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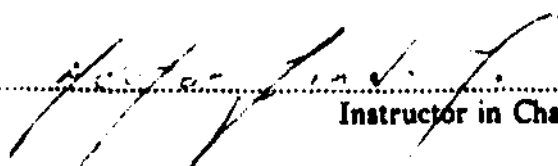
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ENTITLED THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS LEADING TO

THE OVERTHROW OF THE ALLENDE GOVERNMENT IN CHILE

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THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS LEADING TO
THE OVERTHROW OF THE ALLENDE GOVERNMENT
IN CHILE

By

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PREFACE

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for Salvador Allende and his impossible dream

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INTRODUCTION

In order to understand a political revolution, it is first necessary to identify and understand all of the factors and variables responsible for the process. The 1973 overthrow of the Allende government in Chile was revolutionary in that it signified a break with Chile's long-standing tradition of constitutional and democratic governments. To comprehend the significance of 1973 coup d' état, it is imperative to study both the internal and external factors which led to the overthrow of the Allende government. In an historical analysis of an event, it is often easier to focus on one main cause rather than studying all aspects of the event. With Chile, it is extremely easy to villainize the United States government and the CIA and place the blame entirely on them. Although the United States government's intervention may have been a catalyst for the coup, the internal politics and economic situation within Chile were equally as important in assuring the demise of the Allende government. It is difficult to say which set of factors, external or internal, was ultimately responsible for the overthrow of Allende's government. Transforming a capitalist society into a socialist one is difficult in any situation. In Allende's democratic and constitutional framework, this transformation seems to have been

impossible. As Simon Bolivar once said, "To understand a revolution and its actors, it is necessary to observe from very close and to judge from very far, extremes which are hard to bring together." In Chile, the combination of internal problems and external intervention made Allende's downfall inevitable.

CHAPTER I

INTERNAL TENSIONS

The political situation in the years preceding the 1970 presidential election had a direct influence on the outcome of the election and the subsequent downfall of the Allende government. On the surface, the election of a Marxist candidate to the presidency would appear to be an indication that Chile was moving to the left. In reality, the 1970 election did not signify an important change in political sentiment, but rather, a breakdown of a tradition of coalition politics.¹ Without a full understanding of the volatile political situation of the 1960's, one cannot fully grasp the political problems which the Allende government inherited, and could do little to eliminate. There are many reasons why the Allende government was destined to failure, but one of the most important was the breakdown of a political system based on coalition and compromise.

Chilean politics can be characterized as a highly competitive, multi-party system. Throughout Chile's democratic history, the political center has always been weak, which is characteristic of a polarized society.² Until the 1970 election, neither the left nor the right was able to achieve the majority necessary to win a presidential election

without a coalition of a center group which had the support of either the left or the right.³ Until the 1964 presidential election, this conciliatory type of politics was the accepted norm. In the preceding election (1958), Allende lost to conservative candidate, Jorge Alessandri, by a slim margin.⁴ Allende was a candidate of FRAP, a coalition of socialists and communists who rejected populism and advocated Marxist reform.⁵ The Christian Democrat Party (PDC), which was formed in 1957 with a platform based on Christian socialism, ran Eduardo Frei in the 1958 election.⁶ After the election, the Conservative Party (PN) supported Frei and the PDC in order to keep the socialists from gaining the majority in the next election.⁷

In the 1964 election, the main difference between the PDC and the FRAP was that the former advocated peaceful and legal means to social reform, and the latter advocated revolution if necessary.⁸ The PDC rejected capitalist liberal democracy and promoted "communitarianism," or Christian socialism.⁹ Frei and the PDC also received strong support from the Catholic Church and the United States.¹⁰ Frei defeated Allende in the 1964 election by a seventeen point margin which was largely due to the support of the PN and the anti-communist propaganda of the Frei campaign.¹¹ Soon after the election, the Frei government alienated both the right and the left by attempting to become the **partido unico**, or only

party.¹² Frei frightened the conservatives, who believed that the PDC's social reforms were too drastic, while at the same time alienating the left by attempting to influence labor.¹³ Frei's greatest error was that he promised very specific social reforms that he could not deliver, and his "Revolution in Liberty" failed to solve slow economic growth, inflation, and unequal distribution of income.¹⁴ The Frei government actually increased foreign dependence by offering profit-remittance and liberalized import regulations to foreign (especially U.S.) corporations.¹⁵ Although Frei's "Revolution" promised to elicit peaceful change, the PDC had to use considerable force to put down worker and peasant protests and to implement their programs.¹⁶ Another problem of the PDC was that they encouraged agricultural unions which ultimately inhibited the government's effectiveness.¹⁷ The left incited farm seizures (*tomás*) by the poor and the right questioned the legality of agrarian reforms.¹⁸ Political analysts agree that the paramount fault of Frei and the PDC was their refusal to play the political game of compromise, which was necessary to run the country effectively.¹⁹ The polarity between the far left and the far right made it virtually impossible for any faction to compromise. The Christian Democrats occupied the unstable center position and alienated both the left and the right,

which caused political hostility and increased the polarity between the parties.

In the 1970 presidential election, the political bargaining necessary to win a majority had gone out of style.²⁰ Both the left and the right had reorganized and become more set in their political views. In 1966, the Conservative and Liberal parties combined to form the National Party (PN).²¹ The FRAP reorganized into the Popular Unity Party or Unidad Popular (UP), which was a coalition of communists, socialists, and some liberal members of the PDC.²² In his fourth and final bid for the presidency, Salvador Allende represented the Unidad Popular.²³ The PDC ran Radomiro Tomic, who represented the more radical and uncompromising element of the PDC, and the PN ran an aging Jorge Alessandri.²⁴ Unlike most centrist parties of the past, Tomic and the PDC refused to compromise and seek a coalition platform.

The recent and highly visible failures of the Frei government, combined with the PDC's reputation for being uncompromising (**prepotentes**), made another Christian Democrat victory unlikely.²⁵ Both the U.S. and the PN were confident that Alessandri would be the winner, but his age and lack of television appeal greatly diminished his chances.²⁶ Allende's victory demonstrated the polarization of Chilean society in that for the first time, a centrist candidate finished last.²⁷ The election of Allende did not represent

a shift in electoral patterns, in fact, Allende was able to obtain only 36% of the votes, Alessandri 35%, and Tomic 28% of the votes.²⁸ The only radical aspect of Allende's victory was that it demonstrated the complete breakdown of a political system based on coalition and compromise.

Allende faced many political and social crises which greatly impeded the success of the UP. One of the problems that Allende faced was a total breakdown of the political bargaining which was necessary to run the country. Allende allied himself with the moderate faction of the UP which was composed of centrists, radicals and numerous other factions.²⁹ The socialists in the UP had moved to a more radical form of socialism and away from populism, and they relied on Marxists and workers, and not on the centrist middle class, which in turn made the right more polarized and hostile.^{30,31} Although the people had always supported the political extremes, they were willing to compromise and vote for a centrist candidate who would promise to support some of their interests. By 1970, this system was no longer the norm, and Allende could not go back to a pre-1964 political milieu. The situation in 1970 was extremely hostile, with the executive, judiciary, and legislative branches all unwilling to compromise. When Allende was elected in 1970, his victory worried the right, the army, and the United States government. Because Allende did not win a plurality,

the election went to Congress, which was composed of many Christian Democrats. The PDC and Congress rejected a U.S. sponsored plan to supercede Allende with Frei (through Alessandri) and agreed to elect Allende after certain concessions were made.³² Allende promised to uphold civil liberties, to guarantee the continuance of a multi-party system, to insure free press, to accept an independent military, and to allow private education to continue.³³ The military did not prevent Allende from being elected because of tradition, internal divisions, some actual support of the UP, and fear of the repercussions of such an action.³⁴ Also, in Chilean society, the military was always thought of as the guardian of the Constitution and this tradition made the idea of a coup a very difficult one.³⁵ There are a multiplicity of factors which contribute to the breakdown of a political regime, but in the case of the Allende government, the internal political problems which he faced greatly contributed to his downfall.

Therefore, when Allende was elected, he faced a highly polarized and volatile political climate. Allende was a minority president, and he did not have a strong power base and could not run the government effectively. The political opposition presented many obstacles which impeded the success of the Allende government. Also, factionalism and ideological differences within the UP caused many problems for the

Allende government. The combination of factionalism within the UP, and opposition from other parties combined to make the failure of the Allende government inevitable.

Without the support of the PDC in Congress, the Allende government could not implement the majority of its programs. In 1971, the PN and the PDC joined forces in order to elect a representative to a vacant Congressional seat.³⁶ After this event, the coalition force of the PN and the PDC continued to block Allende's economic and social reforms. One of the main reasons for the PDC's opposition was their fear of losing their power as a political party.³⁷ The Congress repeatedly impeached Allende's ministers, thus demonstrating both their power and their dislike of the UP's government.³⁸ One of the greatest threats to Allende's power was the PDC's proposed ammendment to the Constitution which would allow the Congress to control the economy.³⁹ Allende vetoed the bill and it soon became clear that the Congress and the President could not work together.⁴⁰ All parties involved realized that a compromise had to be reached in order to overcome the political stalemate. A series of talks in 1971 were designed to eliminate the hostility between the government and other political parties. When the centrist PIR left the talks, it became clear that no compromise could be reached.⁴¹ In 1972, secret talks were held with the hopes of finding a way out of the political deadlock.⁴² The PDC

demanding that many public industries be transferred to semi-private sectors, that the government should not intervene in private companies, and that the media should be privately run.⁴³ Unfortunately, no compromise could be reached and the political turmoil continued until 1973.

The most serious political problem which the Allende government faced came from within the UP party itself. Immediately after the election, Allende was favored by all factions of the UP.⁴⁴ Soon after, it became clear that the UP was not a homogeneous unit, but rather, a loose coalition of socialists, communists, and revolutionaries, all of varying degrees. The political competition and quota system cut efficiency and made it difficult to implement government policies.⁴⁵ Workers would not take orders from managers who belonged to different political parties. The decentralized tendencies of the state made it impossible for the UP government to act quickly and efficiently, even when swift action was necessary.⁴⁶ Within the UP, the socialists wanted more worker participation, the communists wanted worker ownership, and the MAPU extremists wanted an armed conflict to implement their policies.⁴⁷ Allende had little control over the officials who belonged to rival factions within the UP, and this disparate coalition caused many problems.⁴⁸ Allende himself said, "there are more forces now supporting the government...but its base has been weakened

by the internal problems of the parties.⁴⁹ Each faction within the UP wanted preeminence and feared rival elements in other factions.⁵⁰ As many political analysts have said, Allende was an adept politician, capable of handling day-to-day problems, but unable to resolve any long-term conflicts.⁵¹ Many of the political problems Allende faced were the result of the inherent factionalism within the UP.

Transforming a capitalist society into a socialist one would be difficult in any situation. The political opposition Allende faced from within his own party was as strong as that of outside opposition. The Chilean people became aware of the inefficiency of the government as illustrated by an Ercilla poll of September 1972. In this poll, 43% of the people believed that the Allende government's performance was poor, 36% thought it fair, and only 21% thought it was good.⁵² Perhaps the main reason why the UP government failed was the inability of Allende to form a cohesive center upon which he could build his power.⁵³ It is difficult to guess whether or not an improved political situation could have saved the UP government, or whether its failure was inevitable. It is clear that the combined opposition of other parties and of factions within the UP made a successful government virtually impossible.

One of the repercussions of this political tension was evident in the economy. Before Allende could introduce his

plans for a new economic system, he had to eliminate the problems inherent in the old system. Some of the economic ills of the Allende years were inherited, others were a result of his reform measures, and still others were caused by his lack of political control of the country. Many economic reforms of the UP directly benefitted the lower class, while at the same time benefitting the country as a whole. The problems of nationalization, inflation, and political opposition all combined to create an economic situation which became impossible to control.

One of the first problems the UP government had to face was an unstable and unproductive economy. Allende and the UP wanted to stimulate the economy and to control inflation so that they could begin the socialist economic reforms. The Allende government planned to alleviate inflation through price controls and to stimulate the economy by increasing wages, and thus increasing the purchasing power of the worker.⁵⁴ The rise in wages would decrease profits for industry but would aid in the redistribution of income.⁵⁵ The National Office of Industry and Commerce (DIRINCO) implemented these economic changes and soon after, results were visible. The gross national product went up by 13%, and unemployment dropped from 8.3% to 3.8% in 1971.⁵⁶ Although there were some positive aspects to the UP's economic programs, the consumer price index rose from 598 in

1970 to 718 in 1971.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the UP's plan to improve national income distribution was successful in that the purchasing power of the lower classes rose.⁵⁸

One of the UP's most important and successful plans was that of the nationalization of the copper mines. In the 1970 election, both Tomic and Allende supported nationalization of foreign copper industries, which would allow profits to be used by the Chilean people.⁵⁹ The UP government wanted to nationalize the land on which these companies sat, and the PDC wanted to nationalize the companies themselves.⁶⁰ The disadvantage in nationalizing the whole company was that the Chilean government would have to absorb the debts of the old company and keep the same organizational structure of the previous company.⁶¹ The nationalization of the copper mines was a program that the majority of the people favored, but Allende was willing to compromise in order to gain the support of the entire Congress.⁶² The main goal of the nationalization of the copper mines was the elimination of the power base of Chile's ruling class which had strong ties with the U.S. based companies.⁶³ The UP also wanted to nationalize ownership of other key industries which were essential to the economy.⁶⁴ The state wished to control the basic resources and the market of the country. In this way, the state could control the basic resources which would enable it to plan an independent economy whose

prime objective was to provide goods to the people.⁶⁵ The UP government paid the copper companies an indemnity which consisted of the net worth of the companies (Chuquibambilla and El Teniente) minus the profits that the companies had earned since 1955.⁶⁶ Even with these deductions, the Chilean government took a loss because of the poor economic state these companies were left in prior to Allende's inauguration.⁶⁷ Although the Chilean government had to absorb the debts of the previous companies, they were still able to increase profits for the state. In the second half of 1971, copper production was up 2.5%.⁶⁸ The idea behind the nationalization of the companies was successful in that it created a "new economy" which would provide a transition to socialism.⁶⁹

Although the economic changes of the UP initially worked, problems soon developed. The price control measures aided the poor in that they were able to buy more goods at lower prices, which increased the demand for these goods.⁷⁰ Price controls and an increase in wages put more currency in circulation and the 103% expansion of the money supply caused inflation.⁷¹ The government would not fight inflation at the cost of the working class, but some control was necessary.⁷² The government decided to devalue the escudo and to institute multiple exchange rates in order to control the consumption of non-essential goods.⁷³

One of the main causes of Chile's economic problems was beyond the control of the UP government. In 1971, the price of copper, which constituted 75% of Chile's national exchange, fell from 70¢ a pound, to 46¢ a pound.⁷⁴ Another problem which further exacerbated the economic trouble of Chile was the United States' boycott of international credit and loans to Chile.⁷⁵ All of these factors combined to cause inflation and food shortages which affected the middle class first, and then the lower classes. This created a black market which in turn caused hoarding and speculation by merchants and businessmen.⁷⁶ Farmers were paid a set price for certain goods, so they either switched to goods that were not price controlled, or sold them through the black market.⁷⁷ The government tried to combat the black market by using the police and public sentiment. The poor economic situation was not the only obstacle which the Allende government had to face.

Perhaps the greatest problem Allende faced was the opposition from the Congress, which was composed mainly of Christian Democrats. The tax reform bills which the UP presented were continually rejected by Congress in order to protect the wealthy interests and to insure the failure of the UP.⁷⁸ If the Congress had passed the tax reforms, the government would have had one source of revenue with which to control inflation, unemployment and the money supply.⁷⁹

Although this problem was basically political in nature, its repercussions had a detrimental effect on the economy. The debate over taxes was just one area in which the UP was impeded by the PDC. Clearly, the Allende government did not have enough control of the economy to implement all of its socialist reforms.

Some of the economic problems of the UP government were inherited from the recession of the 1960's.⁸⁰ Others were caused by the inflationary tactics that the UP government used to redistribute wealth. And still others were caused by political opposition to many of the UP's directives. Inflation, unemployment, and food shortages were just a few of the factors which contributed to the economic problems of the Allende government. The process of transforming a capitalist economy into a socialist one would be difficult in the best of circumstances, and in Allende's Chile, this was virtually impossible.

CHAPTER 1 NOTES

¹Valenzuela, Arturo. "The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile." The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes, Linz, Juan J. and Stepan, Alfred eds. The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1978, p.36.

²Ibid., p. 6.

³Ibid., p. 11.

⁴Loveman, Brian. Chile. Oxford University Press. New York, 1979, p. 304.

⁵Drake, Paul W. Socialism and Populism in Chile, 1932-52. University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1978, p. 302.

⁶Ibid., p. 304.

⁷Ibid., p. 313.

⁸Loveman, 1979, p. 303.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 308.

¹¹Drake, 1978, p. 308.

¹²Valenzuela, 1978, p. 36.

¹³Loveman, 1979, p. 315.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 324.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 317.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 322.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 324.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 322.

¹⁹Valenzuela, 1978, p. 19.

²⁰Ibid., p. 38.

²¹Drake, 1978, p. 313.

²²Ibid., pp. 314-315.

²³Ibid., p. 315.

²⁴Ibid., p. 319.

²⁵Loveman, 1979, p. 316.

²⁶Ibid., p. 331.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Drake, 1978, p. 316.

²⁹Ibid., p. 310.

³⁰Loveman, 1979, p. 320.

³¹Drake, 1978, p. 302.

³²Ibid., p. 318.

³³Loveman, 1979, p. 322.

³⁴Drake, 1978, p. 318.

³⁵Valenzuela, 1978, p. 21.

³⁶Ibid., p. 72.

³⁷Ibid., p. 74.

³⁸Ibid., p. 58.

³⁹Ibid., p. 59.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 73.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 74.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Prothro, James W. and Chaparro, Patricio E. "Public Opinion and the Movement of Chilean Government to the Left, 1952-72." Chile: Politics and Society, Valenzuela, Arturo, and Valenzuela, J. Samuel, eds. Transaction Books: New Brunswick, NJ, 1976, p. 96.

⁴⁵Valenzuela, 1978, p. 66.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 67.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 68.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 65.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 60.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 68.

⁵²Prothro and Chaparro, 1976, p. 105.

⁵³Valenzuela, 1978, p. 68.

⁵⁴Boorstein, Edward. Allende's Chile. International Publishers: New York, 1977, p. 110.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 111.

⁵⁷Statistical Abstracts of Latin America, Ruddle, Kenneth and Hamour, Mukhtar, eds., Latin American Center: Los Angeles, 1970, p. 99.

⁵⁸Martner, Gonzalo, "The Economic Aspects of Allende's Government: Problems and Prospects." Allende's Chile. Medhurst, Kenneth, ed. Hart-Davis, MacGibbon Ltd.: London, 1972, p. 144.

⁵⁹Boorstein, 1977, pp. 130-1.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 131.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Boorstein, 1977, p. 132.

⁶³Ibid., p. 128.

⁶⁴Martner, 1972, p. 146.

⁶⁵Boorstein, 1977, p. 128.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 153.

- ⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 139-140.
- ⁶⁸Ibid., p. 140.
- ⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 143-4.
- ⁷⁰Ibid., p. 120.
- ⁷¹Ibid., p. 118.
- ⁷²Ibid.
- ⁷³Ibid., p. 115.
- ⁷⁴Ibid., p. 111.
- ⁷⁵Ibid., p. 112.
- ⁷⁶Ibid., p. 123.
- ⁷⁷Ibid.
- ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 117.
- ⁷⁹Ibid.
- ⁸⁰Martner, 1972, p. 135.

CHAPTER II

AMERICAN INTERVENTION

The government of Salvador Allende faced not only internal problems, but external ones as well. Soon after Allende was elected, President Richard M. Nixon met with Richard Helms, the director of the CIA, and instructed him not to allow Allende to take power.¹ This request was not inconsistent with the United States' previous actions in Chile. In 1964 the CIA enacted a "ruining campaign" to keep Allende and the Marxists out of office and this campaign was successful in that Eduardo Frei, a Christian Democrat, was elected.² In 1970, Nixon feared a "red sandwich," that is, a Communist country in western South America, and Cuba in the east.³ The Nixon Administration used the CIA to help prevent Allende from taking office, and once he was in office, they helped create the political and economic tension which led to Allende's overthrow.

The Central Intelligence Agency's involvement in Chile has been the subject of much debate which will not be resolved for many years to come. Much of the information concerning the CIA's covert actions in Chile from 1970-73, was obtained from a Senate Hearing concerning actions of the CIA.⁴ The link between the United States government and the

CIA was the 40 Committee, which is a sub-cabinet body of the Executive Branch whose purpose is to review major covert actions. It has existed under a variety of names since the 1950's and since 1969, it has been called the 40 Committee. The Committee consists of the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of the CIA.⁵ The 40 Committee, which was directly responsible to the President, directed the majority of covert actions of the CIA from 1970-73. The covert actions of the CIA consisted mainly of directing funds to create political instability, anti-government propaganda, and a military solution to the problem of the Allende government.

The first directive of the 40 Committee was to implement Track I, which consisted of allocating funds to promote propaganda and political unrest.⁶ Initially, Track I was designed to prevent Allende from being elected by Congress, but once he was elected, Track I continued to supply funds to rival political factions. On November 13, 1970, ten days after Allende was inaugurated, the 40 Committee approved \$25,000 for the Christian Democrat party.⁷ Perhaps one of the most interesting characters in the Chilean episode was Edward Korry, Ambassador to Chile from 1967-1971. Before Allende's victory however, Ambassador Korry asked for money to strengthen the political opposition to Allende. The

problem with the 1970 campaign was that the CIA and the President did not act soon enough. Korry, the man closest to the Chilean political situation, was the one man who foresaw Allende's victory. Unfortunately, not only were his warnings ignored, but he was kept in the dark about most of the CIA's activities.⁸ The main problem with the political directive developed when President Nixon decided to support the rightest candidate, Jorge Alessandri, and not the Christian Democrat candidate, Radomiro Tomic. Korry vehemently disagreed, predicting that supporting the far right would split votes and allow Allende to "sneak in."⁹ Henry Heckscher, the Chief of Station of the CIA in Chile, also supported the PN and Alessandri.¹⁰ Heckscher suggested to Nixon and the 40 Committee that the political effort should be entirely anti-Allende, and remain indifferent as to a winner. The problem with this compromise plan (as Korry knew) was that it was difficult to beat somebody with nobody.¹¹

Another aspect of the CIA's efforts to create a political solution to the election involved multinational companies. Although Korry warned U.S. companies not to support Alessandri, many still did. John McCone, former DCI and current board member of ITT, met with Helms to discuss funding of an anti-Allende campaign. ITT offered the CIA \$1 million to attempt a pro-Alessandri effort.¹² ITT was

concerned about protecting the \$95 million holdings in Chile and was willing to contribute significantly to the project.¹³ Although a pro-Alessandri campaign was rejected by the State Department, Korry, and the President, McCone believed that Helms might go ahead with a pro-Alessandri campaign anyway.¹⁴ In truth, the CIA did give ITT lists of people through which they could channel funds.¹⁵ What this means is that the CIA supported a policy which the United States rejected. Before the election, the the prophetic Korry wanted a pre-election poll. The CIA composed a poll in which Alessandri had 42% of the votes.¹⁶ Korry still had doubts, which proved to be true, and on September 4, 1970, Salvador Allende received 36%, Alessandri 34%, and Tomic 27% of the votes.¹⁷

The reaction to Allende's victory was total panic. Once everyone had regained his composure, a new plan for a political solution was devised. The so-called "Rube Goldberg" plan focused on a comprehensive set of political maneuverings which consisted of Frei resigning and his vice president succeeding him and then having the Congress re-elect Frei as president.¹⁸ This plan failed because Tomic and the PDC had already agreed to support an Allende victory.¹⁹

Once Allende was inaugurated, the CIA changed its plan for a political solution to the Allende problem. The new

plan consisted of allocating funds in order to escalate the tensions in Chilean politics. In late November, 1970, the 40 Committee approved \$750,000 for covert political action in Chile, but the money was not allocated until January 1971.²⁰ Between March and July, the Committee approved over \$700,000 of aid to the PDC in hopes that it would win most of the open congressional seats, thus creating more political tension.²¹ Not only did the CIA aid opposition parties, it also allocated \$50,000 in an effort to splinter the UP coalition.²² On October 26, 1972, the 40 Committee approved \$1,427,666 to support opposition leaders in the 1973 Congressional elections. The CIA also caused instability by channelling funds to private citizens who were opposed to the Allende government. In 1972, the 40 Committee allocated money to private citizens who in turn promoted various strikes such as the shopkeeper's strike of August 1972 and the Confederation of Truck Drivers' strike in October 1972.²³ These actions severely impeded the Chilean economy and this situation was further exacerbated by economic aid to opposition groups. The attempts of the CIA to prevent Allende from gaining office through political maneuvering failed. The CIA's secondary plan to create political tension was more effective in eliminating Allende. Clearly one of the main strategies the CIA employed, was meant to eliminate Allende through political means.

Not only did the CIA employ political tactics in Chile, they also used propaganda efforts to eliminate Allende. This propaganda effort began to take shape after Allende was elected. In January, 1971, the 40 Committee approved \$1,240,000 in order to buy newspapers and radio stations which would support opposition to Allende. In September of 1971, the 40 Committee approved \$700,000 for the support of El Mercurio, a major anti-Allende newspaper.²⁴ On April 11, 1972, the Committee allocated \$50,000 in an effort to give additional support for El Mercurio.²⁵

The mass media play a significant role in influencing the attitudes of a society. During the Allende years, the press represented a diverse and multifarious array of opinions. Unlike most socialist states, the Allende government did not control and censor the press, which allowed many anti-government newspapers to flourish. The largest and most widely read periodical, El Mercurio, was able to coalesce many anti-government factions.²⁶ Although the press espoused political doctrine, it was not necessarily supported by any political party. The media did not always portray politician views accurately and the politicians were forced to rely on an unreliable means of communication.²⁷ Although government harassment of the media varied with the means of communication, on the whole, the media was allowed to express its own political views.

El Mercurio offers a good example of an opposition paper that was allowed to express anti-government sentiments with minimal interference. The 40 Committee of the CIA allocated \$1.5 million to aid El Mercurio.²⁸ Even without the United States' support, the feud between Allende and El Mercurio would have produced the political tension evident in the daily press. Unlike such periodicals as Tizona and Patria y Libertad, El Mercurio never openly advocated military takeover of the Allende government.²⁹ The approach of El Mercurio was more subtle and indirect. The newspaper's readers were mostly upper and upper middle class professionals, as evidenced by the advertisements within the paper. El Mercurio attacked the Allende government on two main areas--politics and freedom of expression.

In 1972, El Mercurio repeatedly ran front-page stories about the Communist Party's attempt to infiltrate the military and create a civil war.³⁰ The editors heightened the tension in the Congress between Allende and the opposition parties. The editor reiterates the point that the opposition is a majority (**mayoria**) and that it represents the opinions of the majority of the people.³¹ El Mercurio devotes many pages of print to the Senate hearings and debates, which implies that they are closely watching the political scene.³² In every edition, an ad appears which advocates opposition to the nationalization of certain

industries such as paper, fishing, meat, and many others. The PDC ads for the Asociación de Ahorro y Préstamo advocate opposition to the nationalization of the banks.³³ All of the ads equate nationalization with the loss of freedom, loss of profits, increased government control, and loss of power for the workers. The political tension in Chile is evident in every issue of El Mercurio. The opinions and speeches of members of the Congress and the PDC and other opposition leaders were printed every day. Stories of tomas, or land seizures repeatedly made the front page along with pictures of farmers being thrown off their land.³⁴ In 1973, the political attacks against the Allende government became more blatant and direct. Ex-president Frei is quoted as saying that the Allende government is heading towards a totalitarian state.³⁵ The unstable relationship between the political parties was further exacerbated by the constant attention that was drawn to it in El Mercurio.

Although El Mercurio was closed only once by the Allende government, the editors constantly stated that they were afraid that Allende would shut down their presses.³⁶ This fear was ungrounded, since Allende never threatened to shut down El Mercurio.³⁷ The editors expressed a belief that they were being persecuted by the UP, and that they would nonetheless continue to fight for the truth.³⁸ The

editors expressed disdain for La Mañana, which was the official paper of the UP.³⁹ During the Allende years, there were eleven daily papers in Chile.⁴⁰ The television media was more strictly controlled than the newspaper media. Two of the three channels were in effect, UP controlled.⁴¹ In 1973, El Mercurio ran ads opposing the nationalization of the major paper supplier, La Papelera. The ex-president of La Papelera was Alessandri, therefore this takeover was more political than most.⁴² El Mercurio and other anti-government papers were fearful that if the government controlled the paper supply, that they would be able to drive them out of business as Perón had done in Argentina.⁴³ Although there were attempts to harass the anti-government presses with lawsuits, the government did not threaten to shut down the presses on political grounds.⁴⁴ The editors of El Mercurio implied that once the opposition press was shut down, fascism and the end of all elections would occur.⁴⁵

The operation of opposition presses in a socialist society is an unique occurrence. El Mercurio used emotional and political propaganda to create opposition to the government. Allende's insistence on allowing freedom of the press created an atmosphere full of political tension. El Mercurio was one of the most widely circulated newspapers and it obviously swayed public opinion against Allende.

This negative public attitude was one of the contributing factors which led to Allende's downfall.

The press was just one area in which the United States government was able to supplement the animosity between existing factions in Chile. The CIA channelled funds to an organization which they knew could effectively cause factionalism within Chilean society.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of the United States' involvement in Chile is the CIA's attempt to prevent Allende from taking office through military means. Although the United States did not send troops, military advisers, etc. to Chile, it did pass money, through the CIA, to help generate a military plan to keep Allende out of office. Although at this time no evidence is available to suggest that the CIA was directly involved with the 1973 coup, there is much evidence concerning the CIA's involvement in a coup attempt in 1970.

At the same time that Ambassador Korry was attempting to negotiate the Rube Goldberg (Track I) Plan, Kissinger, Nixon, Helms, and Hecksher were working on a plan to help the military overthrow the government. This phase of the 40 Committee plan was known as Track II and it involved a direct effort to use the Chilean military to prevent Allende from taking office.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, this plan rested on two generals, Viaux and Valenzuela, who were both unstable

and ineffective. As Korry once said to Kissinger, "Only an insane person would work with a man like Viaux."⁴⁷ General Viaux and General Valenzuela were planning to remove the one obstacle to a military takeover. General René Schneider, the Commander in Chief of the Chilean armed forces, firmly opposed any military intervention in the political arena. Finally, on September 15, 1970, Mitchell, Kissinger, Nixon, and Helms held a meeting to discuss possible means of assistance to Viaux. Nixon was intent on overthrowing Allende at all costs, and although everyone there knew that a coup was irrational and implausible, Helms and Kissinger went along with the idea anyway.⁴⁸ The plan centered around using Colonel Paul Wimert, a defense attaché, to keep in contact with Viaux and Valenzuela and tell Helms of their actions.⁴⁹ Wimert gave the Chilean military men tear gas, 45 caliber submachine guns, and grenades, all of which were obtained from the CIA. The plan consisted of kidnapping General Schneider, and then forcing President Frei to submit to the military in order to gain the release of Schneider. This plan failed miserably, and Schneider was killed in the attempt.⁵⁰ Since Schneider was killed with a handgun, the CIA believed that they would not be implicated in the plot. Viaux and Valenzuela were given money by the CIA, and promised more if the coup was successful.⁵¹ The coup attempt was a complete failure and on October 24, 1970,

Allende was inaugurated as President of Chile.⁵² Kissinger and Nixon blamed Helms for not having the correct intelligence information and for not taking a more active role in the Schneider kidnapping. Although Ambassador Korry was suspicious of the CIA, he was totally unaware of the coup attempt for many years. Kissinger and Nixon blame problems on communication and intelligence and claim that they had no idea that Helms was involved with a coup attempt.

The coup attempt is important in itself because it demonstrates the extent of United States' involvement in Chile. It is difficult to discern who was responsible for the Schneider affair, the CIA, the 40 Committee, or Nixon himself. If there are any rules which the Central Intelligence Agency lives by, it would have to be these two-- never reveal secrets, and never write anything down on paper. Needless to say, it is difficult and perhaps impossible to know the full extent of the CIA's military involvement in Chile. Richard Helms, the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) from 1966 through 1973, was a firm believer that his main function was to serve the President.⁵³ On February 7, 1973, Helms was indicted for perjury because of his statements at a Senate Committee hearing.

Symington (to Helms): Did you try in the CIA to overthrow the government in Chile?

Helms: No, sir.

Symington: Did you have any money passed to

the opponents of Allende?

Helms: No sir.

Symington: So the stories you were involved in that are wrong?

Helms: Yes, sir.⁵⁴

As stated earlier, these statements proved to be false. Helms justified his prevarication by claiming that the senators present at the hearings were not authorized to hear this information. As a noted aid of Helms once said, "Helms told the truth, but not the whole truth."⁵⁵ It was not until 1975 that Helms was finally forced to tell the truth about the CIA's pre-Allende activities.⁵⁶ Helms claims that the CIA did not give funds directly to opponents of Allende, and that their main purpose was to prevent Allende from coming to power, not to overthrow the Chilean government.⁵⁷

Whether or not the CIA directly or indirectly tried to prevent Allende from taking office by promoting a coup is not the point. The most important fact is that the United States attempted to prevent the confirmation of a legally elected president. With regards to the 1970 election of Allende, Helms failed in his duty. Through a combination of factors, many of which he had no control over, Salvador Allende became the first elected Marxist president in the history of the American continent.

Understanding the motives and objectives of the United States' military, political and social involvement in Chile is extremely difficult. To some, the covert actions of the

United States government were unjust, illegal and immoral, while to others, they were a means to guarantee national security. The official justification for the CIA's involvement in Chile comes from sources who have a vested interest in providing a specific point of view and is not in any way representative of the entire scope of opinions on the subject.

The officials of the United States government claim that they act in the best national interest, which is ostensibly dictated by the President. In Henry Kissinger's memoirs, White House Years, the author justifies the United States' role in Chile during 1970. Kissinger contends that Allende's victory was dangerous for both the United States and Chile, and he focuses his arguments on these two points. Kissinger states that "Allende represented a break with Chile's long democratic history and would become President not through an authentic expression of majority will but through a fluke of the Chilean political system".⁵⁸ This statement clearly shows Kissinger's lack of knowledge of Chile's multiparty system. Few presidents have won a majority in any previous election, and in 1958, Alessandri won with a lower percentage of votes than Allende had in 1970.⁵⁹

Kissinger continually suggests that the United States' actions were in the best interests of the Chilean people. He

states "It was a central tenet of the party's (UP's) program that "bourgeois" democratic practices would be made irrelevant, by definition this would be the last democratic election."⁶⁰ There is a logical fallacy within this statement in that the rejection of "bourgeois" democratic practices (whatever they may be), does not necessarily lead to the elimination of elections. This theory is easily discounted by the fact that Allende "permitted" municipal elections in which (despite United States' efforts) the UP was able to gain more political power. Perhaps the greatest absurdity of Kissinger's statement lies in the fact that Allende did not have the power to forbid elections--he controlled neither the Congress nor the military. Kissinger claims that the United States acted with an altruistic intent in promoting covert activities because the Chilean people would be better off without the Allende government. Kissinger never attempts to explain how one can justify overthrowing a democratically elected president.

Perhaps the real reason for Kissinger's and Nixon's actions comes from the threat the Allende government posed to United States hegemony in this continent. Kissinger states that the Chilean crisis occurred at the same time as the Cienfuegos incident and a multiplicity of other national crises magnified the threat of Chile.⁶¹ Chile was even more dangerous than Cuba in that it was a continental country and

could easily influence (domino effect) other South American countries.⁶² The former Secretary of State also states that the previous administration (Kennedy/Johnson) had given funds to the PDC, and that Nixon's policy was not at all unusual.⁶³ Immediately after Allende's election, Nixon told Richard Helms, the director of the CIA, "to make the economy scream," so that the "Rube Goldberg" plan could be undertaken.⁶⁴ The Rube Goldberg plan was reportedly Nixon's main objective, and it consisted of pressuring the Chilean Congress to elect Alessandri, and for the other step down, thus allowing Allende and Frei to have a two-way run off race.⁶⁵ (There are a few variants to the "Rube Goldberg Plan") The whole purpose of this plan was to allow Frei to be elected, thus allowing a reasonable candidate to rule Chile. All of these manipulations were designed to protect the United States' national security.

Kissinger also exonerated himself and Nixon from any wrongdoing with regards to the 40 Committee, which directed the CIA's activities in Chile. Kissinger claims that Track I was to be controlled by the 40 Committee, and Track II was to be controlled by the President himself.⁶⁶ This is in direct contradiction with the Senate Committee Report (which Kissinger calls "tendentious") which states that the only differences between Track I and Track II, were that Track I dealt with propaganda and economic sanctions and actions,

and Track II dealt with military actions.⁶⁷ Kissinger denies any connection with the Schneider kidnapping and claims that the CIA acted without any authority.⁶⁸ Henry Kissinger states that although the 40 Committee appropriated funds and made decisions, no one really monitored the activities of the CIA.⁶⁹ He also states that Track II was triggered by an emotional outburst on Nixon's part and that it was not meant to be taken seriously.⁷⁰ Nixon himself denies any knowledge of the Schneider kidnapping and justifies all his actions with regards to Chile.⁷¹ Kissinger does admit that the 40 Committee instructed Ambassador Korry to approach the Chilean military and to convey the President's desire for a new election.⁷² Kissinger states that the CIA was authorized to provide economic and political sanctions, but was not allowed to use military means to prevent Allende's election.⁷³ This statement is in direct contradiction to reports by people who were directly associated with Kissinger.⁷⁴ Kissinger states that pipeline shipments to the Chilean military were resumed because the Chileans were receiving weapons from the USSR, but he cites no reference to corroborate this statement.⁷⁵ Perhaps the most striking part about Kissinger's explanation is that it ends in 1970, with Allende's inauguration. He denies that any aid was given to General Augusto Pinochet in 1973, and claims that the coup was an indigenous occurrence.⁷⁶ The validity

of this statement is not as important as Kissinger's complete lack of reference to the CIA's covert activities from 1970-73. His chapter on Chile simply ends, thus implying the end to any U.S. involvement after 1970. Based on evidence of the Senate Committee, this is entirely untrue. It has been said by people directly involved with Track II that although no one admitted it, Kissinger and Nixon wanted Allende assassinated.⁷⁷ Although the CIA's covert activity alone did not allow the coup of 1973 to occur, it clearly predisposed the Allende government to failure.

The rationale behind the actions of the United States government in Chile is a complex and ambiguous subject. It is difficult to distinguish between the true motives of the protagonists and the reported ones. It is even more difficult to discern where the locus of authority lay, that is, whether it rested with the CIA, the 40 Committee, or the President. If the words of those closely associated with the situation are to be trusted, then a statement by Henry Kissinger seems to be the prevalent attitude and justification for the United States' involvement in Chile.

Kissinger said, "I don't see why we have to let a country go Marxist, just because its people are irresponsible."⁷⁸

The United States government's involvement in propaganda efforts, political assistance, and military actions in Chile can be said to bring about the eventual overthrow of

the Allende government. Each separate aspect of the CIA's actions had one purpose in mind--to keep Allende and his Marxist government from running Chile. Despite Kissinger's claims, there can be no true justification for these activities.

CHAPTER II NOTES

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⁶Ibid., p. 5.

⁷Ibid., p. 59.

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¹⁰Ibid., p. 225.

¹¹Ibid., p. 227.

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¹⁵Ibid., p. 229.

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¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Senate, 1976, p. 59.

²¹Ibid., p. 29.

²²Ibid., p. 60.

²³Ibid., pp. 30-31.

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²⁶Valenzuela, Arturo. "The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile." The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes. Linz, Juan, J. and Stepan, Alfred, eds. The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1978, p. 79.

²⁷Alexander, Robert J. The Tragedy of Chile, Greenwood Press: Westport, Conn., 1978, p. 228.

²⁸Ibid., p. 239.

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³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid., March 10, 1972.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid., March 3, 1972.

³⁴Ibid., June 5, 1973.

³⁵Ibid., June 1, 1973.

³⁶Alexander, 1978, p. 240.

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⁴¹Ibid., p. 242.

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⁴⁴El Mercurio, June 1, 1973.

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- ⁵⁰Ibid.
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- ⁵⁹Valenzuela, 1978, p. 40.
- ⁶⁰Kissinger, 1979, pp. 654-5.
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- ⁶³Ibid., p. 661.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., p. 671.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 672.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., p. 674.

⁶⁷Senate, 1976, p. 13.

⁶⁸Kissinger, 1979, p. 676.

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⁷¹Nixon, Richard M. RN, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, Grosset and Dunlap: New York, 1979, pp. 489-90.

⁷²Kissinger, 1979, p. 679.

⁷³Ibid., p. 676.

⁷⁴Hersh, 1983, p. 287.

⁷⁵Kissinger, 1979, p. 679.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 656-7.

⁷⁷Hersh, 1983, p. 292.

⁷⁸Powers, 1978, p. 227.

CHAPTER III

THE END OF CHILEAN DEMOCRACY

Through a combination of internal political and economic problems, and external intervention by the United States government, the Allende government soon collapsed. The events leading up to the 1973 coup clearly illustrate the dramatic tension which existed within the Chilean political system from 1970-73. After Allende was elected, the United States' policy towards Chile began to stress more economic intervention and manipulation, which the United States government believed would eventually lead to Allende's downfall.¹ A brief chronicle of the events prior to September 11, 1973 illustrates how a democratically elected government could be brought to a standstill, and overthrown by a small group of men with relative ease.

Once Allende was elected and the United States government realized that they could not prevent him from taking office, the policy of the United States government towards Chile changed. The November 9, 1970 National Security Decision Memo (NSDM) #93, stated that the new policy towards Chile would be publically cool and economically hostile.² This policy consisted of limiting private investment in Chile, terminating former economic agreements, persuading

other institutions not to lend money to Chile, and telling American companies that they should not do business with Chile.³ Before Allende took control of the government, the World Bank had lent Chile over \$234 million, but after Allende took office, no loans were made.⁴ The United States government instigated (through the CIA) and supported many of the strikes which ultimately crippled the economy.⁵ Clearly, the strikers would not have been able to exist for as long as they did without assistance.

The role of the CIA in Chile after 1970 was slightly different from that of previous years. By 1971, the CIA was planning various coup efforts which did not materialize. The main function of the CIA from 1971-73 was to collect intelligence information which would be invaluable to the people who would eventually overthrow Allende.⁶ The CIA composed lists of names of people who supported the Allende government and who would have to be arrested, killed, or deported after the coup. The CIA spent much time and effort in trying to undermine the Chilean government, and even asked Australian Intelligence to aid them in their propaganda efforts.⁷ Although officials of the United States government (Kissinger and Nixon) deny any involvement in the 1973 coup, insiders report that Track II (military solution) did not end in 1970.⁸ Colonel Wimert, who helped arrange the Schneider kidnapping, claims that there were undercover

CIA agents in Chile (false flaggers) whose purpose was to assassinate Allende.⁹ This brings up the highly controversial issue of political assassinations. Although officials in the United States government categorically deny any attempt to assassinate Allende ever existed, insiders say that various assassination strategies were planned, and as one source said, "Henry [Kissinger] wanted it."¹⁰ Although the United States government claimed to use only economic sanctions, covert political and military actions were also being carried out.

Although the United States played an important role in the downfall of the Allende government, there were also internal political problems which made the overthrow inevitable. Between 1970-73, several long strikes halted the economy and escalated social tension. By 1973, the insecurity of the people was evidenced by their forming of private police forces, and their building up of personal armies.¹¹ The volatile period called the **tancozo**, consisted of the period after the military officers resigned from Allende's cabinet (they were brought in to help strengthen the government's position) and the abortive coup attempt of June 29, 1973.¹² During the **tancozo** period, the economy was virtually at a standstill, and the disunity within the political realm was at its highest point.¹³ Allende completely alienated the PDC, who had become exceedingly

hostile to the leftist (socialist) faction of the UP. Perhaps Allende's biggest mistake was his refusal to join with the PDC and cut his ties with the far left.¹⁴ The socialist faction of the UP would not reconcile with the PDC and the country soon ceased to have a functioning government. There were constant legislative and constitutional disputes in which the Congress accused the UP government of acting illegally. During this time (July, 1973), the political instability was compounded by a second truckers' strike and a middle class (professional) sympathy strike.¹⁵ Although Allende tried to reconcile the various factions, he could not bring order to a country which was quickly becoming more and more unstable.

Perhaps the most significant event in this unstable period was the one over which Allende had no control. On June 29, 1973, General Carlos Prats put down an abortive coup attempt by a faction of the Chilean army.¹⁶ When General Prats resigned on August 22, 1973, the stage was finally set for the eventual coup.¹⁷ Perhaps the most ironic aspect of this situation was the fact that Allende's nemesis was caused by his own party. In early September, Carlos Altamirano, the Socialist Party Secretary General, openly declared war on the Chilean military in a public statement, without Allende's knowledge or permission.¹⁸ It was at this point that the Chilean army, under its new head,

General Augusto Pinochet, decided to act against the government.¹⁹ After Allende heard Altamirano's speech, he decided that he would ask for a plebiscite in order to end the political impasse.²⁰ Allende was not able to give his plebiscite speech, for on September 11, 1973, the day planned for the speech, Allende was occupied with other matters.²¹

In the early morning of September 11, 1973, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, General Augusto Pinochet, had surrounded La Moneda, the presidential palace and home of the Allende government.²³ According to an eyewitness account, Allende organized the defense of La Moneda, a force which consisted of only a few Allende supporters, since most of the Palace Guard had fled.²⁴ Allende and his supporters refused to surrender, and the shooting and bombings lasted throughout the morning.²⁵ After much gunfire was exchanged, the army was finally able to gain entrance to the building and the fighting continued within La Moneda. At 1:50 p.m., near the halls of the Red Room, Allende and his supporters were surrounded by rebel forces who demanded Allende's surrender. Allende then said, "Never. It is better to leave dead than surrender."²⁶ At this moment, gunfire was exchanged, mortally wounding President Allende.²⁷ The military junta's version of the coup is quite different. They claim that a military car was on route to pick up Allende to discuss a surrender plan with Pinochet, but the

car was held up by sniper fire. They also claim that when they reached Allende, he had already committed suicide.²⁸

Perhaps the most moving account of the final hours at La Moneda comes from Allende's farewell speech to the nation. He said:

In the face of these facts, the only thing left for me to say to the workers: I will not resign! Placed in historical transition, I will pay with my life for the loyalty of the people...workers of my country: I have faith in Chile and her destiny....Probably Radio Magallanes will be silenced, and the calm metal of my voice will not reach you. It does not matter. You will continue to hear me, I will always be beside you or at least my memory will be that of a dignified man, that of a man who was loyal.²⁹

How Allende died is not as important as what his death represented--that is, the end of Chilean democracy.

CHAPTER III NOTES

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⁶Hersh, 1983, p. 295.

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¹¹Alexander, Robert J. The Tragedy of Chile. Greenwood Press: Westport, Conn., 1978, p. 314.

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¹⁵Alexander, 1978, p. 321.

¹⁶Valenzuela, 1978, p. 105.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁸Alexander, 1978, pp. 325-6.

¹⁹Ibid.

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²¹Alexander, 1978, p. 331.

²²Ibid., p. 333.

²³Gonzales-Cordoba, Luis Renato. "The Scene from within the Mon: la." The End of Chilean Democracy, Laurence Birns, ed. Seabury Press: New York, 1973, p. 40.

²⁴Alexander, 1978, p. 332.

²⁵Gonzales, 1973, p. 40.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Alexander, 1970, p. 336.

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CONCLUSION

There are a multiplicity of factors which were responsible for the overthrow of the Allende government. It is difficult to guess whether or not the internal divisions within the Chilean political scene were strong enough to guarantee Allende's downfall. It would be fair to say that the actions of the United States government created an atmosphere in which a coup was a constant and real threat. The most significant aspect of the Allende years was that it epitomized the policy of the United States government towards Latin America.

The two basic assumptions that the leaders of the United States government held about Chile were that the United States had a right to interfere with Allende's government, and that the Chileans themselves were incapable of solving their own political problems. These assumptions clearly demonstrate the United States government's notion that the entire American continent revolves around the United States' wishes and policies. In Chile, the United States believed that it had a vested interest in removing the Marxist government of Salvador Allende. Allende was one of the first elected Marxist presidents in the hemisphere's history, and the United States felt that its political and military hegemony was being threatened. Clearly, a

government which planned to nationalize many United States' companies directly threatened many business interests in the United States. It would seem that the main concern in this situation was economic, with anti-communist rhetoric (some genuine) added to justify American intervention. Perhaps the greatest hypocrisy lies in the fact that the United States government used the threat of communism in order to protect specific economic interests.

The most intolerable aspect of the United States' intervention lies in the attitudes of those involved. Kissinger, Nixon, and Helms did not believe that the Chileans were capable of choosing their own government. The United States government was oblivious to the internal machinations of the Chilean political realm, and made decisions based on inaccurate assumptions. The person most attuned to Chilean politics, Ambassador Edward Korry, was excluded from most of the decisions concerning Chile. As soon as the CIA became aware of the internal political dissention in Chile, they offered aid to these factions who were willing to use the CIA's help to further their own ends. These covert operations by the CIA were based on the assumption that the United States' actions were necessary to create a reasonable solution to the Allende problem. The idea that the indigenous populations in Latin American countries are incapable of running their own governments is a prevalent attitude of

the United States government which causes considerable resentment of Americans among all the classes in the countries south of the Rio Grande.

The United States' involvement in Chile from 1970-73 is not an abstract, isolated incident. The underlying ideas behind the United States government's foreign policy towards Chile is still evident today. The United States' covert and overt intervention in Latin America has occurred in the past, is occurring in the present, and will most likely continue in the future. The United States' policies in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and other Latin American and Caribbean countries clearly illustrate that many of the same tenets concerning American foreign policy still exist today. The United States is a country which advocates popular elections, democracy, human rights and freedom. The hypocrisy of the Chilean involvement revolves around the fact that Allende represented an American ideal--a democratically elected president who respected civil liberties and a free press. In the case of Chile, the United States government had to compromise its values to protect what it believed to be the best national interest. By helping to depose Allende, the United States clearly stated that it does not favor democratic governments, but rather, governments which are favorable to the United States and which do not threaten the economic and political hegemony of the United States.

In the end, the United States government did not get what it wanted, which was a conservative government which appeared to be democratic and which promoted American interests. There is no possible way that the United States government could call the military dictatorship of General Pinochet democratic, or concerned with human rights and freedom. With the help of the United States government, the Chilean military was able to end a tradition of a constitutional and democratic government which had existed for over 140 years. The tragedy of the Allende government offers concrete proof that a re-definition of American foreign policy and relations with Latin America must be made in order to create an alliance of cooperation and peace.

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