victim of sexual violence has been kept confidential. In the other cases, the full names of survivors have been provided because their cases have been widely reported in the media and/or featured in documentaries and literature on the subject, where their identities have been disclosed.

Names of celebrations, institutions, organizations and positions which appear twice or more are provided in English, and their original forms are listed in the Acronyms or Glossary sections below. If a name appears only once, it is given in English, and its original form, written in italics, is placed in parentheses directly after it.

Italics are also used in the titles of books, films, journals and newspapers, and in foreign language expressions, except for those that have entered the English language, such as 'Bundestag' and 'Oktoberfest'.

The Glossary section contains information on terms requiring explanation that appear at least twice in the timeline. If a term appears only once, the explanation is provided in a footnote.

Doubts and missing information are indicated with the symbol '[?]'. Selected references to other places in the timeline are marked with the sign '→'.

The German character 'ß' has been replaced by double 's'. German, Polish and Spanish diacritical marks have been retained.

The expression 'German embassy in Santiago' refers to the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the Chilean capital. Santiago refers to Santiago de Chile and Frankfurt to Frankfurt am Main.

All links to online resources were active as of 1 September 2026.

◦ **Acronyms**

ADEC	<i>Asociación por la Verdad, la Justicia, la Reparación y la Dignidad de los ex Colonos – Vereinigung für Wahrheit, Gerechtigkeit, Entschädigung und Würde der ex-Colonos</i> – Association for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Dignity for Former Settlers
AFDD	<i>Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos</i> – Association of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees (Santiago and regional and local branches)
AG	<i>Aktiengesellschaft</i> – Public Limited Company

⁷ Hevia Jordán, Evelyn Silvana. *Del Hospital 'El Lavadero' al Hospital 'Villa Baviera': Reconstrucción historiográfica del Hospital de Colonia Dignidad*. PhD zur Erlangung des Grades eines Doktors der Philosophie eingereicht am Fachbereich Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften der Freien Universität Berlin im Jahr 2024, Berlin: Freien Universität Berlin, 2024, 456 pp. The author wishes here to express his gratitude to Evelyn Hevia for making her dissertation available to him prior to its publication. The dissertation appeared in print in 2025, see: Hevia Jordán, Evelyn. *Del Hospital 'El Lavadero' al Hospital 'Villa Baviera'. Reconstrucción historiográfica del Hospital de Colonia Dignidad*. Santiago: Lom Ediciones, 2025, 448 pp.

AI	Amnesty International
AMCD	<i>Asociación por la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos Colonia Dignidad</i> – Association for Memory and Human Rights Colonia Dignidad (Santiago)
ARNAD	<i>Archivo Nacional de la Administración</i> – National Archive of the Administration (Santiago)
BRIDEHU	<i>Brigada Investigadora de Delitos Contra los Derechos Humanos</i> – Human Rights Crimes Investigation Brigade
CD	<i>Colonia Dignidad</i> – Colony of Dignity
CDE	<i>Consejo de Defensa del Estado</i> – State Defence Council
CDOH	<i>Colonia Dignidad: Un archivo de historia oral chileno-alemán</i> – <i>Colonia Dignidad: Ein chilenisch-deutsches Oral History-Archiv</i> –Colonia Dignidad: A Chilean-German Oral History Archive
CDU	<i>Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands</i> – Christian Democratic Union of Germany
CNI	<i>Central Nacional de Informaciones</i> – National Information Centre
CSU	<i>Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern</i> – Christian Social Union in Bavaria
DINA	<i>Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional</i> – National Intelligence Directorate
ECCHR	European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (Berlin)
EU	European Union
FDP	<i>Freie Demokratische Partei</i> – Free Democratic Party
FITAL	<i>Feria Internacional de la Región del Maule</i> – International Fairs of the Maule Region (from 1975), earlier <i>Feria Internacional de Talca</i> – International Fairs of Talca
FPMR	<i>Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez</i> – the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany – <i>Bundesrepublik Deutschland</i>
FUB	<i>Freie Universität Berlin</i> – Free University of Berlin
GDR	German Democratic Republic – <i>Deutsche Demokratische Republik</i>
GHWK	<i>Gedenk- und Bildungsstätte Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz</i> – Memorial and Educational Centre House of the Wannsee Conference
GIZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i> – German Society for International Cooperation
INDH	<i>Instituto Nacional de Derechos Humanos</i> – National Institute of Human Rights
JVP	<i>Juventud de Vigilia Permanente</i> – Youth of the Permanent Vigil
MIR	<i>Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria</i> – Revolutionary Left Movement
MMDH	<i>Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos</i> – Museum of Memory and Human Rights (Santiago)
NIG	<i>Not- und Interessengemeinschaft für die Geschädigten der Colonia Dignidad</i> – Emergency and Interest Group for the Victims of Colonia Dignidad
NRW	<i>Nordrhein-Westfalen</i> – North Rhine-Westphalia
OP	<i>Organización Comunitaria de Desarrollo Social Perquillauquén</i> – Perquillauquén Community Organization for Social Development
PC	<i>Partido Comunista</i> – Communist Party
PDC	<i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano</i> – Christian Democratic Party
PDI	<i>Policía de Investigaciones</i> – Investigative Police
PPD	<i>Partido por la Democracia</i> – Party for Democracy
PS	<i>Partido Socialista</i> – Socialist Party
PSM	<i>Private Sociale Mission</i> – Private Social Mission
RN	<i>Renovación Nacional</i> – National Renewal
SA	<i>Sturmabteilung</i> – Storm Division or Storm Troopers

SBED	<i>Sociedad Benefactora y Educacional ‘Dignidad’</i> – ‘Dignity’ Benevolent and Educational Society
SENAME	<i>Servicio Nacional de Menores</i> – National Service for Minors
SPD	<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i> – Social Democratic Party of Germany
SS	<i>Schutzstaffel</i> – Protection Squadron
SSM	<i>Servicio de Salud del Maule</i> – Health Service of the Maule Region
UDI	<i>Unión Demócrata Independiente</i> – Independent Democratic Union
WDR	<i>Westdeutscher Rundfunk</i> – West German Broadcasting Corporation (Cologne)
ZDF	<i>Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen</i> – Second Channel of German Public Television

○ Glossary

Alliance 90/The Greens – *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*

application for legal protection – *recurso de amparo* and *recurso de protección*, two judicial remedies used in the Chilean justice system to ensure the legal protection of an individual’s constitutional rights; they serve as the equivalent of *habeas corpus*, and both are filed with the competent Court of Appeals; the first of these, *recurso de amparo*, may be used, for example, to overturn an arrest warrant, a detention order, or an order depriving a person of liberty, provided that such an order violates the Constitution or the law, as well as to prevent any threats to an individual’s personal safety and liberty; the second, *recurso de protección*, is a petition to take the necessary measures to restore the rule of law and ensure adequate protection for the aggrieved party against unlawful or arbitrary acts or omissions that violate specific constitutional rights; the document does not distinguish between these remedies due to insufficient data on specific cases

campesino/a – a peasant, small farmer

Carabineros (de Chile) – the Chilean militarised police

Casino Familiar – the CD restaurant located in a large tent on the Litral estate by the Itata river, between Bulnes and Quillón in Ñuble Region (earlier Bío Bío Region), around 120 km south-west of the community’s main complex in Parral Commune; the facility was opened in 1984, has its own stage, and can accommodate several hundred guests

Chamber of Deputies – *Cámara de (Diputadas y) Diputados*, the lower chamber of the Chilean parliament

Chenco Hill – *Cerro Chenco*, a remote wooded part of the CD compound, located around eight kilometres from its centre, where burial places of disappeared detainees and vehicle parts were discovered in 2005 and 2006

Cicletada – a bike ride from Parral to *Villa Baviera*, attended by hundreds of participants of all ages that served as a manifestation of support for the colony and its hospital; the enclave and its local supporters organised at least two *Cicletadas* (in December 1991 and [February?] 1996), which included races with awards, speeches and music concerts

Civil Registry – *Registro Civil*

colona/colono – literally ‘a colonist’ (female/male), the term refers to Austrian and German settlers (and one Dutch and one Palestinian, the latter from 196[1?] to 1966), their children, Chilean children adopted by them, and those Chileans who joined the group; the term ‘*ex-colono/a*’ refers to those former inhabitants of the settlement who relocated to different destinations in Chile and/or returned to Austria or Germany

Commune – *Comuna*, the lowest level of administrative division in Chile, established for the purpose of local administration because the internal government of

state extended only to Provinces and Departments (until the end of 1975), and from 1976 onwards, to Regions and Provinces; a commune is administered by a municipality and managed by a Mayor/ess (*Alcalde/sa*) elected by a group of Councillors (*Consejales*)

Communist Youth of Chile – *Juventudes Comunistas de Chile* (JJ.CC.)

Concertación (de Partidos por la Democracia) – the Coalition (of Parties for Democracy), a coalition of centre-left parties founded in the context of the 1988 Chilean plebiscite with the aim of overthrowing the Pinochet regime; it governed Chile from the return to democracy in 1990 until 2010

Court of Appeals (CA) – *Corte de Apelaciones*

Criminal Court – *Juzgado del Crimen*

Department – *Departamento* → Provincia

'Dignidad' – 'Dignity', a term used by settlers (and their supporters) as an abbreviation of the name of their non-profit corporation *Sociedad Benefactora y Educacional 'Dignidad'* ('Dignity' Benevolent and Educational Society, SBED), as well as in reference to the German settlement on the Lavadero estate and the German and Austrian group living there; the colonists did not use the name *'Colonia Dignidad'* as a matter of principle, their supporters employed it occasionally; both the settlers and their adherents also used abbreviations such as *'Benefactora Dignidad'* and *'Sociedad Dignidad'*; they also referred to their community as *'Gemeinde'* (community, parish, congregation) and *'Brautgemeinde Christi'* (the community of the Bride of Christ)

disappeared detainees (also forcibly disappeared) – *detenidos desaparecidos*, often written in capital letters and abbreviated to 'DD. DD'; to 'disappear' someone means to secretly abduct and torture a person, often murder and dispose of their body, usually without any documentation; although the term was widely used in the context of the Argentinian and Chilean dictatorships of the 1970s–80s, it first came into use during the Guatemalan genocide of indigenous people which started in the early 1960s

District Court (AG) – *Amtsgericht*

Federal Foreign Office (AA) – *Auswärtiges Amt*

Federal Foreign Minister – *Aussenminister*

Federal Government (of Germany) – *Bundesregierung*

Fiesta Patria – the Chilean Independence Day (literally 'Homeland Holiday'), Chile's most important national holiday, celebrated on 18 September, and the days surrounding this date

Fifth Department – the so-called *'Quinto'*, an internal affairs unit of the Chilean Investigative Police (PDI) in Santiago, which conducted searches for Paul Schäfer from 1996; officers of this unit were perceived by the colonists and their supporters as their main enemy at the time

Free People's Mission – *Freie Volksmission* in Krefeld

Freihaus – a guest house opened on the Lavadero estate in 1966; it owes its name to then President of Chile Eduardo Frei Montalva (in office 1964–70), whom the *colonos* wanted to receive as a guest in their settlement; the building contains, among others, two large multipurpose rooms and a former apartment of Paul Schäfer

funar – an action of collective public shaming of perpetrators of politicised violence, illegal actions or gross misdemeanours in those criminal cases where the justice system has failed in Chile; the verb *'funar'* means to 'disclose' or 'expose' in Chilean-Spanish (*Chileno*) and comes from *Mapudungún* (the language of the Indigenous Mapuche), where it designates something that rots

- fundo* – an estate; when written with a capital letter, it refers to *Fundo El Lavadero* – this is what the settlers called their village until the mid-1980s when they changed its name to ‘*Villa Baviera*’ for propaganda reasons
- German Embassy – *Deutsche Botschaft*
- Governor – *Gobernador/a*, mid-level authority in the Chilean administrative system, the head of a Department (*Departamento*) before the 1975 administrative and territorial reform, and the executive of the → Province (*Provincia*) after the reform, → Intendent
- hacienda* – a large estate with productive business enterprises; in many Latin American countries, the *hacienda* system, which had existed since colonial times, was organised in a strictly hierarchical manner with a (male) landlord on top of the social ladder, → *inquilino/a*
- hierarch/s – *jerarca/s*, a name given to the top echelon/s in Paul Schäfer’s group by investigators, human rights activists, and rebellious colonists; it is widely used in public discourse on *Colonia Dignidad*
- High Security Prison – *Cárcel de Alta Seguridad*
- Higher Regional Court (OLG) – *Oberlandesgericht*
- inquilino/a* – a tenant (male/female) who was part of the → *hacienda* system; they were provided with accommodation and a piece of land for cultivation, for which they paid with their labour
- Intendent – *Intendente/a*, in the three-level administrative system of Chile, the highest-ranking representative of the government in the → Province (*Provincia*) before the administrative and territorial reform in late 1975, and in the → Region (*Región*) after the reform; in 2021, his role was taken over by the Regional Governor (*Gobernador Regional*), who chairs the regional council, which is elected by direct vote
- La Moneda*, also *El Palacio de la Moneda* – the presidential palace in Santiago, literally the ‘Palace of the Mint’, which refers to the fact that the building accommodated a mint house during colonial times
- Lavadero – a stream flowing through *Colonia Dignidad*, a right-bank tributary of the large river → Perquillauquén; the estate took its name from this stream: ‘*Fundo El Lavadero*’, → *fundo*
- Lechetón* – Milk Marathon, a popular event organised by CD and its supporters to collect monetary donations, powdered milk and other foodstuffs for children hospitalised in the colony after the state dissolved the SBED by decree in 1991; the festival was held six times, starting in December 1992, and its name referred to a highly popular televised charity event called ‘*Teletón*’, which has been held on a yearly basis in Chile since 1978
- Left, The – *Die Linke*
- Maule – the Seventh Region of Chile (*Septima Región*) with its capital in Talca, → Province
- Mayor/ess – *Alcalde/ sa*, head of a municipality and → Commune
- Minister of Justice (and Human Rights) – *Minister de Justicia (y Derechos Humanos)*
- Minister of the Interior (and Public Security) – *Ministro del Interior (y Seguridad Pública)*
- National Association of Members and Friends of the ‘Dignity’ Benevolent and Educational Society – *Asociación Nacional de Miembros y Amigos de la Sociedad Benefactora y Educacional ‘Dignidad’*, its members were influential figures from towns and cities in Regions 7 and 8 (Maule and Bío Bío) and other locations in Chile
- Neukra* – short for ‘*Neues Krankenhaus*’ (New Hospital), a facility built on the Lavadero estate at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s and used for systematic abuse and torture of adolescent female and male colonists; it also served as a place of subjugation of adult settlers; currently, it is a private dwelling

- Ñuble – formerly a → Province, presently the Sixteenth Region (*Decimosexta Región*) with its capital in Chillán; it borders the colony to the north; after the 1975 administrative reform, its territory was annexed into Bío Bío Region (Eighth Region, *Octava Región*) with its capital in Concepción; in September 2018, the province was transformed into a separate region comprising three provinces, of which the province of Punilla borders the colony to the north
- Patients' Committees – *Comités de Pacientes*, a network organization bringing together groups of patients and former patients of the colony's hospital, originating from Parral and San Fabián and 21 other small towns and villages surrounding the German enclave from the → Maule (7th) and Bío Bío (8th) Regions; the committees were created in 1989 to defend the facility and the German community, they were led by Guillermina Hernández (president) from Parral and Adrián Bravo, an Evangelical pastor from San Carlos, who acted as secretary general; the latter withdrew in the second half of 1996 after information of sexual abuses committed by the colony's leader against Chilean boys became publicly known; by 1994, the number of committees reached 32 or 33
- Permanent Vigil → Vigil of Pain
- Perquillauquén – a river bordering CD to the south, which separates the → Maule and → Ñuble (formerly Bío Bío) regions; settlers often shortened its name to 'Perqui'; the term 'Perquillauquén' also refers to the Perquillauquén Organization (OP), a front organization established in 1995 by settlers and their supporters to replace the SBED as the body running the CD's private hospital and school following the dissolution of the Society by a government decree in 1991
- Plaza de Armas – a central square in Chilean cities and towns
- Province – *Provincia*, in the Chilean administrative system that was in force from 1930 until November 1975, it was the highest level of territorial division; Provinces consisted of Departments (*Departamentos*), which in turn included → Communes (*Comunas*); for example, from 1961 to November 1975, *Colonia Dignidad* was located in Linares Province, Parral Department and Parral Commune; from November 1975 to the present day, Provinces are mid-level rungs of the administrative system, i.e. the colony is presently located in → Maule Region, Linares Province and Parral Commune, and borders Región of → Ñuble, Punilla Province to the south
- Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) – *Staatsanwaltschaft*
- Region – *Región* → Province
- Regional Court (LG) – *Landgericht*
- Rock of the Vigil – *Roca de la Vigilia* (also Rock of the Permanent Vigil – *Roca de la Vigilia Permanente*), a rock at the entrance to the German complex, under which colonists and their supporters started their → Vigil of Pain in mid-February 1991 and later organised numerous solidarity events and protests; at its top, there was a gas-powered eternal flame, and next to it, the following slogan was carved: '*Vigilia del Dolor / por Dignidad / Al Supremo Juez / Lo esperamos*' (Vigil of Pain / for Dignity / To the Supreme Judge / We wait for Him); presently, the main entrance to the colony is located around 500 m from the rock
- Sebastián Acevedo Movement Against Torture – *Movimiento Contra la Tortura Sebastián Acevedo*
- Senate – *Senado*
- Supreme Court (CS) – *Corte Suprema*
- transition – *transición*, also *transición a la democracia*, the passage from authoritarian rule to democracy in Chile, which involved the participation of representatives of civil society and the regime

Vicariate of Solidarity – *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*

Vigil of Pain – *Vigilia del Dolor*, later called ‘Permanent Vigil’ (*Vigilia Permanente*), a series of protest actions, performed non-stop for a long period by members of the → Patients’ Committees after the SBED’s legal personality was revoked by the cabinet of Patricio Aylwin on 31 January 1991; it began on 14 February 1991, and in 2000, its ninth anniversary was celebrated at CD

Visiting Judge – *Ministro en Visita (Extraordinaria)*, in the Chilean justice system, a special judge dispatched from a → Court of Appeals to the first-instance court in particularly difficult cases

Zippelsaal (also *Zippelhaussaal*) – the main community hall with its own stage and lighting, located in the *Zippelhaus* (Onion House) at the Lavadero estate; the name of the facility refers to a historical building erected in 1535 in Hamburg (the city of origin of the colony’s architect Johannes Wieske and some other settlers), which was used as a warehouse and a salesroom; ‘*Zippel*’ in an old German dialect means ‘onion’; presently the facility serves as a restaurant

TIMELINE

• Paul Schäfer’s childhood, adolescence and early career

4 December 1921 – **Paul Schäfer** (1921–2010) was born in Bonn in the German Reich (‘Weimar Republic’). He was the third son of **Anna** Schäfer (née Schneider, remarried Schmitz), a Protestant from Troisdorf, North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). His Catholic father **Jakob** Schäfer (born 1894), a poor factory worker, adopted **Walter** (born 1915), Anna’s eldest illegitimate son. Schäfer’s second brother **Johannes** was born in 1919. At the age of six, Paul Schäfer lost his right eye in an accident, and the glass prosthesis led to his nickname ‘Glass Eye’ (*Glasauge*). In 1932, Anna and Jakob divorced and contact with the father broke off. The impoverished mother had to raise her three sons alone. She remarried in 1933. Following his two older brothers, Schäfer joined the Protestant youth organization the Oaken Cross (*Eichenkreuz*), which was subordinated to the Hitler Youth (*Hitlerjugend*) after the Nazis seized power in 1933. He had to repeat two school years, and eventually at the age of 14 was dismissed without a graduation diploma. Afterwards, he assisted the itinerant fair juggler and strongman Hans Daniels, aka ‘**Danilo**’. In May 1936, he found employment as an unskilled worker in munitions production at the Troisdorf *Dynamit AG* factory (formerly *Alfred Nobel AG*).

1939–45 (WWII)

Schäfer completed the compulsory Reich Labour Service (*Reichsarbeitsdienst*) in Aachen, NRW from 3 October 1940 to 1 February 1941. On 6 February 1941, he was called up to Münster for military service. Having only one eye, he was most likely not deployed to the front and reportedly served as a **paramedic** in occupied France, among other places, but reliable information about his wartime assignments is unavailable. According to Schäfer himself, he served in Russia, and his father and brothers lost their lives during the war.

1945–49

After WWII Schäfer remained largely unemployed. He assisted the fairground entertainer Danilo and worked voluntarily as a **youth warden** in Protestant organizations in the Rhineland, starting in Troisdorf. In 1947, his residence is recorded as the Benroth emergency school near Waldbröl, NRW.

1949

23 May – The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), popularly called '**West Germany**', was established. The first federal government was formed on 20 September by **Konrad Adenauer** (CDU) (in office until 1963). On 7 October, the Soviet-administered and occupied zone was transformed into the German Democratic Republic (GDR), or '**East Germany**'. The FRG gained full sovereignty and integrated with the 'West' by 1955. By that time, the GDR had been made fully subordinate to the USSR and became one of its satellite states.

1949–53

In 1949 Schäfer moved to **Gartow**, in the district of Lüchow-Dannenberg, Lower Saxony, where he found employment in an old people's home run by the welfare organization *Diakonie*, and as a youth warden in the Saint Georg Church. After his paedocriminal proclivities came to light, he was dismissed on 6 October 1950, but he stayed in the area and lived in the woods for some time. Later, he claimed that he had encountered Jesus, who had assigned him the mission of founding a community of true Christians. Attracting young people with his charisma, he gathered a small group of enthusiasts, which became the nucleus of his own fundamentalist grouping. Among his first adherents were Brigitte Baak and her future husband **Gerhard Mücke** (1933–2022).

In the summer of 1952, Schäfer left the Gartow area and moved to **Heidenheim an der Brenz**, Baden-Württemberg, where he was employed in the diaconal *Gotthilf Vöhringer* care home for unruly boys. On 1 August 1953 he was dismissed again, most likely due to his sectarian pseudo-pedagogic methods and paedocriminal inclinations, but no criminal charges were brought against him. Subsequently, he took a six-month youth hostel management course in **Brilon**, Sauerland. Upon its completion, he obtained the post of deputy director of the *Paul-Gerhard-Heim*, an apprentice home in **Munich Gladbach**, where he was responsible for young people with educational difficulties.

1951

18 April – West Germany signed the **Treaty of Paris** together with France, Italy and the Benelux countries, establishing the European Coal and Steel

Community (forerunner of the EU). The treaty came into force on 23 July 1952.

• **Beginnings in West Germany (from the mid-1950s to 1960)**

1954–55

Paul Schäfer began a career as an itinerant self-proclaimed **evangelist preacher**, recruiting his followers mainly from free-church Baptist and Pentecostal congregations in West Germany and Austria. He guided them spiritually, including during Bible weeks and tent retreats organised in Gross Schwülper near Braunschweig, Lower Saxony (1954, 1956); Zang near Heidenheim an der Brenz, Baden-Württemberg (1955); Wuppertal (1956); Hanstett near Hamburg (1957); and Bergisches Land, NRW (1958).

August 1954 – At a summer camp in Gross Schwülper, Schäfer won over a German expatriate from Ukraine (Soviet Union), **Hugo Baar** (1925–2001), who worked as a Baptist preacher in Salzgitter-Bad, Lower Saxony. A year later, the Baptist church transferred Baar with his family to **Gronau**, NRW. The entrepreneur **Heinz Kuhn** (b. 1933) followed in his footsteps and joined the group.

6 May 1955 – West Germany became a **member of NATO**.

19 August 1955 – Schäfer and some of his followers, including, among others, Walter Laube, **Alfred Matthusen**, Gerhard Mücke, and former *Waffen-SS*⁸ soldier **Kurt Schnellenkamp** (1927–2017), attended a large religious event in Karlsruhe, which featured the controversial US end-times evangelist William M. Branham. There, Schäfer reportedly met Rosa Krieger from Graz, Austria and **Ewald Frank** (1933–2024, → [Apr 2004?]), a refugee from Gdańsk (Danzig), who would later found a Pentecostal fundamentalist community, the Free People's Mission, in **Krefeld**, NRW. On 2 September, Schäfer travelled to **Graz** for the first time. Subsequently, he would go there repeatedly with some of his followers, including Alfred Matthusen, to enlist adherents from a local Pentecostal congregation, among them members of the Wagner and Wöhri families.

1956

Summer – After his grouping consolidated, Paul Schäfer bought a piece of land in **Heide** near Siegburg, NRW from the Cologne lawyer Otto Nelte, who had acted as a counsellor to Nazi war criminal Wilhelm Keitel during the Nuremberg trials. The community embarked on a major building project – a **youth shelter** (→ 23 Sep 1960; 13 Dec 1961) designed by a member of the congregation, the Hamburg-based architect Johannes (**Hans**) **Wieske** (b.

⁸ *Waffen-SS* – the combat branch of the Nazi Party's SS (*Schutzstaffel*) organization.

1923) (→ 1963; 1977). Kurt Schnellenkamp supervised the construction works, which were completed in 1959.

31 December – Hugo Baar and Paul Schäfer established the charitable association **Private Social Mission** (*Private Sociale Mission*, **PSM**) in Siegburg (→ Aug 1995), which provided a framework for the building project. Baar was its president, Kurt Schnellenkamp acted as his deputy, and the pharmacist and entrepreneur **Alfred Schaak** (→ 11 Oct 1985) became treasurer. Schäfer pulled the strings, however, holding the position of trustee from 1958. The organization's declared aim was to help widows, orphans, and children at risk, but its supposed welfare activities were a façade for Schäfer's paedocriminal activities and the machinations of the management. Ordinary members of the community provided free or minimum-wage work in grocery shops, a drugstore, a transport enterprise, and a building materials business run by the *Schaak und Kuhn* company.

1957

After a mission week led by Hugo Baar in the Baptist congregations of Hamm and Eimsbüttel in Hamburg, their respective leaders **Johannes Bechtloff** and a former SA member and officer of the German Air Force (*Luftwaffe*), **Hermann Schmidt** (1915–96), brought around 30 of their followers to the PSM. Among them was **Hans-Jürgen Blanck** (1929–2004), later the community's legal counsellor. Schmidt remained loyal to Paul Schäfer until his death, whereas Bechtloff and his wife Christel broke with the group in 1960. Later Bechtloff would testify against Schäfer and his acolytes on several occasions. Among those who joined the group in this period were the former NSDAP⁹ member and theologian Gerhard (**Gerd**) **Seewald** (1922–2014) and his wife **Gisela** (née **Gruhlke**) (1930–2013), a medical doctor. Both would later hold leading positions in the colony in Chile.

2[9?] July – Seventeen minors who were housed in the Heide shelter (located in a wooden barrack at the time) were registered by the youth welfare office. With two exceptions, they were children of Schäfer's adherents. Hermann Schmidt, who acted as the director of the facility, received a licence for the care of children under the age of 14. Among them were **Hartmut Hopp** (born 1944), later the community's medical doctor and its representative to the outside world, and **Wolfgang Müller** (born 1945, later **Kneese**), the first successful fugitive from the group's settlement in Chile (→ 26 Feb 1966). Both were entrusted to Schäfer by their mothers.

20 December – The youth centre was inspected for the first time by a district welfare representative, who was satisfied with the care provided.

1958

⁹ NSDAP: *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* – the National Socialist German Workers' ('Nazi') Party.

25 March – West Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux countries signed the **Treaty of Rome**, establishing the European Economic Community.

3 November – An independent politician supported by conservatives, **Jorge Alessandri**, began his six-year presidential term in Chile. In the election on 4 September, he had won a narrow victory over Socialist Salvador Allende and Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei Montalva.

The PSM organised a missionary week in the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum hall in Krefeld. The event featured film presentations and performances by the society's youth choir and trombone orchestra. (Fröhling 99–100; "Junge")



Source: "Junge".

1959

9 November – In the context of antisemitic attacks on synagogues and Jewish community institutions that were taking place in West Germany at the time, German philosopher Theodor Adorno delivered a groundbreaking lecture in which he rejected the popular policy of 'overcoming the past' (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*), arguing that it was a cover for denial of Nazi crimes.

30 November – After Baar had been removed from the list of preachers by [the Federation of Evangelical Free Churches in Germany?] (*Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland*, BEFG), he separated from the Baptists in Gronau. Consequently, some members of his congregation moved to the Siegburg area and joined the PSM. The split led to several divorces and legal battles over property and guardianship of children.

1960

22 May – The most powerful **earthquake** ever recorded, called '*Terremoto de Valdivia*' or '*Gran Terremoto de Chile*', caused a widespread disaster in southern Chile. Over the next two years, the West German authorities provided the Alessandri government with substantial relief aid.

Spring and early summer – Paul Schäfer, Hugo Baar and Hermann Schmidt travelled by car across the Middle East and North Africa to explore relocation opportunities, probably in connection with likely charges against Schäfer for sexual abuse of minors. They brought the Palestinian adolescent **Hussein**

Siam to West Germany (→ Sep 1966), promising his father, Jamil Siam, a postal clerk from Jerusalem, that they would provide him with a good education.

July – A music and theatre programme was presented by the PSM in a refugee camp in Waldbröl, NRW. (“Wohlgelungener”)



Source: “Wohlgelungener”.

23 September – The PSM celebrated the official opening of its Youth Centre (**Jugendheim**) in Heide. The elaborate ceremony was attended, among others, by **Arthur Maschke**, Chilean ambassador to West Germany, who would later facilitate the group’s transfer to Chile (→ 13 Dec 1961). (CDPF/221, 723, 727; “Jugendheim”)

It is likely that Schäfer stayed for an extended period of time in Belgium and/or Luxembourg to avoid prosecution in West Germany.

• The early years in Chile (1961–73)

1961

4 January – Paul Schäfer and Hermann Schmidt began a reconnaissance visit to **Chile**. They were assisted and hosted by **Rudi Cohn**, a local German chemist and real estate agent of Jewish origin.

27 January – After Schäfer had been reported by Hermann Altevogt for sexual abuse of minors, an **investigation** was launched (→ 14 May 1974) and on 21 February an **arrest warrant** against the PSM’s informal leader was issued by the Siegburg District Court (AG) (→ 13 Oct 1970). Schäfer returned to Belgium, where a group of boys whom he had been sexually violating was brought by his henchmen for instruction. His confidantes prepared a gradual **relocation** of the majority of the PSM members to Chile by air and sea. A small portion of the community stayed in West Germany, including Hugo Baar and Alfred Schaak, who looked after the society’s local interests and sent shipments of goods to its Chilean branch. Baar declared publicly that the PSM had separated from Schäfer.

11 April – After the war criminal **Adolf Eichmann** had been captured by Mossad agents on 11 May 1960 in Buenos Aires and transferred secretly to Israel, his trial in Jerusalem began. It focused international public attention on Nazi Germany's crimes, especially the Holocaust.

16 May – The Federal Minister for Family and Youth Affairs (*Bundesfamilienminister*), Franz-Josef Wuermeling, issued a letter of support for the PSM, addressed to a former Nazi, Hans Strack, serving as the West German ambassador in Santiago.

28 May – The lawyer Peter Benenson published "The Forgotten Prisoners" in *The Observer*, which is considered the symbolic beginning of the human rights organization **Amnesty International** (AI) in London. (→ 17, 21 Mar 1977; 10 Dec 1977)

26 June – A private non-profit corporation (*corporación sin fines de lucro*) called the *Sociedad Benefactora y Educacional 'Dignidad'* ('Dignity' Benevolent and Educational Society, **SBED**) was registered at a notary's office in Santiago. From its beginning, the corporation – from 1966 onwards known as '**Colonia Dignidad**' (Colony of Dignity, **CD**) – acted as a business-oriented cooperative rather than a non-profit charity association.

26–27 July – The first followers of Schäfer flew to Chile via Luxembourg and Argentina. The leader himself re-entered Chile [illegally?] on 27 July.

13 August – East Germany began to build a **wall in Berlin**.

The communist threat and the vision of the Red Army invading West Germany were among the most convincing rationales Schäfer and his iron circle provided internally for the exodus of their flock.

21 September – The SBED was granted **legal personality** by the conservative cabinet of President Alessandri. The decree no. 3949 was published on 2 October.

9 October – The corporation's executives Hermann Schmidt and **Rudolf Cöllen** (b. 1934) bought the remote 3,000-hectare Lavadero estate (**Fundo El Lavadero**), a small part of the large San Manuel *hacienda*, located 40 km south-east of **Parral** in **Linares Province**, bordering Ñuble Province, around 400 km south of Santiago. Through successive purchases of neighbouring parts of the San Manuel estate over the years (→ 14 May 1966; 15 Mar 1968; 1975; Sep 1982), the area of the compound grew to around 17,000 hectares.

13 December – The PSM sold its youth centre in Heide (→ 23 Sep 1960) to the German Air Force, and invested the proceeds in, among other things, stone crushing machinery and a fleet of vehicles.

At the time, the conservative politician **Franz Josef Strauss** (CSU) (→ 17–22 Nov 1977) held the post of Federal Minister of Defence (*Bundesminister der Verteidigung*) in Chancellor Adenauer's fourth cabinet.

1962

11 February – Around 70 PSM members who had travelled from Genoa, Italy on board the liner **Marco Polo** arrived at the Lavadero estate. They were followed by next two large groups which reached Chile in the first half of 1962. Soon the colony numbered around 230 people.

1 March – The SBED received the first of its numerous customs exemptions. The decision came into force on 4 April.

30 May–17 June – Chile hosted the FIFA World Cup. Occupied with rebuilding the south of the country after the 1960 earthquake, the authorities supported the event to a minimal degree.

16 June – An adolescent *colono* (colonist) Wolfgang Müller (later Kneese) fled from the enclave for the first time. In early July he was located in Chillán in Ñuble Province and was brought back to the settlement by a special unit sent from the *Colonia*. On 2 July, criminal proceedings were brought before the First Court in Chillán against five members of CD on charges of trespass; however, on 30 August, those proceedings were provisionally stayed. (→ 26 Sep 1963; 26 Feb 1966)

3 October – The SBED received an income tax exemption.

16–28 October – The Cuban Missile Crisis put the world at the brink of the nuclear war.

15 November – President Alessandri enacted the **Agrarian Reform** law, the main feature of which was the government's power to expropriate agricultural land.

3 December – The notorious SS colonel **Walther Rauff** (→ 14 May 1984) was arrested by the Chilean authorities after West Germany had requested his extradition. (→ 26 Apr 1963)

15 December – The colony's musical band performed at the Parral City Stadium (*Estadio Municipal*). (R. B. S.)

[December or December 1963?] – Schäfer staged a demonstrative drowning of Santa Claus in the Perquilauquén river on the Lavadero estate. (Cervio 1; Lindemann; Tymn in Ende 22)



Source: Cervio 1.

1963

[23 January?] – After a serious [**hunting accident?**], Schäfer was stabilised in the Parral hospital and transferred to the *Hospital del Tórax* in Santiago where he underwent lung surgery and five months of recovery treatment (until 3 July).

25 April – Following numerous enquiries by concerned parents of children and adolescents taken to Chile, officials of the **German embassy** in Santiago visited CD probably for the first (and only) time in the initial years of the enclave's existence. They were given a tour of the *Fundo* and courted with a musical performance. Schmidt falsely informed them that Schäfer had left for an unknown destination. Later, the *Colonia* leaders continued to spread rumours that Schäfer was hiding in Argentina or had left for the US.

26 April – The Chilean Supreme Court (CS) freed Walther Rauff (→ 3 Dec 1962) on the grounds that his crimes were time-barred.

August – The mother of Wolfgang Müller (Knesse), **Vera Lilischkies**, who had arrived at the German colony earlier that year, was imprisoned, treated with electric shocks, and kept detained until 5 April 1966.

September – After the arrival of the medical doctor Gisela Seewald, the settlers began to provide basic medical services to local rural residents at a makeshift polyclinic, which would later become the **Lavadero Hospital** (*Hospital El Lavadero*). The facility officially opened in May 1965, and operated without the required authorisations until 11 July 1968, when a three-year permit was issued. It quickly became the enclave's flagship and a perfect smokescreen for the illicit practices of Schäfer and his directorate.

18 September – The colony's orchestra performed at the *Plaza de Armas* in Parral during annual celebrations of the Chilean *Fiesta Patria*.



Paul Schäfer conducts the colony's orchestra. Source: Reyes. The photo was first published in the daily *Crónica* (Concepción) on 15 April 1966 and subsequently reproduced in other press outlets.

26 September – Wolfgang Müller (later Kneese) escaped for the second time to Chillán (→ 18 Jun 1962) and with the help of a police officer managed to reach the German consulate in Temuco in Cautin Province. His escape proved unsuccessful because Hermann Schmidt, his authorised legal guardian, took him back to the *Fundo*, where he was beaten, drugged with sedatives, isolated, and forced to wear bright-coloured clothes and shoes that left a distinctive mark in order to hinder further escape attempts. (→ 26 Feb 1966)

17 October – Widely credited as the father of the ‘economic miracle’ (*Wirtschaftswunder*) in his role as Minister of Economic Affairs (*Wirtschaftsminister*) under Chancellor Adenauer, **Ludwig Erhard** (CDU) became the second chancellor of West Germany. In a speech delivered the following day, he described the situation in the country as a state of normality that marked an end to the post-war period.

[11?] November – The colonists participated in a parade during the Spring Festival (*Fiesta Primavera*) in Parral. Its allegorical vehicle called ‘Golden Lavadero’ (*Lavadero de Oro*) received the first prize. (CDPF/730, 735; Cervio 2; “Fiesta Primavera”)



Source: Cervio 2.

28 November – The colony invited local authorities and journalists from the region for a courtesy visit.

20 December – The **Auschwitz trials** began in **Frankfurt**. The prosecutions of 22 members of the SS lasted until 19 August 1965 and reverberated strongly across West German society and worldwide.

[25?] December – During Christmas celebrations in Parral, the settlers took part in a sports event. (“Alemanes e Italianos”; CDOH/20; “Día de Fiesta”)

30 December – The 18-year-old colonist **Reinhard Mysliwietz** died, most likely as a result of an accident during forestry work.

The SBED opened a **school** exclusively for the colonists’ children, and (later) adopted (often fraudulently) Chilean minors who were taught only in German, which contradicted Chilean regulations. For the first few years, the institution operated unofficially, as the management declared its existence only on 8 July 1967. The staff included, among others, Gerd Seewald (headmaster), Hermann Schmidt, and Hans Wieske, all of whom lacked teaching degrees and the necessary authorisations. The classes were irregular because Schäfer suspended them whenever he needed children for manual labour, music practice and stagings. Until the late 1960s, boys and girls were taught in the same groups, but later they were separated. (→ 20 Mar 1985)

1964

31 March–1 April – A coup d’état in Brazil marked the beginning of a series of military dictatorships in Latin America. The Brazilian regime lasted until 1985.

10 [20?] September – The Governor of Parral Department, **Luis Enrique Fuentes** (→ 2–5 May 1968; 3 Feb 1985), approved the proposal that instead of running an educational facility for children affected by the 1960 earthquake, the German colonists could dedicate themselves to providing medical services to rural communities from the area.

3 November – Christian Democrat **Eduardo Frei Montalva** (PDC) (→ 22 Jan 1982) took office as Chilean president and implemented a progressive social policy as a ‘third way’ between capitalism and socialism, known as the **‘Revolution in Liberty’** (*Revolución en libertad*). On 24 November, Frei established diplomatic relations with the USSR and the countries of the Eastern Bloc (except for East Germany). His position was strengthened after the parliamentary elections on 7 March 1965, in which the Christian Democrats won a strong majority in the Chamber of Deputies and became the largest party in the Senate.

For the *Colonia* directorate, this must have been a warning light that the zeitgeist was changing.

1965

17 January – After the change of government, local representatives of the new authorities visited the colony. The list of guests included, among others, **Héctor Taricco** (Intendent of Linares Province), **Claudio Fuentes** (Governor of Parral Department), and Colonel Alfredo Manhn.

April – After the so-called ‘La Ligua Earthquake’ that shook the Valparaíso region on 28 March, CD sent its emergency medical team to help vaccinate the local populace.

5 April – MP Renato Valenzuela (PDC) visited the colony.

11 May – **Minna Wagner** filed a criminal complaint in Graz, demanding the release of her three minor children who had been fraudulently taken to Chile in 1961 (Wilhelm) and 1962 (Edith and Irmgard). The case was forwarded to West Germany, where the Public Prosecutor’s Office (StA) in Bonn opened an investigation against Schäfer on suspicion of child abduction. (→ 9 Dec 1966)

23 May – Chile’s former ambassador to West Germany, Arturo Maschke, visited the colony.

30 [31?] May – **Mario Mujica**, a medical doctor from a hospital in Parral and the president of the local Rotary Club, issued a false death certificate for the teenage settler **Ursula Schmidtke**, stating that she had died of pneumonia. However, the girl’s death had most likely been caused by severe beatings ordered by Schäfer for her alleged misconduct. There has been speculation that Schmidtke was sexually abused by Schäfer and then killed in order to hide the fact. However, the facts of the case have never been resolved.

14–15 August – The Movement of the Revolutionary Left (**MIR**) emerged from various student organizations, mainly from the University of Concepción (*Universidad de Concepción*), which originally functioned within the youth section of the Socialist Party (PS).

Among the founders of MIR was Erick Zott, who would later be tortured at the German colony. (→ Feb 1975)

1966

26 February–1 March [?] – On his **third escape** attempt, 20-year-old **Wolfgang Müller** (later Kneese) reached the German embassy in Santiago, where he reported a number of serious irregularities and crimes perpetrated at the enclave.

[9?] March – Some 15 colonists, including Kurt Schnellenkamp, made an attempt to kidnap Müller (later Kneese) from a German old people’s home in Santiago, where he had been placed as a minor whose status was awaiting settlement by a family court in Hamburg-Altona. The attempt proved unsuccessful and Schnellenkamp was detained by the police for a short period of time.

23 March – The first major article on Müller’s escape was published in the highly popular national weekly *Ercilla* (Santiago), which would report regularly on incidents in the settlement over the next few months. For the first time, reports about slave work, surveillance, sexual abuse and forced medication featured in domestic and international media coverage of the true situation inside the supposedly idyllic German estate.

28 March – A 43-year-old mother of three, **Wilhelmine Lindemann**, fled from the settlement to Catillo in the vicinity of the *Fundo*. Her shocking testimony about the conditions in the settlement confirmed Müller’s claims. Two days later, Governor Fuentes allowed Schmidt to take Lindemann back to the colony on the promise that she and her children would be given permission to return to West Germany.

29 March – In view of a Chilean Interpol investigation, Schäfer allegedly disappeared from the compound, taking a pistol and leaving a suicide note.

4 April – After the *Colonia* directors had declared that they would suspend their charitable activities in response to investigations conducted by Chilean Interpol, around 100 small farmers and farm workers from the surrounding rural areas demonstrated their support for *los alemanes* (the Germans) at the *Fundo*. (“Campesinos de Parral”; “Con Nombre”; “Ministro en Visita Para”)



Source: “Con Nombre”.

6 April – Judge **Hernán Olate Melo** of the Criminal Court in Parral opened an investigation into suspected crimes committed at the colony, including sodomy, kidnapping, illegal detention, physical abuse, unjust mistreatment, illegal practice of medicine, attacks on personal freedom, fraud and embezzlement, violation of correspondence, murder of members of the SBED¹⁰. Intendent Héctor Taricco forced the colony’s management to release Wilhelmine Lindemann, who showed signs of malnutrition and the impact of psychotropic medication. The woman was taken to the hospital in Linares, and her children were placed in Taricco’s summer house in Bullileo.

¹⁰ Sodomía, secuestro de personas, detención ilegal, maltratos físicos, vejaciones injustas, ejercicio ilegal de la profesión de médico, atentados contra la libertad personal, estafas y defraudaciones, violación de correspondencia, homicidio contra miembros de la SBED.

[8?] April – Unexpectedly, Wilhelmine Lindemann’s husband, Kurt, arrived from West Germany at the instigation of the *Colonia* leaders. He met his wife at the Linares hospital on 11 April. On the following day, they returned to the colony together with their children. In July, the couple was allowed to leave Chile, presumably in exchange for the custody of their children, which the Lindemanns transferred to the high-ranking settlers Friedrich and Magdalena Pöhlchen on 12 July. The Lindemanns remained under the colony’s influence for decades. After the death of his wife, Kurt Lindemann returned to the German settlement and remained there until his own death.

[8?] 9 April – Chilean Interpol chief Hugo Villegas conducted a series of interrogations at the settlement.

12 April – On the initiative of Guido Castilla (PDC), the Chamber of Deputies unanimously requested the Supreme Court (CS) to dispatch a special Visiting Judge to the court in Parral in order to investigate the incidents in the colony.

14 April – Judge Melo inspected the settlement and issued an arrest warrant against Schäfer (on 2[3?] April). Wolfgang Müller/Kneese and his mother Vera Lilischkies were summoned from Santiago to Parral for questioning. Afterwards, the woman was taken back to a hospital in the capital and her son was kept in custody.

14–15 April – The settlers set up a blockade on a bridge, keeping journalists and photographers out of the vicinity of the colony. They also displayed a board with recent press clippings and the caption: “Enough is enough! The press has made enough money from slander against us.”¹¹ After Governor Fuentes intervened, they stopped their protest and allowed selected journalists to visit the *Fundo* on the following days. (Klapp; “La Colonia por”; [Seewald])

15 April – Schmidt was summoned for questioning in connection with accusations of the illegal detention of Vera Lilischkies, Wilhelmine Lindemann and Wolfgang Müller (later Kneese). He appeared at the Parral court accompanied by two young men, Hartmut Hopp and **Wolfgang Müller Ahrend**, who accused Müller (later Kneese) of sexual abuse. After a short stay in custody, Hopp and Müller Ahrend were released (the former had threatened to begin a hunger strike), whereas Schmidt and Müller (later Kneese) remained in detention. The latter was suspected of sexual aggression and homosexuality, which was criminalised in Chile at that time.

16 April – Hans-Jürgen Blanck, Gerhard Seewald, his wife Gisela, and the nine-year-old boy Gerhard Schaffrik were summoned for questioning at the Parral court. The woman was accused of illegal practice of medicine. After giving evidence, they were released.

¹¹ “¡Ahora basta! La prensa hizo bastante dinero de las calumnias contra nosotros.”

18 April – Some [70?] peasant workers from the village of Trabuncura located near CD gathered in front of the colony's hospital to demonstrate their support for the German colonists. Later, they were transported to Parral in trucks provided by the colony and marched from the outskirts of the city to the Governor's office (Aguilar; "En Libertad"; [CDPF/728?]; "La Colonia por dentro"; "La doble"; "Müller, Declarado"; "Nombrado"; "Respaldan"). Meanwhile, Schmidt was released from custody, whereas Müller (later Kneese) was kept detained for the crime of corruption of minors. The Chillán Court of Appeals (CA) appointed Judge **Eduardo Bravo** as a Visiting Judge. The next day, the judge took over the proceedings from Judge Melo and started a series of investigations which lasted until 26 July. Then the judge issued a decision in favour of the SBED, which was eagerly publicised by the directorate in the press. However, the final verdict in the case did not come until → 23 August 1967.



Sources: "La Colonia por dentro"; "La doble"; "Nombrado".

11 May – The right-wing Chilean parties closed ranks to oppose the progressivist Frei government and the leftists, and formed the National Party (*Partido Nacional*, PN), which represented the conservatives and the oligarchy.

Among the PN's founders was the lawyer and politician Sergio Miranda, who in the following years would repeatedly visit the *Colonia* and publicly defend Schäfer.

14 May – The SBED acquired the adjacent **Fundo El Pasto** (a 2,000-hectare part of the San Manuel *hacienda*). On 17 November, the newly bought compound was parcelled and the land plots were transferred to loyal *colonos* Erwin Bohnau, Gerhard Mücke, and **Karl van den Berg** (the only Dutch settler in the colony). Following the purchase of *El Pasto*, the internal school of CD was relocated to one of the buildings on the newly acquired site and renamed **Pastoschule**. The facility was opened by children carrying balloons and lanterns. (Tymm in Karwelat and Rittel 100)

23 May – A crowd of Parral residents celebrated Müller/Kneese's release from custody on bail. The young man was subsequently taken to Santiago by his mother and two German embassy officials. ("Müller salió")

17 June – On behalf of Schmidt and the SBED, the influential and well-networked attorney **Luis Ortíz** (PDC) from Santiago launched a legal counteroffensive against Müller (later Kneese). He lodged a complaint with the Juvenile Court (*Juzgado de Menores*) in Parral against the young man on

charges of theft. As a result, on 22 July Müller (later Kneese) was ordered to be placed under the supervision of the National Health Service (SNS) until he reached the age of majority.

August – After receiving a range of information about the realities of the *Colonia* from Müller (later Kneese), Parral novelist **Orlando Soto-Fernández** announced his decision to write the young man's biography. In the following months, Soto-Fernández repeatedly published critical columns on the *Colonia* in the local newspaper *La Prensa* and informed the Chilean Ministry of the Interior about serious irregularities at the German settlement, which led to a series of inspections by the authorities early in the following year. To silence the author, Schmidt filed a lawsuit against him on 6 January 1967.

7 September – Hermann Schmidt brought a lawsuit against Wolfgang Müller (later Kneese) for defamation and libel in the media.

September – In order to avoid further escapes and improve the colony's image, the hierarchs allowed Günther Reiss and Hussein Siam (→ spring and early summer 1960) to study in the US. Both young men took advantage of their stay abroad and broke with CD.

22 October – Gisela Seewald joined the legal proceedings at the court in Parral against Wolfgang Müller (later Kneese) and accused him of defamation.

[Late October – early November?] – The settlers inaugurated the colony's guest house in a festive manner ([CDPF/728?]). The facility accommodated Schäfer's living suite and two spacious meeting rooms used for all sorts of gatherings and performances as well as for dance and music practice. The hierarchs nicknamed it '**Freihaus**' because they wanted to capitalise on the Chilean president's visit to the construction site of the nearby Digua Dam (*Embalse Digua*) and welcome him as the first visitor to the new building. However, Frei's visit to the settlement never took place. Until the end of the year, the management organised a number of visits by an array of guests, including representatives of the Parral Fathers' Centre (*Centro de Padres*), officials from the National Health Service (SNS), and members of the Lions Clubs (*Clubes de Leones*) from Parral and Talca. Carefully orchestrated receptions included performances by the colony's choirs, among others. ("Gratos"; Monteau; "Un día de paseo"; "Una visita"; "Visita")

1 December – **Kurt Georg Kiesinger** (CDU) became the chancellor of West Germany, leading a grand coalition of the CDU/CSU and SPD.

From 6 December – During a 19-day strike by the staff of the SNS, the Red Cross and some personnel of the Lavadero Hospital offered their services to the Parral hospital.

9 December – The proceedings against Schäfer for abduction of the **Wagner** children (→ 11 May 1965) were discontinued without results.

1967

1 January – The settlement's management invited a group of 35 Parral residents to spend New Year's Day at the colony. The guests, including former governor Luis Enrique Fuentes and his wife, were entertained with a tour of the *Fundo*, choral performances, and a promotional film screening. ("Un milagro"; P. P.)

11 January – The day after an accident during construction works, Wolfgang Müller Ahrend was taken by air force helicopter to the José Joaquín Aguirre Hospital in Santiago. This incident was most likely a consequence of the lack of work safety measures at the colony.

17 January – Intendent Taricco and Governor Fuentes inspected the settlement to verify the facts surrounding Müller Ahrend's accident and the alleged illegal operation of a high-powered radio at the site.

31 January – Wolfgang Müller (later Kneese) filed a private civil action against Hermann Schmidt before the court in Parral for libel and slander. (→ 4 Nov 1967)

5 February – Chilean composer, singer, songwriter, folklorist and visual artist **Violeta Parra** (born 1917, near San Fabián de Alico) died in Santiago as a result of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

25 [24?, 28?] February – Judge Olate **sentenced Müller** (later Kneese) to five years and one day's imprisonment for libel and slander (on 28 October 1969 the Chillán Court of Appeals reduced his prison term to three years and one day). Shortly before the verdict, the young man escaped via the Andes and Argentina to West Germany, where he became a whistleblower and a major force on the frontline against the *Colonia* criminal structure (→ 21 Feb 1988; Feb 1998). After more than half a century (→ 23 Aug 2017) the Chilean Supreme Court (CS) annulled the infamous sentence against him.

March – After four inspections, Galvarino Pérez (director of the regional branch of the **SNS**) recommended in his report addressed to Rafael Avaria (head of SNS medical care) that the colony's hospital, cemetery, slaughterhouse and butter factory should be closed. He also set a period of 60 days to remedy all irregularities, which included the lack of revalidation of Gisela Seewald's medical degree in Chile.

13 May – 45 residents from around the colony complained to Governor Fuentes about the **road barrier** set up by the German settlers on a public road, as well as the identity checks they were carrying out.

2 June – Student Benno Ohnesorg was killed in West Berlin during protests against the visit of the Iranian Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The incident was one of the beacons in the growing West German student movement.

[7?, 13?] June – Wolfgang Müller (leater Kneese) was found guilty of contempt of court for fleeing Chile.

18 July – The PDC Youth of Parral, including postal clerk **Hugo Manuel Rodríguez**, compiled a highly critical **report** on the colony and personally delivered it to MP Guido Castilla (PDC), Juan de Dios Carmona (Minister of National Defence, *Ministro de Defensa Nacional*), Bernardo Leighton (Minister of the Interior) and Pedro Jesús Rodríguez (Minister of Justice) in early August. On 26 September, the SBED sued Rodríguez for slander, libel and attempted blackmail. At the beginning of 1968, the report was published as a book titled «*Colonia Dignidad*». *¿Enigma o desafío?* (“Colonia Dignidad”: enigma or challenge?), but soon after its release, Schmidt prevented its further distribution by a court order.

28 July – A new **agrarian reform** (much more ambitious than the one proposed by the Alessandri cabinet in 1962) was introduced by Frei’s government.

3 August – The director of the post office in Parral, Homero Reyes (aged 37), died in suspicious circumstances. Hugo Manuel Rodríguez claimed that the colony was responsible for the death of his superior.

5 August – Upon Intendent Taricco’s orders, road workers (assisted by *Carabineros*) removed the rural **road barrier** that had been illegally set up by the German settlers. (→ 13 May 1967)

12 August – Following the removal of the road barrier, Heinz Kuhn and Gerhard Mücke verbally attacked Governor Fuentes in his office. They were arrested and taken to the prison in Chillán, where they had to remain for 48 hours. On 18 August, Fuentes opened a case against them in the court in Chillán. (→ 21 Nov 1967)

13 August – Elfriede Gerlach (aged 46) committed **extended suicide** in Gronau, taking her own life and the lives of her three daughters, Renate (aged 13), Brigitte (aged nine) and Gudrun (aged six), allegedly fearing that her husband Helmut (a PSM member) would send them to Chile. The PSM took legal action in West Germany against *Stern* weekly, which reported on the incident on 1 October 1967. As a result, *Stern* had to publish a counterstatement.

20 August – Activists of the PDC Youth conducted a massive public rally in support of Governor Fuentes at the Municipal Theatre (*Teatro Municipal*) in Parral. After the event, the participants marched through the main streets of the city in a protest directed at the leaders of the colony. In the aftermath, on 29 August a delegation of 40 Parral residents travelled to Santiago to pressure the Ministry of the Interior on the *Colonia* case. (“Amplio”; CDOH/20; “[Los Centros...]”; “Organizan”; “Parralinos”; “Reunión”; Rodríguez Quezada 98)



Delegation of citizens of Parral to Santiago. Source: “[Los Centros...]”.

23 August – The Chillán Court of Appeals (CA) delivered a verdict of **acquittal of the SBED** in the proceedings initiated after the accusations made by Wolfgang Müller (later Kneese), which were conducted by Judge Bravo. (→ 18 Apr 1966)

25 August – As part of a charity event, the colony presented its eclectic musical and gymnastic programme at the Municipal Gymnasium (*Gimnasio Municipal*) in **Talca**. (“Coro ‘Dignidad’”; “Hoy actuará”)

6 September – **Helmut Frenz**, a German Lutheran pastor in Chile and future human rights advocate (→ 1 Jan 1976; 22 Feb 1988), paid a short visit to the enclave. Subsequently, the hierarchs repeatedly disseminated his courtesy words written in the *Colonia* guest book to embellish the image of their enterprise.

8 October – The settlers organised an all-day mass fiesta at the *Fundo* to celebrate an annual Chilean state holiday, **Hospital Day** (*Día del hospital*) (“Alrededor”; Baumeister and Huismann 2; CDPF/728, 738–9; “Colonia alemana”; Corabia; Díaz; “Dos mil”; “El Día”; “Volksfest”). The night before the event, Hugo Manuel Rodríguez was brutally beaten and shot (without much harm) by unknown perpetrators in Parral.



Source: Baumeister and Huismann 2.

9 October – Ernesto ‘**Che**’ **Guevara** was shot dead by the army in Bolivia.

4 November – The Court of Appeal (CA) in Chillán dismissed Wolfgang Müller’s case against Hermann Schmidt. (→ 31 Jan 1967)

12 November – The Talca Polyphonic Choir (*Coro Polifónico*), directed by Germán Sánchez, visited the colony at the invitation of Hermann Schmidt. (“Amplia”)

[20?] 21 November – Judge Gustavo Baeriswyl of the Chillán Court of Appeals (CA) acquitted Heinz Kuhn and Gerhard Mücke (→ 12 Aug 1967). Governor Fuentes did not lodge an appeal.

25 November – During a massed ceremony, the Mayor of Parral, Enrique Astorga, presented a gold medal to Parral-born poet and diplomat **Pablo Neruda**, naming him Illustrious Son of the Commune. (→ 21 Oct 1971; 23 Sep 1973)

2 December – The *Colonia* presented its music and sport revue at the basketball court of the Boy's High School (*Liceo de Hombres*) in **Cauquenes**. (Baumeister and Huismann 6; Bensch 20; CDPF/693; “Exito”; Gajardo, “Colonia”)



Source: Baumeister and Huismann 6.

December – A programme containing several Christmas carols, performed by the colony's children's choir, was aired on Chilean radio. (“El lenguaje”)

1968

1 January – According to his own account, **Heinz Kuhn** escaped from the enclave but was brought back after a week. In February, he supposedly eloped again with his then-wife Ursula (née Klemkow). Later, he married again and opened business enterprises in **Los Ángeles** in southern Chile. He maintained commercial connections with the colony until the mid-1980s and helped Hugo Baar (→ 14 Dec 1984) and the Packmor couple (→ 27–28 Feb 1985) to flee from the compound. He also testified in various proceedings against the colony and gave numerous press and television interviews on the topic. (→ 11 Aug 1987)

9 January – At the Court of Appeals (CA) in Chillán, Schmidt submitted an application to **revoke the immunities** (*desafuero*) of Governor Fuentes and Intendent Taricco on the grounds that they had abused their power and arbitrarily arrested Kuhn and Mücke. (→ 12 Aug 1967)

28 January – A protest rally against the colony was conducted by members of the Parral branch of the ruling Christian Democratic Party (PDC). (“Desfiles”; “Nuevos”; “Protesta contra”)



The slogan on the banner reads: “Arrogant Germans / may they leave forever / [?] Manuel Rodríguez [R.?] / Parral”.¹² Source: “Desfiles”.

10 February – At the German embassy in Santiago, the elderly *colono* **Nathanael Bohnau** made a report of deprivations of liberty and maltreatment in the enclave, and pleaded for help in returning to West Germany together with his wife Helene and their children. Two weeks later, he revoked his statements, obviously under pressure from the CD management. After this incident, two embassy officials attempted to visit the colony (on 29 February), but they were denied access. In August, Bohnau’s son Günter, who had remained in Germany, received a smuggled letter from his father with an appeal for help. Günter Bohnau’s intervention at the Federal Foreign Office (AA) brought no results. (→ 11 Jun 1972; 22 Feb 1988)

11 February – A mass event in support of Fuentes and Taricco in **Linares** was attended by thousands of local residents, including villagers (*campesinas/os*) who had started their march to the city the day before. (“Grandiosa”; “Linares en masa”)



The slogan on the banner reads: “‘Germans’ / For ‘Colonia Dignidad’ / of / Parral / to leave / Centres of Mothers / [?] Manuel Rodríguez / Parral”.¹³ Source: “Linares en masa”.

20 February – The Chilean Senate’s Committee on Constitution, Legislation, Justice and Regulations (*Comisión de Constitución, Legislación, Justicia y Reglamento*) unanimously recommended rejection of the request to strip Fuentes and Taricco of their immunities.

28 February – During a plenary session, the Senate lifted the immunities of Fuentes and Taricco in a secret vote. Christian Democratic senator **Patricio Aylwin**, in whose constituency the enclave was located, advocated for the

¹² “Alemanes prepotentes / que se valla[n] [sic!] para siempre / [?] Manuel Rodríguez [R.?] / Parral”

¹³ “‘Alemanes’ / para fuera que se valla [!] / la / ‘Colonia Dignidad’ / de / Parral / Centros de Madres / [?] Manuel Rodríguez / Parral”

cancellation of the SBED's charitable status and repeatedly pressed the government on the issue. In response, the Ministry of Justice commissioned the State Defence Council (**CDE**) to carry out investigations into the corporation's financial operations. The CDE inspected the colony on 22 May and submitted its report on 25 June, which included an extensive list of the SBED's economic activities.

29 February – After the Senate had removed the immunities of Taricco and Fuentes, 1,500 people gathered at the *Plaza de Armas* in Linares in an act of support for them. (“Sigue”)

5 March – At the next Senate session, communist senator and medical doctor Jaime Barros defended the colony. On the following day, Aylwin repeated his call for investigation of the controversies surrounding the enclave.

7 March – At the initiative of the Senate, the Chamber of Deputies appointed an **investigative commission**, chaired by Pedro Videla (PDC). On the same day, a demonstration of support for Fuentes and Taricco was held at the *Plaza de Armas* in Parral with around 2,500 people in attendance. (“Alta”; “Chilenen”)

15 March – The enclave's management bought another part of the San Manuel *hacienda*, *El Peumo*, which on 23 March was parcelled and the plots transferred to the colonists Erich Fege, Walter Laube and Kurt Schnellenkamp. Afterwards, the Germans brutally evicted farm workers (*inquilinas/os*) who had formerly lived and worked on the estate.

18 March – In the Chillán Court of Appeals (CA), CD submitted a complaint against Fuentes and Taricco for abuse of authority. After the appellate court had dismissed the case on 31 August 1968 (and confirmed its decision on 17 April 1969), the complaint reached the Supreme Court (CS), which on 22 July 1969 declared that it was unfounded.

23 March – After a complaint from the Linares Union of Truck Owners (*Sindicato de Dueños de Camiones*) about unfair competition with the SBED, the Customs Superintendency (*Superintendencia de Aduanas*) sent its inspectors, headed by Rodolfo Garcés, to the colony to investigate possible **customs fraud** by the society.

24 March – Around 800 villagers from 11 mountain regions of the department of Parral gathered in front of the Lavadero Hospital to express their support for the Germans. They created the **Peasant Committee for the Defence of Colonia Dignidad** (Baumeister and Huisman 2; *Comisión Campesina de Defensa de Colonia Dignidad*). (“Asamblea”; “Campesinos defienden”; CDPF/728; “Inserción: Campesinos”; “Solicitada: Comité”)



The slogan on the banner reads: “German brothers / work is virtue because / it unifies the human races / on earth / German brothers make great / this homeland which is the homeland / of yours / Pencagua”.¹⁴ Source: Baumeister and Huismann 2.

18 April – To protest the enforcement of the order of the Customs Court (*Tribunal Aduanero*) to requisition machinery and vehicles belonging to the SBED, around 110 adult settlers began an ‘indefinite’ **hunger strike**. They discontinued it four days later, after an emergency visit by a governmental commission, including the Undersecretary of the Interior (*Subsecretario del Interior*) Enrique Krauss (PDC), General Director of the SNS Juan Hepp, and Director of the PDI Emilio Oelkers, who recommended lifting the requisition order. During the four days of the strike, two mass demonstrations of support for the Germans were conducted by their local allies. (CDPF/728; Jorquera; “Se están”; “Suspendida”)



The slogan on the banner reads: “Closed due to / hunger strike / from 18 April 1968 / at 3 am”.¹⁵ Source: Jorquera.

2–5 May – The 11-member parliamentary **commission of inquiry** inspected the settlement and held hearings in the neighbouring towns of Catillo, Linares and Parral (→ 26 Nov 1968). Upon their visit to the enclave on 2 May, the commission was welcomed by children with flowers and a choir performance. At the time, the colony’s local allies manifested their support for the Germans at the entrance to the compound. (“Comisión”)

¹⁴ “*Hermanos alemanes / el trabajo es virtud porque / unifica las razas humanas / en la tierra / Hermanos alemanes haced grande / esta patria que es la patria / de ustedes / Pencagua*”

¹⁵ “*Cerrado por / huelga de hambre / desde el 18-4-1968 / a las 3 hrs de la mañana*”



From the left: MPs Pedro Videla (the commission's chairman) and Mario Dueñas. Source: "Comisión".

11 May – With Schäfer's approval, three couples of high-ranking settlers (Eleonore Gerlach and Alfred Matthusen, Edith Spatz and Karl van den Berg, and Elisabeth Witthahn and Kurt Schnellenkamp) as well as Jutta Brennecke and Daniel Gert registered their **marriages** in the Civil Registry in Catillo. (→ 10 May 1969)

30 May – The German **Emergency Acts** (*Notstandsgesetze*), which allowed basic constitutional rights to be limited during a state of emergency, were passed in the Bundestag. The vote on the constitutional amendment was preceded by a sharply critical campaign carried out by the FDP and the extra-parliamentary (*Ausserparlamentarische*) opposition, including the German student movement (*Studentenbewegung*).

21 June – The colony's choir and music band were scheduled to perform during celebrations of the centenary of the granting of municipal rights to Parral (on 19 June 1868). However, their presence at the Parral Week (*Semana Parralina*, 19–23 June) was cancelled due to the opposition of some city councillors, who feared a boycott from citizens hostile to the colony. ("Centenario"; "Con diversos")

26 November – The Chamber of Deputies voted to accept the **final report** of the investigative commission (→ 7 Mar 1968; 2–5 May 1968) submitted four days earlier, in which the SBED was largely acquitted of the gravest accusations.

29 December – The colonists and their local supporters staged a **massed festivity** called 'The Day of Loyalty, Understanding and Solidarity' (*Día de la lealtad, comprensión y solidaridad*) at the *Fundo El Lavadero* to celebrate the decision of the deputies not to sanction the SBED. ("Además"; CDPF/10, 691; Cervio 3; "Dignidad." *Correo*; "Fiesta en la Colonia"; H.-J.)



Source: Cervio 3.

Around that time, with the help of informants and using open sources such as press articles, Gerd Seewald started to collect **intelligence files** on army and police officers, civil servants, church personalities, journalists, politicians, and ordinary citizens. The archive was used by Schäfer and his clique to build up a support network and prevent attacks on their organization. Seewald's work intensified after the 1973 military coup and terminated with the return of democracy in the early 1990s. (→ 20 Sep 2000; 14–15 Jun 2005; Early Apr 2014; 7 Jul 2014; 15 Nov 2016; 2 Jan 2019)

Members of the national and regional establishment founded the **National Association of Members and Friends of the SBED**, presided over by the former Governor of the Parral Department, Luis Enrique Fuentes, who held this position until the late 1980s.

Theresia Wöhri (née Wagner) and her husband obtained consent from the CD leadership to return to Austria with their three minor daughters. Their eldest son remained in the colony.

1969

3 February – The colonist **Heinz Schmidt** (born Kuhr, later Wagner) fled to the German embassy, but his adoptive father, the SBED's president, Hermann Schmidt, took him back to the compound. Afterwards, the man was maltreated with electric shocks and forcibly medicated for decades.

2 March – In parliamentary elections, the PDC lost its majority in the Chamber of Deputies but remained the strongest political force in both houses.

10 May – The 66-year-old colonist **Peter Packmor** escaped from the enclave on the day of the **wedding ceremony** of four high-ranking couples (Eugen Böckler and Ingrid Seelbach; Erwin Bohnau and Ursula Seelbach; Rudolf Cöllen and Ruth Gert; and **Albert Schreiber** (1931–2008) and Lilli Nill) that took place at the registry in Catillo (→ May 1968). Later, Packmor was allowed to return to West Germany.

Late May – The *Colonia* submitted a request to amend its statute, which from then on identified medical support for local residents as the organization's chief objective.

21 October – After 20 years of Christian Democrat rule in West Germany, a **social-liberal coalition** of the SPD and FDP took power, with **Willy Brandt** (SPD) as Federal Chancellor. Brandt's policy of improving relations with Central and Eastern Europe is known as 'Eastern Policy' (*Ostpolitik*).

4 November – The investigation of possible customs fraud by the SBED (→23 Mar 1968), which in May 1968 had been transferred from the Customs Tribunal to the ordinary justice system, was discontinued. An appeal against the decision was rejected by the Chillán Court of Appeals (CA) on 10 April 1970.

22 December – The RCA Víctor label released an **LP record** with an eclectic repertoire of songs performed by three choirs of the colony. ("Alemanes de"; *Coros*; "Niños")



Source: *Coros*.

In this period, the so-called '**Neukra**' (short for *Neues Krankenhaus*, New Hospital) was built. From around 1970 to 1972, in this facility around 20 adolescent boys and girls were routinely beaten, tortured with electric shocks, and medicated without health-related justification in order to inhibit their sexual behaviour, punish them for their alleged misconduct, and make them docile and obedient. Later, the boys were included in the group called 'Salvation Army' (*Heilsarmee*), which was directly subordinated to Schäfer. The *Neukra* also served as a place of subjugation of adult settlers. (→ Nov 2005; 26 Mar 2008; 12 May 2009)

[1969?] **Hartmut Hopp** was sent to the US to pursue higher education at the San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, CA, and the University of California, Davis. Like Siam and Reiss (→ Sep 1966), he wanted to break with the CD, but *Colonia* envoys seduced him back to Chile with a promise that he would be allowed to marry and continue his studies in Santiago. (→ Mar 1973; 9Apr 1976)

West Germany repealed the 1935 Nazi amendment to **Paragraph 175** (provisions criminalising homosexual acts, introduced during the German Empire) so that sexual relations between men over the age of 21 were no longer punishable.

1970

4 September – Socialist **Salvador Allende**, representing the left-wing Popular Unity (*Unidad Popular*, UP) coalition, won the presidential election in Chile.

Immediately afterwards, Schäfer ordered Hugo Baar to come to Chile and instructed him to start buying weapons on the black market and to send them to Chile with transports of charity goods.

13 October – The 1961 German arrest warrant against Schäfer was cancelled. (→ 27 Jan 1961; 14 May 1974)

22 October – Two days before the ratification of Allende's presidential victory by the National Congress, the commander-in-chief of the Chilean army, General **René Schneider**, was fatally wounded in a failed kidnap attempt, aimed at destabilising the democratic process of power transfer. The general, who died three days later, had publicly expressed his apolitical position and adherence to the constitutional rules.

3 November – Allende began his term in office as the world's first democratically elected Marxist president, and began a set of radical social reforms, augmented by a sweeping nationalisation programme.

1971

4 January – Allende's social programme Half a Litre of Milk (*Medio litro de leche*) was implemented.

February – The Allende cabinet established diplomatic relations with East Germany, making Chile the first Latin American country to do so after Cuba.

February – **Johannes Matthusen** became one of very few colonists to be allowed to leave the enclave without having to flee. He owed his freedom to the perseverance of his son Hans-Günther Matthusen (→ 30 Oct 1979), a criminal investigator, who had come from West Germany specifically for that purpose.

24 September – The authorisation of the colonists' hospital, granted in 1968 for three years, was renewed.

10 November–4 December – **Fidel Castro** paid an official visit to Chile.

1 December – Women supporting the conservative opposition to the UP government staged a mass protest that was dubbed the ‘March of the Empty Pots and Pans’ (*cacerolazo*¹⁶).

10 December – Willy Brandt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize “for paving the way for a meaningful dialogue between East and West”.

Pablo Neruda received the Nobel Prize in literature “for a poetry that with the action of an elemental force brings alive a continent’s destiny and dreams”.

1972

23 February – The Chilean National Health Service (SNS) signed a cooperation agreement with the SBED regarding medical services provided at the society’s hospital.

19 June – A West German counsellor, Werner Kaufmann-Bühler, visited the colony to inquire into the cases of Nathanael Bohnau (→ 10 Feb 1968) and Heinz Schmidt (later Wagner) (→ 3 Feb 1969), who had both tried to return to their home country. Even though the counsellor was not allowed to talk to them in private, he reported having been persuaded that they wished to stay at the settlement. Bohnau died at CD in 1987 without having left the *Fundo*. Schmidt/Wagner was able to leave the enclave only after the criminal structure began to crumble in the mid-2000s.

9 October–5 November – Financed and supported by Chilean business associations and the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), a mass **strike of truck owners** in Chile was held in order to paralyse the country and undermine the socialist government.

October – The colonists began collaborating with the fascist paramilitary organization **Fatherland and Liberty** (*Patria y Libertad*, PL¹⁷), founded on 1 April 1971, which attempted to destabilise Chile through terrorist attacks on political figures and public infrastructure. CD provided a hideout for the PL’s executives, including Pablo Rodríguez and **Roberto Thieme** (General Secretary for Operations) (→ 23 Feb 1973). The father of the latter, Walter Thieme, was a German-Chilean Nazi and an agent of the German military intelligence service *Abwehr*.¹⁸

2 November – In order to secure the support of the army in the face of the country’s drastically deteriorating economic and social situation, Allende brought several military figures into his cabinet, including General Schneider’s successor, General **Carlos Prats** (→ 30 Sep 1974).

¹⁶ *Cacerolazo* – a popular form of protest in Latin America, in which people bang on empty pots and saucepans (*cacerolas*) to make a noise during a march and/or from balconies and windows.

¹⁷ Full name: *Frente Nacionalista Patria y Libertad* (FNPL) – Fatherland and Liberty Nationalist Front.

¹⁸ *Abwehr* – the German military intelligence service from 1920 to 1944.

Reportedly, the CD hosted political seminars given by the ultra-conservative leader of the Gremialist¹⁹ movement and university professor **Jaime Guzmán** (→ 1 Apr 1991), who would later become a major ideologue of the Chilean regime and one of the closest advisors of General **Augusto Pinochet** (1915–2006). The meetings were attended by several would-be leaders of the far-right party Independent Democratic Union (UDI), including, among others, Andrés Chadwick, Luis Cordero, [**Hernán Larraín?**] (→ 19 Sep–6 Oct 1994; 7–10 May 1995; 7 Dec 1996) and Juan Pablo Longueira.

1973

23 February – Wanted by Chilean police for various crimes, Roberto Thieme (→ Oct 1972) simulated a fatal plane crash over the Pacific and landed in the German enclave. After having his airplane repainted and his personal appearance changed, he carried on his escape to Argentina, where he sought asylum and continued to concoct sabotage actions. Upon his return to Chile in July law enforcement officers imprisoned him, but he was released after the 9/11 military coup.

4 March – In the Chilean parliamentary elections, the coalition opposing the Allende government did not achieve its goal of winning the two-thirds of Senate seats required to remove the incumbent president from office.

March – Hartmut Hopp was granted permission to continue his medical training (→ 1969) and enrolled at the prestigious Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (*Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile*) in Santiago. After graduating in January 1978, he replaced Gisela Seewald at the helm of the CD hospital.

29 June – A small-scale coup attempt in Santiago, called the ‘Tank Putsch’ (*Tanquetazo*, also *Tancazo*), was thwarted by General Prats, who commanded troops loyal to the UP government.

23 August – One day after the Chamber of Deputies approved a resolution stating that the government was not respecting the constitution, President Allende appointed General Pinochet (considered loyal at the time) Commander-in-Chief of the army.

With the help of Roberto Thieme, the CD leaders strengthened their ties with the Chilean military and right-wing establishment. Among those who visited the enclave at the time was **Federico Willoughby-MacDonald**, later a press secretary of the Pinochet regime. Schäfer offered him the colony as a support base, and after the coup provided Willoughby-MacDonald with bodyguards for his family and household in Santiago.

¹⁹ The Gremialist movement (*gremialismo*) advocated the strengthening of trade unions, anti-communism, neo-conservatism and a fundamentalist interpretation of Catholic doctrine.

• **During the Pinochet dictatorship (1973–90)**

1973

11 September – The **military coup** (*golpe de Estado*) opened the horrific 17-year reign of General Augusto Pinochet as the head of the civil-military dictatorship (*dictadura cívico-militar*) and – later – as the country's president. President Allende committed suicide during the siege of the governmental palace *La Moneda*.

After the coup, both West and East Germany were among the countries that provided refuge for Chilean political exiles.

Shortly after the coup, the German enclave's leaders brutally evicted dozens of farm workers and residents (*inquilinas/os*) who for decades had been living and working on land acquired by the *Colonia*. Many of them were detained, interrogated, beaten and released; however, 27 of them are still declared missing.

Colonia Dignidad played an important role in the regime's apparatus of repression, collaborating on its own terms with the military (especially with the Artillery School, *Escuela de Artillería*, in Linares and the Third Division of the Army, *III División de Ejército* in Concepción) and the police and intelligence services, above all with Pinochet's newly established secret police the National Intelligence Directorate (**DINA**) (→ 14 Jun 1974; 12 Aug 1977), led by Colonel **Manuel Contreras** (1929–2015), who was subordinate only to Pinochet himself. The compound served as a clandestine military operations base, a training centre and a **torture** and **murder site**. Inside the German estate, it is believed that over 300 left-wing activists and militants were secretly detained and tortured, many of whom (probably over 100) were killed. It is said that Schäfer himself and some of his henchmen were directly involved in these crimes. Moreover, the colony supported the civil-military regime by supplying it with **intelligence material**. It also **smuggled weapons** on a large scale after arms embargos were imposed on Chile internationally, and conducted **foreign espionage** operations, including in Bolivia and Peru. Furthermore, it developed **communication installations** in the *Villa Grimaldi* secret detention and torture centre on the outskirts of the capital and in the National Intelligence School (*Escuela Nacional de Inteligencia*) in Cajón del Maipo near Santiago. In addition, the enclave became a **holiday retreat** for many top civil and military figures of the regime, while its hospital provided health services for some of them, including military colonel Hugo Cardemil (→ 27 Dec 2007), Manuel Contreras and his family members (→ 21 Sep 1976), and Mónica Madariaga and her mother (→ 14 Aug 1997). Last but not least, the *Colonia* leaders established links with some infamous **ex-Nazi criminals** associated with the Chilean dictatorship, such as Walther Rauff, and allegedly hosted some of them at the colony.

16 September – National bard and multi-talented artist **Víctor Jara** was murdered at the *Estadio Chile* stadium, which had been converted into a temporary concentration camp.

23 September – Pablo **Neruda died**, allegedly poisoned by Pinochet's henchmen.

30 September – The Caravan of Death (***Caravana de la muerte***) began, during which members of a death squad led by General Sergio Arellano travelled by helicopter from south to north Chile and executed at least 93 people. The action was completed on 22 October.

October – The 17-year-old **Peter Rahl** joined the enclave at the instigation of his uncle Georg Packmor, who had advised him to come to Chile to avoid military service. Shortly after his arrival, Rahl was sexually abused by Schäfer and for years was subjected to pseudo-medical 'treatment', which included the use of electric shocks and psychotropic drugs.

1974

17 January – After a few days in detention in Chillán, **Mile Mavroski** (1933–2020), a Macedonia-born funeral entrepreneur from San Carlos, was transferred to CD, where he was subjected to torture and jailed for 11 months. His case was unique among those of detained prisoners, because he served most of his term at the colony after having been sentenced by a military tribunal.

15–16 March – A Chilean armed forces regiment of more than 400 troops conducted a cleansing operation on the hill called **Cerro Gallo**, located in the vicinity of the German settlement. It is believed that this may have been a massacre of political prisoners held in a secret camp near CD, which was disguised as a military operation.

14 May – The German investigation against Schäfer initiated in Bonn on → 27 January 1961 was dropped due to the statute of limitations. (→ 13 Oct 1970)

16 May – **Helmut Schmidt** (SPD), a strong supporter of the European Community and the Atlantic alliance, began his term in office as Federal Chancellor of West Germany.

20 May – A member of MIR and son of a military officer, **Álvaro Vallejos**, was arrested and 'disappeared' at the colony. (→ 30 Oct 1979)

24 [25?] May – CD acquired a **house in the centre of Parral** (262 La Unión street, today Ignacio Carrera Pinto street) from the widow of Mario Mujica (1907–72) and made it available to the DINA. The facility was sold in 1986. (→ 19 Aug 2022)

14 June – The DINA, which had operated secretly since immediately after the coup, was officially founded. (→ 12 Aug 1977)

29 July – A former member of *Patria y Libertad* and DINA operative, **Miguel Becerra Hidalgo**, was found dead in his car on the *Panamericana*²⁰ motorway near Longaví, after Schäfer and his accomplices had poisoned him and faked his suicide by car exhaust fumes (→ 27 Jul 1989). They also detained his adolescent son Miguel Becerra Monsalve in the enclave and isolated him from his family. They were later granted custody of the teenager, who went on to become a security specialist at CD and left with his family to Germany in May 2005. (CDPF/623, 647)

7 August – In the Santiago Court of Appeals (CA), a lawyer Fernando Oyarce filed application for protection for his 23-year-old nephew French-Chilean **Alfonso Chanfreau** (a philosophy student and MIR member) and his wife Erika Hennings (member of the Communist Youth). Chanfreau was arrested by the DINA on 30 July, interrogated, tortured for several days in the torture centre **Londres 38** and then secretly transported to unknown location, possibly to CD. After detention on 31 July by the DINA and torture in Londres 38 and other places, Hennings was expelled from the country with their baby daughter in late October. They settled in France but returned to Chile in the 1980s. Oyarce's court application was first rejected, but eventually the case was opened in the Santiago Third Criminal Court on 19 November. After many legal twists and turns during the dictatorship, the proceedings were resumed after the end of Pinochet's regime. (→ 17 May 1990)

20 August – CD organised a lavish **celebration for Pinochet** during his short visit to the *Fundo*. The dictator came by Puma helicopter from Chillán, where he had participated in the anniversary celebrations of one of the fathers of Chile's independence, Bernardo O'Higgins (1778–1842), who had been born in that city. At the colony, Pinochet and his entourage were entertained with choir music and participated in a gun show. Subsequently, the governing junta granted the German community construction work contracts and rights to mine for gold and other rare metals.

14 September – **Juan Pedro Merino** (Communist Youth) was arrested in the city of Coronel, Concepción Province, and detained at the settlement. (→ 29 Jun 2011)

25 September – **Adán Valdebenito** (Communist Youth) was arrested in Lota near Concepción and most likely taken to the *Colonia*. (→ 15 Jun 2010)

30 September – General **Carlos Prats** (→ 2 Nov 1972; 29 Jun 1973) and his wife **Sofía Cuthbert** were assassinated by the DINA in Buenos Aires.

²⁰ *Panamericana* – the Pan-American Motorway. Its Chilean part, also called 'Ruta 5' (Route 5), extends for more than 3,300 km and passes in the vicinity of Parral, around 40 km to the west of *Colonia Dignidad*.

21 November – During his visit to the enclave, the German embassy counsellor Klaus Platz was given a tour of the *Fundo* and attended a choir rehearsal. Later, he reported that the community was focused on charity goals and maintained good relations with the junta.

The **ANDREA Project** (*Projecto ANDREA*), the dictatorship's secret plan to develop forbidden biological and chemical warfare substances for possible armed conflicts with Argentina and Peru, was initiated.

There are strong indications that Schäfer's criminal structure provided logistical support for the project.

1975

10 January – After Hugo Baar, the head of the PSM in Siegburg, had joined the community in Chile at Schäfer's order, the *Colonia* leader stripped him of all power and subjugated him with electric shocks. Alfred Schaak replaced Baar at the helm of the PSM in Siegburg and kept a low profile.

15 January – The hierarchs purchased a large **house** at 817 *Avenida Campos de Deportes*, near the National Stadium (*Estadio Nacional*) in Santiago, which had been used as a detention and murder centre immediately after the coup. The house contained the office of Alfred Matthusen, a permanent liaison with the junta officials and the German embassy. It also served as a contact point with the DINA and – possibly – as a place of torture, as suggested in testimony provided by Luz Arce, a former socialist militant, who had been broken and forced to collaborate with the repressive apparatus.

February – **Luis Peebles** (1947–2025) (MIR) (→ 5 Jun 2014), **Erick Zott** (MIR) and **Eduardo Garcés** (Communist Party) were among those secretly transferred to the *Colonia* and subjected to torture experiments. After their release, they managed to leave the country and subsequently testified internationally about their horrific experiences. (→ 17, 21 Mar 1977; 30 Oct 1979)

19 February – The DINA held a press conference broadcast nationwide on radio and television, featuring four leading MIR members, José Carrasco, Héctor González, Cristián Mallol and Humberto Menanteau, who after being subjected to torture, called on their comrades to give up armed struggle.

From April – To overcome the economic crisis, the Chilean regime adopted an orthodox free-market model, developed by the University of Chicago graduates known as the '**Chicago Boys**'. Among other measures, the Chilean currency, the *escudo*, was replaced by the new *peso* in September of that year. The strongly neoliberal economic policy espoused by the technocrats and implemented by the regime led to a huge economic crisis in the early 1980s.

23 April – A secondary school teacher of French and Communist Party (PC) militant, **Adriana Bórquez** (1936–2019), was arrested and transported to the colony for interrogation and torture. She was one of at least 50 people from Talca and the surrounding area who met a similar fate in April and May. Bórquez was released and emigrated to the UK but after years in exile returned to Chile and continued to fight for truth and justice. (→ 17, 21 Mar 1977; 30 Oct 1979)

24 April – Schäfer received a new passport from the German embassy in Santiago, and together with Schnellenkamp and Schreiber travelled unhindered to Siegburg, where he was issued another passport on 10 June. Possibly during this visit they held a meeting with **Gerhard Mertins**, a former Nazi SS officer, arms dealer and informant of the Federal Intelligence Service (*Bundesnachrichtendienst*, BND). Later, Mertins allegedly collaborated with the colony in arms trafficking and gold mining. He was one of the most important public advocates of the *Colonia* in West Germany. (→22 Jun 1976; 1978)

May – During his visit to West Germany, Schäfer met a social education student from Siegen, **Wolfgang Müller Altevogt**, whose family members had already been part of the community and who subsequently decided to join the group in Chile. His rapid departure from Germany created confusion among his colleagues, who alerted the Federal Foreign Office (AA) that the young man's decision might not have been voluntary (→ 29 Apr 1977; 16 Nov 2004). Later, Müller Altevogt (together with Alfred Gerlach) was responsible for making film documentation of the colony's activities and became one of its leading members.

5 June – Osvaldo Heyder, an army officer and employee of the Military Intelligence Service (*Servicio de Inteligencia Militar*, SIM), who opposed the DINA's bestial actions in Valparaíso, was found dead in his car near Talca. The authorities claimed that he had been killed by left-wing extremists, but claims also circulated that he had committed suicide or been murdered by the DINA.

Allegedly, two German *colonos* were implicated in this mysterious death.

9 June – The exiled Chilean journalist Eugenio Lira was assassinated by the DINA in Paris, possibly with the poisonous gas sarin.

17 June – Pinochet declared himself the Supreme Chief of the Nation, reducing the role of the military junta to that of an advisory board.

June–July – As part of **Operation Colombo** (*Operación Colombo*), the DINA concocted a disinformation campaign and published in fake Argentinian and Brazilian newspapers (*Lea* and *Novo O Dia*, respectively) 119 names of disappeared detainees, presented as victims of an internal power struggle between leftist guerillas in Argentina. Chilean media outlets such as *El Mercurio*, *La Segunda* and *La Tercera* republished this fake news. In the case

of some of these people, their trail went cold at CD. The operation is also known as the 'Case of the 119' (*Caso de los 119*).

6 October – The exiled former Chilean minister and MP **Bernardo Leighton** (PDC) and his wife **Ana María Fresno** were severely injured in a terrorist attack in Rome, Italy, conducted by a neofascist group and commissioned by the DINA.

4 November – After the introduction of an **administrative reform**, Chile was divided into Regions and Provinces.

23 November – Pinochet attended the funeral of General Francisco Franco, dictator of Spain from 1936.

November – **Operation Condor** (*Operación Cóndor*), a US-backed campaign of state terror and coordinated repressions of political opponents by right-wing dictatorships of the Southern Cone (*Cono Sur*)²¹ of Latin America, began.

The colony served as an intelligence compound for the operation.

2 December – Schäfer fraudulently adopted an eight-year-old girl, Rebeca del Carmen Valenzuela (later **Rebeca Schäfer**, 1967–2023), who would enjoy privileges among her peers. (→ 31 Jul 1997; 15 Jul 1998)

CD bought another part of the San Manuel *hacienda*, called 'El Bosque'.

1976

1 January – A Catholic human rights organization, the **Vicariate of Solidarity**, was founded by Cardinal Raúl Silva. It replaced the Committee for Cooperation for Peace (*Comité de Cooperación para la Paz*, COPAHI),²² which had been founded by Silva and activists of various religious denominations, including Helmut Frenz (→ 6 Sep 1967; 22 Feb 1988), shortly after the coup and closed down by Pinochet two years later. The Vicariate offered free legal assistance and logistical support to persecuted and threatened citizens. In 1992 it was transformed into a foundation, which runs an archive.

4 February – The report of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights to Inquire into the Present Situation of Human Rights in Chile, acting under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (**ECOSOC**) (→ 8 Oct 1976; Jul 1978) stated that 'many of the people on the list of 119 prisoners who have disappeared were in the Colonia Dignidad and it is possible that some are still there'.

²¹ *Cono Sur* – the Southern Cone of Latin America that includes Argentina, Chile and Uruguay; sometimes Brazil's four southernmost states and Paraguay are also added to this list.

²² Often abbreviated to *Comité Pro Paz* – the Committee for Peace.

24 March – A **military putsch** took place in **Argentina**. The newly installed regime lasted until 10 December 1983.

26 May – Activists of the Popular Unitary Action Movement (*Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria*, MAPU), **Juan Maino**, **Elizabeth Rekas** (four months pregnant) and her husband **Antonio Elizondo**, were kidnapped by the DINA, and after detention in Santiago ‘disappeared’. It is alleged that they were transported to the colony and assassinated there, although this has still not been proven beyond doubt. (→ Jun 2005; 26 May 2006)

9 April – Hartmut Hopp (→ 1969) was allowed to marry nurse Dorothea Witthahn (sister of Elisabeth Witthahn, Kurt Schnellenkamp’s wife), ten years his senior.

8 June – Henry Kissinger, secretary of state in the cabinet of US President Gerald Ford, visited Santiago for the annual conference of the Organization of American States (OAS). He met Pinochet privately and reassured him of the support of the US administration.

22 June – The US Congress introduced an **arms embargo** on Chile due to the country’s infamous record of human rights violations.

This made Schäfer’s criminal network even more useful to the dictatorship. Reportedly, some *colonos*, especially Kurt Schnellenkamp, cooperated with several arms dealers, among them Gerhard Mertins (→ 24 Apr 1975), and expanded the colony’s illegal ammunition and arms trafficking operations.

16 July – As part of the Operation Condor, a Chilean-Spanish UN diplomat, **Carmelo Soria**, was murdered by DINA agents in Santiago.

30 July – *Apsi* magazine was launched in Santiago. It was one of four important opposition journals that appeared weekly during the dictatorship. The others were *Análisis*, *Cauce*, and *Hoy*.

12 September – The tortured and burnt body of a communist militant, **Marta Lidia Ugarte**, was washed up on the La Ballena beach near Los Molles, 200 km north of Santiago. She was the first confirmed victim of the dictatorship’s forced disappearance strategy. The authorities tried to cover it up by presenting her death as the result of a crime of passion.

21 September – In the first foreign-orchestrated terrorist attack on US soil, a car bomb explosion in Washington, DC killed **Orlando Letelier** (a former ambassador and minister in the Allende government) and his US collaborator Ronni Karpen Moffitt (her husband, Michael Moffitt, was injured). After the assassination, under pressure from the United States, the DINA was dissolved (→ 12 Aug 1977), and two killers, **Armando Fernández** (→ 29 Dec 2016) and **Michael Townley** (a US-born DINA agent), were extradited to the US. However, the demands of the United States administration for the extradition of the notorious DINA chief Manuel

Contreras were unsuccessful, as the Chilean Supreme Court (CS) did not agree to his surrender. Nevertheless, Contreras was dismissed as head of the secret service in November 1977 and had to withdraw from public life.

He found safe haven on the estate of the Germans, who entertained him with hunting trips (→ 2 May 1987), armoured his vehicle after a failed attack on his car in 1984, and provided him with four months of chemotherapy cancer treatment in 1985. (→ 12 Nov 1993; 21 Oct 1995)

8 October – The UN ECOSOC's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile (→ 4 Feb 1976; Jul 1978), which had gathered testimonies from exiled survivors of torture, reported that the German settlement was a place of detention of leftists and a centre for torture experimentation.

15 November – Following the two UN reports, **Erich Strätling**, the newly appointed conservative West German ambassador to Chile (in office from 1976 to 1979), transferred from Pretoria, South Africa, came to the settlement and received a state-like reception with music and song performances.

17 December – After obtaining Schäfer's consent to marry, Anna Maschke and Alfred Gerlach got married.

1977

20 January – '**Jimmy**' **Carter** took presidential office and shifted the focus of US foreign policy towards human rights.

17, 21 March – The German weekly magazine **Stern** and the **AI** German section published reports on human rights violations perpetrated at the colony, which included testimonies of three torture victims: Adriana Bórquez (anonymously) (→ 23 Apr 1975), Luis Peebles (→ Feb 1975), and Erick Zott (→ Feb 1975). The publications reverberated strongly in West Germany and internationally for over a month. The Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Bonn opened investigations into the alleged existence of a detention and torture camp at the German enclave, but discontinued them on 22 July, making reference to ambassador Strätling's exonerating statements which appeared in his report to the Federal Foreign Office (AA) (→ 15 Nov 1976) and in his declaration published in *El Mercurio* (Santiago) on 27 March.

21 March – The Chilean television station *Canal 9* broadcast Rosario Guzmán's favourable reportage on the colony in her new series titled 'Electroshock 77: You asked for it' (*Electroshock 77: Usted me lo pidió*).

19–27 April – As part of their counteroffensive, 225 colonists started an 'indefinite' **hunger strike**. In order to manifest the Chilean government's support and negotiate the termination of the protest, Chilean Minister of Public Health (*Ministro de Salud Pública*), General **Fernando Matthei** (→ May 1978), flew to the settlement on 27 April. On the same day, the colony's

hierarchs orchestrated a highly publicised act of solidarity, performed by around 100 *campesinos* at the entrance gate to CD. (ARNAD/209; “Colonos de ‘Dignidad’ Agradecen”; Gajardo, “Apoyo”, “Colonos”; Guerra and Sepúlveda; “Huelga de Hambre en Dignidad”; “Pleno”; Sandoval; “Se mueren”; Zecher)



The slogans on the banners read: (top, from left) “Our government / does not hide anything / We are a free / country”;²³ “We demand jail for / Marxist / Helmunnt [!] Frenz / for slandering / Colonia Dignidad”;²⁴ “Chileans and Germans / are brothers / We call for punishment / of the Marxists / who attack us”;²⁵ (bottom, from left) “Colonia Dignidad / is peace / love and goodness”;²⁶ “We Chileans / are with / the Colonia / Dignidad”.²⁷ Sources: Gajardo, “Apoyo”; ARNAD/209.

22 April – The PSM submitted a request for a court injunction against AI and Gruner und Jahr, *Stern*’s publisher. The Bonn Regional Court (LG) temporarily prohibited the distribution of the publications, which made further reporting on the issue impossible. The injunction was appealed by AI and *Stern*, which led to an unprecedented 20-year **civil trial** (→ 30 Oct 1979; 22 Jan 1980; 28 Apr–5 May 1988; 18 Nov 1997). Also on 22 April, in consultation with AI, **Ernst Waltemathe** (SPD), one of the few West German parliamentarians following the *Colonia* case systematically, arranged a hearing on the topic in the Bundestag (the lower chamber of the German federal parliament).

29 April – The German social education student Wolfgang Müller Altevogt, who had joined his mother and siblings in the colony in → May 1975, appeared at the German embassy in Santiago to give an assurance that his sudden departure from West Germany had been entirely voluntary. On this basis, the Public Prosecutor’s Office (StA) in Siegen, which had been investigating the case since 1975, handed over the proceedings to the prosecutor’s office in Bonn, where they were discontinued on 22 July.

Late April–June [?] – **Juan René Muñoz**, a notorious **Hooded Man** (*Encapuchado*)²⁸ who identified political opponents immediately after the coup, disclosed to the Vicariate of Solidarity (→ 1 Jan 1976) the DINA’s system of repression, including the German colony’s role in it. On 23 October his body, covered with stab wounds, was found on a wasteland in Santiago. The Chilean Supreme Court (CS) opened an investigation, but the case was dropped on 22 June 1978.

²³ “Nuestro gobierno / no oculta nada / somos un país / libre”

²⁴ “Pedimos cárcel / para / el marxista / Helmunnt [sic!] Frenz / por calumnias a / Colonia Dignidad”

²⁵ “Chilenos y alemanes / somos hermanos / pedimos castigo / a los marxistas / que nos atacan”

²⁶ “Colonia Dignidad / es paz / amor y bondad”

²⁷ “Los chilenos / estamos con / La Colonia / Dignidad”

²⁸ It cannot be ruled out that the dictatorship used more than one informer who wore a hood to hide their identity.

As part of the proceedings, Judge Osvaldo Faúndez visited the colony on 20 December and reported that nothing suspicious could be found there.

9 July – After President Carter had significantly reduced development aid to Chile, Pinochet delivered a speech in which he outlined his plan for return to democracy. The cultural event staged at Chacarillas Hill in Santiago (the so-called *Acto de Chacarillas*) is considered one of the greatest political rituals of the civil-military regime in Chile.

12 August – Under pressure from the US (→ 21 Sep 1976), Pinochet dissolved the DINA, and on the following day created the National Information Centre (**CNI**). This proved to be only a cosmetic change.

The *Colonia* hierarchy continued to maintain close contacts with ex-DINA officers.

September–November – Red Army Faction (*Rote Armee Fraktion*, RAF), a far-left militant group, conducted a series of terrorist attacks in West Germany.

8 October – The *Colonia* celebrated its **15th anniversary** with a massed ceremony and published a richly illustrated brochure in two language versions, German and Spanish, edited by Hans Wieske, which showcased its achievements. (CDPF/172)

Early November – Four **Catholic nuns** from the Contemplative Fraternity Little Sisters of Our Lady of Peace (*Fraternidad Contemplativa Hermanitas de Nuestra Señora de la Paz*) led by **Sister Paulina** (Teresa Camus), sister of **Carlos Camus**, bishop of Linares and human rights defender, moved into a part of the San Manuel estate that had been donated to the church (→ 9 Oct 1961), located on the access road to the *Colonia*. (→ Sep 1982; 27 May 1983)

17–22 November – During his official visit to Chile, which was a sign of support for Pinochet, the CSU leader, **Franz Joseph Strauss** (→ 13 Dec 1961), attended celebrations of the 125th anniversary of German immigration to the country. The politician became Minister-President of Bavaria in 1978.

Contrary to popular belief, it seems that Strauss never visited the colony. Nevertheless, Schäfer and his followers maintained strong relations with the right-wing German establishment, especially the Bavaria-based CSU, and from the mid-1980s onwards started to promote a new name – ‘Bavarian Village’ (**Villa Baviera**) – for their estate. This was the result of a gradual tightening of the West German authorities’ policy towards CD. In the new situation, the leadership could no longer emphasise the enclave’s German identity as strongly as before and shifted the focus to its supposed Bavarian character, although it appears that only two of the settlers were from that federal state (one of whom was Hermann Schmidt).

2–11 December – For the first time the *Colonia* participated in regional fairs. At its own stand at the first **FEPROLI** Exhibition Fair of Linares Province (*Feria Exposición Provincial FEPROLI*), the settlers presented photos of their

estate, novel colour video recordings, and their achievements in agriculture, crafts, food, and hospital work. (CDPF/713; González; “Hoy se inaugura”; “Intendente”) (→ 1–11 Dec 1978)



Source: “Intendente”.

10 December – **AI** (→ 28 May 1961) received the Nobel Peace Prize for ‘worldwide respect for human rights’.

1978

4 January – The dictatorship held the so-called ‘National Consultation’ (*Consulta Nacional*), an opaque referendum, asking for support for the government in the face of ‘international aggression’, i.e. worldwide expressions of solidarity with the repressed Chileans. According to official figures, 75 per cent of voters supported Pinochet.

16 March–2 April – For the first time, the *Colonia* took part in the International Fairs of Maule Region in Talca (**FITAL**) (→ 18 Nov–4 Dec 1983; 2009; 2010). Its pavilion featured crafts, colour video recordings, musical performances, and a food stand. On 31 March, the colony offered a variety show at the Municipal Grammar School, including choral and instrumental music, solo musical performances, dances, gymnastic demonstrations, and comedy skits. (CDPF/719–20; “Elogios”; “Gran”)



Source: “Elogios”.

March – The state of siege, which had lasted since 11 September 1978, was lifted, but the state of emergency remained in place (until 1988). On three more occasions (in 1980, 1984 and 1986) the state of siege would be imposed again for periods of several months. (→ 31 Oct 1984)

18 April – The **Amnesty Bill** (*Ley de amnistía*) was introduced in Chile by decree to guarantee impunity to human rights violators active under the

state of siege from the 1973 coup until 10 March 1978, the period in which the bulk of the junta's crimes had been committed. The following day, the bill was published in the Official Journal (*Diario Oficial*).

22 May – More than 60 people, mainly women, from the Association of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees (**AFDD**), a human rights organization founded in 1974, started an indefinite hunger strike in three churches in Santiago and at the UNICEF office, demanding the truth about their forcibly disappeared family members. In solidarity with their protest action, hundreds of activists and exiled Chileans launched their own hunger strikes in 26 countries around the world.

May – A rival of Pinochet in the junta, Air Force General Gustavo Leigh, was declared unfit and replaced by General **Fernando Matthei** (→ 19–27 Apr 1977). From then on, Pinochet had complete control over the armed forces.

29 June – A virulent opponent of the *Colonia*, MP Ernst Waltemathe (SPD) (→ 19–27 Apr 1977), together with his party colleague 'Hajo' Hoffmann, attempted to verify the allegations related to the colony in person, but were denied access to the compound.

July – Members of the UN Ad Hoc Working Group on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile (→ 4 Feb 1976; 8 Oct 1976) were allowed to enter Chile. In their report, submitted on 25 October, they stated that the *Colonia* directorate had refused them entry as an official delegation.

November – A 35-member **CSU** delegation to Chile, led by Dieter Huber, an advisor of Strauss (→ 17–22 November 1977) and the head of the CSU's international office, visited the enclave, where they were courted with musical performances, among others. Afterwards, the conservative politicians continued to maintain that the settlement was a 'model German estate'.

30 November – The remains of 15 local peasants, who had been detained shortly after the coup, were found in the ovens of an abandoned lime mine in **Lonquén**, southwest of Santiago. In response, Pinochet ordered a secret operation called 'Removal of TV Sets' (**Retiro de televisores**), aimed at unearthing and disposing of the remains of murdered political opponents. In March 1980, the ovens of Lonquén were dynamited to hide the traces of what had happened there.

In the course of the operation, Rudolf Cöllén, **Willi Malessa** (died 2026) (→ 25 Aug 2017; 25 Apr 2018; 5 May 2023; 30 May 2025), Gerhard Mücke, Johann Spatz, and Karl van den Berg dug out dozens of decomposing bodies, incinerated them with accelerants and threw the ashes into the Perquilauquén river. (→ [22?] Aug 2006; 25 Aug 2017)

1–11 December – The colony participated in the FEPROLI fairs in Linares for the second time (→ 2–11 Dec 1977). ("Hoy se inaugura"; "Linares inaugura")

December – A prolonged dispute between Argentina and Chile over the line of the border in southern Patagonia pushed them to the brink of war. The so-called **Beagle Conflict** (*Conflicto del Beagle*) was defused thanks to the mediation of the new pope, John Paul II (→ 1–6 Apr 1987). W latach 1980/81 ponownie groziło jej wybuchnięcie. The tug-of-war finally ended with the signing of a peace and friendship treaty by both countries in 1984.

Hartmut Hopp (→ Mar 1973) took over the management of the *Colonia* hospital from Gisela Seewald.

In this period, Gerhard Mertins (→ 24 Apr 1975) attempted to formalise the **Circle of Friends** (*Freundeskreis*) of CD in West Germany. Among those who lobbied for the colony in that country were conservative Munich councillor **Wolfgang Vogelsang** (CSU) (→ 22 Feb 1988), who visited the colony on several occasions; ZDF television presenter Gerhard Löwenthal; Würzburg professors **Dieter Blumenwitz** (law) (→ 22 Jan 1980) and **Lothar Bossle** (sociology) (→ 14 Dec 1984; 22 Feb 1988); Adolf Herkenrath (CDU), Mayor of Siegburg from 1964 to 1989 (→ 1968; 5 Nov 1988); and Erich Strätling, West German ambassador to Chile from 1976 to 1979 (→ 15 Nov 1976). They supported the enclave in the media and through a policy of alliances with the West German right-wing establishment. It appears that the group never received a formal identity.

1979

22–26 January – West German television broadcast a four-part US miniseries entitled **Holocaust**, which reached a large audience and sparked widespread discussion about Nazi crimes against the Jewish population.

30 October – During the Bonn court proceedings conducted as part of the PSM's case against AI, a former DINA agent, **Samuel Fuenzalida**, acknowledged that he had transported two political prisoners to the German enclave in 1974, one of them being Álvaro Vallejos (→ 20 May 1974). He also testified that it was Schäfer who had received the dissident and most likely stood behind his execution. Fuenzalida was among nine witnesses called before the court by AI between 20 June 1978 and 30 October 1979. The others were seven former political prisoners who had found refuge in Canada and Europe – Adriana Bórquez, Manuel Bravo, Eduardo Garcés, Luis Peebles, Gerardo Sánchez, Iván Treskow and Erick Zott – and the police officer Hans-Günter Matthusen, who had helped his father Johannes to leave the enclave (→ Feb 1971) and whose brother Alfred (→ 15 Jan 1975) belonged to Schäfer's iron circle.

December – The Chilean press published Simon Wiesenthal's speculations that former SS 'doctor' **Joseph Mengele**, who had conducted lethal experiments on prisoners of the Auschwitz II (Birkenau) extermination camp, was hiding at the *Colonia*. (→ 4 Jan 1985; 27–28 Feb 1985)

30 December – The colonists played host to Munich councillor Wolfgang Vogelsgesang (CSU), who was on a one-week visit to Chile with his wife.

1980

22 January – In the PSM's case against AI (→ 19–27 Apr 1977), the Bonn Regional Court (LG) decided to verify the witnesses' testimonies by requesting an on-site visit of representatives of the court to the enclave. This was prevented by the colony's lawyers, who referred to an expert opinion provided by a CSU-affiliated law professor and colony sympathiser, Dieter Blumenwitz, declaring that the active presence of German judges in Chile would violate its sovereignty. (→ 15 Dec 1981; 28 Apr–5 May 1988)

27 August – Following a call for a plebiscite to approve the new constitution, former president Frei led a massive opposition rally at the Caupolicán Theatre (*Teatro Caupolicán*) in Santiago, where he called for a return to democracy and consolidated his position as leader of the opposition.

11 September – Chileans accepted the **new constitution** in a controversial referendum. Among other things, it guaranteed Pinochet the presidency until 1989. The new basic law, which replaced the 1925 constitution, came into force on 11 March 1988. In effect, for eight years the country was governed under the 'transitory' articles. It was only after mass popular protests swept Chile in → October 2019 that the long and as yet inconclusive process of replacing the constitution dating back to the grim Pinochet era was initiated.

1981

2 September – The East German feature film *Die Kolonie* ('The colony'), directed by Horst E. Brand, was premiered. It was the **first fiction film** based on facts from the enclave's history.

15 December – After the Chilean authorities had rejected the Bonn Regional Court's request to allow on-site verification of witnesses' testimonies (→ 22 Jan 1980), the German court decided that the gathering of evidence in Chile would be conducted by way of legal assistance from the Chilean justice system. This resulted in the procedures dragging on for years. (→ 28 Apr–5 May 1988)

The high-ranking CD members Kurt Schnellenkamp, Helmut Seelbach and Rita Seelbach stayed for an extended period at a silver mine owned by Gerhard Mertins (→ 24 Apr 1975) in Durango State (*Estado de Durango*), Mexico. Reportedly, Schnellenkamp shared his experience in stone crushing, Helmut Seelbach installed a radio communication system, and Rita Seelbach was responsible for bookkeeping.

1982

22 January – Former president of Chile Eduardo Frei Montalva (→ 3 Nov 1964) died after surgery. In 1980–81, he had opposed the new constitution and the extension of Pinochet's rule (→ 27 Aug; 11 Sep 1980). Years later, suspicions arose that Frei had been poisoned by ex-DINA agents, and his family began legal proceedings to determine the exact cause of his death. On 18 August 2023, the Supreme Court (CS) dismissed the murder charges and found the defendants not guilty.

2 April–14 June – During the **Falklands War** between Argentina and the UK, Chile officially remained neutral, but supported the British task force with, among other things, military intelligence and long-range radar early warnings of Argentinian air attacks.

[September?] – The settlers bought another part of San Manuel estate and began harassing the Catholic nuns who were living on the land donated to the church (→ early Nov 1977), trying to force them to leave (→ 27 May 1983).

1 October – Following the break-up of the social-liberal alliance of West German Chancellors Brandt and Schmidt, the CDU/CSU and the FDP formed a new coalition, resulting in **Helmut Kohl** (CDU) being elected Federal Chancellor. **Hans-Dietrich Genscher** (FDP) (→ 12–19 Dec 1987; 12 Jan 1988; 9 Jan 1989), incumbent Federal Foreign Minister from the SPD-FDP coalition, retained his position.

Due to a huge **economic crisis** (→ Apr 1975), the first mass demonstrations against Pinochet and his regime called 'hunger marches' (*marches del hambre*) took to the streets. In their demands, the protesters focused not only on material grievances, but also on the restoration of democracy. In the years that followed, mass protests against the dictatorship and its economic policies repeatedly swept Chile. (→ May 1983; 31 Oct 1984; 4–5 Sep 1985; 2 Jul 1986)

1983

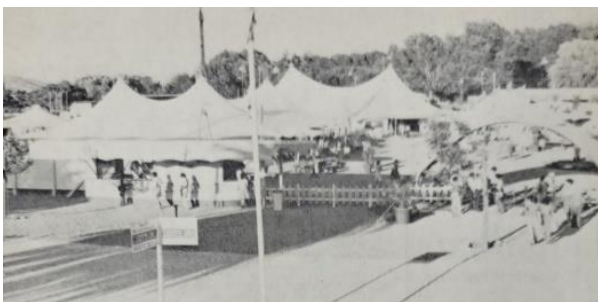
11 May – The Confederation of Copper Workers (*Confederación de Trabajadores del Cobre*) conducted the first major **National Protest** (*Protesta Nacional*), which was followed by protest actions held every month. According to a report of the Vicariate of Solidarity, published in May 1984, 100 people died at the hands of state agents during the first year of protests. More people were injured, arrested and imprisoned, and the state of siege was reimposed.

27 May – The SBED sued **Teresa Camus** and the **Catholic nuns** living in the vicinity of the enclave (→ early Nov 1977; Sep 1982) for alleged property appropriation. The nuns decided to leave in October 1984, after the settlers had concocted a fake pornographic video featuring them and had attempted to burn down their convent (twice: in January and on 21 June 1984), and

the courts (in Parral, the Court of Appeals in Chillán and the Supreme Court in Santiago) had issued rulings in favour of the Germans in 1984. In July 2008, the contested land was returned to the church of Linares.

11 November – Chilean construction worker **Sebastián Acevedo** committed self-immolation in Concepción, demanding the release of his two children, María Candelaria and Galo Fernando, who had been abducted by the CNI. Acevedo's desperate act became a symbol of the suffering of those whose relatives disappeared in suspicious circumstances during the Pinochet era. At the time, a group of prodemocratic activists led by Catholic priest José Aldunate named their organization the Sebastián Acevedo Movement Against Torture (→ 20 May 1988). Acevedo's act also prompted the founding of the Women for Life Movement (*Movimiento Mujeres por la Vida*), active across the country. Until the end of the dictatorship, both organizations conducted numerous peaceful and pro-democratic protests. One of the most important gatherings organised by the Women for Life Movement at that time was a political and cultural event called 'Today and not tomorrow, For Life!' (*Hoy y no mañana, Por la Vida!*), attended by more than 10,000 women at the Caupolicán Theatre in Santiago on 29 December 1983. It was the largest opposition gathering up to that date.

18 November–4 December – The colonists made their second appearance at the **FITAL** fairs in Talca (→ 16 Mar–2 Apr 1978). Their stand consisted of two huge tents and a playground for children. Inside, the corporation presented handicrafts and gave concerts, including one for the birthday of the fairs' president Ladislao Bravo. They also hosted a Chilean military orchestra under the baton of German conductor Heinrich Schlüter (→ [?] Jan 1996). (CDPF/75, 703–4; Cisternas; "Notable") (→ 2009; 2010)



Source: Cisternas.

1984

14 May – Former mid-ranking SS commander Walther Rauff (→ 3 Dec 1962) died in Santiago. His funeral was attended by some former Nazis and Nazi sympathisers, including the controversial diplomat and neopagan occultist Miguel Serrano.

23–24 August – CNI agents conducted operation **Alfa Carbón** aimed at arresting and eliminating MIR leaders in Concepción, Los Ángeles and

Valdivia. Their deaths were presented officially as results of armed confrontations.

4 September – French Catholic priest **André Jarlan** was murdered by *Carabineros* in his house in the rebellious neighbourhood of *La Victoria* in Santiago during a demonstration against the dictatorship.

31 October – A massive strike was held by Chilean workers and bus drivers. Pinochet responded by introducing a state of siege (on 6 November), which lasted for several months.

[November?] – The colonists opened their restaurant Family Casino (**Casino Familiar**) at the *Litoral* (Littoral) estate near **Bulnes**, where they had run a stone crushing plant since the early 1970s. The venue, which quickly gained a reputation for its traditional German cuisine and an amusement park, became the stage for many of the *Colonia's* performances, including those conducted for Pinochet and his influential wife, **Lucía Hiriart**, who visited the place several times (at least once officially, at the invitation of the Mayoress of Bulnes) in the 1980s and 1990s. For years, the *Casino's* guests were greeted by a signed portrait of Strauss (→ 17–22 November 1977), hanging at the entrance. (Gana)

14 December – With the help of Heinz Kuhn (→ Jan 1968), **Hugo Baar** **escaped** from the enclave and reached West Germany via Argentina and Canada. Baar's main objective had been to reform the colony from within, and he thus wished to avoid arousing a public scandal that could have provided fuel for left-wing opponents of Pinochet and the enclave. Therefore, rather than MPs or the press, he briefed the conservative sociology professor Lothar Bossle (→ 22 Feb 1988), an influential persona in CDU/CSU circles and a *Colonia* sympathiser. Upon hearing Baar's shocking accounts, Bossle gradually distanced himself from Schäfer and recommended to **Hermann Holzheimer**, the conservative German ambassador to Chile, that the CD leader should be expelled from the estate.

After the young progressive foreign affairs officer **Dieter Haller** (→ 7 Nov 1987) became head of the consular and legal department of the German embassy in Santiago at the end of 1984, the special consular treatment of the colony (for example, the renewal of colonists' passports *en bloc* rather than individually) came to an end. From August 1987 to March 1988 the colony submitted three administrative complaints against him.

1985

4 January – **Boris Weisfeiler**, a naturalised American mathematician of Judeo-Russian descent, disappeared without a trace near the enclave. There were allegations that he was detained and executed there. Despite the fact that US diplomacy has repeatedly pressed the Chilean authorities on the matter, Weisfeiler's mysterious disappearance remains unexplained to this day. It was speculated that he was an associate of Israel's Mossad and

wanted to establish whether Josef Mengele was hiding at the colony (→ Dec 1979). At the time, Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal insisted that Mengele was still alive and was perhaps staying at the German settlement.

In February that year, a mock trial was organised in Jerusalem in which more than 100 victims of human experimentation testified, and soon thereafter a coordinated effort was made by West Germany, Israel and the US to establish the whereabouts of the so-called 'Angel of Death'. Also in February, the Canadian press reported that Mengele had entered the country without a visa. The consequent media scandal led the Canadian authorities to set up a special commission of inquiry. (→ 27–28 Feb 1985)

27–28 February – Two mid-level colonists who held positions of trust, **Georg Packmor** (b. 1930, came to Chile on 24 November 1962) and his wife **Lotti** (née Peters, b. 1933, travelled from Germany to Chile in 1970), fled from the colony and hid with Heinz Kuhn in Los Angeles (→ 1 Jan 1968; 14 Dec 1984). Being distrustful towards German foreign affairs officials, they sought refuge at the Canadian embassy in Santiago two weeks later. They were transferred to the German diplomatic post only after ambassador Hermann Holzheimer had promised his Canadian counterpart, Clayton George Bullis, that the couple would not be sent back to the settlement. In mid-March, the Packmors reported extensively to Holzheimer on crimes and human rights violations perpetrated at the enclave. They later emigrated to Canada, where they had relatives. Following suspicions that Mengele was illegally in the country (→ 4 Jan 1985), the Canadian press speculated that the Packmors might have had contact with him, or even that Georg Packmor was in fact Mengele.

20 March – Pinochet's wife Lucía Hiriart officially inaugurated the colony's school for Chilean children from the area, called *Las Campanillas* (later renamed '**Villa Baviera Private School**', *Escuela Particular Villa Baviera*). A lavish opening ceremony was attended by numerous officials and representatives of German companies and organizations operating in Chile. The school was subsidised by the Chilean state from 27 February 1986 until January 1991. (CDPF/80–1, 710, 753; "Escuela en Parral"; Ruiz de Gamboa; "Un 7 para escuela") (→ 1 Mar 1995)



From left: Hermann Schmidt (President of the SBED), Rosa Markmann (wife of former president of Chile, Gabriel González), and Lucía Hiriart. Source: "Un 7 para escuela".

30 March – Three Communist Party members, Manuel Guerrero, Santiago Nattino and José Manuel Parada, were decapitated near Santiago airport in what became known as the Slit-Throats Case (**Caso Degollados**). A few months later, under strong public pressure, a *Carabineros* unit was identified as responsible. In the aftermath, General **César Mendoza**, Director General of the *Carabineros* and a member of the governing junta since the 1973 coup, resigned from his post, and his position was taken by General **Rodolfo Stange**, an officer with German roots.

2 April – Hugo Baar sent his testimony to ambassador Holzheimer, which supported the Packmors' statements. The embassy successively forwarded the Packmors' and Baar's reports to the West German authorities, and on their basis the Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Bonn opened an **investigation** against Schäfer for deprivation of liberty and bodily harm. The pre-trial proceedings started in late May and included questioning of more than 30 witnesses, among them *Colonia* escapees, diplomats, politicians, and PSM members (→ Nov–Dec 1988). However, the investigation did not lead to any charges against Schäfer or the issuing of an arrest warrant against him, and was discontinued after his death in 2010. CD immediately launched a counterattack, trying to undermine the credibility of the incriminating witnesses: Baar, Kuhn, and the Packmors. The embassy forwarded Hugo Baar's and the Packmors' reports to the Chilean authorities only at the end of 1987. Neither the Baars nor the Packmors decided to press charges against the *Colonia* in Chile, as this would mean re-entering Schäfer's sphere of influence and being exposed to counter-charges, a legal tactic repeatedly employed by the CD directorate.

10 [12?] April – The CD leaders sent Hugo Baar's wife Waltraud (née Köhler) to West Germany, escorted by Hartmut Hopp, to discredit the charges her husband might bring against the colony and – possibly – convince him to return. Baar, who had been confidentially informed about his spouse's arrival, turned up unexpectedly at Frankfurt airport and persuaded her to stay with him. Although the Baars had left behind nine children in the colony, they decided to testify in West Germany against Schäfer and his henchmen. (→ 2 Apr 1985)

15 May – Schäfer applied for a new passport at the German consulate in Concepción. Referring to the Bonn investigation (→ 2 Apr 1985), the Federal Foreign Office (AA) limited the validity of the document to two years.

August – Klaus Schnellenkamp (born 1972), son of Kurt, a high-ranking member of the colony, tried – unsuccessfully – to escape from the enclave for the first time. (→ 18 Dec 2005)

4–5 September – A nationwide wave of protest swept Chile.

11 October – **Alfred Schaak**, the *Colonia* representative in West Germany (→ 31 Dec 1956; 27 Jan 1961; 10 Jan 1975), **died** suddenly at the age of 59 in

hospital in Bonn. His unexplained death gave rise to speculation that he might have been poisoned by Schäfer's emissaries, because of the possibility that he might switch sides like the Baars and Packmors. Schaak's body was brought to Chile on 23 October by Hartmut Hopp. At the SBED's General Assembly (*Generalversammlung*) on 26 October, Hopp announced that Schaak had donated his property to the community. At the same gathering, in a grotesque report describing their alleged excesses and misdemeanours, Hugo Baar was portrayed as a sick pervert and the Packmors as infidels and manipulative. Schaak's position was taken by Alfred Matthusen (→ 15 Jan 1975), who was sent from Chile to West Germany.

12 December – An 18-year-old Dutch globetrotter, Maarten Visser, disappeared while hiking in southern Chile. His whereabouts remain unknown to this day. Although there has been no proof of the CD's involvement in his disappearance, links have repeatedly been made in the media.

31 December–1 January 1986 – The colonists put on a New Year's arts programme at the *Casino Familiar*. (CDPF/706)

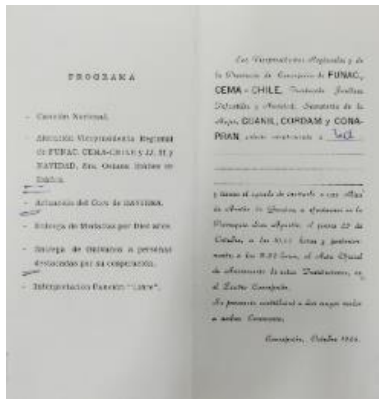
1986

14 April – A market vendor and former CD employee, Raúl Berrios, was shot dead by unknown attackers in Santiago. Twenty-one colonists who had pistols of a matching calibre registered in their names were summoned to the courts in Bulnes and Santiago. CD took legal action against the ballistic investigation.

2 July – During the Day of National Protest (*Jornada de Protesta Nacional*), a military patrol stopped two college students, Carmen Gloria Quintana and photographer Rodrigo Rojas, doused them with petrol and set them on fire. Rojas died of his burns four days later, but Quintana survived. The horrendous incident, called the 'Burnt Victims Case' (**Caso Quemados**), triggered protests against the Pinochet regime nationally and internationally (mainly in the US, where Rojas had lived with his exiled mother since his childhood). The funeral was attended by the US ambassador to Chile, Harry George Barnes, a supporter of the opposition.

7 September – Members of the communist urban guerrilla Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) (→ 1 Apr 1991), established in the early 1980s and advocating armed struggle, attempted to assassinate Pinochet during a motorcade. Their failed coup, nicknamed '**Operation 20th Century**' (*Operación Siglo XX*), was followed by another wave of severe repressions.

23 October – The Bavarian Choir (*Coro de Baviera*) performed at the Concepción Theatre during the 13th anniversary celebrations of women's voluntary organizations from Bío Bío Region, including the **Centres of Mothers Foundation** (*Fundación Los Centros de Madres*, CEMA) chaired by Lucía Hiriart (→ 20 Mar 1985). (ARNAD/291)



An invitation containing the programme. Source: ARNAD/291.

November – A group of leading German surgeons, who were attending an international congress in Chile, spent a day at CD. Their visit was intended to improve the *Colonia*'s tarnished image.

31 December–1 January 1988 – The colony presented a New Year's arts programme at the *Casino Familiar*. ([CDPF/284?])

1987

1–6 April – **John Paul II** (→ Dec 1978) came to Chile on the first pontifical pilgrimage to the country.

On 15 December 1987, the leaders of the colony sent a letter to the Holy Father, asking him to discipline Bishop Carlos Camus (→ early Nov 1977), who fought persistently for human rights. It is not known whether the Apostolic See responded to this request.

April – More than a ton of ammunition, sent by Gerhard Mertins (→ 24 Apr 1975; 22 Jun 1976) and destined for the German enclave, was discovered by Chilean customs officers on board the Dutch ship *Nedlloyd Manila*, docked in Antofagasta. The scandal was covered up after Pinochet's intervention.

[?] 2 May – Eight-year-old **Hartmut Münch** was accidentally killed in a partridge hunt organised by Schäfer for Manuel Contreras (→ 21 Sep 1976) on the colony's grounds. The *Colonia* doctor, Gisela Seewald, issued a false death certificate which stated that the death resulted from a cerebral hemorrhage after a fall from an Unimog truck. This version was confirmed by the driver Horst Wöhri, who later died in a suspicious Cessna crash over the enclave (→ 11 February 1989). In 2005, Hopp testified before the special investigating judge Hernán González that it was the former DINA chief who shot Münch, who had been in the line of fire at the time. The date of the boy's death and the course of events have been disputed ever since, and several versions are in circulation.

3 August – During an official meeting with Pinochet in Chile, Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (*Bundesminister für Arbeit und Soziales*) **Norbert Blüm** (CDU) took up the cause of the persecuted opponents of the

regime and strongly criticised its torture practices. His words spoken in a television interview on his return flight, calling the German colony a 'model farm of contempt for human beings', alluded to CSU members' favoured characterisation of Schäfer's community, and strongly reverberated in the German media. (→ Nov 1987)

11 August – In a WDR television programme, Heinz Kuhn (→ 1 Jan 1968; 14 Dec 1984; 27–28 Feb 1985) stated that the PSM had supplied the so-called 'model farm' with electric shock devices.

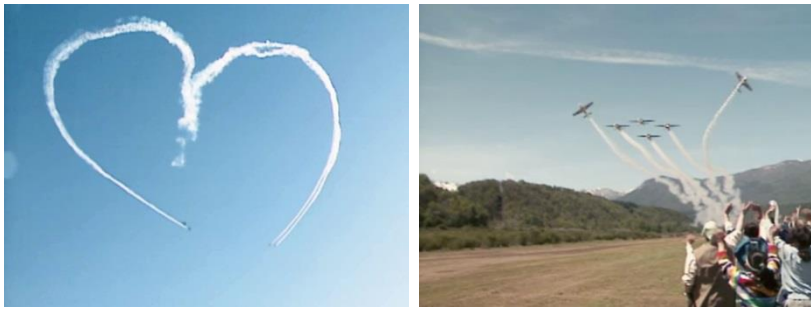
28 August – The young German television reporter **Gero Gemballa** attempted to film the settlement, but after a confrontation with Schäfer and his adjutants, he was arrested by the *Carabineros*. Later, he reported extensively on the *Colonia* for German press, radio and television (→ 30 Jul 1989). On → 25 February 1988, he published the first German book on the subject. His second volume on Schäfer's community came out in 1998. Four years later, Gemballa died of a heart attack at the age of 40, which gave rise to speculation that he had been poisoned with sarin by the colonists.

15 October – A fiction film *Die Kolonie* ('The colony'), directed by **Orlando Lübbert**, an important exiled Chilean film director of German descent, was released in West German cinemas. In the film, references to Schäfer's community were evident. On 5 November 1990, it was screened at *El Biógrafo*, a studio cinema in the centre of Santiago.

16 October – As a sign of support, the Minister of National Defence, Vice Admiral **Patricio Carvajal**, visited the colony with his wife and son. In early November, Carvajal defended the Germans in the Chilean media.

7 November – After several refusals and long negotiations with the CD executive board, a **consular day** at the enclave was conducted by (conservative) ambassador **Horst Kullak-Ublick**, his wife Ingeborg and (progressive) consul Dieter Haller (→ 1984). During the visit, the guests were courted with a performance by a male youth choir. In their report, the diplomats expressed dismay at the colonists' robot-like expressions and made comparisons with the Theresienstadt Nazi concentration camps.

30 November – A Chilean air force squadron, *Los Halcones*, gave an aerobatics display over the colony. In the following years, CD maintained contact with the group, which again demonstrated its skills above the estate and the CD land near Bulnes. (ARNAD/294; Baumeister and Huismann 6; CDPF/535)



Source: Baumeister and Huismann 6.

November – During his visit to Chile, CDU General Secretary Heiner Geissler continued to press Pinochet on the human rights issues and the colony. His and Blüm's commitment (→ 3 Aug 1987) pushed the ruling CDU/CSU-FDP coalition to the brink of a split.

[Early December?] – For the first time, the colony took part in the Socabío fairs in Los Ángeles.

13–19 December – After making the CD case a top priority, Hans-Dietrich Genscher dispatched a special eight-member **fact-finding mission** to the enclave, which included Johannes Marré (a retired diplomat and former German ambassador to Uruguay, who headed the delegation), Michael Gerdts (spokesman of the Federal Foreign Office, AA), Jasper Osterloh (German Red Cross, *Deutsches Rotes Kreuz*), Wolfgang Salewski (Institute for Conflict Research, *Instituts für Konfliktforschung*), Reinhard Schlagintweit (Federal Foreign Office, AA), Lothar Sent (prosecutor at the Ministry of Justice of NRW), Emil Stehle (Catholic auxiliary bishop of Quito, Ecuador and executive director of the Catholic relief agency *Adveniat*²⁹), and Gerrit Stein (Federal Ministry of Justice, *Bundesministerium der Justiz*). The day before the visit, Hartmut Hopp informed ambassador Kullak-Ublick that the SBED's General Assembly had voted against the committee's admittance. Notwithstanding, the ambassador flew to the colony with the bishop on board a police helicopter piloted by *Carabineros* General Carlos Menne. Although the settlers blocked the helipad, the officials succeeded in landing. Nevertheless, Hopp did not allow them to enter, threatening the general with deposition. In the incident's aftermath, the colony obstructed the investigation with a court application for protection (submitted on 14 December to the Chillán Court of Appeals) and the delegation left Chile empty-handed after eight days. This **futile visit** proved to the Federal Foreign Office (AA) the strength of ties between the colony and the Pinochet regime. Regardless, the West German government backed a substantial World Bank loan for which Chile was applying at the time.

December – Around 400 people took part in the Christmas festival organised by the SBED, the Neighbourhood Association (*Junta de Vecinos*) and the Villa Baviera Private School (→ 20 Mar 1985). The festivity was conducted on the premises of the colony's educational facility. (Suazo and Carrasco)

²⁹ *Bischöfliche Aktion Adveniat* – Episcopal Action Adveniat.



Source: Suazo and Carrasco.

December – A demonstration against CD was held in front of the PSM house in Hennef-Heisterschoss near Siegburg.

31 December–1 January 1988 – The colony presented its New Year's arts programme at the *Casino Familiar*. ([CDPF/285?])

1988

12 January – Minister Genscher continued to pressure his Chilean counterpart **Ricardo García** to launch a judicial investigation into the *Colonia* on the basis of the Packmors' and Baar's reports (→ 27–28 February; 2 Apr 1985). Although García submitted three requests to start such proceedings (on 10 March, 19 April and 10 [18?] October) to the Court of Appeals (CA) in Chillán, his initiative was thwarted by the judges.

18 January – An attempted bomb attack took place on the colony's house in Santiago. (→ 15 Jan 1975)

21 February – An aid organization, the Emergency and Interest Group for the Victims of Colonia Dignidad (**NIG**), was founded in West Germany by Günter Bohnau, Jürgen Karwelat, and Wolfgang Kneese (earlier Müller), among others.

22 February – One-day voluntary **public hearings** in the Bundestag were held before the Subcommittee for Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid (*Unterausschuss für Menschenrechte und humanitäre Hilfe*) with the aim of answering the question: "Are German citizens being held involuntarily and under conditions that violate human rights in Colonia Dignidad in Chile?" Former settlers Hugo Baar, Wolfgang Kneese and the Packmors, as well as Günter Bohnau, Helmut Frenz and Gero Gemballa provided a shocking image of the enclave. An ambivalent position was taken by Lothar Bossle (→ 14 Dec 1984), who advocated for the extradition of Schäfer, but backed the colony. Two speakers openly supported the settlement: Munich city councillor Wolfgang Vogelsgesang (CSU) (→ 1978) and the entrepreneur Friedrich Peymann. A spokesman for Schäfer's community, Hartmut Hopp, attempted to read an extensive statement and avoided answering questions. Following the hearings, the Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Bonn extended its investigation against Schäfer (→ 2 Apr 1985) to Hopp, Gisela Seewald, and Baar. Hopp managed to return to Chile immediately to avoid

interrogation. As part of their legal counteroffensive, CD opened a civil lawsuit against Baar in the Cologne Regional Court (LG) on 14 March 1988. The proceedings lasted until 1996 and served to intimidate former colonists who might wish to take a stand against the enclave. As a result of the case, Baar was forbidden to assert that he had been tortured with electric shocks by Gisela Seewald.

26 February – Gero Gemballa's book '*Colonia Dignidad*'. *Ein deutsches Lager in Chile* ("Colonia Dignidad": A German camp in Chile) came out (→ 28 Aug 1987). Two years later, its Chilean edition was published. Also in 1988 the first of numerous books by Dieter Maier came out in Santiago. *Colonia Dignidad – buscando la salida del laberinto* ('Colonia Dignidad: Looking for an exit from the labyrinth') was co-written with Carlos Liberona and was published under pseudonyms (Paul Friedrich Violenstein and Jaime Lagos) for the authors' protection.

30 March – The CD hierarchs applied to the Court of Appeals (CA) in Chillán for court protection against the German consul from Concepción, **Horst Kriegler**, who in an interview for the local newspaper *El Sur* on 17 March had referred to the settlers as being held captive in the *Fundo*. On 25 April, the colony lodged a constitutional complaint with the Supreme Court regarding the same matter, which is dismissed on 14 November.

5 April – Young settler **Jürgen Szurgelies** (b. 1964) attempted to flee from the enclave but was brought back. For the first time, the German embassy filed a court application for protection in favour of a *colono* (on 30 April). The CD hierarchs responded with their own application for protection against the embassy counsellor Hans-Ulrich Spohn, submitted by Szurgelies himself, his father Walter and mother Matthilde (née Selent) in the Chillán Court of Appeals (CA) on 11 May. The court rejected the former request on 16 May (the Supreme Court confirmed this ruling on 7 June) but accepted the latter, thus violating the diplomat's immunity. (→ 20 May 1988)

26 April [4 May?] – The *Colonia* management registered a closed joint stock company **Abratec**, thus initiating the process of restructuring the colony's assets to enable its diversified commercial activities to continue after a foreseeable political change in Chile. (→ 13 Nov 1989; 10 Jan 1990)

28 April–5 May – Following a request from the Bonn Regional Court (LG) for legal assistance in the CD's case against AI (→ 15 Dec 1981), a *Colonia*-friendly judge, **Lidia Villagrán** from the Parral court, carried out on-site inspections along the section of the *Panamericana* from Talca to Parral and from Bulnes to Parral, as well as on the access road to CD and within the estate. On 4 May, relatives of disappeared detainees organised a demonstration in Parral and in front of the settlement's gate, demanding that the truth about the fate of their loved ones be revealed. (B. A.; Délano; F. P. S.; Robledo, "Al anochecer", "Colonia")



Source: Robledo, "Colonia"

April – The colony began construction works on the extension to the main hospital building. (→ 1 Sep 1990)

20 May – Members of the Sebastián Acevedo Movement Against Torture (→ 11 Nov 1983) protested in the centre of Santiago, accusing the dictatorship of torturing political prisoners at the German enclave and calling for the release of Jürgen Szurgelies (→ early Apr 1988). This was the first time that Chilean human rights activists had protested against the abuse of a CD resident. (Hevia and Stehle 110)



The captions on the banners read: (bottom left) "The dictatorship and Paul Schaeffer / torture in Colonia Dignidad / Sebastián Acevedo Movement Against Torture";³⁰ (bottom right) "Jürgen Szurgelies / detained against his / will in / Colonia Dignidad";³¹ (top centre) "Adriana Bórquez / tortured in / Colonia Dignidad".³² Source: Hevia and Stehle 110.

5–6 August – Several colony leaders, including Hans-Jürgen Blanck, Wolfgang Müller Altevogt, Ingrid Pöhlchen, Hermann Schmidt, and Albert Schreiber, were questioned in the Parral court in an unprecedented hearing. On 6 August, Schäfer also had to testify for the first time in CD's history. However, his interrogation was conducted not in the court, but in the colony's hospital.

4 October – The NIG group issued an open letter to the Chilean people, emphasising that the Colonia issue is not merely about the fate of their own relatives, but is also linked to the crimes of the dictatorship. The text of the letter was reprinted in *Lateinamerika Nachrichten* (Latin America News) in Berlin. ("Neues")

5 October – Referring to the provisions of the 1980 constitution (→ 11 Sep 1980), the regime conducted a **national plebiscite**, in which Pinochet's plan

³⁰ "La dictadura y Paul Schaeffer / torturan en Colonia Dignidad / Movimiento Contra la Tortura Sebastián Acevedo"

³¹ "Jürgen Szurgelies / detenido contra su / voluntad en / Colonia Dignidad"

³² "Adriana Bórquez / torturada en / Colonia Dignidad"

of extending his rule collapsed. The victory of the **‘No’ campaign** paved the way to the democratic transition (*transición*), and presidential elections were scheduled for December of the following year. (→ 14 Dec 1989)

The German settlers took part in the plebiscite, voting collectively in favour of Pinochet at the registry in Catillo.

5 November – At the Siegburg market square, the NIG (→ 21 Feb 1988) organised an information event about the colony and denounced the policies of the town’s mayor Adolf Herkenrath (CDU), who continued to support the PSM and its local business activities. (“Neues”; “Sociale”)

November – Retired CD residents did not attend a pension consultation day organised by the German Federal Insurance Institution for Employees (*Bundesversicherungsanstalt für Angestellte*, BfA) in Chile. This led to suspension of their pension payments and many cases in the German social courts, in which CD always ultimately emerged victorious. (→ 22 Feb 1995)

November–December – Judge Villagrán interrogated 32 settlers, including their leader ([or his double, possibly Walter Laube?,] on 11 December) in response to an application by German prosecutors seeking legal assistance in the context of their 1985 investigation against Schäfer. (→ 2 Apr 1985)

30 November – Unknown perpetrators raided the PSM’s house in Hennef-Heisterschoss near Siegburg, allegedly tied up its six residents, locked them in the cellars, and stole numerous documents and film materials. The police investigation into the case did not bring any results. In 1989, some of the stolen footage was broadcast on West German television.

Early December – The colony took part for the second time in the Socabío fairs in Los Ángeles. In its large tent, the settlers presented a varied programme, including acrobatic and musical performances. (CDPF/157, 159, 185; Landa)

31 December–1 January 1989 – The colony organised a lavish New Year ceremony for Chilean guests in the *Casino Familiar*. The programme included a mixture of acrobatics, folk dance, mime, and musical and theatre performances. (CDPF/139, 157)

Dorothea and Hartmut Hopp adopted five-year-old Cristian Javier Godoy and renamed him Michael. The adoption was notified to the Civil Registry in Catillo by María Cristina Alfaro. (→ 28 Apr 1997; 22 Sep 2004)

1989

4 January – Under pressure from Genscher, **Hernán Errázuriz**, the new Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs, personally asked the Supreme Court (CS) to initiate investigations into matters relating to the colony. On 10 January – that is, shortly before the court decided to appoint an investigating judge –

112 young settlers publicly threatened to start a three-day hunger strike. (“Ayuno”; “Ciento doce”; Suazo, “Jóvenes”)



“The Youth of Villa Baviera, Chile”. Sources: ARNAD/252; Museo Colonial at Villa Baviera.

12 January – Judge **Guillermo Navas** from the Chillán Court of Appeals (CA) was appointed to examine the administrative aspects of CD and to establish whether criminal charges could be brought. He was also to investigate whether the colonists had freedom of movement and whether their right to privacy of correspondence was respected. Due to a reorganization of the courts, Navas was replaced by Judge **Hernán Robert** of the Talca Court of Appeals (CA) on 15 March. Judge Robert, who began his investigation a week later, was much more committed and thorough than his predecessor.

11 February – The colonist Horst Wöhri (→ [?] 2 May 1987) died in a suspicious **Cessna accident** over CD, and his co-pilot Norbert Laube was seriously injured. To prevent the interrogation of the latter, Hopp issued a certificate declaring Laube unfit to testify.

February – Following the cessation of pension payments (→ Nov 1988) to beneficiaries at CD, the latter filed an objection with the Federal Labour Office (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*). (→ 22 Feb 1995)

30 March – At the administrative court in Cologne, the SBED opened a lawsuit against West Germany for exerting pressure on the Chilean authorities in matters relating to the *Colonia* (the case was dismissed in December 1992, and again after appeal in May 1995). Shortly afterwards (on 7 April), the CD management asked the Chilean authorities to declare ambassador Günter Knackstedt *persona non grata*, which would have been tantamount to his expulsion.

13 June – In front of the settlement gate, almost 100 journalists took part in a **demonstration of solidarity** with foreign television reporters and their Chilean collaborators who had been physically attacked by *Colonia* sympathisers on the access road to the estate on 23 May. At the time, the colonists mobilised their supporters to conduct a counter-manifestation of solidarity on the colony’s grounds. (Barra and Díaz; CDPF/163; González and Sutherland; Suazo, “Periodistas”)



Source: *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), 15 Jun 1989.

27 July – In the Linares Criminal Court, **Elena Becerra** filed a complaint concerning the murder of her brother Miguel on → 29 July 1974. This led to the first court case in Chile to consider the collaboration between CD and the DINA. The verdict in the case became binding only after Schäfer's death in 2010. (→ 28 Oct 2010)

30 July – A 90-minute **television reportage**, *Das Dorf der Würde, die Colonia Dignidad* ('The village of dignity, Colonia Dignidad') by Gero Gemballa (→ 28 Aug 1987), was broadcast in the prime-time ARD series *Unter deutschen Dächern* ('Under German roofs'). The report received huge coverage in the West German local and national press. In 1990 it received a German television award, the *Adolf-Grimme-Preis*.

31 July – In his report, Judge Hernán Robert (→ 12 Jan 1989) listed a number of **administrative irregularities** and acknowledged the possibility of fraud and illegal medical practice by the CD medical staff. Two days later, the judge opened two criminal cases related to these offences.

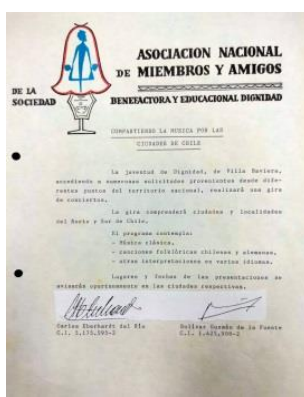
8 September – The Supreme Court (CS) accepted Judge Robert's report, but transferred both cases to Lidia Villagrán, a Parral judge sympathetic to the *Colonia*, who dropped them without any results by 15 June 1990. It also ruled that the residents of CD enjoyed personal freedom and freedom of correspondence. Afterwards, the colony repeatedly presented the CS's judgment as an exoneration on all charges.

18 September – At a meeting in Bonn, presidential candidate Patricio Aylwin and Federal Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher discussed, among other things, administrative measures to be implemented to dissolve the German enclave.

18 September – The colony's amateur theatre, choir and orchestra performed during celebrations of the Chilean *Fiesta Patria*, conducted in the *Casino Familiar*. (Asociación, *Mensajero* 1, 9)

23 September – The association of friends of CD staged a **mass public event** at the *Plaza de Armas* in Parral to celebrate the colony's legal "victory" and demonstrate their support for the Germans. (CDPF/31, [Commentary in:] 155; [The event's programme in:] ARNAD/309)

18 October – The colony's choir and orchestra performed in Temuco, and the settlers presented a propaganda-style video titled 'Meeting with Dignidad' (*Encuentro con Dignidad*) which highlighted their charitable work. (Asociación, *Mensajero* 1, 9; CDPF/291-4; [The event's programme in:] ARNAD/309)



The letter reads: "National Association of Members and Friends of the Dignity Benevolent and Educational Society / Sharing music in the cities of Chile / The Youth of Dignidad, from Villa Baviera, in response to numerous requests from different parts of the country, will go on a concert tour. / The tour will include cities and towns in the North and South of Chile. / The programme includes: / – Classical music, / – Chilean and German folk songs, / – other performances in various languages. / Venues and dates of the performances will be announced in due time in the respective cities. / Carlos Eberhardt del Río / Bolívar Guzmán de la Fuente".³³ Source: ARNAD/309.

24 October – The so-called 'Bavaria' Choir (*Coro 'Baviera'*) performed at the Theatre of the University of Concepción during an anniversary commemoration of women's volunteer organizations from Bío Bío Region. (Asociación, *Mensajero* 1, 9; [The event's programme in:] ARNAD/309)

9 November – After weeks of civil unrest, the authorities of the GDR allowed its citizens to freely visit West Berlin and West Germany. This marked the beginning of the process of **reunification of Germany**. (→ 13 Jun 1990; 3 Oct 1990)

13 November – Schäfer and his clique put in operation the second leg of their plan to intercept the SBED's assets (→ 26 Apr 1988) by establishing a series of closed joint stock companies called 'Agripalma', 'Bardana' and 'Cinoglosa', which formed the so-called '**ABC-Holding**'. Among the lawyers who helped to build this opaque corporate structure were Cirilo Guzmán and his son Juan Pablo. Shortly afterwards, the companies signed employment contracts with the settlers, but this did not translate into regular salaries or pension contributions. (→ 10 Jan 1990)

[Early December?] – The colony took part in the Socabío fairs in Los Ángeles for the third time, and presented its new musical programme in a large tent. (CDPF/[163?], 186)

14 December – The presidential election victory of **Patricio Aylwin** (PDC), representing the Coalition of Parties for Democracy (*Concertación*), opened a fragile **transition** from authoritarian rule to democracy in Chile. (→ 5 Oct 1988; 28 May 1993)

31 December–1 January 1990 – As part of the **New Year Eve** celebrations, the colony presented its new artistic programme to hundreds of Chilean guests in the *Casino Familiar*. (CDPF/77, 161–2, 283, 287, 289, 707)

1990

10 January – The **Cerro Florido** Collective Society (*Sociedad Colectiva Cerro Florido*, CF) was founded by 30 colonists who since 22 September 1989 had formally owned land plots in the Parral area, near Bulnes, and in Santiago. They transferred over 13,000 hectares to the CF, while the SBED retained usufructuary rights. The CF's board of directors consisted of two members

³³ "Asociación Nacional de Miembros y Amigos de la Sociedad Benefactora y Educacional Dignidad / Compartiendo la música por las ciudades de Chile / La juventud de Dignidad, de Villa Baviera, accediendo a numerosas solicitudes provenientes desde diferentes puntos del territorio nacional, realizará una gira de conciertos. / La gira comprenderá ciudades y localidades de Norte y Sur de Chile. / El programa contempla: / – Música clásica, / – canciones folklóricas chilenas y alemanas, / – otras interpretaciones en varios idiomas. / Lugares y fechas de las presentaciones se avisarán oportunamente en las ciudades respectivas. / Carlos Eberhardt del Río / Bolívar Guzmán de la Fuente"

from each of the ABC-Holding companies. The long-time *Colonia* lawyer and director of the National Economic Prosecutor's Office (*Fiscalía Nacional Económica*) in 1963–90, **Waldo Ortúzar** (→ 22 Sep 2004), was appointed an arbitrator in case of liquidation. In the following months, 30 CF shareholders transferred their shares to ABC-Holding and received ABC shares in return. At the time, four more companies were created. On 31 January 1991, the CF was reshaped into *Inmobiliaria e Inversiones Cerro Florido Ltda.* (→ 26 Apr 1988; 13 Nov 1989)

• In the transition period (1990–2005)

1990

19 January – A protest march called to the *Colonia* gate and a human rights demonstration were held, with would-be parliamentarians **Jaime Naranjo** (*Izquierda Cristiana*, Christian Left) and Mario Papi (Radical Party, *Partido Radical*) in attendance. The settler **Reinhard Döring** obstructed the protest with an excavator, and other colonists filmed the demonstrators and recorded their speeches. Later, Döring was fined for his actions. (ARNAD/309; Balboa; “Juez de Parral”; Maier 168; Maier and Narváez 234)

11 March – **Patricio Aylwin** inaugurated his presidency. Under the provisions of the 1980 constitution, Pinochet would remain Commander-in-Chief of the Chilean Army until 11 March 1998, when he would exchange that post for a Senator-for-Life seat in the National Congress. (→ 16 Oct 1998)

13 March – Aylwin held a meeting with former German President Walter Scheel (FDP) and Minister Norbert Blüm (CDU) to discuss bilateral cooperation between Chile and Germany.

The Chilean president promised that the autonomy of Schäfer's community would be ended and the colony would be dismantled. During the first year of his term in office, several administrative investigations were conducted, which paved the way for stripping the SBED of its legal status. (→ 31 Jan 1991)

17 March – State Defence Council (CDE) inspectors carried out a control of CD.

April – SBED filed a lawsuit against Olivia Monsalve at the court in Linares because the woman had told the newspaper *Las Últimas Noticias* that her 28-year-old son had been abducted by the colony. The CD leaders initiated legal proceedings against Bishop Carlos Camus at the Court of Appeals (CA) in Talca on charges of “serious defamation”. This was because Camus had stated that the colony was a concentration camp.

17 May – In the Santiago Court of Appeals (CA), the investigation into the torture and forced disappearance (possibly in the German enclave) of

French-Chilean **Alfonso Chanfreau** on → 7 August 1974 was reactivated after 16 years. The ensuing trial was featured on prime-time Chilean television and became one of the most important human rights cases of the early transition period. (→ 30 Oct 1992; 29 Apr 2015)

2 June – A mass grave with 20 well-preserved bodies of leftists taken prisoner after the 1973 coup was discovered in desert sands near **Pisagua** in northern Chile. Photographs of the corpses released in the press spurred national debate on human rights abuses and inspired searches elsewhere in the country.

13 June – The demolition of the **Berlin Wall** began.

15 June – Judge Lydia Villagrán has concluded the investigations into the unauthorised practice of medicine.

1 September – As part of the colony's **30th anniversary** celebration, organised for hundreds of its supporters from the area, the settlers inaugurated a new part of their hospital. The facility, which was thus almost tripled in size, was renamed **Villa Baviera Hospital** (*Hospital Villa Baviera*) (Asociación, *Mensajero* 1, 14–15; CDPF/31, 126, 319–20; Cervio 3; [The event's programme in:] ARNAD/309). In this context, 23 **Patients' Committees** (*Comités de Pacientes*) from Parral, San Fabián and other small towns and villages in the vicinity of the colony were created, with the aim of defending the facility (and the German community). **Guillermina Hernández** became president of the organization, and her husband Eduardo Mario Fuentes took on the role of secretary general. This position was later transferred to **Adrián Bravo**, an Evangelical pastor from San Carlos, who contributed to the development of the committees. In the early 1990s, a further 10 committees were established. During the ceremony, the committees presented an open bronze book to the SBED with the following text: 'Hospital Villa Baviera / in recognition of its / great charitable social work / Patients' Committees / August 1961–1990',³⁴ which was later embedded in a special **obelisk** erected at the entrance to the colony. (→ Jul 1991)



Source: Cervio 3.

³⁴ "Hospital Villa Baviera / en reconocimiento a su / gran obra social de beneficencia / Comités de Pacientes / agosto 1961–1990"

3 October – **Germany was reunified.** After the GDR was dissolved, its territory was annexed to the FRG to form present-day Germany.

6 October – Seven months after the resumption of work by the Chilean Parliament, the Chamber of Deputies sent its Human Rights, Nationality and Citizenship Committee (*Comisión de Derechos Humanos, Nacionalidad y Ciudadanía*), chaired by María Maluenda (PPD), to CD. In response, the hierarchs invited a few hundred of their local supporters and friendly journalists to an event supposedly celebrating the **reunification of Germany**. (CDPF/[commentary in: 155], 329–30; “Dignidad abrió”; “Dijo”; Urrutia)

11 December – Following an inspection at CD and the *Casino Familiar*, the Governor of Linares Province, **Manuel Francisco Mesa**, sent his report to the Minister of Justice, Francisco Cumplido, in which he highlighted a number of grave irregularities in the operations of the SBED.

12 December – In its final report, the Human Rights Committee of the Chilean parliament (→ 6 Oct 1990) recommended to President Aylwin the dissolution of the SBED by decree.

31 December–1 January 1991 – As part of the New Year’s Eve celebrations, a new compilation of music performances, acrobatics, and theatre skits was presented to hundreds of Chilean guests in the *Casino Familiar*. (CDPF/78, 325, 352–5, 357–8, 708)

1991

24 January – Hermann Schmidt delivered a letter to the Ministry of Justice, protesting against Governor Mesa’s devastating opinion on the SBED’s legal transgressions (→ 11 Dec 1990). Subsequently, the hierarchs sued the governor for defamation. Mesa died in a car crash on 29 April.

30 January – Around 200 colonists began a **hunger strike** to oppose the impending revocation of the SBED’s legal personality. They stopped their protest after a week. (“Colonos en huelga”; “Huelga de hambre en ‘Dignidad’”; Klemke; “Mañana finaliza”; “Terminó la huelga”)

31 January – The cabinet of Patricio Aylwin revoked the SBED’s **legal personality** by **Decree no. 143** for non-compliance with its statutes and illegal operation. The authorities also decided that the society’s assets and properties would be administered by the Methodist Corporation (*Corporación Metodista*). The colony – through **Fidel Reyes** (its lawyer and president of the National Association of Members and Friends of the SBED) – launched a legal battle against the state, and as a result the dissolution decree became legally binding only in the end of 1994.

1 February – The colony’s supporters and some colonists, including Hartmut Hopp, conducted a protest against Governor Mesa’s report in front of *La Moneda* governmental palace in Santiago. (ARNAD/309)



The slogans on the banners read: “No to the lies of Mesa-Seco / We support Dignidad and defend / our work and hospital”,³⁵ “For the bread and health / of our children / we support Dignidad”.³⁶ Source: ARNAD/309.

18 February – As part of their counteroffensive, Schäfer and his lieutenants mobilised thousands of their local supporters, formed into Patients’ Committees (→ 1 Sep 1990), to hold an around-the-clock watch, initially called **‘Vigil of Pain’** and in late 1992 renamed **‘Permanent Vigil’** (“Amigos de los colonos”). It took place at a specially designated spot at the so-called ‘Rock of the Vigil’, located near the gate to the estate (presently about 500 m from the main entrance). In 1993/1994, an outdoor stone theatre was built on the site, featuring a large metal arch called ‘Arch of Pain’ (*Arco del Dolor*), which was used for hanging banners, lights and loudspeakers.



The caption (left) reads: “The greatest injustice in the history of Chile / Memory of the Vigil of Pain”.³⁷ Sources: ARNAD/252; *El Mercurio* (Santiago), 9 Apr 2000.

4 March – In a televised address to the nation, President Aylwin presented the findings of the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (*Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación*), which had investigated the murders committed by the dictatorship.

In its report, known as the **‘Rettig Report’**, the CD’s role as a centre of repression and forced disappearance of political prisoners was officially acknowledged for the first time. The commission established that over 100 people had been disappeared at the German colony, but the only person mentioned by name was Álvaro Vallejos (→ 20 May 1974). (→ 28 Nov 2004)

³⁵ “No a las mentiras de Mesa-Seco / Apoyamos a Dignidad y defendemos / nuestro trabajo y hospital”

³⁶ “Por el pan y salud / de nuestros hijos / apoyamos a Dignidad”

³⁷ “La Injusticia más grande en la historia de Chile / Recuerdo de la Vigilia del Dolor”

[18?] 19 March – Seventeen conservative Chilean senators (Arturo Alessandri, Ricardo Martín, Sergio Diez, Olga Feliú, Sergio Fernández, Jaime Guzmán, Sergio Onofre Jarpa, Ronald Mc-Intyre, Hugo Ortiz de Filippi, Ignacio Pérez, Francisco Prat, Mario Ríos, Sergio Romero, Bruno Siebert, Santiago Sinclair, William Thayer and Beltrán Urenda) submitted a complaint to the Constitutional Tribunal (*Tribunal Constitucional*), alleging the unconstitutionality of the government's decree dissolving the SBED, but their motion was rejected three months later.

1 April – An ideologue of the Pinochet regime, Senator Jaime Guzmán (→ 1972), was assassinated by members of the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR). (→ 7 Sep 1986)

9 April – The house of Guillermo Ceroni (PPD), one of the lawyers working with the German embassy in Santiago on matters relating to the colony, was shot at with a rifle. Those arrested were among the enclave's supporters.

17 April – As part of a joint operation carried out by the Chilean Internal Revenue Service (*Servicio de Impuestos Internos*, SII) and the police, searches were conducted at both the CD premises at 817 Campos de Deportes Street in Santiago and the organization's headquarters in Parral. Following an inspection and seizure of documents at the settlement and the colony's branch near Bulnes on, SII filed a complaint against Hermann Schmidt and Kurt Schnellenkamp for **tax evasion** to an amount of 142 million pesos by the SBED between 1986 and 1989. The binding judgment in the case was handed down after more than 16 years – on → 18 July 2007.

End of June – A formal ceremony was held to unveil **commemorative plaques** with words of gratitude and support for the SBED. The plaques were funded by 23 Patients' Committees and were placed on an obelisk at the entrance to CD (→ 1 Sep 1990). ("Amigos de Dignidad"; CDPF/363–4)

24 August – Law students of Fidel Reyes, led by Juan Pablo Zúñiga, came from Santiago to express their support for the SBED. (CDPF/366–7, 379)

14 September – *Huasos*³⁸ from the rodeo club in Linares, along with conservative deputies Luis Navarrete and Alfonso Rodríguez, as well as the mayor of Parral, Claudio Bravo (all three RN), showed their support during a celebration at the gate to CD (CDPF/373, 377). Years later, the monument at the entrance was demolished and the gate was removed.

28 September – another visit by students to the monument. (CDPF/377, 379)

21 October – During his state visit to Chile, German Chancellor **Helmut Kohl** addressed the *Colonia* issue and advocated for the opening of the compound. Kohl placed the whole burden of responsibility for resolving the

³⁸ A *huaso* is a countryman and skilled horseman in Central and Southern Chile, similar to *gaucho* in Argentina and Uruguay.

issue on the shoulders of the new Chilean authorities. At the same time, several hundred supporters of the colony conducted a protest march in Santiago, and the colony's lawyer Fidel Reyes was active in the media, presenting the SBED as a victim of state repression. (Asociación, *Mensajero* 3, 2; CDPF/250, 382–3)



Source: Asociación, *Mensajero* 3, 2.

29 October – **Eduardo Vega**, director of the Health Service of Maule Region (SSM), cut off funding for the Villa Baviera Hospital.

7 December – The *Colonia* and its supporters conducted a bike ride from Parral to CD, called '**Cicletada**'. The ride was attended by around 200 participants of all ages and turned into a manifestation of support for the SBED and its hospital. On 14 December a bike competition was held on the access road to the *Fundo*. (CDPF/78, 433, 463, 690, 709; *Mensajero* 3, 4)

The Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Bonn opened an investigation against Schäfer for the murders of Alfonso Chanfreau (MIR) (→ 7 Aug 1974) and Exequiel Ponce (PS). The proceedings were suspended after Schäfer's death in 2010.

1992

14 February – More than 1,500 local supporters commemorated the **first anniversary** of the Vigil of Pain in a massed ceremony. Around 100 children who had been born in the Lavadero Hospital marched to the Rock of the Vigil carrying small torches, a symbol of hope (CDPF/384–6; *Mensajero* 3; "Un Año"; "Vigilia"). In the following years, the colony and its supporters would hold festive celebrations of successive anniversaries of the *Vigilia*. (CDPF/325, 341, 365, 387–8)

19 February – Klaus Schnellenkamp (→ Aug 1985) escaped to the German embassy in Santiago, but was sent back to the colony like many other fugitives before him. (→ 18 Dec 2005)

14–15 March – The *Colonia* and its local supporters organised the so-called '**Music Encounter**' at the Rock of the Vigil. It was a competition for amateur musicians from the Maule and Bío Bío Regions, who sang folk and pop songs dedicated to CD and its hospital and school. (CDPF/392–5, 440–4)

[8 July?] – The SSM stopped supplying milk to the Villa Baviera Hospital for distribution among *campesinos* from the Maule Region.

[9?] September – Around 100 supporters of the SBED protested at the offices of the intendency in Talca, demanding the distribution of milk in the colony's hospital and an end to the 'repressions'. (CDPF/588; "Pacientes de Dignidad")

17 September – On Chile's *Fiesta Patria*, a huge ceremony in support of the SBED took place in front of the Villa Baviera Hospital. The Vigil of Pain was renamed 'the Permanent Vigil'. (CDPF/445)

30 October – The Chilean Supreme Court (CS) transferred the Chanfreau trial (→ 17 May 1990) to the military justice system, where the case was dropped the following year in an act of self-amnesty by the former dictatorship. The investigation was reopened in 2011 and the binding verdict was reached on → 29 April 2015.

31 October – A mass youth support movement called '**Youth of the Permanent Vigil**' (JVP) was created both for propaganda purposes and for pragmatic reasons (to provide care for the children of adult protesters taking part in the Permanent Vigil). It was also a source of new victims of sexual violence by Schäfer who entrusted Günter Schaffrik (whom he had been sexually abusing for more than 20 years) with the organization of holiday and weekend programmes for hundreds of young people from the Maule and Bío Bío Regions. All teenage colonists were given the extra duty of looking after their Chilean guests. (→ 26 Feb 1994)

9 November – In a large tent erected next to the Rock of the Vigil, the colonists organised a lavish celebration for visitors from Bavaria, Germany, who had come to support CD. (CDPF/450–5)

[Around 22 November?] – During another protest by female patients in the regional administrative office in Talca, its participants were forced out by police, which led to a brawl and several injuries and arrests. (CDPF/[380?], [589?]; "Mujeres protestaron")

November – One of the most notorious DINA torturers, Osvaldo Romo, was extradited from Brazil to Chile, where he faced justice.

During the proceedings, he acknowledged that political prisoners were detained at CD.

3 December – Approximately 100 female members of the Patients' Committees demonstrated in front of the court in Talca. They supported the application for protection submitted by the colony's lawyer Fidel Reyes on behalf of 478 children. Reyes argued that the 'arbitrary and unlawful' actions of the authorities represented by Eduardo Vega (SSM) had violated the children's right to life and bodily integrity. The application was rejected six

months later on the grounds that food for children was distributed by other health care facilities. (CDPF/[380?]; “Colonia ‘Dignidad’ presentó”)

12 December – The colonists organised a sports event for Chilean workers employed by Abratec. (CDPF/456–7)

15 December – A group of MPs from the ruling *Concertación* coalition presented a constitutional indictment against the Supreme Court (CS) judges Hernán Cereceda, Lionel Beraud and Germán Valenzuela, as well as army auditor General Fernando Torres (a member of the Supreme Court under the provisions of the Code of Military Justice). The four defendants, along with two lawyers, who had handled the case of Alfonso Chanfreau’s detention and forced disappearance (→ 7 Aug 1974), were accused of dereliction of duty. On 8 January 1993, the Chamber of Deputies declared the accusation admissible, but 12 days later, the Senate accepted the indictment only in respect of Judge Cereceda, who was removed from his position and banned from holding a public position for five years. It was the first time in Chile’s history that a member of the Supreme Court had been sanctioned in this way.

19 December – The colonists and their local supporters organised the first so-called ‘**Lechetón**’ (Milk Marathon) at the site next to the Rock of the Vigil. They did this both for practical purposes, such as collecting donations of money, powdered milk and other food items for children hospitalised in the colony after state support had been withdrawn (→ 8 Jul 1992), and to put pressure on the Aylwin government. Since the festival proved to be a success, the colony and *campesinos* repeated it at least five times. (CDPF/458)

1993

14 January – Erich Honecker, former authoritarian ruler of the GDR, came to Chile to reunite with his family. Upon his arrival, he was greeted by the leaders of the Chilean Communist and Socialist parties, who thanked him for supporting exiled Chileans during the Pinochet dictatorship. Honecker died in Santiago on 29 May 1994.

[13?] 14 February – A ceremony commemorating the second year of the Vigil of Pain was conducted near the Rock of the Vigil. (CDPF/387–9)

20–21 March – The second *Lechetón* was organised at the entrance to CD. Its artistic part included songs sang by the JVP members. (CDPF/321, 397, [447–8?])

28 May – The fragile transition agreement was put to the test by the sabre-rattling of the so-called ‘**Boinazo**’, a show of force organised near the seat of government to force the definitive closure of the investigation into a corruption case in which Pinochet and his son, Augusto Pinochet Hiriart, were implicated. This eventually took place in 1995 without any penalties

being imposed on those responsible. The military also demanded the suspension of all pending trials involving army personnel or their transfer to the military justice system. Besides, they protested against the Aylwin's cabinet's prerogative to retire officers.

12 November – In the first instance, **Manuel Contreras was sentenced** to seven years in prison for masterminding the assassination of Orlando Letelier (→ 21 Sep 1976). His deputy, Pedro Espinoza, was sentenced to six years in prison. The binding verdict in the Letelier/Moffitt case was reached on 30 May 1995. (→ 21 Oct 1995)

The colonists ceremoniously opened an outdoor sports facility for JVP members. (CDPF/474)

The Third *Lechetón* was carried out at the Rock of the Vigil area. (CDPF/475–6, 574)

31 December–1 January – The colonists organised another New Year's Eve party at the *Casino Familiar*. (CDPF/53)

1994

26 February – On the third anniversary of the Vigil of Pain, the colony and its supporters staged a massive ceremony called '**Lanterns Night**' (*Noche de los faroles*). During the celebration, several hundred members of the Youth of the Permanent Vigil (JVP), with lanterns in their hands, swore to behave morally in their lives and to defend 'd/Dignity'. To confirm their promise, they lit a large torch with an unquenchable flame. (CDPF/132, 262, 376, 505–6, 598, 683; Cervio 3)



(Left): "Vigil of Pain / for Dignity / To the Supreme Judge / We wait for Him";³⁹ (right): "3 years of the Vigil / The Youth of the Permanent Vigil / Present".⁴⁰ Source: Cervio 3.

11 March – After Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (PDC) succeeded Aylwin as president, he began to reduce the influence of the military in governance.

31 March – Following the resumption of the investigation in the *Degollados* case (→ 30 Mar 1985) in May 1989, Judge Milton Juica sentenced three former police officers to life imprisonment and 13 to prison terms ranging from 41 days to 18 years for their involvement in the crime. The verdict

³⁹ "Vigilia del Dolor / por Dignidad / Al Supremo Juez / Lo esperamos"

⁴⁰ "3 años de Vigilia / Juventud de la Vigilia / Permanente / Presente"

marked a breakthrough in the Chilean justice system of the transition period. Later, the appellate court increased the sentences of six of the convicts to life imprisonment, and the Supreme Court (CS) confirmed this decision in five cases.

2 August – The Chilean Supreme Court (CS) upheld the decision on the **SBED's dissolution** (→ 31 Jan 1991) which led to the termination of its educational and healthcare activities. The colonists appealed against this ruling, and their supporters organised blockades of local roads and a demonstration in front of the governmental palace *La Moneda* in Santiago. (CDPF/481–2, 579, 582)

16 August – Around 200 supporters of the colony conducted a protest in front of the provincial authorities' office on the *Plaza de Armas* in **Chillán** to denounce the closing of the CD hospital. (CDPF/583, 585; Suazo, "Pacientes")

3 September – The fourth **Lechetón** was organised on a grand scale. The event included, among other things, a rich programme of songs created by Chilean supporters in tribute to CD. (CDPF/648–65; "En 'Cuarta'")

6 September – The Supreme Court (CS) rejected the SBED's appeal, which made **governmental decree no. 143** (→ 31 Jan 1991) **legally binding**.

19 September – On Chile's *Día de las Glorias del Ejército de Chile* (Chilean Army Day), the choir and orchestra of the SBED performed its repertoire of army songs at the *Casino Familiar*. At the end of the ceremony, Hernán Escobar, on behalf of 53 young colonists, read an open letter accusing the government and judicial authorities of arbitrary decisions and announcing the beginning of an indefinite hunger strike. The concert concluded with the *Funeral March* from Beethoven's Third Symphony. (CDPF/666–71)

19 September (midnight)–6 October – A group of 53 young colonists (men and women) conducted an 'indefinite' **hunger strike** in a large tent located near the Rock of the Vigil to protest the Supreme Court's ruling (→ 2 Aug, 6 Sep 1994). They were soon joined by some former patients of the colony's hospital. The protest ended after 17 days, following the intervention of right-wing senators Hernán Larraín (UDI) and Bruno Siebert (independent supported by RN) and deputies Sergio Correa (UDI) and Rosauero Martínez (independent supported by RN), who presented a declaration in support of the enclave, signed by 16 senators and 22 deputies from the far right of the political spectrum. ("Ayunante"; CDPF/127, 623–6, 629–33, 636, 642–5, 647; Gómez, "Huelga"; Pinto; Saavedra, "Después")



Sources: "Ayunante"; Pinto.

19 October – Twenty-three retirees from the *Colonia* attended a federally organised pension consultation day in **Chillán** (→ Nov 1988). The colonists staged a protest in front of the Gran Hotel, where the meeting was taking place. (CDPF/484)



The slogan on the banner reads: "Elderly people in their 70s and 80s with no defence against political dialectics / - 5 years without a pension -".⁴¹ Source: *Museo Colonial* at *Villa Baviera*.

5 December – In front of the buildings of local authorities in **Linares**, **Parral** and **San Carlos**, nearly 500 *Colonia* supporters staged simultaneous protests against the official closure of the hospital and the school, which was scheduled for the following day (CDPF/604). More than 100 demonstrators occupied the town hall in San Carlos for several hours. An attempt to do the same in Parral was thwarted by *Carabineros* ("Amigotes"; Gómez, "Protestan"; "Impaciencia"; Pérez).

6 December – The CD directors officially closed the Villa Baviera Hospital. The same happened to the colony's private school, but it was immediately forcibly reopened by *campesinos*. (CDPF/575)

8 December – Following the closure of the colony's educational and healthcare facilities, members of Patients' Committees conducted a **blockade of a local road** near Parral. (32 Comites; CDPF/518)

⁴¹ "70 bis 80 jährige wehrlos gegen politische Dialektik / - seit 5 Jahren keine Rente -"; "Ancianos de 70 a 80 años sin defensa contra dialéctica política / - 5 años sin pensión -"



The slogan on the largest banner reads: "Our children are dying / without the Dignidad Hospital".⁴² Source: *Museo Colonial at Villa Baviera*.

1995

5 January – The Chamber of Deputies voted to establish a **Committee of Inquiry** (*Comisión Investigadora*) with the aim of verifying the implementation of the 1991 governmental decree. 15-member committee, headed by Jaime Naranjo (PS), was constituted on 2 March. Its final report, submitted to the Chamber on 6 December and accepted on 18 January 1996, clearly showed that hardly any changes had been implemented to comply with Chilean regulations. On the same day, 21 women supporting CD, including Elma Gutiérrez and her daughter Olalia Vera, accompanied by their children, occupied the Catholic **cathedral in Talca** as part of their solidarity campaign. They brought an open letter to the apostolic nuncio Piero Biggio, asking him to mediate with the government. They also announced the beginning of an indefinite hunger strike in the cathedral. (CDPF/570; "Mujeres se niegan")

3 February – The colonists and their local supporters registered the **Perquilauquén Organization** (OP) to replace the SBED as the organiser of its educational and medical activities. The organization's members included many influential figures from political circles, among them Luis Enrique Fuentes (chairman of the Perquilauquén), MP Ignacio Urrutia (RN), and Nieves Spoerer Ferrier de Urrutia (Mayoress of the Parral Commune in the years 1953–56 and 1963–64).

22 February – The Federal Social Court (*Bundessozialgericht*) upheld the refusal to pay pensions to two eligible elders living in the *Colonia* on the grounds of a lack of cooperation. (→ 19 Oct 1994)

30 March – The colonists gave a concert at *Colegio Cholguán*, and Schäfer led a scout song workshop for the schoolchildren. The settlers also presented their music programme at a large sawmill and woodworking factory (Trupán) in **Cholguán**. (CDPF/488–9)

7 May – A mass ceremony was held in front of the Villa Baviera Hospital, attended by three members of parliament: Hernán Larraín, Sergio Correa (both UDI) and Felipe Letelier (PPD). The presence of the latter was all the more surprising given that he belonged to one of the parties of the ruling

⁴² "Nuestros hijos se mueren / Sin Hospital Dignidad"

coalition. The purpose of the gathering was to announce the immediate **reopening of the hospital** without authorisation. (CDPF/524–8; “Con masivo”; “Reabrió”)

8 May – Rural supporters of the colony clashed with representatives of the local authorities, who came assisted by *Carabineros* to seize SBED assets and hand them over to the Methodist Corporation, in accordance with the governmental decree (→ 31 Jan 1991). CD adherents also attacked Eduardo Vega (SSM), who attempted to close the hospital down after its illegal opening the day before. (CDPF/511–4, 601)

10 May – Eduardo Vega (SSM) returned to CD with a large unit of security forces and completed the task of closing the medical facility. (Baumeister and Huismann 5; CPPF/170, 601)



Source: Baumeister and Huismann 5.

28 June – The SSM authorised the reopening of the colony’s hospital as a private facility (without state subsidy), under the administration of the Perquilauquén Organization (OP). The hospital resumed its operation the following day.

August – At its own request, the **PSM** was deprived of legal capacity by the Siegburg District Court (AG) because the number of the society’s members had fallen below three.

29 September – Judge María Luisa Riesco of the Criminal Court in Santiago brought charges against Hermann Schmidt and Kurt Schnellenkamp for **tax evasion** in the years 1986–89 (→ 30 Apr 1991). They were arrested but soon released on bail. Schmidt died (→ 10 May 1996) long before the final verdict in the case was reached (on → 18 July 2007).

21 October – After months of delays and political tension, **Manuel Contreras** was finally **imprisoned** in the Punta Peuco Prison for seven years (→ 12 Nov 1993) for ordering the assassination of Orlando Letelier on → 21 September 1976. After he had served his sentence, on 24 January 2001, the former DINA chief was placed under house arrest, awaiting verdicts in pending trials against him. (→ 28 Jan 2005)

[End of December?] – As part of the activities of the Youth of the Permanent Vigil, at *Olihaus* near *Casino Familiar* Schäfer and his followers held a festive

event to inaugurate a large swimming pool. (Baumeister and Huismann 6; CDPF/389; Karwelat and Rittel 106–107)

Around this time, a dozen Chilean boys from the vicinity of the colony were carefully selected to participate in a newly established, informal intensive boarding school (***internado intensivo***) at the enclave. The initiative was conceived for propaganda purposes and as a source of new sexual abuse victims for Schäfer. Evangelical pastor Adrián Bravo, a secretary general of the Patients' Committees, was actively involved in recruiting children for this project. However, after the sexual abuses committed by the colony's leader against Chilean children became publicly known in → June 1996, he turned away from Schäfer. As a result, he regularly received death threats.



Erika Tymm and Günter Schaffrik lead the polonaise dance during the inauguration of the swimming pool. Source: Baumeister and Huismann 6.

1996

[1?] January – For New Year, the Villa Baviera Symphony Orchestra, conducted by **Heinrich Schlüter**, a German military conductor who had led the Chilean Army Concert Band in the 1980s, performed a concert in a CD aircraft hangar. The classical programme included Franz Schubert's *Symphony No. 5 in B flat major, Part 2*, overtures to operas by Vincenzo Bellini (*Norma*), Mozart (*Abduction from the Seraglio*) and Rossini (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*), as well as several polkas by Johann Strauss and *Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, movements 1 and 3* by Mozart (1756–1791). (CDOH/19; CDPF/212, 240, 244; Douglas)



Centre: Rebeca Schäfer playing violin. Sources: CDOH/19; Douglas.

18 January – After many thwarted attempts, 59-year-old settler **Karl Stricker** fled from the *Fundo*. He was the first known escapee in the post-dictatorial period. He was detained by police and questioned in San Carlos, but allegedly changed his mind and was brought back to the compound. Psychiatrist **Otto Dörr** issued a medical certificate confirming Stricker's

severe depression (→ 13 Feb 2002), which allowed CD attorneys to prevent the settler from testifying in court. Dörr continued to defend the *Colonia* publicly in 1997. (→ 28 Mar 2018; 10 Sep 2019)

[?] February – The fifth *Lechetón* and the finale of another *Cicletada* were held at the *Roca de la Vigilia*. (CDPF/295, 365–6, 391, 519–22)

10 May – **Hermann Schmidt died** at the age of 81, reportedly of cardiac arrest (→ Aug 1998). His role of public spokesman for the colony was taken over by Hartmut Hopp.

[9?] June – In a smuggled note, a 12-year-old attendee of the ‘intensive boarding school’, **Cristóbal Parada** from San Carlos, alerted his grandmother that he had been sexually abused by Schäfer. His mother **Jacqueline Pacheco** succeeded in taking her son from the *Fundo* and searched for help as far as Santiago, fearing the local power structures. After contacting an NGO, the Chilean Human Rights Commission (*Comisión Chilena de Derechos Humanos*), she was directed to Prefect **Luis Henríquez**, the resolute head of the **Fifth Department**, an internal affairs unit of the Investigative Police (**PDI**), and an uncompromising lawyer, **Hernán Fernández**. The latter filed a criminal complaint against Schäfer in the court in Parral on her behalf. Both men became iconic fighters for justice for victims who had been abused by the CD criminal structure.

July – The State Defence Council (CDE) initiated an investigation into possible **fraudulent transfer of assets** (*contratos simulados*) from the SBED to CD companies (→ 26 Apr 1988; 10 Jan 1990) and seized a large part of the German estate, which strongly curtailed its economic activities, carried out under the auspices of ABC-Holding. In 2007–08, the German embassy lobbied for lifting of the restrictions, which was achieved through an agreement between the CDE and the colony’s companies on → 21 August 2009. The related case was discontinued on 30 May 2011.

14 August – Parral judge **Jorge Norambuena**, who had opened an investigation into the sexual abuse of Cristóbal Parada, issued an arrest warrant against Schäfer. The CD’s high ranks and their team of lawyers, including Waldo Ortega (Linares), Gonzalo Ruiz (Parral), Mario Ruiz (Chillán), Fernando Saenger (Concepción), Roberto Saldías (Talca) and César Valero (Parral), bought time for the *Colonia* leader with an application for protection. (→ 17 Mar 1997; 25 Jan 2013)

18 September – During Chile’s national holiday, the colonists organised a rich programme for Chilean youth from JVP, including animations and visits to the *Colonia* workshops. (CDPF/375, 555–7)

30 November – After the warrant against Schäfer had finally come into force, it was executed by Luis Henríquez, who together with over 100 PDI officers conducted a **raid** (*allanamiento*) at the colony in search of its leader (CDPF/577). The CD premises in Santiago and the *Casino Familiar* were also

investigated at the time. However, for fear of an exchange of fire with aggressive and well-armed colonists, the police units were withdrawn without finding the suspect, who was hiding at the *Fundo*.

7 December – 1,500 local supporters of the colony gathered at the Rock of the Vigil to protest against the police raid. They were joined by two UDI parliamentarians, Hernán Larraín and Sergio Correa, and conservative MP Rosauro Martínez (independent – RN). (Baumeister and Huismann 6; Saavedra, “Congresales”)



Sources: Saavedra, “Congresales”; Baumeister and Huismann 6.

1997

[Late?] February – The sixth anniversary of the Permanent Vigil was organised along with the sixth *Lechetón* at the Rock of the Vigil. (Baumeister and Huismann 6; CDPF/672–9)



Source: Baumeister and Huismann 6.

8 March – At the Parral court, lawyer Hernán Fernández brought complaints concerning the abduction of three boys: eight-year-old **E. U.**, ten-year-old **Jaime Parra** and 13-year-old **Ángel Rodrigo Salvo** (→ 10 Sep 2007), all participants of the ‘intensive boarding programme’ and victims of sexual abuse by Schäfer. The two former children were returned to their mothers after the intervention of the PDI, but the latter was secretly detained by the *colonos* Albert Schreiber, his wife Lilli and their son Ernst at various locations in Chile (allegedly including José Miguel Stegmeier’s Santa Matilde Estate in the vicinity of Los Ángeles) for more than two years (in June 1999, Salvo was brought to the office of the *Colonia* attorney Fidel Reyes). The boys were concealed presumably to prevent them from testifying and being forensically examined. In order to intimidate the plaintiffs, German colonists and their Chilean supporters, including the *campesino* couple **Hugo Hidalgo**

and **Olalia Vera**, who were acting as the leaders of the Patients' Committees, continued to harass and persecute them for months.

17 March – On the request of the government, the investigations into allegations of abuse of minors by Schäfer were transferred to a special visiting judge from the Talca Court of Appeals (CA), **Hernán González**. Judge Norambuena focused on the investigations into child abduction, kidnapping, and obstruction of justice and illicit association, and issued arrest warrants against the settlers Gerhard Mücke and Günter Schaffrik, as well as Hugo Hidalgo and Olalia Vera. On 25 [26?] March both judges inspected the colony.

9 April – The Supreme Court (CS) extended the powers of Judge González to investigate other offences allegedly committed at the colony, including illicit association, indecent assault, inducement to abandon home, kidnapping, and obstruction of justice.

17 April – On behalf of **Rosa Verdugo**, Jaime Parra's mother, lawyer Hernán Fernández laid a complaint concerning the sodomistic rape of her son by Schäfer. Some time later, the boy was taken from his home by the settlers and persuaded to record a video statement of denial. In the following months, parents of other Chilean children gradually joined the campaign against the *Colonia* leader, who was finally accused of indecent assault and rape (*abusos deshonestos*) in a total of 27 cases.

29 April – The Chamber of Deputies set up another **Committee of Inquiry** (→ 2 Mar 1995) into irregularities at the *Colonia*. At the same time, the **Committee for the Family** (*Comisión de Familia*) began investigating possible violations of children's rights at the settlement. (→ 13 Aug, 15 Oct 1997)

14 May – After Schäfer had refused to surrender to justice, his team of lawyers (→ 14 Aug 1996) gave up their mandates.

15 May – Hopp delivered an open letter from Schäfer, who justified his decision to remain in hiding by claiming that the children had been forced to give evidence against him and the judiciary would guarantee him neither personal safety, nor a fair trial. In response, President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle defended the impartiality of the Chilean justice system and called on Schäfer to confront it.

18 May – Enclave supporters Abelino González and his brother Mariano assaulted and made death threats against Gero Gemballa (→ 28 Aug 1987), Germán Malig (a cameraman) and Erick Delvalle (a soundman), who were reporting for the German television channel ARD. The attackers removed the tape from the reporters' camera and broke their filming equipment. The González brothers were arrested by *Carabineros* the next day and were brought before the court in San Carlos.

20–28 May – Several police raids took place, conducted by some 30 *Carabineros* and PDI officers of the Fifth Department. The settlers and their local supporters protested by blocking roads, lighting large bonfires at the entrance to the compound, continuously playing recordings of bells, and activating sirens (Baumeister and Huismann 6; CDPF/610, 612; Cento, “Tensa”). They claimed that Schäfer did not want to turn himself in because Fifth Department officers intended to murder him and present his death as suicide.



Source: Baumeister and Huismann 6.

22 May – Around 200 demonstrators, including Chilean and German children and adults, marched with candles and torches to the concrete amphitheatre at the Rock of the Vigil, and chanted songs and called for an end to the ‘persecution’ of their benefactors by state authorities. They also demanded an end to the ‘harassment’ of children by officers of the Fifth Department, who had allegedly abducted three boys and ordered them to lie to the judge. (CDPF/610, 613; Rossel, “Operación”)

29 May – An emotional ceremony took place at CD with the participation of children from JVP, during which they said goodbye to ‘Tío Permanente’ (Paul Schäfer), who was hiding in the colony at the time. (CDPF/253, 594–6)

31 May – Lawyer Hernán Fernández filed a **new claim of sexual harassment** and two further claims of obstruction of justice and unlawful association with the court of first instance in Parral on behalf of three minors aged 10, 15 and 16, who belonged to the JVP. The following day, a group of parents who were friends with CD and whose children attended the JVP programmes warned that they would not consent to their children being questioned or giving evidence in court.

3 June – The State Defence Council (CDE), represented by lawyer Daniel Martorell, joined the lawsuits against Paul Schäfer.

7 June – Around 60 family members of disappeared detainees, mostly women from the AFDD (Adriana Bórquez among them), held a demonstration at the entrance to the enclave, demanding justice for the victims of the Pinochet dictatorship. The colonists and their supporters clashed with the demonstrators. The former were armed with sticks and stones as well as a bulldozer, a water cannon that poured water mixed with chemicals on protesters, and a system of loudspeakers. During the demonstration, the bulldozer driver Reinhard Schmidtke was arrested and spent 17 days in the

Parral prison awaiting the court's decision on his life-threatening actions. He was eventually acquitted. In response to these events, adherents of the colony organised a march of support, attended by children from JVP and their parents. (Baumeister and Huismann 5; CDOH/19; CDPF/617-8; "Dignidad: estudian"; Kurbjuweit; "Ministro en visita verá")



Source: Baumeister and Huismann 5.

13 June – As part of a manoeuvre to divert attention and avoid police raids, **Maximilian Rudolph**, a German citizen living permanently in Chile and a *Colonia* friend, checked into a hotel in Bariloche, Argentina, claiming to be Schäfer. When the police arrived on the scene the next morning, alerted by an anonymous phone call, the supposed 'Schäfer' had already left.

18 June – 250 *Carabineros* and 19 PDI officers conducted a massive search for Schäfer at the *Fundo*. On its eve, Hartmut Hopp and Gerd Seewald were arrested for failing to comply with Judge González's order to appear for questioning. They were released after interrogation the next day. During the raid, Maximilian Rudolph was identified as the person who had posed as Schäfer in Bariloche. He was arrested and kept in preventive detention in Parral until 5 July.

[June?] – Hernán Fernández, representing **Sonia Godoy**, filed a complaint with Judge Norambuena against the Hopps for the fraudulent adoption of her son **Cristian Javier Godoy** in → 1988. The woman testified to having been deceived when signing the adoption papers (→ 22 Sep 2004). In this period, Judge Norambuena began investigating irregularities in other adoptions carried out by the German settlers.

26 July – During the celebrations marking the **36th anniversary of the arrival** of the first colonists in Chile (CDPF/22, 599-600; "Discreta"), 24-year-old settler **Tobias Müller** fled from the estate together with **Saló Luna** (aged 18), a *Colonia* weekend visitor and a spokesman of the Youth of the Permanent Vigil from Paso Ancho near San Fabián de Alico. After an arduous escape, they reached the German embassy in Santiago, where ambassador Werner Reichenbaum first gave them refuge in his residence and then sent them to Germany for protection and to avoid media pressure. The day before leaving on 1 August, they testified for ten hours before Judge González in Talca and confirmed that Schäfer was still hiding at the *Fundo*. After their arrival in Germany, they gave interviews to ARD and *Der Spiegel*, stating that the *Colonia* leader sexually abused children, including Tobias. Luna returned to Chile three weeks later and received temporary police

protection. Subsequently, he became a frontliner in the fight against the coercive CD system. Müller testified before the Public Prosecutor (StA) in Bonn, which led to the opening of an investigation against Schäfer for sexual assault. As a result, on 18 September 1997 the Siegburg District Court (AG) issued the first German arrest warrant against Schäfer since 1961, later issuing an international warrant (on 18 May 1998), but this did not result in a targeted search for the accused. The proceedings were discontinued after Schäfer's death in 2010.

31 July, 1 August – After Judge Norambuena again subpoenaed Hopp and his wife Dorothea to testify in relation to the case of an irregular adoption (→ [June?] 1997), the Hopps left the country immediately, travelling with their adopted 14-year-old son Michael by plane to Mendoza, Argentina. They were accompanied by colonist Friedhelm Zeitner (→ 10 Mar 2005) and Schäfer's adopted daughter Rebeca (→ 2 Dec 1975). The next day, Hopp returned to Santiago alone and was arrested at the airport, but after being questioned by Judge Norambuena in Parral, he was released. Later, Dorothea Hopp fled with Michael to the US, where they remained until 2001–2002, when the teenager came of age.

[3 August?] – It is assumed that **Schäfer escaped** from the colony, and after several weeks in Santiago flew aboard a private plane to Argentina, where he went into hiding with his bodyguards and the most loyal nurse Maria Strebe, by then the head nurse of the colony's hospital. Another plausible version states that Schäfer remained in hiding at the *Fundo* until the end of 1997 and only then secretly left the estate (→ late Nov 1997). In early 1998 he moved with his appointees to the 36-hectare *finca* (farm) *La Solita* near Chivilcoy, Argentina, bought at around that time by Hermann Schmidt's son, Peter. (→ 10 Mar 2005)

8 August – On a request of the Socialist Party's president, Camilo Escalona, submitted in July, the Supreme Court (CS) extended the powers of Judge González to investigate the cases of the 112 detainees mentioned in the Rettig Report (→ 4 Mar 1991).

12 August – After a motorway chase, Hartmut Hopp was arrested again upon Judge González's order and remanded in custody in Parral. For three consecutive nights, the colony's supporters tried to protest in front of the prison against Hopp's detention, but their actions were prevented by *Carabineros* (Cento, "Abogados"). The *Colonia* doctor was released three weeks later (→ 1 Sep 1997), because Judge González was unable to provide sufficient evidence of his complicity in child abuse by Schäfer.

13 August – The Investigative Committee of the Chamber of Deputies (→ 29 Apr 1997), chaired by Socialist deputy José Antonio Viera-Gallo, submitted its report (accepted by parliament a week later), which recommended, among other things, deportation or revoking of the residence permits of those CD leaders against whom no legal proceedings were pending. The committee also advocated appointing another Visiting Judge to investigate the allegations of

customs fraud, tax evasion and fraudulent transfer of assets. On the same day, due to staff shortages, the colony's **hospital was again closed down** by the Perquillauquén Organization (OP) (→ 7 May 1995) and the patients were evacuated. At the time, Hopp was in jail and the SSM had cancelled the authorisations of six female nurses (including Hopp's wife) and a medical technologist earlier that month (on 7 August), giving them three months to revalidate their professional qualifications. On the day of the hospital closure, Gisela Seewald and midwife Ingrid Seelbach were notified that they also had to authorise their diplomas within 90 days.

14 August – Mónica Madariaga, who had held ministerial positions during the dictatorship, admitted in the media that she and other leading members of the UDI had maintained close relations with CD. This was the first such admission by a high-ranking politician from the right-wing establishment. (→ 1972)

13 August – A demonstration in front of the *Colonia* was held by a small group including members of around 30 members of human rights groups and the Communist Party of Chile, including its leader **Gladys Marín**, who demanded the truth about her 'disappeared' husband Jorge Muñoz and other detainees. A similar demonstration was conducted at the entrance to the colony's house in the Ñuñoa district of Santiago three days later. (Arthur; James; "Piden interrogar"; "Piden que Contreras"; "Piden que declare"; "PS Solicita"; Rodríguez, "Querella")



The slogans on the placards in the middle photograph read: (bottom) "Truth and / Justice";⁴³ (right) "Paul Shafer [!] / is friend / of Pinochet".⁴⁴ Sources: Arthur; "Piden interrogar"; "Piden que declare".

22 August – 150 persons participated in an authorised demonstration in front of the Parral prison to support Hopp. ("Madre de menor")

23 August – The AFDD held a protest in front of the *Colonia* house in Santiago, demanding the closure of the facility. (Rossel, "Piden cerrar")

25 August – The Third Chamber of the Supreme Court (CS) (considered the most conservative sector of the judiciary at the time), including Lionel Beraud (→ 15 Dec 1992), Arnaldo Toro, Germán Valenzuela, Guillermo Navas (→ 12 Jan 1989) and the lawyer José Fernández, annulled the arrest warrant against Hopp and his wife Dorothea (→ 31 Jul 1997) and established that Sonia Godoy (→ 28 Apr 1997), the biological mother of the German couple's adopted son, did not have the authority to request this

⁴³ "Verdad y / Justicia"

⁴⁴ "Paul Shafer [!] / es amigo / de Pinochet"

protective measure. The ruling also included a warning to Judge Norambuena for having issued the warrant and for his 'excessive' contacts with the media.

30 August – Some 20 representatives of the Human Rights Coordinating Committee (*Coordinadora de Derechos Humanos*) gathered in front of the *Colonia* house in Santiago and demanded the release of all information concerning the detainees 'disappeared' at the colony, and especially the whereabouts of eight women who were pregnant at the time of their arrest. (Cento and Rojas)

1 September – On the day of Hopp's release on bail, his local supporters demonstrated in front of the Parral prison, demanding the reopening of the hospital (→ 12 Aug 1997). In this period, members of the Patients' Committees employed a new protest strategy, appearing in large numbers at the hospital in Parral in an attempt to paralyse its operation and thus prove the necessity of reopening the *Colonia* medical facility.

7 September – The AFDD staged a protest march of around 50 people in front of the court in Parral to support the judges González and Norambuena, who were being challenged by a legal team defending Hopp. ("Anuncian"; Rossel, "Apoyo"; "Familiares de desaparecidos apoyan")



The slogan on the placard reads: "Let Colonia Dignidad / answer for / the disappeared / detainees / We demand justice / Where are they?"⁴⁵ Source: Rossel, "Apoyo".

25 September – After journalist Osvaldo Muray, who had been following the *Colonia* case for decades, speculated in the magazine *Ercilla* that some of detainees 'disappeared' at the colony might have been buried in the cemetery there and some might even still be alive, the AFDD organised a protest in front of *La Moneda* in Santiago, demanding that the government order a search for their relatives in the German compound. ("Espeluznante"; "Exigen"; Jalilie; Muray; "Que busquen")

⁴⁵ "Colonia Dignidad que / responda por los / Detenidos / Desaparecidos / exigimos justicia / Donde están?"



The caption on the banner reads: “Association of Relatives / of Disappeared Detainees”.⁴⁶ Source: “Exigen”.

15 October – In its final report (accepted by parliament six days later), the Chilean Committee for the Family (→ 29 Apr 1997), chaired by Socialist MP **Fanny Pollarolo**, denounced the inhumane conditions in the enclave that had been tolerated by the Chilean state for decades, and highlighted that only the actual (and not just formal) dissolution of the colony might have prevented physical and psychological abuse of children in the compound. This unequivocal assessment reverberated strongly within the Chilean public and contributed to its gradual turning away from Schäfer’s community.

22 October – The Third Chamber of the Supreme Court (CS), including Lionel Beraud, Germán Valenzuela, Osvaldo Faúndez and lawyer Manuel Daniel, ruled in Hopp’s favour on two other appeals for relief from Judge Norambuena’s rulings (→ 25 Aug 1997) – one concerning a letter rogatory sent to Argentina to prevent his adopted son’s departure to any country other than Chile, and the other concerning the five-day deadline the judge had set for Hopp to bring his son before the court.

25 October – The AFDD of Maule Region (**AFDD-Maule**), including **Myrna Troncoso** from Talca, conducted a protest march to deliver an open letter to the *Colonia* leaders and held a demonstration of around 150 people in front of the German estate, demanding free entry to the compound in order to check for the presence of living disappeared detainees there (→ 25 Sep 1997). (“Familiares de desaparecidos realizaron”; *Memorias* 35; Mendoza)



The caption on the banner reads: “Association of Relatives / of Disappeared Detainees Talca”.⁴⁷ Source: Mendoza.

October – Six German children, for whom protection requests had been filed in September by the National Foundation for Children’s Rights (*Fundación Nacional por los Derechos del Niño Pro Infancia*), disappeared from CD. The

⁴⁶ “Agrupación de Familiares / de Detenidos Desaparecidos”

⁴⁷ “Agrupación de Familiares / de Detenidos Desaparecidos Talca”

settlers hid five of them in the mountains and possibly at the premises of influential friends of the *Colonia*, while the sixth, the Hopps' adopted son, had been taken out of the country earlier (→ 31 Jul, 1 Aug 1997).

31 October, 1 November – Further major police searches (→ 20–28 May; 18 Jun 1997) were conducted at the German estate and at the CD premises in Santiago and near Bulnes. The main purpose of the operation was to exhume the remains of Hartmut Münch, shot dead presumably on → 2 May 1987. As police officers entered the site, around 20 settlers stood at the gate holding banners with protest slogans and lit candles and torches (Rossel, “Sin detener”). The next day, the police raided the enclave again and discovered a large system of tunnels with automatic doors. During this operation, about 50 children, instructed by an adult settler, sang songs and tried to obstruct the police. (Rossel, “Juez”)



Source: Cervio 5.

18 November – The *Colonia's* 20-year lawsuit against AI (→ 19–27 Apr 1977) was finally dismissed on the grounds that the plaintiff, the PSM, had lost its legal capacity. After the formal dissolution of the society (→ Aug 1995) and its Chilean counterpart (→ 6 Sep 1994), AI was left with around 160,000 German marks of legal costs.

29 November – Adherents of CD marched through Parral to express their support for the Villa Baviera Hospital. Later that day, they continued their protest along the access road to the German complex and demonstrated in front of the colony's medical facility (CDPF/559–60; “Manifestación en Parral”).

Around that time, the so-called ‘Youth of Villa Baviera’ (*Juventud de Villa Baviera*), including those colonists who were born in Chile, protested in Parral against what they called ‘persecution by the Chilean state’ and those advocating their parents’ expulsion from the country. They were confronted by members of the AFDD, who shouted the same slogans as their predecessors in 1968: “Arrogant Germans / may they leave forever!”⁴⁸ (CDPF/84)

Late November – Judge González ordered another large-scale raid, but General Jaime Rieutord, head of the *Carabineros* of Maule Region, refused to execute it. This suggests that Schäfer might have been given time to escape

⁴⁸ “¡Alemanes prepotentes / que se vayan para siempre!”

from the colony when the search loop began to tighten. Whether the general acted on his own initiative or on orders from someone higher up remains an open question.

17 December – *Colonia* supporters organised another protest in front of *La Moneda* in Santiago, demanding the reopening of the hospital. (CDPF/327; “Pacientes de Villa”; “Pacientes del hospital”)



The slogans on the banners read: (top) “Mr. President, for / Christmas we ask for / the return of our / Villa Baviera Hospital”⁴⁹ and (bottom) “No! to the expulsion / of our benefactors / Is this how Chile pays for 36 years / of benefaction?”⁵⁰ Source: *Museo Colonial at Villa Baviera*.

31 December–1 January 1998 – The *Colonia* performed its New Year artistic programme in a large tent for JVP children and their parents. (CDPF/286)

In Bad Oldesloe near Hamburg, Wolfgang Kneese (earlier Müller) and his wife Heike Kneese established an association to support victims of Schäfer and his henchmen, called ‘Wing Beat. Against Child Abuse by Cults’ (*Flügelschlag. Gegen Kindesmissbrauch durch Sekten*). The organization was dissolved in 2011, i.e. after Schäfer’s death.

1998

12 January – Chilean human rights lawyers submitted the first of more than 70 lawsuits against Pinochet. Judge **Juan Guzmán** from the Santiago Court of Appeals (CA) was appointed to take over the proceedings, which included investigations into the enforced disappearance of Álvaro Vallejos in 1974. The final ruling in this case was reached after more than 20 years, on → 6 August 2018.

[27?] February – Hopp was arrested again (→ 12 Aug 1997) for ordering unauthorised transports of 23 bodies of patients who had died in the colony’s hospital between 1995 and 1996 to several cemeteries in the area. He was later released on bail.

14 March – Long-time *Colonia* security chief **Erwin Fege** and his wife Brigitte Malessa left the compound and settled in Purrarque in southern Chile. Willi Malessa (→ 30 Nov 1978; 8 Apr 2005; 30 May 2025), his spouse **Edeltraut** (née **Bohnau**), and Reinhard Schmidtke followed in their footsteps.

⁴⁹ “Sr. Presidente, para / la pascua pedimos que / nos devuelva nuestro / Hospital Villa Baviera”

⁵⁰ “¡No! a la expulsión / de nuestros benefactores / ¿Así paga Chile 36 / años de beneficencia?”

Considering that the departees had extensive knowledge about CD's machinations, the hierarchs decided to buy their silence with concessions and money. Allegedly, after the departure of the couples, the leaders secretly transferred the colony's buried arsenal to one or more other locations, fearing that the former security personnel might betray the existing hiding places. Around this time, Manfred Lindemann and his wife also left the *Fundo*.

[21?] March – The Supreme Court (CS) rejected the application for protection submitted by the colony's medical staff after its members had been disqualified (→ 13 Aug 1997) for not having nostrified their degrees in Chile. Hopp lamented that this decision amounted to the final closure of the hospital.

24 March–2 May – On Judge González's orders, around 60 *Carabineros* and PDI officers conducted a **40-day occupation** (in the language of the settlers: '*Vierzigertage*') of the settlement and the colony's branch near Bulnes, but their search for Schäfer proved unsuccessful. The settlers and their supporters held nightly vigils around large bonfires to oppose the presence of the law enforcement units, and on 2 May staged a ceremony at the Rock of the Vigil, symbolically exorcising the police. (CDPF/45, 50; "Un adiós")

[17?] April – Another lawsuit against Hartmut Hopp and Gisela Seewald was opened at the Court of Letters in Parral, in which the *Colonia* doctors were accused of malpractice in the case of **María Teresa Romero**, a widow with five small children, who had undergone a total hysterectomy at the colony's hospital in August 1996. Shortly after being discharged, she began to experience health complications and decided to check into hospital in Chillán, where doctors pointed out the mistakes made during the operation by the Germans. However, due to financial constraints, Romero returned to the Villa Baviera Hospital in the following year and was persuaded to sign documents transferring the care of her children to CD. In October 1997, when she was already seriously ill, she filed a complaint against Schäfer for sexual abuse of her two sons. She died on 19 May 1998. On 14 December 2000, Hopp and Seewald were sentenced to 300 days' imprisonment for serious bodily harm, but the Supreme Court (CS) acquitted them on 23 January 2007.

18 April – In the course of investigations into Schäfer's child abuse, Judge González expanded the circle of suspects who were accused of **aiding and abetting** Schäfer's sexual violence and his escape from justice. The list included Dennys Ricardo Alvear, Hans-Jürgen Blanck, Alfred Gerlach, Hartmut Hopp, Gerhard Mücke, Günter Schaffrik, Kurt Schnellenkamp, and Gerd Seewald. They were arrested, but the court released them on bail. (→ 16 Nov 2004)

19 May – The Chamber of Deputies mandated its Family Committee and Human Rights Committee to jointly investigate the situation at the German enclave. Their report, submitted on 10 August 1999 and accepted by the

Chamber on 19 August 2000, complained of, among other things, obstruction of justice by the region's *Carabineros* (→ late Nov 1997).

19 May – Major agricultural entrepreneurs Edgardo Neumann and José Miguel Stegmeier, together with lawyer Enrique Veloso, established a business venture called '*Tierra Negra Ltda.*' in Los Ángeles, which was allegedly one of the ghost companies conceived to transfer Schäfer's fortune to secret accounts in Canada, Saint Kitts and Nevis (in the Caribbean), Uruguay, and the US. It is assumed that they also stood behind Schäfer's escape to Argentina.

15 July – Rebeca Schäfer applied for a change of name to Rebeca Carmen Berger in Saint Kitts and Nevis. On 9 September, she received a new passport and a passport with the name 'Paul Berger' for her adoptive father. In order to complete the formalities, Hopp and Peter Schmidt had to buy a holiday flat on one of the islands.

[25?] August – Pursuant to a court order, Hermann Schmidt's remains were exhumed to confirm the veracity and cause of his death (→ 10 May 1996). The investigators suspected that the SBED's president might have faked his own death to avoid justice in an ongoing tax fraud trial (→ 30 Apr 1991; 29 Sep 1995). In front of the cemetery gate, the settlers protested against the exhumation in silence, holding black banners with the words: "As a benefactor, he was persecuted; as a dead man, he is desecrated" and "Don't you have / a conscience / or respect / for death?"⁵¹ (CDPF/16). Later, together with their Chilean supporters, they blocked access to the grave with their own bodies. Finally, *Carabineros* and PDI officers removed them from the cemetery.

1 October – Two days before the annual Hospital Day celebrations, a group of patients of the colony's hospital occupied the premises of the SSM in Talca, demanding the reopening of the facility (→ 13 Aug 1997). ("40 pacientes"; "Protesta de pacientes"; "Violenta")

5 October – a resolution of the Ministry of Health cancelled authorisation to practise for Gisela Seewald as a doctor-surgeon and also revoked the authorisation of the midwife Ingrid Seelbach.

16 October – Pursuant to an international warrant for the former Chilean dictator's arrest on murder charges, issued by the Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón, **Pinochet** was detained in London and put under **house arrest**. After a legal battle, British Home Secretary Jack Straw decided that Pinochet's health did not permit his extradition, and allowed him to return to Chile on → 3 March 2000. Despite this conclusion, the tyrant's provisional detention contributed to the strengthening of democratisation processes in Chile. Moreover, relatives of several French-Chilean citizens who had been forcibly 'disappeared' or executed in Argentina and Chile from 1973 to 1977,

⁵¹ "Como benefactor / él fue perseguido, / como muerto es / profanado"; "¿No tienen / conciencia / ni respeto / a la muerte?"

including Alfonso Chanfreau (→ 7 Aug 1974), filed complaints in France soon after Pinochet's arrest. The French judge Roger Le Loire issued international arrest warrants against 19 suspects, among them Contreras, Pinochet, and Schäfer. After 12 years, on 17 December 2010, the Criminal Court (*Cour d'Assises*) in Paris found 13 Chilean officials guilty of the kidnapping and torture of four French-Chileans during Pinochet's rule.

Schäfer died before the verdict was reached.

October – In a letter addressed to the colonists, Schäfer condemned their **desire to marry** (*Heiratswut*, literally 'marriage mania', or 'obsession with marriage'), ordered them to keep their secrets, and emphasised that those who left the community should be treated as renegades and traitors without any rights to the goods they had brought in or worked on. (→ 9 Aug 2000)

[29?] November – The Court of Appeals (CA) in Talca ordered the reopening of the colony's hospital (→ 13 Aug 1997), but the SSM appealed against this decision. (→ 15 Mar 1999)

December – During a Christmas meeting in the community hall called '*Zippelsaal*', the settlers read an open letter to Pinochet, who was being held under house arrest in the UK at the time, and recorded a Chilean military song for him. The evening also included music and theatre performances by young colonists. (CDPF/[1?], 103, 106, 109, 111)

1999

29 January – During a police raid, an **underground bunker** was discovered at the Lavadero estate, allegedly used as a place of detention and torture.

15 March – After the Supreme Court's decision in February of this year, the Villa Baviera Hospital resumed its work (→ 13 Aug 1997), but only as a polyclinic offering outpatient care.

25 March – The State Defence Council (CDE) brought charges against CD on suspicion of forming a **criminal organization** (*asociación ilícita*). The case was reactivated in mid-June 2005, and the binding verdict was reached on → 29 December 2016.

21 August – Whilst Pinochet was under house arrest in London, the government of President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle convened the Human Rights Dialogue Table (***Mesa de Diálogo de Derechos Humanos***) in order to make progress in the search for victims of enforced disappearances during the civil-military dictatorship. Following the agreements reached, in January 2001 (→ 26 Jan 2001) the armed and law enforcement forces provided a list detailing the final fate of 200 victims, including 180 identified individuals and 20 people whose identities remain unknown.

19 September – On the Day of the Glories of the Chilean Army (*Día de las Glorias del Ejército de Chile*), the colonists performed their music programme at the *Casino Familiar*, paying tribute to Augusto Pinochet. (CDPF/67, 200)

27 October – More than 40 PDI officers conducted another raid on the colony.

2000

[26?] February – The colony and its local supporters celebrated the **ninth anniversary** of the Permanent Vigil. (CDPF/53, 66, 192, 207)

3 March – Upon Pinochet's return to Chile after his house arrest in the UK (→ 16 Oct 1998), his supporters welcomed him with honours at the airport.

11 March – Socialist **Ricardo Lagos** (PPD) began his term as president of Chile. He was the first socialist president since Allende.

1 June – On Children's Day, the settlers presented their artistic programme at the *Casino Familiar*, which included music, dance, acrobatics and pantomime scenes for children and their parents. (CDPF/55–6)

3 August – Deputies Nelson Ávila and Guillermo Ceroni (both PPD) denounced the existence of a private telephone line connecting the German enclave and the CNI between 1985 and 1990.

20 September – During a police raid on the colony ordered by Judge Juan Guzmán, who was investigating forced disappearances (→ 12 Jan 1998), PDI officers discovered an extensive collection of documents, known as the CD '**secret archive**'. In reality, it was only a small part of the *Colonia's* paper documentation, and it is likely that the hierarchs allowed this discovery as a means of threatening those who might want to turn against them. (→ 14–15 Jun 2005; 7 Apr 2014; 7 Jul 2014; 15 Nov 2016; 2 Jan 2019)

1 December – The Villa Baviera Choir and Orchestra, conducted by **Fernando Silva**, performed in Parral during the highly popular televised fundraising event called **Teletón**. (CDPF/59, 70, 107, 113, 198, 203, 206)

December – The Villa Baviera Choir and Orchestra under the baton of Fernando Silva gave a Christmas concert for the benefit of the Cerro La Virgen Nursing Home in **San Javier**. (CDPF/91–2, 104, 112–3, 115–6, 204–5)

Tensions were growing between the colony's old guard, threatened with judicial investigations, and the younger, reformist settlers. As a result, the leaders gradually came to allow **family life**, including marriages (which nevertheless had to be approved by the hierarchy), having children and living together (→ Oct 1998). **Dennys Alvear** (who had remained at the *Fundo* as a teenager after successful hospital treatment in 1972 and at the time acted as

a public spokesman of the colony) and **Eva Laube** (née Eva María Sepúlveda, a Chilean adopted in her infancy in 1970), who had been secretly dating for 12 years, were among the first to be allowed to marry (on 9 August 2000). Two other couples – one of them being Esther Laube and Michael Müller – married on the same day.

Around that time, 20 selected young settlers (only children of the old leadership) were allowed to pursue their education beyond the enclave. However, they could not choose their careers, which were determined by managers who wanted to prepare the new generation of leaders for their future tasks.

At this time, a ‘forgiveness ritual’ was performed (most likely several times) (→ [Apr 2004?]). This was a community gathering forced on the group by those who had participated in the maltreatment and torture of children in the *Neukra* (→ 1969). From then on, the whole congregation was supposed to forget what had happened and move forward.

2001

3 January – Hugo Baar died.

26 January – Judge Héctor Carreño announced the discovery of numerous bone fragments of forcibly disappeared persons at the bottom of the Los Bronces mine shaft in **Cuesta Barriga**, northwest of Santiago. This discovery confirmed the dictatorship’s operation known as ‘Removal of TV Sets’ (→ 30 Nov 1977). It was made possible thanks to information provided by the military, resulting from the work of the Human Rights Dialogue Table (→ 21 Aug 1999).

Late January – Judge Guzmán interrogated Pinochet and put him under house arrest. The charges against the dictator were suspended in July and were subsequently dropped on health grounds. In 2004–05, further attempts were made to bring the former dictator to justice. (→ 10 Dec 2006)

February – The CD security staff foiled one of **Doris Gert**’s escape attempts. Like many other fugitives before her, the 32-year-old settler was subsequently medicated with high dosages of psychotropic drugs.

March – Hilde Ritz took advantage of the visit of her sister, Ida Gatz, and fled from the colony. **Ida Gatz** was among the first followers who had joined Schäfer in West Germany, but she had come to oppose him and left the group before its exodus to Chile.

May – The 65-person Villa Baviera Orchestra took part in the closing ceremony of Sea Month (*Ceremonia de Clausura del Mes del Mar*), organised by the Chilean Navy (*Armada de Chile*), most likely in the Talcahuano naval base. (CDPF/100–1, 119)

Judge Alejandro Solís from the Santiago Court of Appeals (CA) began investigations into the abduction (*secuestro calificado*) of 27 people from Parral and the surrounding area (*Episodio Parral*). Despite ample circumstantial evidence of the colony's complicity in the crime, none of the settlers was charged. The first-instance judgment was reached on 4 August 2003, and the final verdict of the Supreme Court (CS) was issued on → 27 December 2007.

2002

13 February – **Karl Stricker** died after a fall from a roof of the Villa Baviera School. He had been assigned to work at height by Gerhard Mücke, despite being medicated with psychotropic drugs after his escape on → 18 January 1996. The following day, another settler, Wolfgang Müller Ahrend, fell off the roof and broke his leg.

15 March – Forty-year-old Rolf Schaffrik died of hypothermia during a mountain hike near Termas de Chillán, when the weather changed rapidly and caught his group of seven by surprise.

March – Ahead of a state visit by Federal Foreign Minister 'Joshka' Fischer (Alliance 90/The Greens) to Chile, NIG activists staged a demonstration in Siegburg and demanded the closure of the German settlement in Chile. They claimed that nothing had changed at CD since the Pinochet era, and referred to the recent death of Stricker and the injury of Müller Ahrend (→ 13 Feb 2002). (Ossendorf 265)

16 May – On the initiative of MP Lothar Mark (SPD), the **Bundestag** passed the **motion** 'Help for the Victims of Colonia Dignidad' (*Hilfe für die Opfer der Colonia Dignidad*), with the CDU/CSU deputies abstaining. The motion called on the federal government of Gerhard Schröder (SPD) to give high priority to the *Colonia* case. However, the resolution did not lead to any concrete steps on the part of the German executive (→ 29 June 2017). The only tangible result of this initiative was the signing of an agreement between the Federal Foreign Office (AA) and the Evangelical Church in Germany (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, EKD) in 2004, under which pastors such **Enno Haaks** began visiting the compound to provide pastoral care. A year later, the Federal Foreign Office also began paying for psychological support, provided by a small team of psychotherapists. (→ 29–31 August 2004; Mar–Apr 2005)

4 July – Pinochet resigned from his post as a lifetime senator.

19 October – Judge Hernán González closed the preliminary investigation into the case of sexual abuse committed by Schäfer, thereby bringing the investigation phase to an end.

1 November – **Efraín Vedder** (born José Efraín Morales in 1967), who had been fraudulently adopted in his infancy, was the first colonist to leave the

settlement unhindered by its security staff. He was the only settler who, in the period between Schäfer's escape in 1997 and his arrest in 2005, provided Chilean police and various media outlets with specific details of life and crimes at the *Fundo El Lavadero*, and his testimony contributed to the dismantling of the CD system. Later, he sought refuge in Germany and published his autobiography in 2005. He subsequently returned to Chile and continued to oppose the *Colonia's* criminal network.

1 December – The uncompromising PDI prefect, Luis Henríquez (→ Jun 1996), was promoted and – unexpectedly – relieved of his CD-related duties, which happened just before another scheduled search of the settlement. In 2003, Henríquez retired.

2003

21 March – In his tax evasion case, Kurt Schnellenkamp received a suspended prison sentence of three years and had to pay off tax arrears (→ 29 Sep 1995). The binding judgment in the case was issued on → 18 July 2007.

11 April – **Franz Baar** (1954–2025, born Francisco Morales and adopted at the colony as a 10-year-old boy), his newly married wife **Ingrid Baar** (née Szurgelies) and her parents Mathilde (née Selent) and Walter Szurgelies left CD with the help of the investigating judge and PDI officers. After decades of hardships suffered at the enclave and several unsuccessful attempts to start a new life in Germany and Chile (including on the island of Chiloé and near Bulnes), the Baars moved (with the help of friends, including Carola Fuentes and Hernán Fernández) to Villa Ortega near Coyhaique in southern Chile, where they continued to confront the harsh neoliberal realities of the country and the dubious policies of the colony's new management. Franz Baar was the brother of Efraín Vedder (→ 1 Nov 2002), but most likely they had been unaware of their blood relationship for decades.

21 April – The 13th Criminal Court in Santiago convicted Kurt Schnellenkamp of a tax offence and sentenced him to three years' imprisonment and a fine amounting to 100 per cent of the tax loss caused. The convicted lodged an appeal.

4 December – After contacts with the leader waned, Schäfer's deputy and liaison **Hans-Jürgen Riesland** absconded to Germany.

An 11-member village council ('*Dorfrat*') was established, and the reformer **Michael Müller** (→ 13 Mar 2005) was elected its first chair and provisional community spokesman. **Anna Schnellenkamp** (daughter of the hierarch Kurt Schnellenkamp) (→ 12 May 2012; 2016) joined the council as its only female member.

2004

[April 2004?] – The fundamentalist German pastor **Ewald Frank** (→ 19 Aug 1955), leader of the apocalyptical Free People's Mission in Krefeld, came to the colony to fill a spiritual void after ties with Schäfer weakened. Until 18 October 2005, when the socialist government of Ricardo Lagos imposed an entry ban on the minister, fearing that he might have become Schäfer's successor, Frank visited the *Fundo* several times (including in February 2005) and conducted a mass baptism for around 120 people (among them Hartmut Hopp) in a turbine canal. As a result of the restriction, in the following years Frank would send his substitutes, Urs Graff and Helmut Myskies, to preach at the compound. Meanwhile, he filed a writ of protection, and the Chilean Supreme Court (CS) ruled in his favour in late December 2014. By that time, many *colonas* and *colonos* (among them representatives of the executive board, including the Hopps and the Schreibers) had relocated to Krefeld and gathered around their new spiritual guide. Some members of the leadership and several dozen ordinary settlers, who stayed at CD, have continued to follow Frank's teachings distributed on video cassettes and online, and have regularly visited Krefeld (they are called 'Franklern'), while others have remained skeptical, preferring to cultivate their spirituality in private or talk to visiting Evangelical German pastors, such as Timm Lohse and Enno Haaks (→ 16 May 2002). In his sermons, which included end-of-time interpretations of the Bible, Frank stressed the need to '**forgive and forget**' (*vergeben und vergessen*), and consequently his precepts helped reinforce the regimen of silence in the colony and inhibited therapy and democratisation there.

April – Schäfer's confidant Reinhard Döring fled to Germany together with his wife Dorothea (née Müller) and their adopted son Michael. (→ [1?] Jun 2005)

May – Despite opposition from the Roman Catholic Church, President Lagos signed a law giving Chileans the right to divorce.

29–31 August – The German embassy was permitted to hold the first **consular consultation day** at the compound since → 7 November 1987. During a special assembly, around 30 settlers were able to share their horrific life stories unhindered for the first time. In his report, embassy official Martin Schäfer suggested that the colonists should be provided with pastoral care and psychological support, but material aid should be avoided as it might benefit the hierarchy.

August – One of the leading hierarchs, Hans-Jürgen Blanck, died of cancer. Another leader, Alfred Matthusen, also died in 2004.

22 September – The Chilean Supreme Court (CS) acquitted the Hopps of charges of irregularities in the **adoption** process of Cristian Javier Godoy (→ 1988; 28 Apr 1997). Afterwards, the press highlighted that the adoption formalities had been handled by the celebrity lawyer and former senator Olga Feliú, who together with her influential husband Waldo Ortúzar (→ 10 Jan

1990), a former member of the Supreme Court (CS), had represented the *Colonia* in various proceedings.

12 November – Judge Joaquín Billard, who (following Judge Guzmán) was investigating the case of the forced disappearance of Álvaro Vallejos (→ 20 May 1974; 12 Jan 1998), issued an international arrest warrant against Schäfer.

16 November – Judge Hernán González **sentenced Schäfer in absentia** to 20 years' imprisonment for crimes of indecent assault (abuse and rape), committed against 26 Chilean minors in the years 1993–97. He also convicted nine Chileans and 13 Germans as accessories of the leader. Nine defendants (including Dennys Alvear, Rudolf Cöllen, Hartmut Hopp, Gerhard Mücke, Wolfgang Müller Altevogt, Günter Schaffrik, Kurt Schnellenkamp, Gerd Seewald and Olalia Vera) were sentenced to five years and one day in prison. The prison terms of 13 others (Víctor Arriagada, José Briones, Uwe Cöllen, Alfred Gerlach, Abelino González, Hugo Hidalgo, Edith Malessa, Pedro Salvo, Wolfgang Scheuber, Diego Soto, Elizabeth Urrea, Reinhard Zeitner and Wolfgang Zeitner) ranged from three years and one day to 541 days. The convicts appealed and remained out of prison. The binding judgment in the case was issued on → 25 January 2013. (→ 10 Mar 2005; 24 May 2006)

28 November – In a televised speech to the nation, President Ricardo Lagos presented the first part of the '**Valech Report**' submitted by the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture (*Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura*).

The document confirmed that the German colony had served as a detention and torture facility for the DINA. (→ 4 Mar 1991)

The Criminal Court in Talca opened investigations into the abduction and torture of Adriana Bórquez (→ 23 Apr 1975) and – in a parallel case – the kidnapping of 50 people from Parral and Talca (*Caso 50 Detenidos*), committed by the DINA and CD in 1975. Later, the cases were taken over by Judge **Jorge Zepeda** of the Santiago Court of Appeals (CA) (→ 14 Sep 2011). Binding judgments were issued in the former case on → 30 October 2013 and in the latter on → 22 May 2018.

2005

28 January – Manuel Contreras was forcibly arrested at home after refusing to appear in court. He received two life sentences (for commanding the assassinations of General Prats and his wife in Argentina on → 30 September 1974) and a total of almost 550 years of imprisonment for other crimes. Until September 2013, the former DINA chief served his sentences in the Cordillera Prison (*Penal Cordillera*),⁵² a luxury jail in Santiago for high-

⁵² Full name: *El Centro de Cumplimiento Penitenciario Cordillera*.

ranking military convicts. He died at the age of 86 in the Santiago prison hospital on 7 August 2015.

February – The colonists took part in the carnival parade in Parral (CDPF/241).

• From Schäfer's arrest (2005) to the present day

2005

10 March – An Argentinian Interpol unit led by Salvador Bellusci **captured Schäfer** and members of his entourage, including his adopted daughter Rebeca, nurse Renate Freitag (his former nurse Maria Strebe had died on 25 October 2002 in Argentina), and bodyguards Matthias Gerlach (born Carlos Antonio González, later Packmor), Peter Schmidt and Friedhelm Zeitner, in Las Acacias, a high-class suburb of Tortuguitas, Greater Buenos Aires. The arrest was broadcast by a Chilean team of investigating reporters, led by **Carola Fuentes** and **Gustavo Villarrubia**, who – together with lawyer Hernán Fernández – provided necessary information to make the capture possible. The *Colonia* leader was deported immediately to Chile and placed in the High Security Prison in Santiago, while his companions were released. After they returned to Chile individually in the following years, they were investigated and prosecuted in 2006–07 (→ 20 Oct 2006; 12 Jan 2007; 6 Sep 2007) and 2009 (→ 22 Jul 2009), but finally all of them were acquitted or received suspended sentences (*libertad vigilada*).

13 March – **Michael Müller**, an interim spokesman of the colony, admitted in a dialogue with relatives of disappeared detainees that human rights had been violated in the German enclave during Pinochet's rule. After he repeated his statement in an interview with *La Nación*, published on 5 June, he received death threats and suffered a nervous breakdown. In December, he decided to leave the estate and return to Germany, following his wife Esther. (→ 9 Aug 2000)

26 March – At the colony's grounds, PDI officers excavated **engine parts**, presumably from vehicles which belonged to forcibly disappeared detainees. In May, further pieces of vehicles were found.

April – After the Federal Foreign Office (AA) had commissioned a small team of therapists in March 2005, including **Susanne Bauer** (German psychotherapist and music therapist) and German-Chileans **Niels Biedermann** (psychiatrist) and his daughter **Karin Biedermann** (psychologist and family therapist), they started their psychotherapeutic programme for *Colonia* residents. Bauer conducted therapy until 2008, and Niels Biedermann continues his appointment to this day.

2 April – More than 300 relatives of disappeared detainees (AFDD) held a demonstration in front of CD. (Andrade)

8 April – The Supreme Court (CS) transferred all proceedings related to human rights violations committed at the colony to Judge **Jorge Zepeda**, who initiated further investigations and interrogated (and remanded in custody for extended periods of time) Hartmut Hopp, Gerhard Mücke, Kurt Schnellenkamp and Karl van den Berg, while his informants, such as Erwin Fege and Willi Malessa, were not charged and received witness protection. These decisions left the colony largely leaderless and contributed to the opening of the compound and the disintegration of the group, of whom more than 100 members (mainly progressive ones) gradually returned to Austria and Germany, whereas some started new lives in Chile.

[11?] May – The PDI seized 26,000 medical files from the colony.

[26, 27?] May – Judge Zepeda placed Hopp, Mücke, Schnellenkamp and van den Berg in preventive detention in the High Security Prison in Santiago to forestall the concealment of human rights violations and obstruction of justice.

[1?] June – Mücke and van den Berg were charged by Judge Zepeda with the aggravated kidnapping of three MAPU members, Antonio Elizondo, Juan Maino and Elizabeth Rekas (→ 26 May 1976). In September, the judge also issued an international arrest warrant against Reinhard Döring, who had fled to Germany in → April 2004. The final sentence in the case was handed down on → 14 November 2014.

7 June – Judge Zepeda opened an investigation against Hopp, Schäfer, Schnellenkamp and van den Berg for violation of the Arms Control Act (*Ley de control de armas*). (→ 3 Oct 2005)

14–15 June – As part of the operation called ‘*Jeremias 33.3*’, PDI officers unearthed metal containers holding a horrifying **military arsenal** at the colony’s main site. The police also discovered a large part of the *Colonia*’s **secret archive**, which included thousands of documents and personal index cards (*fichas*), which Gerd Seewald had been compiling from the late 1960s for potential blackmail and intimidation of the colony’s opponents. Some of the files contained transcripts of interrogations of political prisoners, conducted at CD after the military coup. For reasons of ‘national security’, Judge Zepeda made the archive unavailable to the public for nearly a decade (→ early Apr 2014; 7 Jul 2014). After these discoveries, the judge reactivated the proceedings in the **criminal organization** case, opened at the Parral court after a complaint submitted by the CDE on → 25 March 1999.

15 July – In testimony before Judge Zepeda, Gerhard Mücke admitted that ‘about 30’ political prisoners had been murdered at the colony’s grounds.

July – Chile underwent a major constitutional reform, which was seen as the biggest step in the transition to democracy. Among other things, the influence of the military in politics was significantly reduced.

2 August – The Villa Baviera Hospital was finally closed down by the Perquillauquén Organization (OP), as its director Hartmut Hopp remained in preventive detention.

4 August – During further weapon excavations at *El Litral* (the colony's branch near Bulnes), PDI officers unearthed more than three tons of weaponry.

26 August – At the request of the CDE, Parral judge Jimena Pérez put the colony under forced administration to verify its financial situation, including salary and tax payments. In September, Herman Chadwick, a lawyer and entrepreneur commissioned for the task, reported numerous irregularities and confirmed that the estate was on the verge of insolvency, but did not consider the transfer of its assets illegal. Following his report, Judge Zepeda lifted the sequestration order on 14 September.

[31?] August – The PDI seized high doses of psychotropic drugs at the Villa Baviera Hospital.

3 October – After the *Colonia* arsenal had been discovered in June and August, Judge Zepeda indicted Schäfer, Schnellenkamp and van den Berg for violations of the Arms Control Act, and Hopp for acting as an accessory. The final verdict in the case was issued on → 2 July 2008.

4 October – The Chilean authorities appointed a special commissioner, **Herman Schwember**, a German-Chilean survivor of the oppression of the dictatorship, to support the settlers in economic planning and help them integrate with Chilean society. In 2006, Schwember presented his working strategy, but the proposal was not approved by the authorities. As a result, he resigned on 24 April 2006, but after meeting President Michelle Bachelet (PS) on 3 May, he resumed his work and continued it until late 2007. He promoted the democratisation of the group through communication with individual settlers. His insightful book *Delirios e indignidad. El estéril mundo de Paul Schäfer* (Delusions and indignity: Paul Schäfer's sterile world) was published in 2009; this came after Schwember's death of a stroke on 31 May 2008.

November – Judge Zepeda opened a case against Schäfer for causing **bodily harm** (*lesiones graves*) to eight young settlers (Wolfgang Müller Ahrend, Waltraud Schaak, Gerd Helmut Schaffrik, Günter Schaffrik, Hans Peter Schaffrik, Horst Schaffrik, Jürgen Szurgelies, and Gudrun Wagner) by ordering medically unjustified treatment, conducted at the *Neukra* in the early 1970s (→ 26 Dec 2005). The first-instance verdict in the case was announced on → 26 March 2008, and the Supreme Court (CS) handed down its binding judgment on → 12 May 2009.

24 November – At a remote wooded part of the compound, called Chenco Hill, located around eight kilometres from the centre of CD, forensic

anthropologists **Iván Cáceres** and **Keneth Jensen**, accompanied by law enforcement officers, began **excavations** to search for the remains of persons forcibly disappeared during Pinochet's rule. (→ 2 Jan 2006)

25 November – In the course of the investigations, PDI officers confiscated the CD chemical arsenal, which included neurotoxins and other hazardous substances that might have been used in the manufacture of explosives.

4 December – AFDD-Maule held a demonstration near the entrance to the *Colonia*, combined with a religious ceremony led by Brother Guido Gossens. (*Memorias* 64)

18 December – Accompanied by a German ZDF television team, **Klaus Schnellenkamp** (→ Aug 1985; 19 Feb 1992) left Chile and settled in Germany. In 2007, he published his horrifying account *Geboren im Schatten der Angst. Ich überlebte die Colonia Dignidad* ('Born in the shadow of fear: I survived Colonia Dignidad').

26 December – Judge Zepeda arrested Gisela Seewald for alleged practice of torture against minors (→ Nov 2005). During interrogation, the former head of the *Colonia* hospital admitted that upon Schäfer's orders, she had subdued young people with electric shocks and psychotropic drugs to facilitate their abuse by the leader and erase their memories.

Judge Zepeda launched an investigation into the kidnapping of Pedro Merino on → 14 September 1974. The first-instance verdict in the case was handed down on → 29 June 2011, and the binding judgment was issued on → 15 December 2014.

2006

2 January – Forensic anthropologists and a police search group found what was believed to be mass burial sites (so-called '**fosas**') of political opponents murdered in the colony from late 1973 onwards. (→ 30 Nov 1978; 24 Nov 2005)

15 January – Michelle Bachelet (PS) won the second round of presidential elections and became Chile's first female president.

[End of] January – The Villa Baviera Hospital was transformed into the Rural Health Post (*Posta de Salud Rural*) with a nursing procedure room and a clinical laboratory, which offered primary health care to *Colonia* residents (especially elderly ones) and people from the vicinity. The hospital building was also used as tourist accommodation in the initial phase of transformation of the colony into a tourist resort, as well as family housing and a home for elderly settlers.

10 April – Judge Zepeda laid charges concerning the formation of a criminal organization by CD and the DINA (→ 25 Mar 1999). In the course of the

proceedings, Gerd Seewald was arrested for having carried out intelligence work.

19 April – Prompted by Herman Schwember (→ 4 Oct 2005), *Colonia* representatives Martin Matthusen and Susana Schreiber delivered a '**Public declaration** to our fellow citizens in Chile and Germany' (*Declaración pública a nuestros conciudadanos en Chile y en Alemania*) to the presidential palace in Santiago, where they were attended by a representative of the newly sworn-in socialist president, Michelle Bachelet. In the document, the settlers apologised for all wrongdoings, but attributed the whole blame to Schäfer, who – in their view – had distorted their original noble intentions. Their statement was circulated by Chilean and German press outlets *El Mercurio* (Santiago) (on 19 April) and *Die Welt* (Berlin), but a significant part of public opinion interpreted it as an attempted whitewash.

24 May – In the court of first instance, Schäfer was sentenced by Judge González to **20 years in prison** for a total of 25 sexual crimes (20 indecent assaults and five rapes) committed against Chilean minors between 1993 and 1997 (→ 16 Nov 2004). The judge also ordered the *Colonia* leader to pay compensation of 770 million pesos (around 1.25 million euros) to 11 children whose representatives had filed lawsuits. Schäfer died before the appeal was decided at the second instance (on → 6 Jan 2011).

26 May – For the first time, human rights activists and relatives of disappeared detainees were allowed to hold a **commemoration ceremony inside the enclave**. The act was dedicated to photographer **Juan Maino** on the 30th anniversary of his forced disappearance (→ 26 May 1976). (Agüero and Canales; Aliaga; Tapia)

May – During his official visit to Chile, new Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier (SPD) declared his support for the policy of not disbanding the community and integrating its members with Chilean society. (→ 26 Apr 2016)

[22 July?] – In declarations made before Judge Zepeda, Gerhard Mücke admitted that the remains of political opponents murdered at the enclave had been burnt with phosphorus and the ashes thrown into the Perquilauquén river. (→ 30 Nov 1978)

28 August – In the court of first instance, Judge Zepeda sentenced Schäfer to seven years in prison for violating the Arms Control Act (→ 7 Jun 2005). Karl van den Berg and Kurt Schnellenkamp received prison terms of five years and one day. Harmut Hopp was sentenced to 541 days on probation for acting as an accessory. The binding judgment in the case was handed down on → 2 Jul 2008.

7 September – Judge Zepeda indicted Schäfer for the murder of Miguel Becerra (→ 29 Jul 1974). The first instance judgment in the case was

announced on → 27 November 2008 and the final verdict on → 27 October 2010.

16 September – To emphasise the colonists' intention to integrate into Chilean society, their children participated in a parade in Parral which was conducted as part of the celebrations of Chilean National Day. On the following day, the settlers' choir presented its programme at the *Casino Familiar*, which could be interpreted as a **symbolic opening** of the compound. (Disegni)

30 September – In the first action of its kind in Europe, human rights activists staged a protest called '**funa**' in front of the Free People's Mission in Krefeld (→ [Apr 2004?]) to denounce the failure to punish **Albert Schreiber**, who had fled to Germany with his wife Lilli and son Ernst in 199[8?] ("Funa"; Maier 213). The Chilean international arrest warrants issued against them in 2000 and against Albert Schreiber on 17 March 2005 were not enforced in Germany, because according to the German constitution (article 16, paragraph 2) German citizens cannot be extradited to any foreign country beyond the EU. Furthermore, the criminal proceedings initiated in Bonn in 2006 against the hierarch and his family members for aiding and abetting the sexual abuse of children and depravation of minors were discontinued on 20 August 2008. The same applied to the investigations conducted by the Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Memmingen in 2007 for Schreiber's violation of the Arms Act (the proceedings were closed on 28 January 2008). In September 2008, Schreiber died of cancer without having been convicted.

20 October – Rebeca Schäfer was arrested while entering Chile by bus at the *Los Libertadores* border crossing in the Andes. The woman declared that she had decided to return to Chile because she wanted to be close to her father (→ 10 Mar 2005). She was interrogated by Judge Zepeda in Santiago on 23 October and by Judge González in Parral the following day. She was then placed in pre-trial detention for covering up for her father in cases of rape and indecent assault. The Talca Court of Appeals (CA) released her in January 2007. (→ 6 Sep 2007)

9 December – Under the direction of Helmut Burkard, the Villa Baviera choir, brass band and chamber orchestra performed the **Advent Concert** (*Concierto de Adviento*) at the Catholic church of San José in Parral. (Farkas and Zuber)



The invitation reads: "Advent / Concert / 2006 / Choir, / Wind Ensemble and / Chamber Orchestra / of / Villa Bavaria / Conductor: / Helmut Burkard / in Parral – San José Church, / Saturday, 9 December 2006, 7:30 pm. /

Invitation / + / promotion / in Villa Bavaria: / We are waiting for you with / a typical German lunch / of duck or / Kassler cutlet / on Sunday, / 10th of December. / for only \$5,900⁵³,⁵⁴ Sources: MMDH/FDM/B7/16/2; Farkas and Zuber.

10 December – **Pinochet died** at the age of 91 in Santiago without having been convicted on the many indictments laid against him by Judge Juan Guzmán (→ 12 Jan 1998).

2007

12 January – After his extradition from Argentina, Peter Schmidt was arrested at the *Los Libertadores* border pass. Four days later, he was interrogated by Judge González and detained in the Parral prison. He was prosecuted as an accessory to Schäfer in 26 cases of child abuse.

6 September – In the course of the sexual abuse case, Judge González sentenced Rebeca Schäfer and Peter Schmidt to three years in prison. The ruling was appealed on one side by both defendants and on the other by the CDE, the National Service for Minors (SENAME) and the plaintiffs' lawyer Hernán Fernández. The second-instance judgment in the case was handed down on → 6 January 2011, and the binding verdict was issued on → 25 January 2013.

10 September – Ángel Rodrigo Salvo (→ 8 Mar 1997), a victim of sexual abuse by Schäfer, died of lymphatic cancer at the age of 24.

Late October – The Supreme Court (CS) confirmed Kurt Schnellenkamp's first-instance (→ 21 Mar 2003) and second-instance (issued on 18 July 2007) suspended sentences of three years and one day in prison and the payment of tax arrears in the tax evasion case (→ 30 Apr 1991; 29 Sep 1995). However, as the convict officially had no assets, the payment could not be collected.

18 October – After 11 years of collaboration with CD, two lawyers of the hierarchs, the brothers Gonzalo and Mario Ruiz, gave up their mandates.

27 December – In the final instance, in the case of 27 abducted persons from Parral and its vicinity (→ 2001), Hugo Cardemil (army) and Pablo Caulier (*Carabineros*) received suspended prison sentences of five and four years respectively.

The CD management opened a **restaurant** in their *Zippelsaal* (community hall). In the same year, the colonists participated in a beer festival in Concepción.

2008

⁵³ Chilean pesos (CLP).

⁵⁴ "Concierto / de Adviento / 2006 / Coro, / Grupo de Vientos y / Orquesta de Cámara / de / Villa Baviera / Dirección: / Helmut Burkard / en Parral – Iglesia San José, / Sabado, 09 de diciembre 2006, 19:30 hrs. / Invitación / + / promoción en Villa Baviera: / Le esperamos con / un almuerzo típico / alemán de Pato o / Chuleta Kassler / para el día domingo / 10 de diciembre. / por solo \$ [CLP, Chilean peso] 5.900,-"

26 March – Judge Zepeda sentenced Schäfer to three years and one day in prison for causing **grievous bodily harm** to eight young settlers by the administration of electrical shocks and psychotropic drugs at the *Colonia* hospital between 1970 and 1980 (→ Nov 2005). The ruling was ratified by the Santiago Ninth Court of Appeals (CA) on 11 July 2008, and the binding judgment was issued on → 12 May 2009. A psychological report had previously declared Schäfer fit to stand trial.

2 July – In a binding ruling, the Supreme Court (CS) sentenced Schäfer to three years' and 300 days' imprisonment for **violating the Arms Control Act** (→ 7 Jun 2005; 28 Aug 2006). Schnellenkamp and van den Berg received two-year-and-300-day sentences on probation and Hopp 90 days on probation (the latter's prison term was covered by his pre-trial detention).

September – Albert Schreiber died in Germany.

27 November – Judge Zepeda sentenced Schäfer to seven years' imprisonment for the murder of Miguel Becerra (→ 29 Jul 1974; 27 Jul 1989). Cöllen and Schellenkamp received sentences of 541 days on probation for acting as accessories. Due to its political context, the judge classified this murder as a **crime against humanity** (*crimen de lesa humanidad*), and thus not subject to the 1978 amnesty law or the statute of limitations. The verdict became final on → 27 October 2010 (after Schäfer's death). In a parallel civil suit, the three convicts were ordered to pay the Becerra family compensation of 170 million pesos for moral damage.

Lawyer Hernán Fernández (→ Jun 1996; 8 Mar 1997) and ex-settler Wolfgang Kneese (earlier Müller) (→ 26 Feb 1966; 25 Feb 1967) were awarded the Federal Cross of Merit (*Bundesverdienstkreuz*) for their tireless fight against the *Colonia's* criminal network.

2008–13 – The German government provided a total of more than one million euros to continue projects promoting the social and economic integration of the colony into Chilean society. Some of the funds were earmarked for psychological and psychiatric support as well as pastoral care. More than half of this sum was paid to the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) for economic counselling. After 2013, only the psychiatric support provided by Niels Biedermann (→ Mar–Apr 2005) was continued.

2009

12 May – The Supreme Court (CS) rejected the cassation appeal against Judge Zepeda's sentence of → 26 March 2008 in the grievous bodily harm case (→ Nov 2005), making Schäfer's prison sentence of three years and one day final and binding.

22 July – In the court of first instance, Judge González sentenced Matthias Gerlach and Friedhelm Zeitner, as accessories to Schäfer in the repeated

crimes of indecent assault, to 819 days in prison, and Renate Freitag to 541 days for the same crime (→ 10 Mar 2005). The decision was appealed by the defendants. The second-instance ruling was handed down on → 6 January 2011, and the binding judgment was issued on → 25 January 2013.

21 August – The CD management signed an **agreement with the CDE**, whereby in exchange for lifting of the restrictions on economic use of four large land parcels, imposed in → July 1996, the leaders guaranteed that they would settle claims by the end of 2017, should individual colonists be sentenced to pay retributions in pending criminal proceedings. The compensation payments materialised only on → 9 June 2022, as the directorate continually sought diverse legal remedies to drag out the procedures.

13–15 October – For the first time, the CD organised its own version of an annual **Oktoberfest**, which met with fierce criticism from human rights groups. (“Oktoberfest”)

Gradually, the management of *Villa Baviera* was taken over by a **new generation of leaders** (mainly the hierarchs’ children, many of whom had been allowed to study from 2000 onwards), including Markus Blanck, Siegfried Laube, Martin Matthusen, Wolfgang Müller Altevogt, Thomas Schnellenkamp, Hans-Jörg Schreiber, Reinhard Zeitner and two Chileans, Víctor Briones and Hernán Escobar (the latter had been the president of the Villa Baviera Youth and had acted as CD spokesman from 1993 to 1997). Around 2009, the leaders hired a business consultant, Falk Spahn, and entrusted him with the actual management of ABC-Holding. Spahn caused the colony’s companies to go heavily into debt. In 2013, he left Chile, after **Winfried Hempel**, a former colonist and lawyer for the survivors, filed an application for protection against him.

Reinhard Döring (→ 21 Jul 2016) testified as a witness at the Public Prosecutor’s Office (StA) in Bonn and admitted that he had guarded prisoners at CD and witnessed executions, but denied that he had been involved in torture and murder.

A large tent was installed for events and weddings in the centre of the compound. CD also participated in the FITAL fairs in Talca for the first time since 1983.

2010

11 January – President **Michelle Bachelet** inaugurated the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (**MMDH**) in Santiago, which commemorates the forcibly disappeared, survivors, and victims of the Pinochet regime.

January – CD participated in the FITAL Talca fairs.

27 February – Many facilities at the colony were badly affected during the largest earthquake since the 1960 Valdivia *terremoto*, which occurred off the coast of central Chile.

11 March – The swearing-in of right-wing President **Sebastián Piñera** (RN) ended the 20-year rule of the centre-left *Concertación* coalition in Chile. The new president pledged to tackle the consequences of the earthquake. He also appointed a large-scale farmer from Los Ángeles, José Miguel Stegmeier, as head of the administration of Bío Bío Region.

However, after reports released on 19 March by the online newspaper *El Mostrador* about Stegmeier's possible involvement in CD money laundering and the likelihood that he had concealed a molestation victim of Schäfer's in 1997 (→ 8 Mar 1997), Piñera immediately withdrew the appointment.

24 April – **Schäfer died** of a chronic heart condition in the Penitentiary Hospital in Santiago. The *Colonia* residents decided not to allow his burial on the community's land, and their former leader was interred anonymously in sector C-17 of the *Parque del Recuerdo Cordillera* cemetery on the outskirts of Santiago. Outraged Chilean citizens protested ferociously when the hearse with Schäfer's body left the *Hogar de Cristo* morgue in the Santiago central district of Independencia. However, their protests did not escalate and the vehicle reached the burial place, where a private ceremony was held with only five people in attendance (Rebeca Schäfer, Peter Schmidt, Matthias Gerlach, and Schäfer's long-standing attorney Luis Sotomayor with his wife). Outside the entrance, two dozen journalists attempted to photograph the funeral, which was protected by security guards. Rogelio Benavides, a Chilean neo-Nazi, appeared adorned with a swastika armband and delivered a lengthy eulogy for Schäfer in front of press reporters.

15 June – The first-instance verdict in the case of the forced disappearance of Adán Valdebenito, who had been abducted in 1974, was issued by Judge Carlos Aldana. The binding judgment was handed down by the Supreme Court (CS) on → 11 January 2012.

13 October – 33 Chilean miners were rescued after 69 days underground, as reported by media around the world.

27 October – The final verdict in the Miguel Becerra murder case (→ 27 Jul 1989; 27 Nov 2008) was announced by the Supreme Court (CS). Rudolf Cöllén and Kurt Schellenkamp received suspended prison sentences of 541 days. Schäfer, who had been sentenced to a seven-year prison term, did not live to hear the binding judgment.

October – Lawyer Hernán Fernández filed a complaint on behalf of a middle-aged *colona* (female settler) against Rudolf Cöllén for rape committed in 2004.

CD held its Oktoberfest.



The captions read: (left) “Oktoberfest 2010 or the so-called ‘Beer Festival’”;⁵⁵ (right): “Friends / from near and far”.⁵⁶ Source: Wieske 43–44.



The captions read: (left) “Oktoberfest / 2010 / gives a boost to all illustrious and modest visitors”;⁵⁷ (right) “Never by singing will you die but by singing you will live”.⁵⁸ Source: Wieske 45–46.

2011

6 January – The Talca Court of Appeals (CA) handed down the second-instance verdict in the sexual abuse case (→ 16 Nov 2004; 6 Sep 2007; 22 Jul 2009). The court sentenced a total of 25 persons as accessories, but acquitted Rebeca Schäfer of all charges. Both defendants and plaintiffs appealed the ruling. The binding judgement was handed down by the Supreme Court (CS) on → 25 January 2013.

January – For the first time, CD ran a beer festival at the *Casino Familiar*.

Mid-May – **Hartmut Hopp**, sentenced in the second instance to five years and one day in prison for aiding and abetting Schäfer’s sexual abuse of Chilean minors, **fled to Germany**, thus violating an exit ban, as he was awaiting the Supreme Court’s final verdict, and two other criminal proceedings against him were pending in Chile: one in the Elizondo, Maino and Rekas case (→ [1?] Jun 2005) and the other in the criminal organization case (→ 25 Mar 1999; 10 Apr 2006). As a result of his escape, on 23 May Judge Zepeda ordered the preventive detention of ten defendants in the criminal organization case. Eight colonists were remanded in custody: six men (Matthias Gerlach, Gerhard Mücke, Kurt Schnellenkamp, Gerd Seewald, Karl van den Berg and Friedhelm Zeitner), who were transferred to the Santiago High Security Prison, and two women (Renate Freitag and Gisela Seewald), who were placed in the Women’s Penitentiary Centre (*Centro*

⁵⁵ “La Oktoberfest 2010 o la tan llamada ‘Fiesta de la Cerveza’”

⁵⁶ “Amigos y Amigas / de cerca y de lejos”

⁵⁷ “La Oktoberfest / 2010 / da empuje a todos los ilustres y modestos visitantes”

⁵⁸ “Nunca cantando morirá / sino cantando vivirá”

Penitenciarario Feminino) in the capital. On the following day, Rebeca Schäfer and Peter Schmidt voluntarily handed themselves in.

May – Thousands of Chilean high school and university students took to the streets, starting a series of protests against high levels of social inequality, in particular in the education system.

29 June – Judge Zepeda announced the first-instance verdict for the kidnapping and disappearance of Pedro Merino (→ 14 Sep 1974). Manuel Contreras, Pedro Espinoza and Fernando Gómez received five-year sentences of imprisonment without benefits. Sergio Apablaza, Orlando Manzo, Manuel Rioseco, and the *colono* Gerd Seewald were acquitted. The accused Paul Schäfer had died before the ruling was handed down. The binding judgment in the case was issued on → 15 December 2014.

24 August – At the Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Krefeld, the Berlin-based European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), represented by lawyer Andreas Schüller, submitted a criminal complaint against Hartmut Hopp, a fugitive from Chilean justice since → mid-May 2011. (→ 6 Oct 2011; 6 May 2019)

14 September – The Eighth Court of Appeals (CA) in Santiago placed Fernando Gómez (DINA) and Gerhard Mücke (CD) on trial for the crime of illegal deprivation of liberty and unlawful coercion. The decision was taken in relation to a complaint filed by Adriana Bórquez in → 2004. Never before had the justice system recognised the colony as a torture centre operated in conjunction with the DINA. The decision revoked a previous ruling by Judge Zepeda, who had rejected the indictment of both defendants. The binding judgment in the case was handed down on → 30 Oct 2013.

6 October – Further criminal charges were filed against Hartmut Hopp (→ 24 Aug 2011) by lawyer **Petra Schlagenhauf**, the legal representative of two former CD residents, Gudrun Müller (née Wagner) and Wolfgang Müller Ahrend, and a relative of Elizabeth Rekas, a forcibly disappeared detainee. The case focused on the kidnapping and murder of Antonio Elizondo, Juan Maino and Elizabeth Rekas on → 26 May 1976 and the abusive treatment of the Müllers with psychotropic drugs (→ Nov 2005).

November – The Oktoberfest took place at the colony's main compound.

2012

11 January – In the final ruling in the Valdebenito case (→ 24 Sep 1974; 15 Jun 2010), Manuel Contreras was sentenced to 541 days' imprisonment and Orlando Manzo received a 61-day suspended sentence.

21–22 January – At the *Casino Familiar*, the second edition of the weekend *Bierfest* (beer festival) opened. ("Comenzó")



Source: "Comenzó".

23 January – In the first instance, Judge Zepeda sentenced five former DINA agents to prison terms in the Elizondo, Maino and Rekas case (→ [1?] Jun 2005). Gerhard Mücke and Karl van den Berg received sentences of five years' imprisonment for aiding and abetting. Both settlers appealed. The final judgment in the case was issued on → 13 November 2014.

14 February – The Krefeld Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) summoned Hartmut Hopp to testify (→ 24 Aug 2011; 6 Oct 2011), marking the official opening of investigations against him in Germany.

March – Simultaneous demonstrations were held in Chile and Germany to demand truth and justice in the cases relating to CD.

12 May – With support from the Chilean governmental Production Development Corporation (*Corporación de Fomento de la Producción de Chile*, CORFO) provided in the years 2011–12, the **Hotel Baviera** opened under the direction of Anna Schnellenkamp. CD continued to develop its tourist services, and participated in a related fair called 'Chile is Yours' (*Chile es Tuyo*).

28 December – Judge Miguel Vásquez charged Pedro Barrientos, a former lieutenant, and Hugo Sanchez, a retired colonel, with the killing of Victor Jara shortly after the 1973 coup d'état (→ 16 Sep 1973), while another six former military officers were charged with complicity in the murder.

2013

19–20 January – A weekend *Bierfest* was held in the *Casino Familiar*. (Pardow)



Source: Pardow.

25 January – The Second Chamber of the Supreme Court (CS) issued the **final verdict** in the Chilean child abduction and **sexual abuse case** (→ 14 Aug 1996; 16 Nov 2004; 24 May 2006; 6 Sep 2007; 22 Jul 2009; 6 Jan 2011). Some convicts had their sentences increased, while others were granted the benefit of probation. Gerhard Mücke and Günter Schaffrik were sentenced to 11 years and one day in prison. Dennys Alvear, Hartmut Hopp, Kurt Schnellenkamp and Gerd Seewald received prison sentences of five years and one day, while 15 other *colonos* and their Chilean supporters were given suspended sentences. In the civil part of the trial, the Supreme Court (CS) ordered the commercial companies that succeeded CD to pay compensation to 11 victims and their families, amounting to around 800 million pesos (including compensation for inflation), equivalent to around 1.25 million euros. The CD management prevented the enforcement of these payments with obstructive legal measures until → 9 June 2022. Five convicts began serving their sentences in the Cauquenes prison in February, but Hopp had fled to Germany in → mid-May 2011.

4 February – A torture survivor, Adriana Bórquez, sent an open letter to President Sebastián Piñera and German Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU), demanding truth, justice, and an end to tourist activities at the colony. She was supported by several Chilean activists and human rights organizations.

23 March – Around 50 protesters participated in a **funa** (→ 30 Sep 2006), conducted in front of Hopp's rented apartment in Krefeld. They demanded the enforcement of his five-year-and-one-day prison sentence in Germany, swift investigation of his crimes, and the building of a memorial at the *Fundo*. The next day, a protest march to the colony's gate and a vigil were conducted, attended by around 80 relatives of disappeared detainees, including Adriana Bórquez. (Beucker; "Convocan"; "FUNA"; Heller and Schildmann; Maier 230–234)



The caption on the placard in front reads: "Torture centre / yesterday / Amusement park / today?"⁵⁹ Source: Beucker.

22 May – Relying on files found at CD, Judge Zepeda handed down the first-instance verdict in the Chanfreau case (→ 7 Aug 1974). Four DINA agents – Manuel Contreras, Miguel Krassnoff, Ricardo Lawrence, and Marcelo Moren – were sentenced to ten years in prison. Basclay Zapata (DINA) received a three-year-and-one-day prison term as an accomplice, while Gerardo Urrich

⁵⁹ "Gerstern / Folterzentrum / Heute / Vergnügungspark?"

(DINA) was acquitted. The Court of Appeals (CA) announced its ruling on → 7 August 2014, and the Supreme Court (CS) issued the final verdict on → 29 April 2015.

13–14 July – A touristic Pork Knuckle Festival (*Fiesta de Pernil*) was held at the *Casino Familiar* for the first time. (“Comenzó hoy”)

24 July – The Chilean Supreme Court (CS) decided that a request for Hopp’s extradition was admissible.

4 September – A body representing Chilean judges made an unprecedented apology for the actions of the judiciary during military rule, admitting that it had failed to protect victims of state abuses.

8 September – At the entrance to the colony, around 100 human rights activists staged a protest action. The new leaders of the colony blocked the gate, demanding an entrance fee in case the demonstrators wished to visit the burial sites of political opponents. Two days later (the day before the 40th anniversary of the military coup) some 40 people marched from the Chilean embassy (*Embajada de Chile*) in Berlin to the Federal Foreign Office (AA). The demonstrators in both countries denounced the failure to punish the perpetrators, and called for the declassification of the colony’s secret files and the building of a memorial at the German site. (“Chilenos”; Stehle, “Chile”; “Víctimas de Colonia”)



The captions read: (left) “Truth Memory Justice / for the fallen of Colonia Dignidad”;⁶⁰ (right) “Colonia / No Dignidad / Impunity!”⁶¹ Source: Stehle, “Chile”.

30 October – In the last instance, suspended three-year prison sentences for Fernando Gómez (DINA) and Gerhard Mücke (CD) in the Adriana Bórquez case (→ 2004; 14 Sep 2011) were upheld. This was the first conviction for the torture of political prisoners at the CD site.

1–2 November – The first edition of the *Bierfest Vikinga* was held at the *Casino Familiar*. (“Este viernes”)

2014

⁶⁰ “Verdad Memoria Justicia / para los caídos de Colonia Dignidad”

⁶¹ “Colonia / Keine Dignidad / Strafflosigkeit”

24–26 January – A beer festival was organised at the *Casino Familiar*. (“Desde hoy”)



Source: “Desde hoy”.

24 February – A skull with an apparent bullet mark and other human bones were found on a bank of the Itata river, next to the *Casino Familiar*.

11 March – Michele Bachelet returned to power following the December 2013 election, in which she had defeated former senator and labour minister Evelyn Matthei (daughter of the junta general Fernando Matthei).

15 March – A protest caravan of around 100 relatives of disappeared detainees drove to the German enclave. The action was related to the discovery of human remains at the colony’s branch near Bulnes in February. In addition, the activists inaugurated their own **memorial stone**, erected without state assistance near the new Trabuncura Bridge over the Perquilauquén river in the vicinity of the *Fundo*. The protesters also demanded action from the recently sworn-in President Bachelet, including the declassification of the colony’s secret archive and full investigation of the crimes committed at the settlement. (“Angehörige von Verschwundenen weihen”; “Cráneo y restos”; *Memorias* 66, 99)



The caption on the banner in front reads: “Those who died here live / in the memory of people”.⁶² Source: “Angehörige von Verschwundenen weihen”.

Early April – Following a campaign by human rights activists and pressure from the media, the first part of the *Colonia secret files* (→ 20 Sep 2000; 15 Jun 2005) was finally made public by Judge Zepeda, who handed over

⁶² “Los que aquí murieron viven / en la memoria del pueblo”

around 40,000 files to the National Institute of Human Rights (INDH) and copies of them to the CDE, while 407 files were released to human rights groups working at the former torture centres, including the José Domingo Cañas Memory House (*Casa Memoria José Domingo Cañas*), the Londres 38 Space of Memory (*Londres 38, espacio de memorias*), the *Venda Sexy* and the Villa Grimaldi Peace Park Corporation (*Corporación Parque Por la Paz Villa Grimaldi*). The Londres 38 group launched the campaign 'No More Secret Archives' (*No Más Archivos Secretos*), demanding that the National Congress, the government and the courts adopt measures to allow full and unrestricted access to all CD files and other archives containing information on the repressions of the civil-military dictatorship. (→ 7 Jul 2014)

9 April – Judge Zepeda issued the first-instance verdict in the criminal organization case (→ 25 Mar 1999; 10 Apr 2006), sentencing settlers Gerhard Mücke, Kurt Schnellenkamp, Karl van den Berg, and former DINA agents Pedro Espinoza and Fernando Gómez to four years' imprisonment. Matthias Gerlach, Rebeca Schäfer, Peter Schmidt and Friedhelm Zeitner, who had supported Schäfer in Argentina, were acquitted. The judge established that CD planned and executed multiple crimes, including infliction of serious injury, use of illegal weapons, rape of minors, and human rights violations. He classified the CD transgressions as crimes against humanity, although the convicted settlers were formally civilians, not state actors. The defence appealed and the second-instance verdict was delivered on → 31 December 2015, with the case finally reaching the Supreme Court (CS), which announced its binding ruling on → 29 December 2016.

5 June – The Association for Memory and Human Rights Colonia Dignidad (**AMCD**), headed by **Margarita Romero** (president) and the torture survivor Luis Peebles (deputy) (→ Feb 1975), was founded in Santiago. The organization has conducted a number of commemoration ceremonies, legal initiatives, protest actions, and seminars.

19–20 June – A *Fiesta de Pernil* took place at the *Casino Familiar*.

27 June – AFDD-Maule paid tribute to disappeared detainees at the monument near the Trabuncura Bridge and submitted a complaint to the authorities headed 'No to Tourism in Colonia Dignidad' (*No al turismo en Colonia Dignidad*). (*Memorias* 50, 66, 100)

3 July – After the request for Hopp's extradition (→ 24 Jul 2013) failed (according to the German constitution, German citizens cannot be extradited to a country beyond the EU), the Chilean Supreme Court (CS) issued a subsidiary request for enforcement of his five-year-and-one-day prison term in Germany.

7 July – AFDD-Maule organised a demonstration at the colony's gate (*Memorias* 50, 66) two days before the premiere of the television reportage ***Las fichas del horror*** ('The horror files'), directed by Patricio Godoy and

Luis Narváez, as part of the series *En la mira* ('In the spotlight') on *Chilevisión*. Shortly after the programme was broadcast, the executive director of the station, Jaime de Aguirre, accompanied by *En la mira*'s editors and reporters, handed over 45,612 digitised files to human rights institutions and organizations, including the AFDD, the Association of Relatives of the Politically Executed (*Agrupación de Familiares de Ejecutados Políticos*, AFEP, founded in 1978), the Documentation and Archive Foundation of the Vicariate of Solidarity (*Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad*), Londres 38, the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (MMDH), and the Villa Grimaldi Peace Park. In late August, Londres 38 activists began to make the files available through the institution's website, but they had to cease doing so due to Chilean personal data regulations. Later, a German human rights activist, freelance investigator and expert publicist on *Colonia Dignidad*, **Dieter Maier** (→ 1 Nov 2019), launched an online data base in Germany, providing free access to the files. Currently, this access is also granted by the MMDH.

14 July – At the age of 93, Gerd Seewald died in a hospital in Cauquenes.

7 August – In the Chanfreau case (→ 7 Aug 1974), the Court of Appeals (CA) upheld the sentences of ten years in prison for DINA agents Contreras, Krassnoff, Lawrence and Moren, and found that Zapata had acted not as an accomplice but as a perpetrator, therefore deciding to increase his sentence to ten years' imprisonment (→ 22 May 2013). In the civil part of the case, the court accepted the appeal of the Chilean Treasury (*Fisco de Chile*) and refused to award monetary compensation. It considered that the damage would be remedied through the benefits awarded under the Reparation Law (*Ley de reparación*) of 1992. On → 29 April 2015, the Supreme Court (CS) gave its final ruling.

15–16 August – The second edition of the *Fiesta de Pernil* was held at the *Colonia*'s main compound.

4 September – During a press conference in Talca, members of AFDD-Maule called for the formation of a round table of dialogue. Two days later, they chained themselves to the colony's entrance gate, demanding the punishment of crimes and an end to tourism at the site. On the following day they conducted a protest march. (*Memorias* 52, 68–69)

22 October – A team from the Human Rights Crimes Investigation Brigade (BRIDEHU) of the PDI entered the German estate to search for intelligence files and audiovisual materials that were allegedly hidden at the colony. On the following day, Judge **Mario Carroza**, who had taken over (from Judge Zepeda) the investigations into forced disappearances and torture (→ 8 Apr 2005), arrived to supervise the proceedings.

25 October – A march to honour disappeared detainees was organised by AFDD-Maule at the colony. (*Memorias* 52, 69, 100)

29 October – On Judge Carroza’s order, **new excavations** at the estate began. These proceedings are still pending.

1–2 November – The *Casino Familiar* held its *Bierfest Vikinga*. (“Todo listo”)

13 November – In the last instance in the Elizondo, Maino and Rekas case (→ 23 Jan 2012), the Supreme Court (CS) confirmed the sentences of the DINA agents Manuel Contreras and his subordinate Carlos López, who received ten years and one day in prison, and Eugenio Fieldhouse (DINA) who was sentenced to five years and one day. The CD defendants, Gerhard Mücke and Karl van den Berg, were acquitted. (→ 30 May 2025)

22–23 November – At the beginning of a beer festival in the colony, AFDD-Maule blocked the road to the estate, denying access to almost 5,000 people attending the touristic event. (Artaza)



The caption on the poster reads: “Oktoberfest / and Spring Festival / together this year / in Villa Baviera / and in Parral”.⁶³ Source: Hevia and Stehle 61.

29 November – AFDD-Maule organised a protest march and a Mapuche⁶⁴ *lletipun* ceremony for disappeared detainees. (*Memorias* 70)

2 December – An Oktoberfest was held at the *Casino Familiar*.

11–12 December – The AMCD, together with the Berlin-based Memorial and Educational Centre House of the Wannsee Conference (GHWK) and the MMDH in Santiago, co-organised an **international seminar** titled *Colonia Dignidad. Diálogos sobre verdad, justicia y memoria* (Colonia Dignidad: Dialogues on truth, justice and memory) in Santiago. Financed by the Federal Foreign Office (AA), the event opened a cycle of annual seminars and workshops with affected groups, led by an interdisciplinary team which was coordinated by the deputy director of the GHWK, **Elke Gryglewski** (→ Jun 2019). The first workshop in Parral and Talca was attended by former political prisoners and relatives of the forcibly disappeared.

15 December – In the final ruling by the Supreme Court (CS) in the Merino case (→ 29 Jun 2011), the DINA agents Sergio Apablaza, Manuel Contreras, Pedro Espinoza, Fernando Gómez, Orlando Manzo and Manuel Rioseco

⁶³ “Oktoberfest / y Fiesta de la Primavera / juntos este año / en Villa Baviera / y en Parral”

⁶⁴ A group of indigenous inhabitants of south-central Chile and southwestern Argentina; in the history of world colonialism, they were the people who resisted invaders for the longest time (more than three centuries). In today’s Chile, the Mapuche are fighting for autonomy and respect for their cultural and natural heritage.

received prison sentences of five years and one day. The colonist Gerd Seewald had died (→ 14 Jul 2014) before the final verdict was handed down.

27 December – AFDD-Maule held a demonstration at the entrance to the settlement, demanding that the colony be turned into a peace park. The protesters burnt a paper replica of the *Villa Baviera* emblematic stone monolith, located near at the entrance road to the colony. (Artaza; *Memorias* 71)

2015

13 March – The AMCD called for the revocation of President Bachelet's appointment of the former senator Olga Feliú (→ 19 Mar 1991; 22 Sep 2004) to the Presidential Advisory Council against Conflicts of Interest, Influence Trafficking and Corruption (*Consejo Asesor Presidencial contra los Conflictos de Intereses, el Tráfico de Influencias y la Corrupción*). The activists highlighted that the lawyer had represented *Colonia* leaders in various civil cases.

29 April – The Supreme Court (CS) upheld the Court of Appeals' ruling (→ 7 Aug 2014) in the Chanfreau case. (→ 22 May 2013)

7 May – Judge Zepeda issued the first-instance verdict in the Vallejos case (→ 12 Jan 1998). The DINA officers Manuel Contreras, Pedro Espinoza, Fernando Gómez and Miguel Krassnoff received ten years and one day in prison, and the colonist Gerhard Mücke three years and one day for aiding and abetting. Schäfer, who was listed as an accused, had died during the proceedings. Contreras died on 7 August 2015, before the legally binding sentence was announced (→ 6 Aug 2018). In the civil part of the trial, the judge awarded compensation to relatives of the victim and ordered the Chilean state to erect a memorial museum on the public ground near the entrance to the colony, to preserve mass burial sites located at the German compound, and to make them accessible to family members of the victims.

30 May – AFDD-Maule conducted a protest march in the centre of Talca, demanding termination of the colony's tourist activities. (*Memorias* 54)

17–19 July – The third edition of the *Fiesta de Pernil* at the *Casino Familiar* was held, attended by around 5,000 people each day. (Salcedo)

18 July – AFDD-Maule handed out protest leaflets to visitors travelling to the colony for touristic reasons. The demonstrators displayed images of their forcibly disappeared relatives in front of the site and threw red carnations into the Perquilauquén river. ("Familiares de detenidos desaparecidos protestaron"; *Memorias* 72)



Source: “Familiares de detenidos desaparecidos protestaron”.

13 September – Around the anniversary of the military coup, relatives of disappeared detainees entered the settlement, guided by ex-colono and lawyer Winfried Hempel (→ 2009). They held a commemorative ceremony there. (“Maule”)



The caption on the banner reads: “Association for Memory and / Human Rights Colonia Dignidad / In the fight for / Justice, Truth and Memory”.⁶⁵ Source: “Maule”.

10–11 October – A beer festival (*Bierfest Vikinga*) took place at the settlement. (“Bierfest Vikinga”)

15 October – In the court of first instance, Judge Zepeda sentenced former DINA agent Fernando Gómez and the colonists Gerhard Mücke and Kurt Schnellenkamp to five years and one day in prison, with the benefit of probation, as perpetrators of the aggravated abductions of 50 people in Parral and Talca (→ 2004). The binding ruling in the case was handed down by the Supreme Court (CS) on → 22 May 2018.

14 November – Around 40 relatives of disappeared detainees protested at the gate of the colony against the Oktoberfest and German-style folklore tourism conducted there. (“Angehörige von Verschwundenen protestieren gegen”)



⁶⁵ “Asociación por la Memoria y los / Derechos Humanos Colonia Dignidad / En la lucha por / Justicia, Verdad y Memoria”

The caption on the banner on the right reads: "Truth And Justice / Now".⁶⁶ Source: "Angehörige von Verschwundenen protestieren gegen".

10–11 December – The second international seminar, titled 'Challenges facing an archive of repression and the construction of a site of memory' (*Desafíos frente a un archive de la repression y la construcción de un sitio de memoria*), was held at the MMDH in Santiago.

31 December – The Ninth Santiago Court of Appeals (CA) upheld the sentences handed down by Judge Zepeda in the criminal organization case (→ 9 Apr 2014). The binding ruling was issued on → 29 Dec 2016.

2016

February – The CD executives Thomas Schnellenkamp and Hans Schreiber offered individual settlers small land parcels in exchange for the rights to their personal biographies.

18 February – After its premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival on 13 September 2015, a **fiction film** titled *Colonia Dignidad – Es gibt kein Zurück* ('Colonia Dignidad: There is no going back'; the film was distributed in English-speaking countries under the title ***The Colony***), directed by Florian Gallenberger, was released in German cinemas. The work resonated widely and spurred German politicians to action.

February – A CD-related seminar, financed by the Federal Foreign Office (AA), took place at the House of the Wannsee Conference (GHWK) in Berlin. It was attended by representatives of the Chilean authorities, relatives of the forcibly disappeared, torture survivors, and some residents of *Villa Baviera*. The latter announced that they would suspend the beer festival at the main estate as a gesture of good will towards the relatives of victims of the dictatorship.

26 April – At a **special event** at the Federal Foreign Office (AA) in Berlin, with around 400 people in attendance, including some former colonists and CD residents, Federal Foreign Minister **Frank-Walter Steinmeier** (→ May 2006) admitted serious shortcomings by his office and the German embassy in Santiago in dealing with *Colonia*-related issues in the past, but rejected any legal and political responsibility of the Federal Government for the CD's crimes. The politician also shortened the term for opening classified files related to *Colonia Dignidad* by ten years (from 30 to 20), and announced that the case would become one of the subjects covered in training programmes for young diplomats.

24–26 June – Prior to the historic visit to CD by the highest German state official to date, **Dieter Lamlé** (Director of the Latin America and Caribbean section at the Federal Foreign Office, AA), and a state visit to Chile by Federal President of Germany **Joachim Gauck**, a two-day hunger strike was

⁶⁶ "Verdad Y Justicia / Ahora"

held by AFDD-Maule activists in Talca. On 26 June, the protesters marched to the gates of the colony and staged its **symbolic closure**. (“Agrupaciones y familiares”; “Hungerstreik”; “Ministerio de RR.EE.”; Salazar)



The slogans on the banners read: (left) “No to tourism / in the colony of death”;⁶⁷ (right) “Closed down / due to human rights violations”.⁶⁸ Source: “Hungerstreik”.

12–14 July – During his state visit to Chile, President Joachim Gauck expressed his regret over German diplomats’ past reprehensible attitudes towards CD-related issues, but did not leave Chilean victims any hope for reparations. In a scandalous decision by German officials, Hans Schreiber and Reinhard Zeitner from the second generation of the CD leaders were invited to Gauck’s reception held on 12 July, while representatives of Chilean victims’ associations were not given the opportunity to talk to the President. On 13 July, AFDD-Maule protested in front of the MMDH in Santiago when Gauck visited the facility, accompanied by President Bachelet. (“Familias de ejecutados”)

18 July – On the AMCD’s initiative and with the approval of the National Monuments Council (*Consejo de Monumentos Nacionales*), eight sites at the settlement, including several buildings and 182 hectares of land, partly corresponding to the parcels where the burial places of disappeared detainees are located, were classified as a **Historical Monument** (*Monumento Histórico*) by the Ministry of Education (*Ministerio de Educación*). The relevant decree was published on 10 August. The executives of the CD real estate companies appealed against this decision, but the court rejected their complaints.

21 July – After the Chilean judiciary had renewed its 2005 arrest warrant against Reinhard Döring, the Public Prosecutor’s Office (StA) in Münster opened an investigation against him. (→ Apr 2018; 22 Jan 2019)

10 September – On the eve of the anniversary of the 1973 coup d’état, around 50 AFDD members commemorated their murdered relatives and protested against CD’s tourist activities. They marched 12 kilometres from the entrance of CD to Chenco Hill, where burial places of disappeared detainees and vehicle parts had been discovered in 2005 and 2006. (“43. Jahrestag”; “Agrupaciones de DD.DD.”)

⁶⁷ “No a turismo / en la colonia de la muerte”

⁶⁸ “Geschlossen / Wegen Menschenrechtsverletzungen”



The slogan on the placard reads: "Closed down / for violating / human rights".⁶⁹ Source: "43. Jahrestag".

30–31 October – The *Casino Familiar* held another edition of its beer festival. ("Aromas")

2 November – A seven-member delegation of German MPs from all parliamentary factions of the Bundestag Committee on Legal Affairs and Consumer Protection (*Bundestagsausschusses für Recht und Verbraucherschutz*) visited the settlement. It was the **first visit of German deputies** to the colony. The parliamentarians, including Matthias Bartke (SPD), Christian Flisek (SPD), Stephan Harbarth (CDU/CSU), chairwoman **Renate Künast** (Alliance 90/The Greens), vice-chairman Jan-Marco Luczak (CDU/CSU), Harald Petzold (The Left), and Volker Ullrich (CDU/CSU), held a commemorative ceremony together with relatives of disappeared detained, including Myrna Troncoso, at the so-called 'Fosa-4' at Chenco Hill, where mass burial places of political prisoners had been found by police investigators on → 2 January 2006. The next day, the MPs met with AFDD-Maule representatives in Talca. After the visit, the delegation's chair, Renate Künast, announced that suitable commemorative measures should be sought, including the erection of a memorial and the establishment of an educational facility. ("Begrüssung"; "Bundestagsdelegation"; "Diputados alemanes"; *Memorias* 74)



Source: "Bundestagsdelegation".

15 November – The Chilean Ministry of Education declared the **CD archive**, including, among others, administrative and juridical documents, medical records and intelligence files (→ 9 Apr 2014; 5 Jul 2014), a **Historical Monument**. The decision was published on 6 December 2016. The documents were transferred to the National Archive of Administration

⁶⁹ "Clausurado / por violaciones a los / derechos humanos"

(**ARNAD**) on 17 December 2017, and since → 2 January 2019 they have been accessible (with restrictions) to investigators.

14–15 December – After workshops in Parral and Talca attended by relatives of forcibly disappeared, former political prisoners, and ex-residents of CD, then living both in and outside the colony, the third international seminar, titled ‘Colonia Dignidad: Moving towards truth and justice’ (*Colonia Dignidad: Avanzando hacia la verdad y la justicia*), was held at the MMDH in Santiago.

29 December – The Supreme Court (CS) handed down the final judgment in the **criminal organization case**, initiated by the CDE on → 25 March 1999 and reactivated by Judge Zepeda on → 10 Apr 2006. Gerhard Mücke, Kurt Schnellenkamp and Karl van den Berg, as well as the DINA agents Pedro Espinoza and Fernando Gómez, received five years and one day in prison (their sentences were increased by one year). The court upheld the acquittals of Matthias Gerlach, Rebeca Schäfer, Peter Schmidt, and Friedhelm Zeitner. Before the binding verdict was delivered, several defendants had either died (among them Albert Schreiber in 2008, Paul Schäfer in 2010, Renate Freitag and Gisela Seewald in 2013, Gerd Seewald in 2014, and Manuel Contreras in 2015) or fled (three of them to Germany – Albert Schreiber in 199[8?], Hans-Jürgen Riesland in 2003 and Hartmut Hopp in 2011 – and one to the US – ex-DINA agent Armando Fernández (→ 21 Sep 1976), who was placed under the US Federal Witness Protection Program after his extradition from Chile in 1977). At the time of the verdict, Espinoza, Gómez, Mücke and Schnellenkamp had already been incarcerated for other grave offences. Thanks to *Colonia* lawyers, van den Berg was released after about one year and a half in prison and returned to the *Fundo*.

On Anna Schnellenkamp’s initiative, CD opened its makeshift museum called ‘**Colonial Museum**’ (*Museo Colonial*) to narrate its own version of the history of CD.

2017

15 March – The Supreme Court (CS) ordered the SBED’s successor companies to pay compensation totalling 800 million pesos (around 1.5 million euros) to sexually abused Chileans. The payments had already been ordered by the same court on → 25 January 2013, but the boards of the CD companies had repeatedly appealed this decision, claiming formal obstacles. The payments materialised as late as → 9 June 2022.

10 April – In the Vallejos case, the Court of Appeals (CA) increased the first-instance prison sentences (→ 7 May 2015) given to three DINA officers from ten years and one day to 15 years and one day. Mücke’s three-year-and-one-day sentence for aiding and abetting was upheld. All of those convicted had already been jailed for other grave offences. Two defendants, Contreras and Schäfer, had died in 2015 and 2010, respectively. The first-instance court’s order for the Chilean state to build a memorial museum was upheld. The

matter was finally decided by the Supreme Court (CS) in the third instance on → 6 Aug 2018.

10 April – In the case of 50 people from Parral and Talca (→ 2004; 15 Oct 2015), the Court of Appeals (CA) upheld Fernando Gómez's five-year-and-one-day suspended prison sentence, but significantly reduced Gerhard Mücke's and Kurt Schnellenkamp's similar sentences to three years and one day and 500 days, respectively. The binding ruling in the case was issued on → 22 May 2018.

[31?] May – A commemorative plaque on a former torture site, known as the '**Potato Cellar**' (*Kartoffelkeller*, *Bodega de papas*), was installed during a memorial ceremony with relatives of disappeared detainees and some former colonists, including lawyer Winfried Hempel, in attendance. (Ebert)



Source: Ebert.

29 June – In the **Bundestag**, the motion titled 'Dealing with the crimes committed in Colonia Dignidad and helping the victims' (*Aufarbeitung der Verbrechen in der Colonia Dignidad und Hilfe für die Opfer*), proposed by Renate Künast on 30 March, failed (it was supported only by 91 MPs from Alliance 90/The Greens and The Left). On the initiative of MP Klaus Barthel (SPD), the governing coalition had proposed its own motion on 27 June. After a plenary debate on the *Colonia* issue in the presence of some of the German survivors, parliamentarians from all factions unanimously supported the second Bundestag **resolution**, titled 'Dealing with the crimes in Colonia Dignidad' (*Aufarbeitung der Verbrechen in der Colonia Dignidad*), which called on Angela Merkel's government to investigate CD's wrongdoings jointly with the Chilean authorities, and to secure and evaluate the evidence of crimes committed at the enclave. The motion also advocated the establishment of a memorial, the creation of an aid fund for the victims, and an examination of the colony's assets. The German executive was given one year to propose a concept for the aid fund.

12 July – The Federal Government, represented by the Federal Foreign Office's Latin America Commissioner Dieter Lamlé, and the Government of the Republic of Chile, represented by the Chilean ambassador to Germany, Patricio Pradel, established the Chilean-German joint **intergovernmental committee** for the reappraisal of the history of CD (*Gemeinsame deutsch-chilenische Kommission zur Aufarbeitung der Geschichte der Colonia*

Dignidad, Comisión Mixta Chileno-Alemana para abordar la Memoria Histórica de Colonia Dignidad), with a mandate to create a memorial and a documentation centre, to identify, secure and evaluate evidence and documents of crimes committed in the compound, and to investigate the assets of companies that had emerged from CD.

15–16 July – A *Fiesta de Pernil Medieval* took place at the *Casino Familiar*. (Valenzuela)

7 August – The Krefeld District Court (AG) ruled that Hopp's five-year-and-one-day prison sentence for complicity in the sexual abuse of Chilean minors by Schäfer could be enforced in Germany. The convict's lawyer, Helfried Roubicek, appealed to the Düsseldorf Higher Regional Court (OLG), and Hopp remained free. (→ 25 Sep 2018)

23 August – The Chilean Supreme Court (CS) overturned the infamous 1967 verdict against Wolfgang Kneese (earlier Müller). (→ 25 Feb 1967)

25 August – Judge Carroza visited the Cauquenes prison to interrogate Gerhard Mücke, Günter Schaffrik and Kurt Schnellenkamp about the location of burial places of those who had 'disappeared' violently during Pinochet's rule. Guided by a witness, Willi Malessa (→ 30 Nov 1978), he also inspected the colony in the company of PDI officers from the Human Rights Crimes Investigation Brigade (BRIDEHU) and forensic anthropologists Iván Cáceres and Keneth Jensen. Afterwards, Judge Carroza ordered new excavations at the estate, which began in November 2017.

17 September – Upon Judge Carroza's decision, Kurt Schnellenkamp was transferred from the Cauquenes prison to CD due to gastric cancer. He remained under house arrest until his death on 25 November.

17 December – The *Colonia* archive was handed over to ARNAD. (→ 2 Jan 2019)

2018

9–10 January – The members of the bilateral Chilean-German committee were received in Berlin by Federal Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel (SPD) and MPs from various parties.

24 January – Judge Carroza headed investigative proceedings conducted inside CD, related to the complaint filed by AFDD-Maule.

25 January – Re-elected President Sebastián Piñera gave a place in his cabinet to Hernán Larraín, a staunch supporter of *Colonia Dignidad* (→ 19 Sep–6 Oct 1994; 7–10 May 1995; 7 Dec 1996). Larraín became the Minister of Justice and Human Rights. The president's cousin Andrés Chadwick, also considered a friend of the colony, was given the portfolio of Minister of the

Interior. These decisions met with outrage from Chilean and German human rights groups.

28 March – Otto Dörr received the National Prize for Medicine (*Premio Nacional de Medicina*) for professional achievements during his academic career. The AMCD and other human rights organizations criticised this decision due to the psychiatrist's strong links with the colony. (→ 18 Jan 1996; 10 Sep 2019)

25 April – In their report submitted to Judge Carroza, forensic anthropologists Cáceres and Jensen highlighted the need to continue searching for a grave, which according to Willi Malessa (→ 25 Aug 2017) had not yet been excavated and therefore might still contain the remains of disappeared detainees.

April – At the Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Münster, the ECCHR filed a criminal complaint against Reinhard Döring (→ 21 Jul 2016) and submitted evidence of his possible involvement in the murders of Antonio Elizondo, Juan Maino and Elizabeth Rekas.

April – For the first time, representatives of the federal and regional German justice system travelled to Chile in a case related to the *Colonia* (the pending Hopp case in Krefeld). (→ 24 Aug 2011; 6 Oct 2011)

22 May – The Supreme Court (CS) upheld suspended sentences of five years and one day for Fernando Gómez (DINA) and three years and one day on probation for Gerhard Mücke in the case of 50 people from Parral and Talca, which had been conducted by Judge Zepeda since 2004 (→ 15 Oct 2015). Schnellenkamp, who in the second instance had received a suspended 500-day prison sentence, had died before the binding verdict was announced.

31 May – Commissioned by the Federal Government, the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) presented a feasibility study of the CD companies. However, the ABC-Holding executives allowed access to the balance sheets only in return for an assurance of confidentiality, and consequently the GIZ report remains unavailable to the public to this day.

16 June – A *funa* was conducted in front of Hopp's apartment in Krefeld. It aimed to publicly denounce him and demand his imprisonment after the Krefeld District Court (AG) had decided on → 15 August 2017 that his Chilean five-year-and-one-day prison sentence could be enforced in Germany. The protest was attended, among others, by Myrna Troncoso, who had travelled from Chile earlier that month to learn first-hand about the progress of work on a financial assistance programme, which the Federal Government was due to present before the end of June. (Chase; Dannemann, "Krefeld"; Garuz; Hoss; Löhning, "Der Sektenarzt", "Schwierige"; "Piden 'gesto'")



The slogan on the placard on the right reads: “Hopp / into prison! / Dignity / and Justice / for the victims!”⁷⁰
Sources: Hoss; Löhning, “Schwierige”.

29 June – The German government presented a proposal for an **aid fund** for selected groups of CD victims (→ 29 Jun 2017). The document underlined that the compensation payments, called ‘support measures’ (*Unterstützungsmassnahmen*), would not be legally binding, but voluntary. It also excluded reparations for the Chilean victims of the colony. The proposition met with severe criticism from those affected and some MPs, including Renate Künast and Michael Brand (CDU, a human rights spokesperson of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group), who saw it as highly unsatisfactory. Subsequently, a joint committee, consisting of representatives of the Bundestag and the Federal Government, was constituted on 10 October with a mandate to develop a concept for the assistance and to implement it.

14–15 July – A *Fiesta del Pernil* was conducted at the *Casino Familiar*. (“Detalles”)

6 August – In the third instance of the Vallejos case, the Supreme Court (CS) upheld the sentences of 15 years and one day in prison for the DINA officers Pedro Espinoza, Fernando Gómez and Miguel Krassnoff, and three years and one day for Gerhard Mücke. In the first instance (→ 7 May 2015), Judge Zepeda had ordered the Chilean state to build a memorial museum on the public ground near the entrance to the colony, to preserve mass graves located at the German compound, and to make them accessible to the family members of the victims. The Supreme Court (CS) did not ratify this measure, considering that it went beyond reparation in relation to the case under consideration.

August – The Chilean-German governmental bilateral committee (→ 12 Jul 2017) invited **Elke Gryglewski** from the Lower Saxony Memorials Foundation (*Stiftung Niedersächsische Gedenkstätten*) and the Bergen-Belsen Memorial (*Gedenkstätte Bergen-Belsen*), lawyer **Diego Matte** from the University of Chile (*Universidad de Chile*), and **Jens-Christian Wagner** from the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation (*Stiftung Gedenkstätten Buchenwald und Mittelbau-Dora*) to sit on an **expert panel** tasked with developing a concept for a memorial and a documentation centre to be built on the colony’s grounds. In 2019, psychologist **Elizabeth Lira**

⁷⁰ “Allez / Hopp / in den Knast! / Dignidad / y Justicia / para las víctimas!”

from Alberto Hurtado University (*Universidad Alberto Hurtado*) in Santiago would join the panel, which would present the final version of its proposal on → 24 June 2021.

1 September – AFDD-Maule organised a commemorative ceremony at Chenco Hill. (*Memorias* 56, 74–76)

25 September – Hartmut Hopp won his appeal, meaning that his binding Chilean sentence (→ 25 Jan 2013) could not be enforced in Germany. In its decision, the Düsseldorf Higher Regional Court (OLG) adopted the narrative of the perpetrators, highlighting the colony's charity and social work rather than its transgressions. In response, the AMCD issued a statement repudiating the decision of the German judges.

10 October – The issue of the *Colonia* was addressed at a bilateral meeting between Angela Merkel and Sebastián Piñera in Berlin, held during the Chilean president's European tour. Both leaders agreed to continue the process of critical review of the colony.

A group of 13 former *Colonia* members, including some fraudulently adopted Chileans, created the Association for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Dignity for Former Settlers (**ADEC**), chaired by Horst Schaffrik. They have been supported in their struggle for justice by lawyers Hernán Fernández and Winfried Hempel. (→ 17 Mar 2024)

2019

2 January – ARNAD made the CD archive (except for the clinical files) available to investigators. (→ 15 Nov 2016)

January – The Federal Foreign Office commissioned Professor **Stefan Rinke** (head of the Latin American Studies Institute, *Lateinamerika-Institut*, LAI, at the Free University of Berlin, FUB) to lead a three-year project titled 'Colonia Dignidad: A Chilean-German Oral History Archive' (**CDOH**), which aimed to create a repository of more than 60 video interviews with *Colonia* residents, political survivors, relatives of missing opponents, and other contemporary witnesses and experts. (→ 17 Mar 2022)

22 January – NRW judges discontinued criminal investigations against Reinhard Döring, which had been launched on → 21 July 2016, without hearing the accused or available witnesses, and without laying any charges.

6 May – The preliminary investigation against Hopp, conducted by the Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Krefeld since → 24 August 2011, was dropped. An appeal and a motion to restart the procedure also failed in 2020 and 2021, respectively. Hopp, legally convicted in Chile, is still living free in Germany.

7 May – The company CEPAEMIL SA sued ABC-Holding, demanding a reversal of the Abratec sale transaction that had been finalised in 2015.

17 May – A joint committee of the Bundestag and the Federal Government (→ 29 Jun 2017; 29 Jun 2018) presented a concept for a **Relief Fund** for the Victims of Colonia Dignidad (*Hilfsfonds für die Opfer der Colonia Dignidad*), according to which those German settlers whose lives had been concentrated in the compound and Chilean nationals who had lived in the colony since their childhood and who could not be shown to be among the group of perpetrators were entitled to one-off payments of up to 10,000 euros. Many Chilean victims of the *Colonia's* criminal activity were excluded from the proposal. The concept also provided for the creation of a 'care and old age' fund. The first payments were made in → March 2020.

15 June – Around 50 demonstrators from AFDD-Maule conducted two peaceful protests in front of the German embassy and the presidential palace *La Moneda* in Santiago to protest against the lack of progress in delivering justice for *Colonia* victims and to denounce the decision of the Public Prosecutor's Office (StA) in Krefeld to terminate the criminal investigations against Hopp (→ 6 May 2019), thus closing the last German case related to the colony. ("Angehörige von Verschwundenen protestieren vor der deutsche"; Dannemann, "Protesta"; "Manifestación en la embajada"; "Manifestaciones")



In the photo on the left (from left): María Cristina Escanilla, Myrna Troncoso, and [?]. The slogan on the placard reads: "No more protection for German criminals of / Colonia Dignidad in Germany".⁷¹ Source: "Angehörige von Verschwundenen protestieren vor".

[May?] June – A group of 14 victims of the enclave made a one-week visit to Berlin. They participated in workshops and seminars and visited sites of memory such as the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum (*Gedenkstätte und Museum Sachsenhausen*), located in the former Nazi concentration camp, and the House of the Wannsee Conference (GHWK). The activities, which were part of the process of work on a concept for a memorial in the enclave, were organised by Elke Gryglewski and Jens-Christian Wagner and funded by the Federal Foreign Office (AA).

13–14 July – A *Fiesta de Pernil* took place at the *Casino Familiar*.

20 July – **Adriana Bórquez died.**

⁷¹ "Keinen Schutz mehr für deutsche Kriminelle / von Colonia Dignidad in Deutschland"; "No más protección para criminales alemanes de / la Colonia Dignidad en Alemania"

27 August – To celebrate Human Rights Education Day (*Jornada de Educación en Derechos Humanos*), AFDD-Maule organised a visit of social work students from the University of Bío Bío (*Universidad del Bío Bío*) in Concepción to the memorial located by the Perquillauquén river (→ 15 Mar 2014). (*Memorias* 77–78)

10 September – The Ethics Tribunal of the Medical College (*Tribunal de Ética del Colegio Médico*) unanimously ruled in favour of the *Colonia* victims and their relatives, represented by lawyer Winfried Hempel, who had filed a complaint against Otto Dörr for his repeated defence of the enclave. The association decided to reprimand the psychiatrist for violating the ethical guidelines, which, however, did not jeopardise his status as the winner of the National Prize for Medicine (→ 28 Mar 2018). The Chilean commission that awarded that prize finally ratified its decision on 25 September 2019.

October–November – A series of mass demonstrations and violent protests against social inequality began in Santiago and swept the country. Brutally pacified by riot police, the rebellion, called '**Social Outburst**' (*Estallido social*), paved the way for a constitutional referendum.

1 November – Dieter Maier (→ 7 Jul 2014) was awarded the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany on Ribbon (*Verdienstorden der Bundesrepublik Deutschland am Bande*) for his incessant fight for truth about the CD criminal structure and justice for its victims. He has authored several comprehensive books on the colony, which were originally published under the pseudonym 'Paul Friedrich Heller', adopted for his protection.

2020

11 March – **Covid-19**, which had begun as an epidemic in Wuhan, Hubei province, in central China on 17 November 2019, was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO).

During the pandemic, the CD management imposed entrance–exit restrictions at the settlement. Winfried Hempel submitted an application for protection against these measures, but his application was rejected by the court, which accepted the *Colonia* leaders' rationale that they were following the safety guidelines of the Ministry of Health (*Ministerio de Salud*).

March – The German payments (→ 17 May 2019) to selected *Colonia* victims began. To date, more than 200 people have received this form of financial support.

31 July – Relatives of the detained disappeared reported that the recently appointed Minister of the Interior and Public Security, Víctor Pérez (UDI), was a staunch *Colonia* supporter. Pérez resigned from his post in December 2020.

2 December – In a complaint submitted to Judge Carroza, AFDD-Maule reported that earthworks with a backhoe were being conducted in the sector of the German compound protected by the National Monuments Law (→ 18 Jul 2016), where burial places are located. They also denounced the blockade of CD by the *Carabineros*. (“Familiares de detenidos desaparecidos del Maule”; *Memorias* 59)

In the only ongoing Chilean CD trial, focused on the search for remains of forcibly disappeared detainees (*inhumación y exhumación ilegal*), soil samples were sent to a Swiss laboratory. However, no traces of human remains or flammable substances were found in them, and it was established that the sediments came from a forest fire.

2021

15 February – AFDD-Maule formally requested that Judge **Paola Plaza** from the Santiago Court of Appeals (CA), who had taken over the investigations into illegal burials and exhumations after Judge Carroza’s promotion to the Supreme Court (CS), bring the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (*Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense*, EAAF), equipped with Light Imaging Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) technology, into the search for remains of forcibly disappeared detainees.

21–23 April – After Judge Plaza had reopened the Elizondo, Maino and Rekas case, she inspected the enclave and took statements from 12 witnesses, including those settlers who were serving sentences in the Cauquenes prison.

24 June – During an online meeting, four experts nominated by Chile and Germany (→ Aug 2018), Elke Gryglewski, Elizabeth Lira, Diego Matte and Jens-Christian Wagner, made the first public presentation of the **concept for a memorial** at the former enclave. According to the proposal, histories of different victim groups would be presented at different locations on the estate, and a place of mourning and remembrance would be created. The experts also recommended that the site should be funded by both countries and administered by an independent entity, which should include representatives of all interested groups.

22 September – Pursuant to an Interpol detention order, Reinhard Döring was arrested in Forte dei Marmi, Tuscany, but the Court of Appeals in Florence released him two months later on the grounds that the Chilean extradition request had not arrived on time. After his release, Döring immediately returned to Germany.

1 October – The six-part series *A Sinister Sect: Colonia Dignidad*, authored and directed by Annette Baumeister and Wilfried Huismann, was premiered by **Netflix** and brought worldwide attention to the subject.

29 October – Referring to Willi Malessa’s statements made in the Netflix series, Judge Plaza began new investigations into CD.

[November?] December – For the first time, different victim groups met at the historical site of the *Colonia* during a two-day workshop led by an interdisciplinary team of experts. The concept for the memorial site proposed by the specialists appointed by the Chilean and German authorities (→ Aug 2018) was presented, and the meeting ended with a joint ceremony.

17 December – The Senate presented to President Piñera its resolution on the creation of the National Commission for Truth, Reparation and Memory of Colonia Dignidad (*Comisión Nacional de Verdad, Reparación y Memoria de Colonia Dignidad*).

19 December – In the second round of presidential elections, the young left-wing progressive political leader **Gabriel Boric** (Social Convergence, *Convergencia Social*) was elected President of Chile.

2022

17 March – The results of the Oral History project (CDOH) (→ Jan 2019), consisting of several dozen life stories that had been transcribed, translated and indexed, began to be gradually released online.

28 May – In the context of Chilean Heritage Day (*Día de los Patrimonios*), the AMCD organised a commemorative ceremony at CD, attended by survivors from Linares, Parral, Santiago and Talca. (“Día de los Patrimonios”; “Renuevan”)



Source: “Día de los Patrimonios”.

9 June – The court forcibly auctioned 1,024 hectares of the colony’s land for the equivalent of around 950,000 euros to pay **compensation to Chilean victims** of Schäfer’s sexual abuse (→ 25 Jan 2013; 15 Mar 2017). ABC-Holding avoided a second auction by directly paying the remaining amount of about 450,000 euros.

9 July – Members of AFDD-Maule and other human rights groups visited the Potato Cellar and the Thatched Shed (*Galpón de paja*), two sites at the settlement which had been provided by the colonists to the DINA for purposes of torture during the dictatorship. (Amauta)



The slogan on the placard on the right reads: “Truth And Justice / Now”.⁷² Source: Amauta.

19 August – On the initiative of AFDD-Maule, the *Colonia house in Parral*, which had been made available to the DINA in May 1974, was declared a **Historical Monument** by the Ministry of Culture, Art and Heritage (*Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio*). The relevant decree was published on 13 September 2022.

4 September – A nationwide **plebiscite** on the text of the **new constitution** was held in Chile, but the proposed progressive version of the basic law was not accepted by a majority of voters.

10 September – To pay tribute to the victims of the dictatorship, the AMCD organised a cultural and commemorative event at CD the day before the anniversary of the military coup. For the first time, representatives of the central Chilean authorities (Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Marcela Ríos, and Undersecretary for Human Rights, *Subsecretaria de Derechos Humanos*, Haydee Oberreuter) attended a ceremony at the German settlement. (“Acto”)

September – A founding member of the CD, Gerhard Mücke, died at the age of 87 in a hospital in Cauquenes.

30 September – The five-episode series ***The Survivors: Colonia Dignidad***, directed by Argentinian filmmaker Rosario Cervio, was released on the Amazon Prime Video platform.

10–15 October – President of the Federal Council (*Bundesrat*) **Bodo Ramelow** (The Left) visited the German settlement during his official trip to Chile. He became the highest-ranking German politician to visit the site to date.

⁷² “Verdad Y Justicia / Ahora”

2023

26 January – After the National Congress appointed Hernán Larraín (→ 19Sep–6 Oct 1994; 7–10 May 1995; 7 Dec 1996) to the 24-member commission of experts tasked with drafting the new constitution proposal, the AMCD vigorously protested against this decision.

29 January – During his state visit to Chile, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (SPD) reached agreement with President Boric on the building of a memorial site at the colony.

1 March – In southern Germany, Rebeca Schäfer died of gastric tract cancer at the age of 55.

5 May – **Willi Malessa** was **arrested** and placed in preventive detention on charges of involvement in the kidnapping and forced disappearance of Antonio Elizondo, Juan Maino and Elizabeth Rekas on → 26 May 1976. (→ 30 Nov 1978; → 30 May 2025)

26 August – A **funa** in front of Hartmut Hopp's apartment in Krefeld was organised by human rights activists from Bochum. The event included, among other things, a solo performance of the Chilean traditional dance **cueca**⁷³ by **Juan Eduardo Rojas**, whose father and brother had been arrested in 1973 and presumably murdered at the colony. The date of the protest was related to the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, celebrated annually on 30 August, and the 50th anniversary of the 9/11 military coup in Chile. (Dannemann, "Funan"; "Funan"; Löhning, "Protest"; Rojas, *Juan*; Schraeder)



Holding the microphone: Juan Eduardo Rojas. Source: Löhning, "Protest".

30 August – Ahead of the 50th anniversary of the *Golpe*, President Boric announced the **National Search Plan** (*Plan Nacional de Búsqueda*), a last-ditch attempt to find and identify the remains of around 1,200 people forcibly disappeared during the Pinochet dictatorship.

⁷³ *Cueca* – a traditional Chilean pair dance which was strongly promoted by the Chilean dictatorship and became a cultural symbol of the country. *Cueca sola*, a *cueca* danced alone, became a form of protest against the enforced disappearance strategy employed by the Pinochet regime.

18 November – In a symbolic ceremony, members of AFDD-Maule and their supporters laid a foundation stone for a memorial to be erected at the German estate. Their impromptu construction, including pebbles taken from the Perquilauquén river and a marble plaque, was demolished two days later, allegedly by the current leaders of CD. (“Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos ponen”; Löhning, “Stockende”; Rojas P., “Vandalizan”)



The caption on the stone reads: “18 November 2023 / First stone / Site of remembrance / former Colonia Dignidad / In homage to / Men and Women / from the countryside and the city / who fell here / ‘Even if the footsteps touch / a thousand years this site’ / We do not forget them / AFDD y EP⁷⁴ / Maule Region”.⁷⁵ Sources: Löhning, “Stockende”; Rojas P., “Vandalizan”.

17 December – In a **constitutional referendum**, a majority of Chileans rejected the second (strongly conservative) proposal for a new basic law.

2024

6 February – Former President Sebastián Piñera died in a helicopter accident while on vacation in southern Chile.

17 March – In an unprecedented **protest**, around 20 members of the **ADEC** (→ 2018), representing current and former residents of the colony, claimed that several families of former hierarchs had monopolised the management of the companies founded by Schäfer and the profits made by the estate. With placards, banners and a road blockade, they attempted to draw public attention to the injustice they had been suffering. (Dannemann, “El patrimonio”; Löhning, “Colonia”)



The slogans on the banners and placards on the left read: (front row from left): “They owe our / pensions”;⁷⁶ “We are / expropriated”;⁷⁷ “Villa Baviera / = Colonia Dignidad”; “Give back / our lives”;⁷⁸ (back row from left) “An end to

⁷⁴ *Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos/as Desaparecidos/as y Ejecutados/as Políticos* – the Association of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees and Politically Executed Persons.

⁷⁵ “18 de noviembre 2023 / Primera piedra / Sitio de memoria / ex Colonia Dignidad / En homenaje a / Hombres y Mujeres / del campo y la ciudad / que aquí cayeron. / ‘Aunque los pasos toquen mil años este sitio’ / No les olvidamos / AFDD y EP / Región del Maule”

⁷⁶ “Deben nuestros / jubilaciones”

the plundering / of / our goods”;⁷⁹ “An end to / Paul Schäfer’s / companies”;⁸⁰ “They owe our / salaries / and [?]”.⁸¹ Source: Dannemann, “El patrimonio”.

1 June – Prior to the presidential tour of Europe, which included a state visit to Germany and meetings with Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on 10–11 June, President Boric announced in the Chilean National Congress a plan to **expropriate** six historical buildings of the colony where serious crimes had been committed, in order to create a site of memory. During his German visit, Boric reiterated these decisions.

8 June – Pastor Ewald Frank died in Krefeld at the age of 90 (→ Aug [?] 2004). Hartmut Hopp and Thomas Schnellenkamp attended his funeral.

7 September – The Parral-based Association for Human Rights (*Asociación por los Derechos Humanos*) organised a protest and commemoration ceremony at the colony. The organization has lobbied for the expropriation of the former *Colonia* house in Parral (→ 24 May 1974; 19 Aug 2022) by the state and the opening of a memorial site there.



Source: GZA/Urra.

Late November – As part of the judicial investigations on the CD grounds, a team of experts discovered a previously unknown underground bunker, located in the vicinity of the entrance gate to the compound. The Visiting Judge of the Santiago Court of Appeals, Paola Plaza, supervised the excavations, conducted by a multidisciplinary team of specialists.

2025

29 January – **Luis Peebles died** (→ Feb 1975).

2 March – Ahead of the official visit of German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier to Chile (4–6 March), a protest action by some former colonists affiliated to the ADEC was conducted on the access road to CD. The protesters claimed that the planned expropriation of some of the land and buildings of the colony by the Chilean state, as confirmed by President Boric on 3 March 2025, would benefit the new hierarchy rather than the victims. They also lamented the fact that they had not been invited to Steinmeier’s

⁷⁷ “Estamos / expropiados”

⁷⁸ “Devuelvan nuestras / vidas”

⁷⁹ “Fin al saqueo / de / ntrs. bienes”

⁸⁰ “Fin a las / empresas de / Paul Schäfer”

⁸¹ “Adeudan ntrs. / sueldos / y [?]”

private meeting with some experts and persons involved, to be held at the MMDH on 4 March. During that meeting, Professor Stefan Rinke of the Free University of Berlin (FUB) presented plans for a digital interactive station at the MMDH, which would include archival material related to the history of the *Colonia*.



The slogans on the banners and placards read: (from left) “Steinmeier / avoids / the true victims”;⁸² “An end to / Paul Schäfer’s / companies”;⁸³ “An end to the plundering / of / our goods”;⁸⁴ “They owe our / salaries / and [?]”;⁸⁵ “Villa Baviera = Colonia Dignidad”. The slogan on the right reads: “No to the clan / Schnellenkamp / Schreiber / Blanck”.⁸⁶ Photos: Winfred Hempel. Source: GZA/Fernández.

30 May – Judge Paola Plaza of the Santiago Court of Appeal **sentenced Willi Malessa** (→ 5 May 2023) to six years in prison and disqualified him from holding public office for covering up the kidnapping of three political prisoners: Antonio Elizondo, Juan Maino and Elizabeth Rekas (→ 13 Nov 2014). This ruling may open the way for new judicial investigations of the criminal structure of CD.

10 June – **Franz Baar died** at the age of 71. (→ 11 Apr 2003)

16 June – The Council of the National Institute of Human Rights (INDH) approved a **report** which acknowledged for the first time the state’s responsibility for human rights violations at CD and identified 20 crimes committed there. Although the report represents a step forward in terms of accountability for crimes and redress for victims, it is based on weak methodology, as it mixes documentary and fictional sources.

7 July – Minister of National Assets (*Bienes Nacionales*) Francisco Figueroa, Minister of Justice and Human Rights Jaime Gajardo, and Minister of Housing and Urban Development (*Vivienda y Urbanismo*) Carlos Montes signed a **decree expropriating** part of the CD estate (117.27 hectares in total), including sites where documentation had been found and where crimes had been committed (for example the *Freihaus*, the hospital, and the Potato Cellar), as well as access roads and some internal roads.

⁸² “Steinmeier / meidet die / Wahrenopfer”

⁸³ “Fin a las / empresas de / Paul Schäfer”

⁸⁴ “Fin al saqueo / de / ntrs. bienes”

⁸⁵ “Adeudan ntrs. / sueldos / y [?]”

⁸⁶ “No al clan / Schnellenkamp / Schreiber / Blanck”

2026

11 March 2026 – The far-right politician **José Antonio Kast** of the Republican Party (*Partido Republicano*) became President of Chile, and shortly after being sworn in, his cabinet revoked the decree expropriating part of the CD's land.

29 August – The **fourth funa against Hartmut Hopp** was carried out in front of his apartment in Krefeld. The man, who fled from the Chilean justice system, was in his flat at the time. The demonstration was organised by the association Medical Aid for Refugees (*Medizinische Flüchtlingshilfe Bochum, MFB*) to mark the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, observed on 30 August. (Alvarez; Dannemann, “Nueva”; Löhning, “Sprecht”; Rojas M.)



Fernando Galván (top left); Bianca Schmolze (MFB) (centre right); Jan Stehle (political scientist) and Isabel Liphthay (Duo Contraviento) (bottom right); Photo Grzegorz Ziółkowski

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Quillón

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