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The ghost of Pinochet haunts Chile in the most complex elections in the last 30 years

On Monday, the Cadem poll, which predicted Kast's victory, gives Gabriel Boric about ten points over the far-right José Kast.



In less than six months the Chilean political atmosphere has mutated like a storm on a sunny day. The political process that gave birth in 2019 to the popular revolt was in full swing, the Constitutional Convention was advancing despite the many traps but expectations in the short term remained high. Until the storm of November 21 bursts, with an electoral result that inverted in a staggering way the previous perceptions.

The process of change, driven by the revolt of October 2019 and prosecuted in the Convention, has crashed into a retaining wall that neither the conventional nor the parties and organizations behind those transformations were able to see. Today, after the results of the elections there are certain loose ends that begin to form a dirty skein.



The triumph of José Kast in the first round of elections has not been a fortuitous event. A campaign to stop the processes of change that the hegemonic media had prepared and raised since the beginning of the year to generate a perception of terminal political crisis. Disorder, barricades, terrorism, drug trafficking, unleashed crime plus a designed discredit of the Convention.

Along with the corporate press, we must add the entire financial establishment, from the Central Bank onwards, to discredit a Congress that voted in favor of pension fund withdrawals. Kast's rise in the polls is the effect of this panoply of articulated disasters. Their campaign only amplifies a previously installed fear.

The result of the elections is confrontation. The reinstallation of Chile from the YES or NO to Pinochet, the extreme polarization. After the triumph of Kast, the traditional right in all its spectrum joins his campaign without great doubts. It assumes a discourse typical of the cold war, with a high-sounding warning to communism, to the loss of freedoms, to policies against private property, to indoctrination, to persecution. An old strategy but in confusing times tremendously effective. It is propaganda, it is a lie, but it serves to win elections.



The lie is the mediatized reality. The *fake news* is disseminated as the best political propaganda from the media to circulate and reproduce like a virus through social networks. The voter, often naïve, politically ignorant and fearful of his life receives this information in its unbearable distortion. The lie, in these cases, is read as truth. It is an atmosphere of deafening noises that cloud the contents and nullify the meaning of politics.

The entire right, with very few and honorable exceptions, has supported José Kast without hesitation. He has taken off a mask of tolerance that was uncomfortable for him. He has closed ranks not only for a candidate more politically profitable than the ill-fated former minister of Piñera Sebastián Sichel, but has embraced since before November 21 a regressive and denialist proposal. Overnight the Chilean right erases all the difficult advances in respect for rights

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regressive and denialist proposal. Overnight the Chilean right erases all the difficult advances in respect for human rights during the last thirty years.



If in the discourse it reflects the today artificial anti-communist discourse of the cold war, in the contents, in the sense of politics, it demonstrates comfort and lack of shame by wrapping a leader and a program of open features of fascist intolerance that denies violations of human rights, the rights of women and indigenous peoples, it is openly homophobic, rejects the scientific consensus on climate change and looks with distrust at the UN. That line that divided the right from the far right is nothing more than a moving line, a rhetorical expression.

This right is not new. She is an old acquaintance, she is the true gene of the Chilean oligarchy, which crosses all history and waters it with its intolerance, discrimination, class supremacism and the defense of its privileges at any price. This same gene is reproduced today, too, as we well observe, not only in the votes for rejection, but, and mainly, from the movements of capital in the financial centers, in the blatant editorial line of their media, in the entire spectrum of investors and their political operators.

The right strips naked to exhibit its true power, which is none other than violence. Kast's praise and affection for the armed forces and carabineros respond to this classic strategy.



In this scene, the only possible vote is against Kast and against the model of country installed by Pinochet and consolidated in the Constitution that he defends so much. Not only against his insistence on strengthening the neoliberal regime but by, and especially, in his vindication of the civic-military dictatorship and the discourse that denies or relativizes human rights violations. To vote against Kast is to defend the native peoples and the scope towards their self-determination and the democratic advances, even if they are scarce, of the last thirty years. It is to give course and priority to the changes channeled through the Constitutional Convention.

Kast's victory over Boric, which is no more than two percentage points, has shaken Chilean public opinion and generated a climate of cohesion among all sectors of the left and progressives. Since Monday, November 22, Boric's campaign only adds names, figures, parties and organizations of various activities. A spectrum that goes from the Christian Democracy to the Communist Party, which is a founding part of the Coalition Approve Dignity, which has raised since its origin the candidacy of Boric.

The electoral process is in full swing and looks successful. There is certainly a climate of optimism, but there are also the polls. On Monday, the Cadem poll, which predicted Kast's victory, gives Gabriel Boric about ten points over the far-right José Kast.

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