Chile Under Allende: A Bibliographical Survey

by

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Es mucho más fácil hacer la crítica que hacer la revolución.

Pablo Piacentini, "Crítica a la estrategia de la UP"
INTRODUCTION

This paper presents an analytical survey of evaluations of the Popular Unity government in Chile during 1970-1973. The interpretations are divided into two major groups, Marxist and non-Marxist. This division, and a further subdivision into smaller sections is necessarily somewhat schematic (a number of works could be listed in more than one section), but the classification will orient the reader among the multitude of contradictory judgments. The survey sketches the basic types of interpretation, and briefly discusses some selected works. For the sake of uniformity, all quotations are in English. The books and articles reviewed in the text were published after the coup in September 1973, but the additional annotated bibliography includes some titles published during the Allende period. The selection has been made on the basis of two considerations: First, to include the most important works, or at least those that are most often referred to, and second, to present as many different opinions as possible. The availability of books also played a role in the compilation. Books and articles that are mainly concerned with the coup and its aftermath have not been included.

The following summary is intended for those who are not familiar with the developments in Chile between September 4, 1970 and September 11, 1973. Additional explanatory remarks on crucial facts and events can be found in footnotes to the text.

In September 1970, the Chilean voters had to decide between three presidential candidates: Radomiro Tomic, candidate of Christian Democrats who had governed the country between 1964 and 1970; Jorge Alessandri, an independent candidate of the right; and Salvador Allende,
a member of the Chilean Socialist Party and candidate of a leftist coalition of six parties (the strongest being Socialists and Communists) called Popular Unity. Allende won by a small margin but because he did not have the majority (he received 36.3%), the Chilean Congress -- according to Chilean laws -- had to choose between him and the second runner up, who was Alessandri. The period between the popular election on September 4 and the Congressional vote on October 24 was marked by an economic slump and a high political tension, caused mainly by both passive and active resistance of Chilean business and political right against the election of a Marxist president. The U.S. government and business also tried to prevent Allende's election. Finally, however, Allende signed an agreement with Christian Democrats promising to uphold the constitution, and was elected Chilean president on October 24, 1970.

The program of Allende's government was a democratic, peaceful transition to socialism, the most important immediate tasks being: income redistribution, full employment, agrarian reform, nationalization of banks and big foreign companies, especially U.S. copper companies (Kennecott and Anaconda). During 1971, the government accomplished a great deal of its program, preserving at the same time all democratic freedoms and rights. Real wages rose considerably, unemployment fell, agrarian reform was speeded up, and in July 1971, the Chilean Congress unanimously passed a constitutional amendment nationalizing the copper mines (copper accounts for about 80% of Chilean exports). The year 1971 was thus an apparent success but many economists -- mainly from the opposition -- strongly criticized the governmental economic policy for shortsightedness. And indeed, the year 1972 witnessed an economic decline
and at the same time, a growing political polarization which was both a cause and a consequence of economic difficulties. This most pronounced problems were shortages of goods, appearance of black markets, inflation, governmental deficit and lack of foreign reserves. The opposition started to blame the government more and more vigorously, while the government and the left claimed that all problems were caused by the actions of the opposition and more important still, by an external "invisible blockade" led by the U.S. government (the "invisible blockade" denunciations usually referred to suspension of credits and a general economic squeeze). A long strike of truck drivers in October 1972 almost crippled the country, and was only solved by inclusion of the military in the Allende government. This step calmed down the heightened political passions for some time, but the division of the country at the beginning of 1973 was already so deep that it could not be bridged.

There were two hostile camps and the center, traditionally represented by the Christian Democrats, practically disappeared. The last hope for the opposition to depose Allende legally was to win two thirds of the congressional seats in the March 1973 elections which would make it possible to impeach Allende. The opposition, however, won only 55%. After the elections, Chile was quickly plunged into a general chaos: the economic situation became disastrous; the political system was breaking down as the executive, the congress and the judiciary were violently attacking each other; and extremist groups on both left and right called for a radical solution. Finally, on September 11, 1973, the Chilean military intervened. Allende died in his presidential palace, either fighting the entering commandos or by suicide, and a military dictatorship was installed.
I. THE PROTAGONISTS

1. Unidad Popular and MIR

During the last months before the September 1973 coup, the most frequently heard sentence in Chile was "This cannot go on." On August 22, 1973, the Cámara de Diputados of the Chilean Congress approved a declaration denouncing the government for repeated violations of law and constitution. The opposition media urged more and more openly that the Armed forces "save the fatherland" and leftist periodicals were publishing articles about an impending military uprising. The economy was a shambles, with inflation, shortages and strikes gaining in intensity each day. Yet it seems that, when the coup finally came, the Popular Unity\(^1\) was surprised and completely immobilized. None of the UP parties took a public stand, none of them addressed the thousands of people whom they claimed to represent -- not even during the first hours of the coup when the military did not yet control the entire country. Apparently, the governing coalition was in as deep a crisis as was the whole Chilean society.

The first leftist group in Chile to make an evaluation of the UP defeat was MIR\(^2\) which had already gone underground in the last weeks of Allende government. The evaluation was formulated by Miguel Enriquez.

\(^1\)A coalition of six parties, formed in October 1969. Its members were: Socialist Party, Communist Party, MAPU (Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitario), Radical Party, API (Acción Popular Independiente), Social Democratic Party. Throughout the paper, it is referred to by the initials of its name in Spanish, Unidad Popular.

\(^2\)Movement of Revolutionary Left (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria), a radical leftist organization formed in 1965. Its members were mainly students and young intellectuals and its greatest impact was in the countryside where they organized land occupations, and in the shantytowns around Santiago.
the Secretary General of the organization, in an interview that took place several days after September 11.\(^1\) After denouncing the Junta, Enríquez declared:

"In Chile, neither the left, nor the revolution have been defeated. In Chile a reformist illusion has come to its tragic end, the illusion of modifying socio-economic structures and carrying out a revolution with the consent and passivity of those whose interests were most injured, the dominating classes."

Enríquez did not discuss the economic situation (an attitude typical of MIR throughout the UP period), did not mention the role of foreign economic interests, and never used the expression "in invisible blockade." He alleged, however, that the coup itself had been "directed and planned by the Brazilian Military Mission and the U.S. Naval Intelligency." Several months later, in January 1974, MIR issued a declaration on the objectives of popular resistance against the Junta.\(^2\) It evaluated the UP defeat in the following way:

"Persistent attempts to seek alliance with a sector of the bourgeoisie, in a period of rising worker militancy and extreme social polarization, weakened and disarmed the workers, thus lending strength and initiative to the bourgeois counter-revolution. The defeat of the Chilean people in the face of the reactionary forces dramatically shows the price that the masses pay for the vacillations and ineffectiveness of leftist centrum."

Both these statements reflect the basic attitude of MIR during the preceding years: they were firmly convinced that the revolution could only succeed by force, by armed struggle of the people. For that reason, they did not join the UP coalition and remained its "critical supporters" only.

\(^1\) Published in: Chile. The Allende years, the coup, under the junta. New York, IDOC, December 1973, p. 39-41. It is not indicated who obtained the interview and whether it was published elsewhere.

\(^2\) Reprinted in MACLA's Latin America & Empire Report (Berkeley, California), v. 8, No. 5, May-June, 1974: pp. 5-8.
The most outspoken opponent of MIR within the UP had always been the Communist Party which claimed that the peaceful way to socialism was possible and in fact that it was the only possible way given the Chilean conditions. The CP clandestine statement about the coup, issued on October 11, 1973 and smuggled out of Santiago, thus differed from the MIR evaluation, even though there were understandable similarities in denouncing the Junta, the Chilean reaction, and imperialism.

The Communists acknowledged the importance of economic problems and criticized not only foreign interests but also the UP policies, especially the policy of "adoption of budget laws and increase of wages without adequate financial measures to back them up." Their disapproval of actions by the extreme left was softened by a simultaneous rebuke of reformism -- which is somewhat ironic because it was precisely the Communist who were being accused of reformism: "Grave damage was caused by the activities of the leftist elements and reformist tendencies, which at times made themselves felt in the work of the Popular Unity government."

But, most importantly, the Communists reiterated that the only correct

1Founded in 1922, the party was legal during most of its existence. It was a well organized, disciplined party, with greatest influence among the working class. It was noted for subservient loyalty to Moscow, and for moderation in its domestic policies.

2"To the people of Chile." Chile. The Allende years ..., op. cit., pp. 36-38. The original text can be found in Carlos Cerdá, Chile: La traición de los generales. 2nd ed. Bogotá, Ediciones Suramérica Ltda., 1974, pp. 73-87.

3An interesting article written by Ernest Conine appeared in the Times of Los Angeles on January 25, 1974. Conine argues that both West European and Soviet Communists -- similarly to the Chilean CP -- have always been very critical of the leftist extremism, and he quotes an Italian politician as saying: "Our Communists are not so angry at the 'imperialists' as they are at the Chilean Socialists for extremist policies and attitudes which frightened non-Marxists and made a military coup inevitable."
policy of the UF should have included "mutual understanding with other
democratic forces," "striving to inspire confidence in the middle strata
of the population," "persistent labors to strengthen the alliance of the
Communists and Socialists," "efforts to increase production and raise
the productivity of labor ... and to insure strict observance of labor
discipline ...""

The Socialist Party,\textsuperscript{1} which had been closer to leftist radicals
than to moderate Communists, did not issue any declaration on its own
after the coup. Its name appeared, however, on two declarations of the
Chilean left in exile signed by UF parties and MIR. The first, published
on December 25, 1973 in \textit{Granma},\textsuperscript{2} was a short denunciation of the military
junta; the second, signed on February 12, 1974,\textsuperscript{3} contained an analysis of
the situation in Chile at that time and also an explanation of the coup:

"From the moment of the popular triumph in 1970, by
means of plans prepared by the CIA and financed by the
transnational companies, the sinister conspiracy that
culminated in the assassination of President Allende
in the bloody military coup last September 11 was put
into play. A part of these plans were the economic
blockade and sabotage, the financial boycott and the
concerted action of the transnational corporations,
which constituted a new form of intervention by
imperialism .... The military coup in Chile fits
the model of the reactionary counteroffensive by

\textsuperscript{1}Founded in 1933. The party's position was to the left of the Communists,
and its history had been marked by numerous divisions and internal strife,
and by lack of organization and discipline. These traits persisted after
the UP victory. Allende was one of the founders of the Socialist Party, but
during his presidency, he was often closer to the Communists.

\textsuperscript{2}\textit{Granma} (La Habana). Also published in the magazine \textit{Casa de las Américas}

\textsuperscript{3}The English version in \textit{Chile under military rule}. New York, IDOC, 1974,
pp. 146-151; the Spanish version in \textit{Casa de las Américas}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 3,
(separate), and also in CIDOC (Centro Cultural de Documentacion), \textit{DOC
Chile} 74/4, Mexico.
imperialism in Latin America, whose object is to crush with blood and fire the development of popular struggles on the continent. The action of the traitor general is, therefore, determined by the global strategy of large international capital -- of which they are merely the policemen, put in charge of representing the Chilean people."

There was no word of criticism of the UP policies, the implicit assumption being that the violent overthrow of the Allende regime exonerates it from all blame.

A lengthy analysis of the UP period and its collapse was prepared by the leaders of MAPU\(^1\) in November 1973 in Santiago. It circulated in Europe and was published in February 1974.\(^2\) According to this document, "the defeat of the popular forces in September was due to the breakdown of the strategy that the reformist and center revolutionaries impressed on the revolutionary process from the beginning...." MAPU acknowledged that the revolutionary centrist -- i.e., the position taken by the Communist Party -- despite being bureaucratic and gradualist, also aimed at a takeover of power by the proletariat but its timing and form were different from the revolutionary strategy. The document stressed the weakness of the revolutionary forces -- i.e., MAPU, MIR, sections of the Socialist Party: "Still weak in their political ideology and organization, without any single vanguard for expression, these sectors so far have little influence on the masses, especially the working class. Only decision, strategy-tactic correction, articulation and

\(^1\)\textit{Latinamerica Press}, February 1, 1974. For a summary, see "New tactics for the Left: MAPU analysis," \textit{Chile under military rule}, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

\(^2\)A splinter group of the Christian Democrats, formed in May 1969. During the UP period, it became more and more radical. In March 1973, its internal strife led to a division into two groups.
organization will allow them to be transformed into a significant force." According to the analysis, the mistakes committed by the left had been exclusively political, or, in other words, the UP had not been politically ripe for revolution. The MAPU document did not discuss economic aspects and paid very little attention to the foreign factors -- except an almost obligatory statement about the military government representing "the interests of the national and international bourgeois monopoly."

2. The Military Junta and the Anti-UP Opposition

From the beginning, the Allende government had been criticized by various opposition groups but until mid-1972, the opposition was quite heterogeneous, ranging from ultra-right attacks by Patria y Libertad\(^1\) to the moderate, and even constructive, criticism of the left-wing of Christian Democrats. Although the last year of the UP period witnessed a consolidation of opposition ranks, the reaction of the most important anti-Allende forces to the coup had different shades.

Previous to the coup, the military did not engage in the open political debate in any significant way, even though it could hardly have been claimed that the Armed Forces remained apolitical.\(^2\) The first statement of the new rulers was a 14-point proclamation issued in the morning

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\(^1\) A fascist group formed in 1970.

\(^2\) An argument has been made that Allende himself was responsible for politicizing the Armed Forces when he brought the military into his government. There may be some merit in this observation but it seems more important to stress that the military was not a monolithic enemy of the UP from the beginning, and that it could hardly have remained neutral in the deepening political polarization of the country. It is also well known that a minority of the armed forces, both at the top and among the rank and file, was loyal to the government until the end.
of September 11.\textsuperscript{1} It listed the main accusations that had been voiced by the opposition long before the coup: Allende's government, by misusing and distorting the legal system, by violating civil liberties, and by usurping more power than it was entitled to, became illegitimate; as a result of its policies, the nation was divided and the economy was in a disastrous situation, and no corrective measures were taken to improve that situation. Therefore, the Armed Forces declared it their moral duty to "depose the Government as illegitimate, immoral and no longer representing the great majority of national feeling." In its \underline{White Book}\textsuperscript{2} and other public statements, the Junta elaborated on the points contained in the first declaration, and added a number of new accusations concerning the allegedly planned leftist coup (so-called "plan Z"), the Cuban intervention in Chilean affairs, the numerous caches of arms found in the offices and homes of UP members, the role of leftist extremists from other Latin American countries, etc.

The military take-over was hailed with enthusiasm by the main party of the right, Partido Nacional.\textsuperscript{3} This party had been in total opposition to the Allende government from the beginning,\textsuperscript{4} accusing it of


\textsuperscript{2}English version, see above; the Spanish version: \textit{Libro blanco del cambio de Gobierno en Chile}. Santiago, Editorial Lord Cochrane, 1973.

\textsuperscript{3}Partido Nacional was formed by a merger of the old Conservative and Liberal parties and Acción Nacional, a small fascist-inclined group.

\textsuperscript{4}With the exception of the constitutional amendment concerning the nationalization of copper companies, approved by the Congress unanimously in July 1971.
all possible crimes and maintaining that the ultimate goal of the UP
was to achieve totalitarian power. On the day following the coup, Partido
Nacional issued a short statement in which it repeated the arguments of
the Junta's declaration, expressed its "unrestricted support for all
actions leading to the solution of the moral and material crisis," and
urged all Chileans to "endorse without reservations the corrective
actions of the Junta."

Still more enthusiastic were the statements of various profes-
sional groups and gremios that had been, since mid-1972, the most vocal
and active opponents of the UP government, engaging in numerous strikes
which contributed to the economic disruptions and chaos. The declaration
of the Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura, issued a few days after the
coup, can serve as an example of this attitude. It said, among other
things, that the members of this organization "declare their profound
gratitude and total adherence to the Armed Forces and the Carabineros of
Chile who patriotically resorted the dignity of our country."4

1 El Mercurio, 13 de septiembre 1973, p. 4.
2 The most important traditional gremios: Sociedad Nacional de
Agricultura, Sociedad de Fomento Fabril, Cámara Chilena de La
Construcción and Cámara Central de Comercio. Two new gremios of
small entrepreneurs which played an important role under Allende:
Confederación de Dueños de Caniones and Confederación del Comercio
Detallista. The most important and influential professional groups
were: Colegio de Abogados, Colegio Médico and Colegio de Ingenieros.
3 The Chilean police.
4 El Mercurio, 14 de septiembre 1973, p. 4. For other statements
by the gremios, see p. 12.
The attitude of the Christian Democrats, who had always professed an adherence to the democratic process, was not so totally approving. In a statement issued immediately after the coup, the party declared that the Junta needed patriotic support of all Chileans, despite the fact that the military take-over was contrary to the democratic traditions of the country and, as such, a deplorable event. According to the statement, however, the military were not to blame because they had shown previously that they had not sought the power. The real responsibility rested with the UP government: "The events that Chile experiences are a consequence of economic disaster, institutional chaos, armed violence and moral crisis to which the deposed government brought the country and which led the Chilean people to anguish and despair." In a lengthier statement made two weeks later, the Christian Democrats reiterated these points, stressing once more that the party had done everything possible to prevent such an outcome. Furthermore, they acknowledged that the reactionary sectors had also been responsible for exacerbating the situation, and expressed concern about the influence of these sectors on the Junta's policies.

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1The largest single party in Chile, founded in 1937 under the name of Falange Nacional. Eduardo Frei, President of Chile during 1952-70, had been opposed to Allende since the beginning. He was the leader of the centrist-to-rightist section of the party, which gradually allied itself with the traditional Chilean right. A leftist section, headed by Radomiro Tomic (presidential candidate in 1970), was more willing to strike a compromise with the UP but its position within the Christian Democratic Party was gradually eroded during the Allende administration.


3Reprinted in Chile. The Allende Years..., op. cit., pp. 31-35.
In addition to the official statement of the Christian Democrats, a declaration signed by 12 dissenting members of the party circulated in Santiago almost immediately after September 11. The document condemned the coup quite categorically and maintained that both the government and the opposition were responsible for the collapse of the Chilean democratic system. It placed the major blame on the extreme left and extreme right.¹

¹Reprinted in Chile: The Allende years... op. cit., p. 29.
II. ARGUMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. Marxist interpretations

The authors listed in this section tend to accept Marxism as a valid social theory but there are significant differences between their interpretations of the UP period. They range from dogmatic, quasi-religious evoking of the Marxist classics to explain any and all phenomena of the Chilean experience, to thoughtful, judicious analyses which take into account a wide range of concrete historical factors influencing the Chilean developments during 1970-73. One theme, however, is common to all these assessments: the Allende government represented a progressive social force and it was defeated by both world imperialism and the Chilean reaction, which represented the oppressive (and in the case of the military junta regressive) forces of the world. Not all of these writers are sympathetic to Allende and UP, but all of them are very negative towards anti-UP opposition.

a) UP was too weak and irresolute

A peaceful way to socialism is possible, but the UP was too heterogeneous, too much internally divided, to succeed. It lacked a clear strategy and committed grave mistakes in the economic policy, which ultimately led to its collapse.

This interpretation concentrates mainly on the political and economic analysis of the UP government, with relatively little emphasis on the actions of internal and external opposition. It corresponds roughly to the evaluation of the Chilean Communist Party and it also contains -- from the point of view of leftist orthodoxy -- a number of "reformist" elements. An important characteristic of the authors grouped
in this section is their effort to see the complexity of the whole process,
the political and social constraints that the UP had to face, and the
historical determinants that made the UP victory possible and played a
crucial role in the subsequent developments.

Priority should be given to Joan Garcés, Allende's political
advisor. Shortly after the coup, Garcés published a book consisting mainly
of articles written during the UP period, but in the introduction and
conclusion, he offered his interpretation of the UP defeat. He says that
the international factors, especially the economic blockade, played an
indisputable role in the overthrow of Allende, but he stresses the weak-
ness of UP caused by the lack of unity: "... in the conduct of a revolution-
ary process, a tactical unity of all the different movements that
support this process is imperative. The great majority of deficiencies
and political mistakes which stand out in the period of UP government,
have their origin, directly or indirectly in this problem." Garcés
emphatically rejects the contention that Allende's government should have
armed the workers and describes it as a 'profound mistake and a gross
ignorance of the concrete military reality in Chile under the UP
government,' and subsequently notes: "Between 1970 and August 1973, the
objective and subjective circumstances that determined the course of the

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1 Joan E. Garcés, El estado y los problemas tácticos en el gobierno de
a Catalan by birth and a renowned political scientist, came to Chile in
1970 and was invited by Allende to join him in the presidential campaign.

2 He also provides very interesting inside information about the develop-
ments immediately preceding the coup.

3 Garcés, op. cit., p. 34.

UP government made it impossible (Garcés' emphasis) to organize a popular army parallel to the professional one.\textsuperscript{1} Garcés' final conclusion is somewhat less convincing. He declares that Allende's death "was his last victory, the most important of his political life. He dragged down with him the whole scaffolding which had supported the bourgeois political system, forcing thus his adversaries to expose their social interests and their concept of democracy."\textsuperscript{2}

An interesting, perceptive work by a French sociologist, Alain Touraine, can also be placed in this category.\textsuperscript{3} Touraine's book is not a systematic analysis but rather a "sociological journal" written in Santiago between July 29 and September 24, 1973. Some retrospective passages deal with the whole UP period but the main emphasis is on detailed description and analysis of the pre-coup situation. Touraine repeatedly argues that the weakness of the UP government consisted in its inability to use the available state mechanisms, especially in the economic sphere (according to him, after Vuskovic' resignation,\textsuperscript{4} the government did not have any economic policy at all). He is critical of leftist extremism and points out that the constant leftist warnings about the impending military coup could be seen as a "self-fulfilling prophesy." Regarding the international aspects, Touraine quite explicitly says that they played

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid, p. 26.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid, p. 307.


\textsuperscript{4}Pedro Vuskovic, the Minister of Economy between October 1970 and June 1972, was the architect of the initial economic policy of reactivation, structural transformations and income distribution.
a minor role in the Chilean developments and that in fact the lack of explicit external threat contributed to the political polarization and economic chaos. His main conclusion is that the only way the UP could have succeeded would have been to combine "reformist" and "revolutionary" strategies: "The regime of Allende could have lived only by combining the policy of the Communist Party at the bottom... A Poder popular at the base and a search for an economic policy that would permit an agreement with the Christian Democrats was the correct, the only possible way for the regime."\(^1\)

Another interpretation of this type was formulated by an Argentinian journalist, Pablo Piacentini.\(^2\) He says in his sympathetic, yet moderate, analysis that the UP "acted as if it considered the relation of forces to be favorable and after an offensive that was beyond its real possibilities, it encountered a reaction stronger than its capacity of response."\(^3\) He points out that a transformation process of such a magnitude as the UP proposed should have been expected to provoke a powerful reaction from the opposition, both internal and external, and that it would have been necessary to have the support of the majority of the people, which the UP did not have,\(^4\) to face this reaction. According to him, the main mistakes of the Allende government

\(^1\)Touraine. op. cit., p. 234.


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 50.

\(^4\)Electoral strength of UP during its existence was following: September 1970 presidential elections, 36.3%; April 1971 municipal elections, 50.9%; March 1973 congressional elections, 43.4%.
consisted in attacking on all fronts simultaneously, and in alienating the middle classes. Piacentini does not preclude the possibility of another effort at a peaceful transition to socialism, and hopes that the lessons drawn from the Chilean experience might help in future national and revolutionary movements in Latin America.

b) UP was not revolutionary

A peaceful way to socialism is impossible, as it had been proven by the classics of Marxism-Leninism. The UP was a reformist government which used a revolutionary rhetoric but failed to prepare the masses for an armed revolutionary struggle — and therefore it was defeated.

This argument corresponds roughly to the interpretations of MIR and MAPU even though it often contains harsh criticism of both these organizations. Its exponents, most of them belonging to Trotskyite groups, tend to list revolutionary actions which the Allende government should have taken, without considering the feasibility of such actions. Usually, they disregard the economic developments under Allende, or at most they treat them in a rather simplifying manner. As with the evaluations in the preceding section, the attention of leftist radicals is focused on the UP rather than on its adversaries.

Paul M. Sweezy, a well known American author and the editor of the independent socialist magazine Monthly Review, summarizes the UP period in his article published shortly after the coup. First of all, he argues that "the issue of violent confrontation must be central to all socialist strategy and tactics at all stages of the process. The problem is not how to avoid violent confrontation but how to prepare

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for it and win it.1 According to him, the main mistakes of the UP government was that it did not use the opportunity after the successful April 1971 elections to declare a plebiscite, which could have assured the UP control over the legislature and the judiciary. This would have left only one branch of the government, the military, not controlled by the UP -- and Sweezy suggests a solution:

'Reactionary officers should have been retired, loyal ones promoted to key command positions; the pay, living conditions, and democratic rights of enlisted men and noncommissioned officers should have been expanded and improved; political education should have been introduced into training programs; and, perhaps most important, all contacts between the Chilean military and the United States should have been conditionally severed. At the same time, the UP administration should have started organizing, arming, and training a popular militia with the purpose of entrusting to it more and more of the responsibilities hitherto borne by the army and the national police. 2

The actual policy of the UP government vis-à-vis the military was, according to Sweezy, an expression of political naivete.3 Further on, Sweezy admits that a policy of retreat and compromise is sometimes necessary in the revolutionary process and he concludes by saying: 'Perhaps the greater and ultimately fatal, weakness of the Chilean UP was that it had no coherent strategy to begin with, and at no time showed itself capable of making the kind of assessment of the situations in which it was operating which would have been essential to success.'4

1Sweezy, op. cit., p. 1.
2Ibid, p. 4.
3Compare this opinion with that of Joan Garcés, p. 15 above.
4Sweezy, op. cit., p. 11.
Another example of this interpretation is a book *Disaster in Chile*, edited by Les Evans.\(^1\) It is a collection of articles written both before and after the coup by authors connected with the Trotskyite news magazine *Intercontinental Press* and with several other Trotskyite periodicals and organizations. In his introduction, Les Evans singles out two basic errors of Allende's popular front strategy: first, a myth about the existence of a "truly national bourgeoisie" and second, a belief that "the bourgeoisie would remain bound by the rules of bourgeois democracy when these conflicted with its class interests."\(^2\) According to Evans, Chile needed a "mass revolutionary party with a perspective of struggling against the military for power, not collaborating with the generals and urging the workers to trust the local agents of imperialism." Neither the Communists nor the Socialists were truly revolutionary and MIR, instead of being a "revolutionary alternative" to the UP coalition, was its "critical supporter."\(^3\) Other articles in the book contain similar themes: criticism of the Communist for reformism, criticism of MIR for not being resolute enough to call the government bourgeois, criticism of Allende for "collaborationist" policies. One author makes the following statement about the economic policy of the UP government: "As a result of its "revolutionary" approach, the government was unable to unite the decisive masses of the population behind a clear program for reorganizing the economy. Because of its refusal to expropriate the big capitalists, it did not have sufficient control of economic life to offer any solution

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\(^3\) Ibid, p. 14.
to the problems of the petty bourgeoisie."\textsuperscript{1}

A similar position is taken by a group of Latin American authors whose articles were published in the book \textit{La tragedia chilena}.\textsuperscript{2} They attack the UP (and especially the Communist Party) for being opportunist, for collaborating with the bourgeoisie, for blocking the mass mobilization, for being soft with the reaction: "We have to point out that even as a nationalist bourgeois government, the UP did not distinguish itself as the boldest and most consistent... (Allende) did not expropriate the capitalists fully and permitted the rightist leaders to submerge the country into chaos, by means of strikes (paros) of truck-drivers, merchants, etc. Villarin, the leader of two truck drivers strikes, did not suffer more repression than a few days of comfortabe prison, and the leaders of the fascist group \textit{Patria y Libertad} moved around freely, appearing and disappearing whenever it seemed convenient to them."\textsuperscript{3} The authors repeatedly attacked MIR: "MIR did not explain to the working masses that the UP government was not a workers' and people's government; that it was necessary to defend it but without trusting it. This error is unforgivable: while every day its press denounced facts that proved that the government continued being bourgeois, and that it preferred appeasing the bourgeoisie to encouraging the workers' mobilization, MIR helped to maintain the illusion among the working masses that it was their government."\textsuperscript{4}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{1}Gerry Foley, "The Coup," p. 228. For data on expropriations of both big and small capitalists, see the publications of NACLA, and also the article by R. Ratcliff, p. 23, below.
\textsuperscript{3}\textit{Ibid}, p. 27-28 (article by Silvia Diaz and Andres Mendez).
\textsuperscript{4}\textit{Ibid}, p. 29-30.
\end{footnotes}
c) **UP was defeated by internal reaction**

The Chilean bourgeoisie wanted to destroy Allende from the very beginning, and therefore manipulated the middle classes and sabotaged the economy. With the help of international imperialism, the Chilean reactionary forces finally succeeded in crushing the UP government.

This interpretation concentrates on the actions of UP internal enemies, including the Christian Democrats. It blames the "bourgeoisie" for shortages, black market, strikes, and for legislative obstruction. The measures and policies of the government are not criticized, some of them are not discussed at all, and little attention is paid to the differences within the UP coalition.

Several authors argue that the UP government failed because it was too successful. This idea is expressed by two graduate students who spend considerable time in Chile:

The coup was caused by the successes of the government, not by its failures. Allende's opposition was running scared and could not wait for the presidential elections of 1976. The Left was growing in numbers and in organizational strength. Furthermore, there were clear indications that Chile's major economic problems were on their way to solution. An objective analysis indicated that the Chilean winter of 1973 (June to September) would be the most difficult period the government would face. If it survived the winter, the economy would begin to improve, and political support for the Left would increase even more rapidly. This meant that the Left was almost certain to win a popular majority in the presidential elections of 1976.¹

A similar, but more sophisticated, analysis is contained in an article by Richard Ratcliff. He says that "a more thorough assessment of why the UP fell as it did to a brutal attack from the right would place the emphasis much less on the movement's inherent impotence and much more on its surprising successes." Further on, he argues that "time was working for the benefit of those committed to a socialist transformation in Chile," and that by 1976, "even if the UP had been voted out of office, the likely victors would have been a coalition of middle class groups who would have no certain commitment to return property, and its many prerogatives, to the upper classes." Ratcliff's argument about the weakening position of the Chilean upper class can hardly be disputed, but he minimizes the opposition of the middle classes by saying that their grievances were "of a limited sort" and that they sought solutions relating only to their own interests.

With some reservations, the book No Peaceful Way, by Gary MacEoin could be placed in this section. It is a descriptive rather than analytical work, which devotes the introductory chapters to the historical and political background of the Allende government. The account of the UP period itself is rather uneven and does not follow any clear pattern, neither chronological nor topical. MacEoin praises the government for its economic measures that improved the living standards of the poor, and criticizes the opposition for deliberately causing economic chaos.


There are many omissions, some of them quite significant: for instance, in his chapter on better living standards for the working classes he never mentions the huge price increases in August and September 1972\(^1\) that marked the beginning of a hyperinflationary cycle. Another small example of an omission, fairly common in many leftist interpretations, concerns the electoral results: he points out that in March 1973 elections the government improved its position as compared with the presidential elections in 1970 but he fails to mention that it was a decline as compared to the April 1971 elections.\(^2\) MacEoin expresses a total approval for everything the UP government did: for its economic policy, for its efforts to reach an agreement with the Christian Democrats, for its commitment to democracy -- and he places all blame for the UP collapse on the opposition, on Christian Democrats (for shifting to the right), on the military, on the upper classes in general, and naturally, on the United States government, multinational corporations, and international banks.

d) **UP was defeated by world imperialism**

The Allende government was a victim of a large international conspiracy headed by the U.S. government and supported by the internal Chilean reaction. The most important weapons of imperialism were the financial blockade and the subversive activities of ITT and CIA.

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1. In August, the consumer price index rose by 22.7\% and in September by 22.2\%. Food prices rose by 38\% in August and by more than 30\% in September.

2. For election results, see footnote on page 17. The anti-Allende interpretations often contain a reverse omission: the decline in 1973-1971 results is pointed out, but not the increase in 1973-1979.
A large body of leftist interpretations, including the declaration of the Chilean left in exile, puts the whole responsibility for the UP defeat on imperialism, and more concretely, on the United States. Any criticism of UP policies is considered harmful because it "objectively" implies a support for the repressive policies of the military junta. The emphasis is placed on international context rather than on internal Chilean situation, but some authors attack external and internal reaction with equal vehemence (therefore, the interpretations in the preceding section are very close to those discussed below). Several studies also contain criticism of the socialist countries for being too hesitant about helping Allende in his struggle with imperialism.

Several articles in *Latin American Perspectives*, a journal initiated in response to the Chilean coup, belong in this category.

Richard E. Feinberg\(^1\) sees the Chilean case in the context of "dependency theory" and makes an interesting point about the "international conspiracy".

There is substantial evidence that a conspiracy existed involving sectors of the U.S. public and private economy to deprive Chile of credits. Theoretically, however, no 'plot' would have been necessary. Given that the health of the Chilean economy was so dependent upon the goodwill of the United States, Chile would have become a credit risk once the support of the U.S. government and the international financial agencies it dominates, was withdrawn.

Norma Stoltz Chinchilla and William Bollinger also strongly condemn the U.S. involvement in Chile.\(^2\) At the same time, however, they praise Cuba for its involvement, while criticizing the other socialist


countries: "Only Cuba attempted a significant 'internationalist' role in Chile; but, because of Cuba's modest material resources, the intervention was more political than economic." In another article, Victor Wallis\(^1\) surveys the scope of foreign presence in Chile before 1970 and sharply criticizes those evaluations of the UP experience that try to minimize the U.S. role.

A very vocal group that has been denouncing U.S. imperialism in recent years is the North American Congress on Latin America which publishes a regular monthly report, usually devoted to one topic. In January 1973, NACLA published an issue on the "invisible blockade,"\(^2\) and after the coup, devoted one issue to Chile in October 1973\(^3\) and another in May-June 1974.\(^4\) These publications contain a number of articles and statistical information on the United States involvement in Chilean affairs: ITT\(^5\) and CIA activities,\(^6\) contacts between the U.S. and Chilean military, historical survey of the role of copper companies in Chile,

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1 Victor Wallis, "Imperialism and the 'Via Chilena,'" ibid. p. 44-57.


3 NACLA, Latin America and Empire Report, Chile: The Story Behind the Coup, (Berkeley, Ca.), v. 7, No. 8, October 1973.


5 NACLA also published the secret memos of ITT in v. 4, No. 4, April 1972.

6 Some of NACLA's allegations about the CIA role made in 1973 were substantiated in September 1974 when the CIA 'destabilization' program was revealed in the U.S. press. According to a testimony of CIA director, W.E. Colby, $8 million was authorized to be spent in Chile. Part of this money allegedly helped finance the truck drivers' strike in October 1972 and July-August 1973.
U.S. support for anti-Allende politicians before 1970, details on international lending agencies, etc. NACLA writers take a strong position and make categorical conclusions, occasionally based on somewhat distorted facts -- but at the same time, the reports are noted for their wealth of data and bibliographical material. In the case of Chile, references to articles in the U.S. press are especially helpful.

A very hostile attack on the United States was written by Armando Uribe, a former Chilean ambassador to China (July 1971-September 1973). In his book, Uribe transcribes several lengthy memoranda that were supposedly written by Chilean diplomatic officials but he is so vague in specifying when and by whom the memoranda were written and how they got into his possession that it is impossible to consider them a reliable official material. In addition, it is not clear whether all transcripts are verbatim or whether they are only summaries of what Uribe remembers about them. He also includes a long memorandum concerning CIA and Pentagon plans for a coup in Chile, prepared in 1970. Uribe goes beyond the standard leftist argument about the U.S. culpability declaring on the first page that the "U.S. government had to destroy Chile as a nation and as a state because it represented a case of indiscipline within the system." Later on, he accuses the U.S. government of being instrumental in the fall of copper prices and blames it for the disequilibrium in the world trade.

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2 The _New York Times_ reported on September 3, 1975, that U.S. Defense Department ordered U.S. military attaché in Chile to give covert support to a military coup planned in October 1970. The plot, which was intended to prevent Allende from assuming presidency, never materialized.
He also argues that the U.S. government was not interested in settling the issue of copper nationalization because it was a convenient pretext for its aggression. He says that the U.S. Senate hearings about the role of ITT in Chile, conducted in March 1973, represented a new conspiracy, "a new, much more serious plot: a plot of the U.S. government trying to destroy Chile with the knowledge of everybody."  

2. Non-Marxist interpretations

The authors listed in this category do not share any basic assumption about social processes and changes, and their political attitudes range from centrist (or social democratic) to extreme rightist. There is, however, one common point in all these assessments: stressing the internal economic and political developments in Chile as the main cause of the UP collapse. Some arguments are quite similar to those reviewed in the "Leftist interpretations" but they are not based on theoretical acceptance of Marxism and can be clearly distinguished from their Marxist counterparts.

a) **UP failed because of its inherent contradictions**

The UP government had to face two related problems: how to combine socialism and democracy, and how to harmonize the different currents within the Chilean left. The impossibility of solving these problems led to the UP collapse.

This group of interpretations is more heterogeneous than the others. Usually, the authors discussed below are sympathetic (or at least not hostile) to Allende and stand on a centrist position, somewhat

\footnote{Ibid, p. 199.}
similar to the moderate wing of the Chilean Christian Democrats represented by Tomic. Rather than arguing that the UP should have been more reformist or more revolutionary, the following interpretations are based on a view that the UP government could not have been either more reformist or more revolutionary.

Laurence Whitehead begins his study *The Lesson of Chile*¹ with a question about the compatibility of socialism and democracy, and presents the framework of his evaluation:

The failure of the 'Chilean road to socialism' cannot convincingly be attributed to any accidental factor such as betrayal by some particular individuals, or acts of sabotage by politically isolated property interests, or mere conventional mismanagement of the affairs of the government. It came about mainly because redistribution on a scale considered indispensable by the country's Marxist leaders generated such violent political conflict that the country became ungovernable by constitutional means.

The author is skeptical about a possibility of workable compromise between UP and Christian Democrats, arguing that the traditional hostility between these two political forces made an agreement very difficult: "So long as (Allende) was president ... powerful elements in the Christian Democratic party would wish to undermine his political base just as he had undermined their programme of reforms ever since 1964."² A skepticism is also expressed about the advantages of a slower pace of structural reforms: "My guess in retrospect is that this alternative would have been better, but not good enough to avert the debacle."³


²*The Lesson of Chile*, op. cit., p. 4.

The author discusses in detail various miscalculations of UP leaders, and considers the most important one the underestimation of the "extent to which, once they were precariously in office, the process of mobilization on the left might also come to strengthen the UP's most extreme enemies on the right." Whitehead is convinced that the foreign interests played only a secondary role. He says that Chile "was tragically unlucky, but the external factor which clipped back export earnings was an unplanned trade cycle, not a politically directed conspiracy," and that "it should not be assumed that CIA money (for the strikes) necessarily tipped the balance. The funds and personnel available from Chilean sources were probably more than adequate." In the conclusion, Whitehead stresses the difficulty of "bringing about by means of non-repressive political action any major distribution of income and power in societies where inequality and injustice prevail," but despite that, he implicitly considers a non-violent way preferable to and more likely to succeed than armed struggle.

An analysis of the role of middle classes during the UP period is contained in an article by Stanley Plastrik. He stresses the fact that Allende did not have a clear-cut mandate from the majority of the

1Ibid, p. 25.
2Ibid, p. 34.
3Ibid, p. 37.
5Stanley Plastrik, 'A First Word on the Chilean Tragedy," Dissent (New York), Winter, 1974: pp. 7-12. The article is somewhat marred by several misleading and inexact statements.
people to reconstruct the society along socialist lines," and he is very
critical of MIR which, without representing any significant social force,
was allowed to "roam the countryside, leading illegal seizures of land --
in an atmosphere of polarization, fear, extremism." Plastrik blames the
government for not recognizing in time that the interests of the middle
class must be taken into account: "In a country that has a large middle
class, it is simply impossible to combine an effort at peaceful social
transformation with the methods, atmosphere, and rhetoric of a Leninist
or Castrolite revolution." In the concluding argument, the author rejects
the socialism-democracy contradiction: "A democratic commitment -- which
is not some sort of 'luxury' or 'weakness,' but the very essence of the
socialist idea -- enforces upon socialists in office, especially when they
represent a minority of the population, certain constraints and costs."
The UP government failed to realize this and therefore was defeated.

John Strasma's testimony before the U.S. Senate\footnote{John Strasma, Allende's Economy: Where it was Going, and Why? Testimony before the U.S. Senate, 1974, 27 p., mimeo.} should also be
mentioned here, despite the fact that he concentrates mainly on the
economic developments. He evaluates each year separately, stressing
the successes during 1971 and minimizing the depth of the crisis in
1973 ("Had the truck strike not happened, 1973 might well have been a
fairly good year.") His general assessment takes into account the
various forces which contributed to the UP defeat. According to this
author, the most important factors were the divisions within the UP
coalition and the strength of the Chilean opposition. He criticizes the
U.S. attitude vis-à-vis Chile but is far from putting all blame on
"imperialists": in one passage, he discusses an unpublicized offer, allegedly made by high U.S. officials to the Allende government (the offer contained a mutually advantageous proposal on settlement of the copper issue but was rejected due to insistence of the Socialists); he lists various successful and friendly negotiations that Allende government concluded with American firms; and he does not think that the CIA money played a decisive role: "I personally believe that everything that happened in Chile, tending to harass Allende or encourage the coup, could have and would have been funded by Chileans if no outsider had been willing to pay for it. Nonetheless, the availability of outside money probably increased the quantity and quality of the Opposition effort."²

Another author to be included in this group is Solon Barraclough who wrote a paper devoted primarily to agricultural development during the Allende administration.³ In the conclusion of his study, he presents evaluation of the UP period and says that the "Chilean way to socialism" as it was formulated by Allende was doomed from the very beginning:

The major error, if there was one, seems to have been to have attempted the impossible. Given the national and international context in 1970, with the United States' government's certain opposition to any kind of really socialist government in Latin America, the strength of the propertied classes, the internal divisions of the left and the absence of effective working class mobilization, and also the certainty that much of the Chilean left would insist on a radical, anti-U.S. program, it was probably unrealistic for Allende to have accepted the presidency at all.

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¹Strasna, op. cit., p. 25.

²Solon Barraclough, Major Economic Problems During the Allende Administration in Chile. Cornell University, 1974. 29 p., mimeo.
The opinion about impossibility of the "Chilean way" is shared by Genaro Arriagada Herrera whose detailed work is probably the best analysis of the UP period published in Chile.\textsuperscript{1} Despite its anti-UP bias,\textsuperscript{2} the book does not contain the easy, simplistic denunciations of anything even remotely connected with Marxism or socialism. In a matter-of-fact way, Arriagada exposes the problems both within and outside the UP that -- according to him -- predetermined the tragic outcome of that experiment. In the first section of the book, he sketches the "Chilean way to socialism" as it was defined by Allende: pluralist, non-violent, a "second model," different from the first model of the transition to socialism through dictatorship of the proletariat. He sets out to prove that this "Chilean way" did not have a sufficient political basis because all UP parties, with the exception of relatively unimportant PIR,\textsuperscript{3} considered the dictatorship of proletariat inevitable. The "second model," Arriagada maintains was thus "a hope that did not have any political basis. The Chilean left was too much attached to the patterns of dogmatic Marxism and was unable to undertake even a minor "theoretical revision." The ambitious project formulated by Allende in May 1971\textsuperscript{4} was crushed under the weight of narrow and sectarian orthodoxy which disqualified it by calling it vacillating, reformist and social democratic.\textsuperscript{5} In the following section, the author argues that UP always

\textsuperscript{1}Genaro Arriagada Herrera, De la "via chilena" a la "via insurreccional," Santiago, Editorial del Pacífico, Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1974, 329 p.

\textsuperscript{2}Which certainly expresses the author's attitude but could also have been strengthened by external constraints.

\textsuperscript{3}Partido de Izquierda Radical, formed in 1969. It left the UP coalition in 1972, and one of its founders, Alberto Baltra Cortés, became strongly opposed to the Allende government. See below, p. 39.

\textsuperscript{4}In his annual Message to the Congress, May 21, 1971.

\textsuperscript{5}Arriagada, op. cit., p. 86.
wanted to achieve total power, but that it wanted to achieve it by
peaceful means: "To achieve the strategic objective of total power,
the UP proposed a tactic defined as 'political-institutional way.' The
'Chilean way' was thus reduced to one of the roads to achieve a dictatorship
of the proletariat." 1 After this general proposition, Arriagada devotes
more than one hundred pages to the chronological description of events,
stressing the economy and the growing political polarization of the
country, and disregarding completely all foreign aspects. According
to him, the possibility of the "political-institutional way" collapsed
after the March 1973 elections and subsequently, the only alternatives
that the Allende government had were either a violent uprising or political
agreement with the Christian Democrats. The government, however, was
unable
completely paralyzed and/to act:

To an observer of the last period of Allende, from the
days after the March 1973 elections, and especially
from June 29th onward, the government gave the impression
of absolute tactical ambiguity. One witnessed a govern-
ment pitifully paralyzed, which could not face the
decision between a 'revolutionary' way and a reformist
option that, far from total power, would have permitted
the country to develop more progressive forms of political,
social, cultural and economic organization than those
the country had had in 1970. 3

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1Ibid., p. 93.

2The date of the abortive coup which was easily and quickly suppressed
because of its striking dilettantism (for instance, the tanks stopped at
red lights at intersections) -- which was quite a contrast to the pro-
fessionalism of the latter, successful coup. Some writers argue that
the abortive coup's purpose was to reveal the officials loyal to the
government, so that they could be eliminated when the real coup happened.

3Arriagada, op. cit., p. 328.
b) UP was incompetent

The UP government embarked on an ambitious program of rapid structural transformation of the Chilean socio-economic system which it wanted to accomplish without revolutionary violence but also without electoral majority. This fundamental strategic error, combined with short-sighted economic policies and a number of ill-devised political moves, led to a total crisis of the Chilean society, which in turn provoked the military intervention.

This interpretation corresponds roughly to that of the Chilean Christian Democrats. The authors listed below emphasize the crucial role of the economy, and analyze it in technical rather than political or ideological terms. Their viewpoint thus seems less biased than in most other interpretations, but their political attitude could be generally characterized as right of center. They concentrate on errors and mistakes of the UP government and pay little attention to the internal anti-UP opposition. However, they often discuss the "invisible blockade" argument and reject it. Despite harsh criticisms, they usually acknowledge some positive aspects of the UP government, at least as far as intentions were concerned.

A succinct exposition of this argument is contained in an article by Rosenstein-Rodan. The author begins by stating that "Salvador Allende died not because he was a socialist but because he was an incompetent," and further on, he uses a quote from Fidel Castro to

criticize the UP income redistribution policy: "Marxism is a revolution of production: Allende's was a revolution of consumption." Rosenstein-Rodan argues that Allende should have promised at least some compensation to the copper companies, and that he should have introduced something similar to Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) in the 1920's. The article is well written but it simplifies the whole problem and reduces the UP experience to a series of economic blunders.

A prominent exponent of this type of interpretation is Paul Sigmund, who wrote several articles on Chile both before and after the coup and has just finished a book on the Frei and UP periods. In his first article published after the coup, Sigmund rebuts the "invisible blockade" argument by maintaining that there existed no U.S. led conspiracy and that the suspension of credits and loans was the result of lowered credit-worthiness of Chile. He includes a series of figures on continuing disbursements of previously contracted loans and on new credits obtained outside the United States, in order to prove that the financial squeeze by U.S. banks and several international agencies was not so tight and, in addition, was amply offset by alternate sources of external financing. According to Sigmund, Allende's regime fell for four main reasons: runaway inflation (caused not by lack of foreign assistance but by Vuskovic' economic policy), intensification of class struggle, use of legal "loopholes," and complicity in the stockpiling of arms.


2The UP government unearthed several old laws, passed in 1932 during the brief existence of a Socialist republic in Chile, which enabled it to "intervene" private enterprises. "Intervention" meant that the enterprise continued to be the legal property of its private owner, but its control and management was taken over by the state.
Sigmund concludes that a government which nationalizes U.S. property without compensation cannot expect any "subsidy" from the U.S., but at the same time cannot "blame all its problems on foreign imperialists and their domestic allies, and ignore elementary principles of economic rationality and effective political legitimacy in its internal policies."\(^1\) In an article published several months later,\(^2\) Sigmund rebuts various "myths" about the UP and Allende, presented by the right, the left and the Christian Democrats, and comes to the conclusion that "the military coup of September 11 was neither a last-ditch defense against Marxist totalitarianism nor a fascist and reactionary rupture of peaceful democratic institutions. It was, rather, a nearly (but perhaps not entirely) inevitable result of economic policies and a political stalemate which made majority rule under law almost impossible."\(^3\) Another article by Sigmund\(^3\) concentrates on internal developments during the UP period. He maintains that the economic policy of "socialist consumerism" was basically unsound and inevitably led to serious economic disequilibria, and further on argues that Allende could have succeeded only by reaching an understanding with the Christian Democrats.

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\(^1\)After the CIA revelations in September 1974, Sigmund made several minor corrections in his argument, but did not change its substance. See his letter to the editor in the "Correspondence" section, *Foreign Affairs* (Washington), v. 53, January 1974: pp. 375-377.


\(^3\)"Allende in Retrospect," *Problems of Communism* (Washington), v. 23, May-June 1974: pp. 45-62. The abundant and almost exclusive references to the Junta's *White Book*, which can hardly be considered an objective source of data, are the main flaw of this article.
A purely technical discussion of the Chilean economic developments under the UP regime is contained in an article by Markos J. Mamalakis\(^1\) who considers economic inefficiency, not political factors, the main cause of Allende’s fall. A more general evaluation of the UP period was formulated by the same author several months later.\(^2\) In this paper, Mamalakis analyzes the rise and fall of Allende from different angles: ideological, political, psychological, and economic. He says that “neither revolution nor reform could be achieved through (Allende’s) populistic consumerism,” and further on characterizes Allende as a “pioneer, novel and even noble thinker, politician and revolutionary, (who) set goals out of reach, opened battle fronts that could not be defended and relied on instruments that could not be mastered, controlled, and manipulated either by himself, or the Popular Unity or the Chilean people.” The paper contains several interesting passages on foreign investment, one of them concerning the CIA role:

> Although it is very difficult to estimate the relative importance of the U.S. opposition to Allende’s downfall, I believe that it was a lesser and by no means the single most important contributing factor. When the social, economic and tidal waves favored Allende in 1970, CIA activities were not only unable to reverse them, but may have even reinforced them.... The CIA’s rising capacity to be incorporated into major segments of the Chilean social, economic and political fabric are more a proof of Allende’s rising vulnerability and destructability than of CIA power.


Mamalakis also devotes a few paragraphs to the "invisible blockade" and summarizes both the argument against and for it. In his own view, however, the "invisible blockade" had very little effect: "I do not deny that the U.S. had every interest, intention, and possibly pursued policies to bring down Allende. These policies, if ever implemented, were, however, so totally ineffective that Allende's fall cannot be blamed or credited to the CIA." Mamalakis concludes his paper by saying that Allende's most important achievement was a massive institutional reform.

A representative Chilean interpretation of this type is a book by Alberto Baltra Cortés,¹ devoted to the description and analysis of the economic developments under Allende. The author discusses, mostly in technical terms, various aspects of UP economic policies and analyzes the reasons for their failure. He summarizes the economic problems during the Allende administration as a "basic and fundamental disequilibrium between global supply and demand."² In his final assessment, however, he says that the political failure was still more serious than the economic one. According to him, the Allende government could have brought about a new society of a democratic socialism because the majority of Chileans were ready for substantial structural changes (he cites the unanimous support for copper nationalizations as one example of that readiness). But the government instead of trying to win support "showed an exceptional talent to make enemies" and by fomenting insecurity and distrust, gradually led the country into a deep crisis.

¹Alberto Baltra Cortés, Gestión económica del Gobierno de la Unidad Popular, Santiago, Editorial Orbe, 1973, 143 p. Baltra Cortés was originally a member of UP and was even considered a potential presidential candidate before the choice fell on Allende.

²Ibid, p. 141.
c) UP failed because it wanted to establish totalitarian regime

From the very beginning, the UP government intended to impose a totalitarian Marxist regime on the Chilean society. This effort was opposed and finally thwarted by the majority of Chileans who considered such a regime alien to their country's traditions and completely contradictory to the well established political democracy that had existed in Chile for more than a hundred years.

This argument corresponds to the evaluation by the Chilean Military Junta and other Chilean rightist groups and organizations. The proponents of this interpretation feel that socialism -- which they often do not distinguish clearly from communism and/or Marxism -- is inherently bad and by definition incompatible with democracy. Therefore, it must be opposed by all means.

Almost immediately after the coup, a strongly formulated attack on Allende and the UP regime was made by James D. Theberge in his statement before the House Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs.¹ Theberge repeats several times that the liberal public opinion around the world has been fooled and misled by Marxist propaganda and this it was "profoundly ignorant" of what was happening in Chile. According to this author, the ultimate goal of Allende was totalitarian power: "The socialism which the Allende regime aimed at imposing on the Chilean people was not any new 'humane' democratic socialism. It was the old totalitarian socialism with which

we have become all too familiar." He maintains that the Nixon administration "exercised considerable restraint" vis-a-vis Chile and that it is the Soviet Union which could be criticized for not giving Chile massive long-term financial assistance.

An article by David Holden\(^1\) could be, with certain reservations, also placed in this category. Holden rebuts three "myths" surrounding the UP experiment: American intervention, ruling class conspiracy, and Allende as a constitutional revolutionary. He considers Allende a political romantic whose lack of realism "would probably have been fatal to any statesman anywhere," and he concludes by stating that

you can't be a democrat and a revolutionary -- at least not in a society that is already admittedly democratic. That you can't be anti-American and expect the Americans to help you. That you can't pose as the people's leader and kick most people in the teeth. That you can't conscript soldiers into politics and expect them to remain apolitical. That you can't have inflation roaring out of sight and maintain a base for social welfare....

A strong attack on the UP government is contained in a book written by the staff writer for the British journal the Economist, Robert Moss.\(^2\) He considers the UP members and apologists to be either interested in personal power only or deluded by UP propaganda: "It was clear to those who bothered to read the statements of the Marxist leaders themselves that Chile's Communist and Socialists were not basically aiming for social reform....

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\(^2\) *Chile's Marxist Experiment*, Newton Abbot (Eng.), David and Charles, 1973; 225 p. It was translated into Spanish the following year: *El experimento marxista chileno*. Santiago, Editora Nacional Gabriela Mistral, 1974; 249 p. Arturo Fontaine A. says in the forward: "... in opposition to almost all of those who let themselves be tempted by the false image of Allende and his regime ... Robert Moss was almost the only one who gave an objective picture of the political and social reality of Chile."
They were concerned with power.\footnote{Ibid, p. 13.} In another place, he says: "The final goal was not a more equal society, nor even a novel form of socialism ... but rather the concentration of political power in the hands of a narrow ruling group."\footnote{Ibid, p. 50.} In a section devoted to the U.S. Senate Hearings on the role of ITT in Chile, Moss writes: "It appears that ITT behaved rashly and irresponsibly in Chile. But Senator Church and his colleagues hardly drew breath to ask themselves whether the fears of the unfortunate ITT executives about what was likely to happen in Chile after the advent of a Marxist government had any substance."\footnote{Ibid, p. 8.} Many of the arguments in this book are mirror reflections of extreme leftist views, the most explicit probably being Moss' discussion about the UP comments after the March 1973 elections. He points out that a UP newspaper headline "The people - 43% - the monos - 55%" is absurd and illogical, but he himself is not willing to consider those 43% -- which is, after all, almost a half of the population -- as "true Chileans" either. He hints several times that the assassination of the Commander-in-Chief Rene Schneider in October 1970\footnote{An attempt by the right to prevent Allende's election by the Congress. The perpetrators of the assassination were caught and sentenced to prison terms.} and the abortive June 1973 coup "might have been" provoked by leftist infiltrators, and he painstakingly tries to prove that the March 1973 elections were not only rigged\footnote{Shortly after the elections, it was alleged by the opposition that an electoral fraud was committed. It was never proven beyond doubt.} but that the relatively good showing of the UP could be explained
by many "unqualifiable" factors, as for instance pleasant weather in
which it was "rather less irksome to have to queue for twelve hours to
buy a chicken."

\[^{1}\text{Moss, op. cit., p. 181.}\]
Conclusion

From the very beginning, the Chilean experiment of a peaceful transition to socialism aroused a great deal of interest in many countries of the world, because the events in Chile touched upon issues that went beyond national boundaries. In Latin America, the Allende government was viewed as another possible solution to underdevelopment, after the example of the Cuban revolution remained isolated. In the United States, the business community and the government were angered by Chile's leftist policies, and on the other hand, numerous radical groups applauded the Chilean defiance of imperialism. In Western Europe, the Popular Unity program was considered important for its effort to combine socialism and democracy, a goal proclaimed long ago by the strong Communist parties of Italy and France.

The military coup in September 1973 provided answers to some of the questions raised in the course of previous three years, but it also provoked a series of new questions. Their continuing relevance explains the highly polemical nature of most of the literature dealing with this subject. Many authors seem to be less interested in analyzing the Chilean experience than in defending or attacking general political positions. In a sense, these biased works contribute to the understanding of the UP period because they mirror the political atmosphere prevailing in Chile during the latter part of the Allende government. More valuable, however, are undoubtedly the studies by those authors who try to understand and explain what really happened and who refuse the temptation to fit the UP period into a schematic ideological pattern. This is not to say that a completely
neutral or objective analysis of the Chilean events can be written in the near future because these events are still too recent and are always judged from a particular political position. An individual political persuasion, however, does not imply that one has to reduce the very complex Chilean process to a simplified, black-and-white picture, be it a struggle of progressive leftist forces against the evils of imperialism, or a struggle of democratic, patriotic Chileans against the threat of communist totalitarianism.
I. BOOKS AND ARTICLES CITED IN THE PAPER

1. **Protagonists**

*Casa de las Américas* (La Habana), v. 14, no. 83, marzo-abril, 1974.

*Chile. The Allende Years, the Coup, Under the Junta.* New York, IDOC, December, 1973.


*CIDOC (Centro Cultural de Documentación).* *DOC Chile*, 74/4, Mexico.


*NACLA.* *Latin America and Empire Report* (Berkeley, Ca.), v. 8, no. 5, May-June, 1974.

2. **Arguments and Interpretations**

a) *Marxist*


*Entries in each section are arranged alphabetically.*


b) Non-Marxist


was reprinted in *Chile Under Military Rule*, op. cit., pp. 83-85.


II. ADDITIONAL ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY


a) Marxist


Account of the first months of the UP government from the communist point of view.


Collection of previously published articles, covering the UP period up to 1973 March elections. Standard leftist arguments, blaming the opposition for all problems.

*The annotations are very brief and do not pretend to give a full description of the cited works, rather, they should serve as a basic orientation.*

Historical background of the UP government, written by a moderate leftist before the coup.

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**Chile 1973: Mi reforma, ni revolución.** Bogotá, Editorial La Pulga, 1973-74. 2 v.

First volume contains articles and documents written by the UP and MIR members during 1970-73, and second volume consists of previously published articles, written mostly by foreigners. The editors are left radicals, who strongly oppose the reformism of the communists, and the selection represents the positions of MIR, MAPU and the left wing of the Socialist Party.

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Leftist account of the first half of UP period, from the communist standpoint. Criticizes strongly the extreme leftists: "The actions of the ultra left, grouped in the MIR ... come second only to the fascists in their anti-communism."

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Written at the end of 1972. Praises the UP policies, denounces the opposition and believes in the success of the Chilean way. After the coup, the same author wrote another book on Chile entitled *Chile no* (Buenos Aires, Editor de Buenos Aires, 1974. 222 p.).

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History of Chile and the account of the first year of UP government, from moderate leftist positions. The unity of the Chilean left is considered essential for the success of the Chilean way.

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Selection of the articles on the Chilean military, previously published in Chile hoy (an important leftist weekly published between June 1972 and September 1973).


Journalistic account of a moderate leftist, written before the coup.


A biased selection of articles on Chile under UP government, published before the coup. Non-leftist attitudes are practically not represented.


About half of the book concerns the pre-UP period. Considers Allende too reformist.


Journalistic account of the first year of UP government, with historical background.


Collection of articles, most of which were previously published in the review Government and Opposition (London), v. 7, summer, 1972. Contains interesting discussion comparing Chile, France and Italy.


Very sympathetic account of the first year and a half of the UP period.
193 p.

*About the first year of the UP government. Criticizes UP reformism and considers MIR "the only revolutionary movement in Chile."*


*Text on basic economic concepts of the UP leaders (Allende, Zorrilla, Vuskovic, Martner, Chonchol, and others).*


*Proceedings of an ODEPLAN-IDS round table in March 1972. Frank discussion on problems and difficulties of the Chilean road to socialism.*

Zeitlin, Maurice, "Chile. The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism."


*Author believes in the possibility of democratic socialism in Chile, but expresses doubts about revolutionary capacity of the Chilean left in eventual showdown with the rightist forces.*

b) *Non-Marxist*


*Collection of articles on Chile, some very general, some specifically on Allende government. Strong anti-UP attitudes.*

Collection of articles mainly concerned with economy. The authors are critical of the UP government, but not totally hostile. They say that the purpose of the book is to "provoke a broad and intelligent discussion about the situation in the country."


Five articles, written in 1972, analyzing social developments under UP. Despite a strong anti-UP bias, the authors acknowledge (a little bit grudgingly) some positive aspects of the new regime, as for instance the new self-confidence of workers and peasants.


Published in early 1973, contains articles and speeches by the author, a Chilean Christian Democratic senator, during the UP period. Greatest emphasis on economy.


Very detailed and careful analysis of the UP period, until the end of 1972 and with a postscript on March 1973 elections. The author stresses the discrepancy between the proclaimed goal of a peaceful transition to socialism and actual policies (especially economic policies) that were in contrast with this goal.


Collection of articles published by the author in the Christian Democratic newspaper *La Prensa* between August and December 1972, when the economic situation in Chile started to deteriorate rapidly.

Collection of author's commentaries broadcast
by the rightist Radio Agricultura in 1971 and 1972. 
The arguments by this staunch defender of capitalism
are noted for their persuasive logic and understated
irony.


a) Marxist

Alegría, Fernando, "The Fall of Santiago," Ramparts (Berkeley, Ca.),

Allende did not want to realize that the Chilean way
implicitly meant to suppress violently the forces
of national oligarchy and U.S. imperialism.

Barnet, Richard L., "The Nixon-Kissinger doctrine and the Meaning of Chile."


The U.S. policy makers could count on Soviet unwillingness
to protect another socialist experiment.


The Allende Years..., op. cit., pp. 7-10. (Originally published as


"U.S. bears major responsibility.... The Chilean economy.
we might now say, was sentenced to hang from its neck
and turn slowly in the wind...."

Chile: una tragedia americana. Buenos Aires, Editorial Crisis, 1974,

259 p.

Collection of articles written by authors of various
nationalities and various shades of leftist attitudes.
The most notable articles are by Pablo Piacentini
on UP strategy (cited in the paper, see above) and
on the role of Chilean military ("TT.AA.: Del legalismo
al golpismo," pp. 137-189), and by Guillermo Medina on
the role of Chistian Democrats ("La Democracia
Cristiana y las crisis en Chile: la quiebra del centro

Economic blockade argument: "... the fascist take-over in Chile might well be the U.S. government's cheapest coup."


Careful analysis of the UP period. The author concludes that the Allende government neither mobilized a democratic popular movement nor provided a united revolutionary direction, which was the cause of its defeat.

L'Express (Paris), No. 1158, 17-23 septembre, 1973, p. 20, 70, 72, 74.

Reactions of the French left to the Chilean coup, the most notable article being "Le testament d'Allende" by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber.


Standard leftist argument by a prominent Latin American novelist.


"The direct and indirect U.S. corporate and Government role in bringing about this colonial fascist state cannot be overemphasized."


Judicious analysis of the Chilean effort to realize democratic socialism. Contains comparisons with the Czechoslovak "socialism with human face" in 1968.

"Unabashed reformism is preferable to revolutionary rhetoric where sufficient force to carry out a revolutionary program is lacking."


Political and sociological analysis of Chilean developments during 1970-73.


Written from a communist point of view. The author, an Argentinian, discusses the relevance of the Chilean experience to other Latin American countries.

Petras, James F., and Betty Petras, "'Epitaph for a Peaceful Revolution,'"


Leftist argument: economic crisis was caused by opposition, not incompetence; the coup was the result of combined effort of Chilean and U.S. military; the UP government did not mobilize the workers sufficiently; Chile's parliamentary system was always anti-democratic, etc.


Detailed discussion of U.S.-Chilean relations during the Allende period, with abundant bibliographical material. Argues that the policy of U.S. government vis-a-vis Chile was "premised on the short-run need to disaggregate the state, disassemble critical institutions of the state apparatus, and create commitments and loyalties to the external power."

84 p. (Colección argumentos latinoamericanos).

Four articles, the most interesting of which is by Darcy Ribeiro, "Salvador Allende y la izquierda desvariada." Ribeiro argues that almost all Chilean left was undermining the Chilean way to socialism whose main and lonely exponent was Allende.


Radical leftist interpretation, anti-communist, critical of MIR (for being "castrista"). Argues that destruction of bourgeois state with all its organs of domination is more important than economic reforms.


Anonymous article by a Chilean, written in December 1973. Argues that Chile was not moving towards socialism, but towards a "democratic, dynamic, and relatively independent model of State capitalism ... oriented towards the welfare of the popular masses."


In view of the insufficient support for its economic policy, UP should have either made a compromise with the bourgeoisie or armed the workers.

b) Centrist and rightist


Descriptive article, sympathetic to Allende. Discusses the international complications, anti-UP opposition, divisions within the left, and the political polarization of the country.

Similar to Plastrik's argument (Plastrik article is discussed in this paper, see above). A postscript on American role in Chile contains a rebuke of Armando Uribe's interpretation (Uribe cited in the paper, see above).


Rightist interpretation: "The September 11th is the recuperation of the dignity of the country." Personal attack on Allende.


Short but perceptive article. Criticizes the undermining of social discipline on all levels and maintains that the "final breakdown ... resulted more than anything else from the disagreements within the Government coalition itself."


Denunciation of the UP government from Junta positions, accompanied by numerous photographs.

Sanders, Thomas G., "The Process of Partisanship in Chile," American Universities Field Staff, Fieldstaff Reports (Hanover, N.H.), v. 20, no. 1, 10 p. (West Coast South American Series.)

About political polarization in Chile during the UP government. Says that Allende missed "an opportunity to experiment with a peaceful and legal transition to socialism by unnecessarily provoking and underestimating the forces ranged against it."
Starishka, Bernhard, Der Sturz des Präsidenten Allende in Chile. Stuttgart, J. Fink Verlag, 1974. 54 p.

Virulent attack on UP and Allende whose true character was allegedly masked with such cleverness that it fooled even his enemies -- while in fact "he resembled Hitler in many points."


Sympathetic to Allende, concentrates on economic development but points out that the economic mismanagement was only one of many reasons for UP defeat. Says that UP program was radical enough to provoke strong resistance, but the government was not strong enough to put the program in practice.