Speech upon being proclaimed candidate for deputy for San Antonio. January, 1949[1]

The F.N. (National Falange, from its Spanish acronym for *Falange Nacional*) has proclaimed me its candidate for deputy for the Fourth District of the Province of Santiago.

It is not the candidacy of a man. It is the candidacy of an idea.

Patricio Aylwin is an unknown name to the people of San Antonio; yet the inhabitants of this town, like all Chileans, have already had the opportunity to know something about the loyalty and integrity of the men of the Nacional Falange.

After twelve years of struggle, constantly silenced by the press, and often distorted by lack of understanding and slander, the F.N. has consistently demonstrated, through concrete facts and attitudes, an unwavering line of fidelity to the principles it proclaims and to popular interests.

In these twelve years, Chile has witnessed many things. Parties and men have shifted positions over and over again, forgetting the ideas they previously proclaimed and showing an absolute contempt for morality.

And the Chilean people, who placed their faith and hope in those parties, have suffered the bitterness of disappointment and betrayal time and time again.

And in the midst of this fluctuation of political opportunism, only one force, small but vigorous, the F.N., has remained unalterably faithful to the same ideas, always fighting for freedom, for social justice, and for the moralization of political life.

Guiding their thoughts and conduct by the social principles of Christianity, Bernardo Leighton, Eduardo Frei, Radomiro Tomic, Jorge Rogers, Tomás Reyes, Abraham Zambrano, and all the men to whom the Falange has entrusted the performance of a public duty, whether in Government or Parliament, in union leadership or municipal councils, have been zealous defenders of freedom, tireless opponents of any impropriety or abuse, and strenuous champions of the social conquests of the workers. Nothing and no one has managed to divert them from this path—neither the flatteries of power, nor influences, nor special interests—and it is impossible to find a single inconsistency in their record.

Thus we reach the present day, when the great masses of Chilean workers are more wounded than ever in their very humanity, suffering the limitation of their liberties, the destruction of their union

[1] Document corresponding to the draft of the speech delivered by Patricio Aylwin during his proclamation as a candidate for deputy for San Antonio, which was then the fourth district of the Province of Santiago. It does not specify an exact date, only "1949", but it is estimated to be from January of that year, when the parliamentary campaign began. The elections took place on March 6, 1949, with 20 senators and 147 deputies elected that day.

organizations, and a policy of total disregard for their fundamental rights and interests—all at the hands of the very people who yesterday sought their trust and whom they elevated to power. Now, they are once again called upon to elect legislators for the next four years.

It is evident that they must not place their trust again in those who have just betrayed them, nor in the eternal defenders of interests and privileges. They must not vote again for the Radical Party, who adopted a progressive facade to climb to power, only to align with the Right once in Government to remain there and comfortably continue reaping the benefits of the Administration. Nor must they vote for the Liberal and Conservative parties, which, cloaking their eternal selfishness in novel attire or proposing pretty words constantly contradicted by facts, continue today, just as yesterday, to defend the interests of capital.

Nor must they vote for those who, due to their indiscipline or incompetence, have so far failed to answer to the popular hopes placed in them.

Amidst this bleak landscape, only one path emerges toward the light, offering a redemptive hope to the people of Chile: that of the National Falange. And our red arrow—piercing through the barriers of oppression and injustice, of misunderstanding and malice—is beginning to take root in the hearts of Chileans from one end of the country to the other, mobilizing their consciences in a drive for liberation. It is both my honor and my responsibility to represent this hope in the Fourth District of the Province of Santiago.

I am a man at the service of an ideal.

I do not offer programs, nor do I make promises. The People are tired of programs and promises.

If I go to the Chamber, I will go there to uphold the standard maintained this far by the representatives of the National Falange: I will go to speak the truth; I will go to defend freedom; I will go to fight for justice.

We live in a world of deceit and lies. Congress needs clear voices willing to speak the truth.

I offer mine. I will go to expose, for example, the disgrace that a worker in San Antonio, after thirty years of labor, can be dismissed from his job with no more rights than six days of severance pay, and with no social safety net other than the laughable pensions of the Compulsory Workers' Insurance Fund.

I will go to say that nearly eight hundred port workers in San Antonio have been waiting since 1945 for the promises to include them in a serious and effective welfare system to be fulfilled, but nothing serious has been done to fulfill those promises.

I will go to say that those same workers earn today wages whose amount was fixed two years ago, and despite the fact that the cost of living has risen since then until now, according to official statistics, by more than 30%, they are now offered, on the eve of elections, a 10% readjustment.

I will also go to say that the four hundred maritime workers of San Antonio, despite a hundred promises, have not been able to obtain to date either the satisfaction of their fair aspiration to be included in the benefits of the *Caja de la Marina Mercante Nacional* (National Merchant Marine Fund).

I will go to denounce to the Chamber the political dictatorship that the Radical Party exercises in jobs such as those of the port of San Antonio and the Maestranza of San Bernardo, where merits do not count to enter or be promoted, but rather the pass from the Assembly or the recommendation of the deputy.

I will go to denounce to the Chamber the shameful conditions in which the workers of the Cartagena Lime Factory work, with immense damage to their health, and the complacent attitude that the departmental labor authorities have adopted in this regard, failing to fulfill their official task.

I will go to the Chamber to defend freedom, the essence of a true Democracy. Among the deceits of our world, one of the greatest is the speculation with the word Democracy, which is used even to destroy Democracy.

Nothing else is what has happened with the so-called law of Defense of Democracy, which suppresses the equality of Chileans, limits personal freedom and freedom of opinion, and practically suppresses freedom of association in one of its fundamental aspects: the syndical one.

A country that permanently lives under the rule of laws like this one, and still needs to give extraordinary powers to its rulers, cannot call itself a true Democracy.

For it to truly be one, it is necessary to repeal those laws and broadly restore the full freedom of all Chileans.

I will go to the Chamber to fight for justice, which in the days we live essentially means fighting for the workers, for the manual laborers and employees, who constitute the enormous proletarian mass of men who have no other resource to live on than their work.

The current world is built on the basis of money, on the predominance of money.

Justice demands that each one be given what corresponds to him, but in the processes of economic life today capital takes the best part, and the workers, who are the ones who make capital produce, which is sterile in itself, get the share of the poor relatives in the distribution of benefits.

This requires an immediate correction. It is necessary to give labor, represented by manual laborers, employees, and technicians, the participation they justly deserve in the profits, the management, and even the ownership of the enterprises.

As long as this is not done, the balance of the economic process will not be restored, and it will be absurd to expect greater production and wealth with simple incentives to capitalists—through remunerative pacts or other similar formulas—if the incentive of effective participation is not simultaneously offered to the workers.

I believe that the workers must obtain this participation through their own effort, and not as a gift, and that for this they have to train and organize themselves.

I will defend, therefore, labor rights and freedom of association as the best instrument for Chilean manual laborers and employees to obtain their liberation.

To defend these ideas, to fight for these principles of the National Falange, I request the votes of the workers of the Fourth District.

I know that those from San Bernardo, who have known me for twenty years and whom I have had the fortune to be able to serve, are with me. Those of San Antonio have the word.