

CHILE SINCE 1920

- "IBÁÑEZ AND ALESSANDRI: THE AUTHORITARIAN RIGHT AND THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT IN TWENTIETH CENTURY CHILE." By GEORGE STRAWBRIDGE. (State University of New York at Buffalo, Council on International Studies, Special Studies Series, No. 7, 1971. Pp. 52.)
- NICOMEDES GUZMÁN: PROLETARIAN AUTHOR IN CHILE'S LITERARY GENERATION OF 1938. By LON PEARSON. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1976. Pp. 285. \$13.00.)
- "THE FREI GOVERNMENT AND THE CHILEAN LABOR MOVEMENT." By PATRICK V. PEPPE. (New York University, Ibero-American Language and Area Center Occasional Papers, No. 12, 1974. Pp. 27.)
- "ASPECTOS DEMOGRÁFICOS DE LA FAMILIA EN UNA PROVINCIA DE CHILE, SEGÚN EL CENSO DE 1970." By LUIS FELIPE LIRA. (Santiago, Chile: Centro Latinoamericano de Demografía, PISPAL Documento de Trabajo, No. 12, 1975. Pp. 46.)
- "CARACTERÍSTICAS SOCIO-ECONÓMICAS Y ESTRUCTURA DE LAS FAMILIAS EN LA CIUDAD DE SANTIAGO CHILE, 1970," By LUIS FELIPE LIRA. (Santiago, Chile: Centro Latinoamericano de Demografía, PISPAL Documento de Trabajo, No. 8, 1975. Pp. 35.)
- THE ALLENDE YEARS: A UNION LIST OF CHILEAN IMPRINTS, 1970-1973. By LEE H. WILLIAMS, JR. (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1977. Pp. 339. \$24.00.)
- CHILE 1970-1973: LECCIONES DE UNA EXPERIENCIA. Edited by FEDERICO G. GIL, RICARDO LAGOS E., and HENRY A. LANDSBERGER. (Madrid: Editorial Tecnos, 1977. Pp. 470.)
- CHILE: THE STATE AND REVOLUTION. By IAN ROXBOROUGH, PHILIP O'BRIEN, and JACKIE RODDICK. (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1977. Pp. 304. \$20.00.)
- "CHILE: RECYCLING THE CAPITALIST CRISIS." NACLA Latin America & Empire Report, Volume 10, Number 9, November 1976. (Pp. 32. \$1.25.)
- "TRANSITIONS TO STABLE AUTHORITARIAN-CORPORATE REGIMES: THE CHILEAN CASE?" By ROBERT R. KAUFMAN. (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Professional Papers in Comparative Politics, 1976. Pp. 68. \$3.00.)
- SOCIOLOGÍA DEL DESARROLLO RURAL: ENFOQUE INTERDISCIPLINARIO DE LA DIFUSIÓN DE TECNOLOGÍA AGROPECUARIA EN CHILE. Edited by CARLOS AMTMANN M., FRANCISCO FERNÁNDEZ M., and DARÍO MENANTEAU-HORTA. (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1976. Pp. 144.)

These books and papers span over a half century of Chilean history from the 1920s until the present. The most dramatic event of the period, and indeed perhaps in all Chilean history, is the coup d'état that overthrew the Allende government. Many books have been published on the Unidad Popular (UP) government (1970-73); the one edited by Gil, Lagos, and Landsberger and the one by Roxborough, O'Brien, and Roddick are among the best. The UP experi-

ence will not only exert a crucial influence on future developments but will also lead to a reinterpretation of the past, particularly from the 1920s onwards. Thus it is appropriate that this review should concentrate on this key period.

Strawbridge's paper examines the governments of Arturo Alessandri (1920) and Carlos Ibáñez del Campo (1931). This article was presented at the conference on "Political Parties and the Search for Institutional Stability" in 1968. Although dealing with the 1920s, it foreshadows certain political dilemmas that are relevant to the present. The main thesis is that the Alessandri government was unable to solve pressing social, economic, and political problems because of its reliance on democratic procedures, whilst the Ibáñez regime was successful in alleviating some of these same problems through resort to authoritarian rule. Strawbridge's conclusion can be interpreted as providing an historical justification for military dictatorships. However, the nature of the crisis, of the military intervention, and of the Ibáñez government itself differs from the present military government in Chile and Strawbridge should have made a distinction between different types of authoritarian governments to avoid drawing the wrong conclusions from his analysis.

It is certainly true that Alessandri was unable to introduce some necessary social reforms, but this was due to obstruction from the oligarchical parties which controlled parliament (and, at that time, parliament ruled supreme over the presidency). What was in crisis was the oligarchical system of domination, which was being challenged by a militant mining and industrial proletariat and by an expanding middle class. Alessandri knew that in order to preserve the interests of the upper class it was necessary "to bring about quickly the evolution in order to avoid the revolution" (Strawbridge quoting Alessandri). Similarly, almost half a century later, Frei promised "revolution in liberty" to avoid a real revolution. They were both unsuccessful as both ended with a polarized society followed sooner or later by an authoritarian government. A succession of military coups overthrew Alessandri and then a radical wing of the officers, Ibáñez among them, recalled Alessandri to end his term in office and institute a new constitution abolishing the parliamentary system and replacing it with a presidential one. Afterwards, in 1927, Ibáñez was elected president (with a limited franchise) and assumed dictatorial powers. In the case of Frei's government, polarization was accelerated through reforms that were deemed insufficient by the working class and too much for the upper bourgeoisie, resulting in the election of the Allende government, and followed by a military coup and government. But Ibáñez—contrary to the present junta—did not set out to change the Alessandri constitution of 1925. The 1925 crisis of the oligarchical system of domination had matured in 1970–73 to a crisis of the capitalist system itself.

Ibáñez's regime introduced social legislation, promoted industrialization, and expanded state intervention to solve labor conflicts, while at the same time restricting any independent class action. While it is possible to argue that his government had some Bonapartist features, Strawbridge accepts too uncritically the view propagated by Ibáñez himself that he acted in the national interest and that he was above political parties and particular social groups. In reality, Ibáñez

represented an alliance of the emerging petty bourgeoisie (particularly those linked to the state) with the oligarchy and the U.S., which had replaced Great Britain as the imperial power. Ibáñez tried to solve the economic and political problem by letting in foreign capital—especially from the U.S.—and contracting huge foreign debts in the hope that this would promote economic growth.

Although Ibáñez governed in an authoritarian manner, the party system was not destroyed, the constitution remained unchanged, and the bourgeois democratic system of government returned to normal after his presidential period expired. Meanwhile, the present junta has overturned the constitution, abolished political parties, and excluded the popular and most of the middle sectors from the polity and economy. It is governing for the narrow interests of the upper class. Furthermore, the junta is attempting to perpetuate military rule and if forced to leave the government it is unlikely that Chile will return to a full bourgeois democratic system.

Pearson's book on Nicomedes Guzmán is a much needed examination of a writer who was a leader in the Chilean literary generation of 1938 and a representative of socialist realism in art in Chile. His novels portray the difficult life of the lower classes and the lumpenproletariat living in the urban slums (*conventillos*) where he himself grew up. He remained faithful to his proletarian origins. He was considered a communist, continually experienced economic problems, and undertook a great variety of jobs during his lifetime—many of them menial. He did not live to see the election of Allende—who attempted to tackle the problems of poverty denounced in his novels—as he died tragically of alcoholism in 1964. His writings and personal life flourished during the period from the formation of the Popular Front in 1936 until the end of the Popular Front government of P. A. Cerda in 1940. His fortunes declined with the election of the G. G. Videla government in 1946 when, in 1948, it sent many communists and other left-wingers to a concentration camp in Pisagua or drove them into exile with the *ley de defensa de la democracia* (law in defence of democracy), or as it was popularly known the *ley maldita* (the damned or wicked law). Like many Chileans today, he became a political outcast in his own country.

Pearson examines insufficiently the relationship between the literary decline of Guzmán and the post-second-world-war anticommunist and working class repression in Chile. His statements about Guzmán's disillusion and betrayal of his political ideals are totally inadequate and lack explanation. At times Pearson misinterprets political history as when he characterizes the Alessandri government of 1920–24 as a "first step in the evolution of a socialist state" (p. 75)! Unfortunately no biographical appendix of Guzmán is provided. Over half of the book is concerned with a literary analysis of what Pearson calls the New Proletarian Style as exemplified by Guzmán. Those concerned with literature will find this part of particular interest.

The paper by Peppe deals with the labor policies of the Christian Democrat government of President Frei (1964–70). The paper is full of insights that not only explain events during the Frei government but provide a useful antecedent

to issues and events that only developed fully subsequently. For those who see today in Frei the democratic alternative to Pinochet's dictatorship, Peppe's work provides a timely reminder that "his corporativism contained authoritarian elements which plainly threatened the traditional system of Chilean democracy" (p. 26). The author argues that Frei attempted to establish a new capitalist order in alliance with (mainly) U.S. capital aimed at further weakening and subordinating the working class. He concludes that the organizational strength of the working class—and, I would add, its close linkages with Marxist parties—prevented such aims from being successful.

To illustrate his case, he analyzes the plan by the treasury minister, Sergio Molina, to introduce in 1968 a forced saving scheme for wage earners (dubbed *chiribonos* by the left) to combat inflation and provide funds for investment. During the first couple of years in office Frei was quite successful in expanding the economy and curtailing inflation. By 1967–68 lack of response from capitalists to increase their savings and investments brought a renewed threat of stagnation with inflation unless the government acted decisively. The Molina project attempted to place the burden on the working class instead of on the foreign or national capitalist class (for example, Frei refused to increase the taxes on the largely foreign owned copper mines despite rising profitability). As a result of opposition from the CUT (the national trade union confederation) and the left-wing parties, as well as differences within the Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC), the *chiribonos* project was abandoned after some months and Molina resigned. Congress approved a new budget proposal from which the forced saving scheme was deleted, but only after the government threatened that an institutional crisis would ensue—which was interpreted as meaning a coup d'état—if the bill was not passed. A right-wing PDC congressman openly speculated that Frei might form a military cabinet with himself as the head and close Congress. Frei remained silent, as during the attempted coup against Allende (several months before Allende's actual overthrow).

Peppe further analyzes the corporatist ideas of Thayer, Frei's first labor minister, who argued that the power of the unions had to be curtailed as a prerequisite for further capitalist development. If not, the unions would put forward demands that the system could not satisfy, leading to its collapse. Another group within the PDC opposed Thayer and called for a noncapitalist road to development. Many of this progressive group left in 1969 to form MAPU (Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitario), which later joined the UP coalition of parties. The article shows interestingly how various fractions were taking shape within the PDC as a reflection of the government's actions and the development of the class struggle. Three fractions emerged: the *oficialistas* (right-wing) who were behind Frei, the *rebeldes* (left-wing) backing the noncapitalist way, and the *terceristas* (the center) loyal to Tomić.

Stagnation and growing inflation during the last three years of Frei's government led to increasing labor unrest as evidenced by the spiralling number of strikes and takeovers, mainly of large farms. For many workers and peasants the dependent capitalist system's inability to provide their basic needs was revealed. Meanwhile a segment of the capitalist class, who had supported Frei

in the 1964 presidential elections, were appalled by the government's inability to control the labor movement by either incorporation or repression. In 1970 they turned to Jorge Alessandri, the candidate of the right-wing National Party, instead of Tomić, the PDC candidate. This split in the vote of the bourgeoisie allowed Allende to capture the presidency in 1970 with a minority vote.

The two short papers by Lira provide evidence for those who hold that, in the long run, the most effective means for population control in less developed countries like Chile is to improve the welfare of the poor. Lira himself does not draw this conclusion although it follows logically from his findings. He merely states from his demographic analysis that a higher rate of fertility is observed in extended families. Furthermore he finds a positive correlation between extended families and poor residential areas of Santiago, and poor families and manual occupation. Of course, population growth is not only determined by the rate of fertility but also by the rate of mortality. Lira uses only data for 1970. It would be of interest to contrast the movement of the above-mentioned variables during the UP government and the present military government, as one would expect it to move in an opposite direction. While standards of living and health services improved for the poor during Allende, they have deteriorated drastically since.

The work by Williams is a bibliography of books published by Chileans or non-Chileans about Chile, as well as of several publications in social sciences and literature published in Chile during the Allende government. It includes only those publications which are available in some major libraries in the U.S. The material is classified by subject and an author index is provided. The UP years were extremely creative culturally and there has probably never been so much published in Chile before or since. This bibliography is most welcome as it provides a useful service for those working on Chile; it also reveals the richness of some libraries in the U.S. This is, at least, an advantage of "cultural imperialism" especially as some of the books, papers, and journals mentioned are no longer available or accessible in Chile owing to the junta's obscurantist cultural policy of burning or withdrawing from public circulation literature considered dangerous (Marxist writings were a principal target).

However, the book has some weaknesses, for instance, the subject classification does not discriminate sufficiently, and imprints that have nothing to do with the Allende period but happen to have been published during 1970 to 1973 in Chile or elsewhere about Chile are included. In this sense the title of *The Allende Years* tends to be misleading. The division of the bibliography into two parts according to place of publication (Chile or elsewhere) does not seem to be highly relevant. Williams would provide an invaluable service if he expanded his bibliography to include journal articles published about UP during the Allende years as well as since the coup d'état.

Certain themes recur in most writings about the UP period and the debate will continue as many questions can never be fully answered. Historical events are unique and cannot be tested in laboratory experiments where variables can

be manipulated to assess their effect on the final outcome. Most of the writings on UP tend to fall into one of two positions: simplifying and pushing the arguments to their extreme, one group holds that the Chilean road to socialism was doomed from the start; the other that it was viable if certain events or mistakes had not happened. Each group also draws different lessons from the failure. Some of the major themes to emerge concern the viability of the parliamentary, or political, or peaceful road to socialism in Chile and the identification of the factors that explain the failure of UP. Issues such as the following are examined: the political differences within UP, the errors in economic policy, the lack of an adequate policy towards the military, the influence of imperialism, and UP's policy towards the PDC.

Of the two major works discussed next, by Gil, Lagos and Landsberger (GLL) and by Roxborough, O'Brien and Roddick (ROR), the ROR book has the advantage of not presupposing any knowledge about Chile. It is also more coherent and comprehensive, giving a readable and informed account of the UP government while providing an instructive historical background since colonial times. The GLL book is the result of a seminar on "Chile 1970–1973: Lessons of an Experience" held under the auspices of the Institute of Latin American Studies of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 1975. The list of participants is indeed distinguished, including over a dozen Chileans most of whom were key actors in the UP government or in the Chilean political system. All of them are or were also academics. The combination of both experiences raises high expectations, which are largely fulfilled. This book—like many of its kind—tends at times to be too detailed, specialized, and characterized by some unevenness in the quality of the contributions. At times these key decision-makers reveal interesting insights, at times they tend to fall back on defending their past personal attitudes and actions.

Regarding the impact of economic factors on UP's downfall, the writers in GLL agree that economic policy has to be considered as an instrument in the struggle for power. This in my view is the correct way of analyzing the economic problem, and not by attacking the UP economic policy from a limited technocratic perspective as some authors have done. Undoubtedly economic policymakers committed errors and some were incompetent, but many of the so-called mistakes can only be explained when political factors are considered. Other factors that intervened in the economic crisis were outside the government's control and can be squarely attributed to the actions of national and foreign capitalists.

Pio García argues that economic policy, particularly at the beginning, was formulated by a team of economists who did not have much political influence within the various parties of the coalition. This resulted in a disjuncture between the political requirements inherent in a certain economic policy and the political actions pursued by the political directors of UP. It seems ironic that the first minister of economics, Pedro Vuskovic, who was then an independent technical expert, had to reiterate constantly the political requirements of the economic policy to political leaders, who had at first viewed it as a technical problem. This of course changed later when the economic crisis converted the economy into a major political issue. The parties then assigned political leaders to analyze the

specific political implications of economic policies. However, according to García, this delayed decisions instead of solving the problem. The main issue in my view does not concern the appointment of political overseers but the existence of important political differences within UP.

In Sergio Bitar's view, the economic policy problem was even more serious as the political projections implicit in the initial design of the economic policy were inconsistent with those considered by the political leadership. One of the objectives of the short-term expansionist policy adopted by Vuskovic was to improve significantly the standard of living of the majority of the population in the hope of a favorable electoral result in the municipal elections of 1971. This conjuncture would then be used to call a plebiscite to change the existing legal system and transform political power decisively in favor of the working class and its political representatives. Whether such a tactic would have succeeded remains doubtful (and certainly Allende thought it would fail), but early to mid-1971 was probably the most favorable political conjuncture UP was to encounter for advancing towards the seizure of power.

The opposition quickly grasped the importance of using the economy as a political weapon against Allende. The outgoing PDC finance minister, Andrés Zaldívar, attempted to create a financial panic to prevent Allende from taking office. Towards the end of 1971 when the economy was buoyant, except for some minor distribution problems, the opposition organized a women's march of "the empty pots." Later, in 1972, lorry-owners' and shopkeepers' strikes were designed to exacerbate distribution problems. The opposition exploited every possibility to create economic disruption and sabotage the economy as part of their strategy to bring down the government. Indeed, by mid-1972 shortages and inflation were becoming a major problem. The measures implemented by the government were insufficient to deal with the situation and, according to Bitar, from then on UP lost control over the economy. He seems to imply that it had also lost the battle for power as it was no longer able to implement a coherent economic policy. The validity of Bitar's reasoning depends on how important economic dislocation was in mobilizing the middle sectors against the UP government and, more importantly, in alienating the support of the working class. The increase in UP's electoral support in the 1973 parliamentary elections in relation to the 1970 presidential elections does not allow an easy answer. The extent to which workers thought "better the socialism of poverty than the misery and rank horror of the Chilean capitalism" (see ROR, p. 160) is difficult to ascertain, but certainly some credence must be given to it. As for the middle class, the economic crisis undoubtedly damaged UP's political strategy of forging an alliance between the middle and working classes. In some instances the problem was not so much one of production as of distribution (hoarding). UP was never able to control the distribution system and it felt that introducing rationing would push sectors of the middle class further into opposition.

In short, both Bitar and García stress the lack of coherence between UP's economic and political direction whilst drawing attention to what I consider to be the crucial problem: the lack of a uniform and coherent policy, which was due to the coexistence of two different strategies and tactics within UP.

David Baytelman, in his article on the rural sector, also argues that a crucial aspect of UP's economic policy had to be to win the struggle for power, as otherwise it was impossible to control the economy and create a new economic system. To achieve this purpose he thinks that an agreement had to be reached with the PDC in order to widen the social basis of support for the process of transformation. This proposition has certain similarities with the one put forward by Radomiro Tomić. But as Julio Silva Solar points out, these writers overestimate the strength of the progressive sector within the PDC. Furthermore another way open to UP for gaining strength was to widen its support among the workers, peasants, and shanty-town dwellers. As for the peasantry, evidence suggests that UP was gaining their increasing support. For example, in 1970 about two-thirds of the organized rural laborers were affiliated to unions that supported the PDC but by 1972–73 two-thirds supported UP.

Another issue raised by Baytelman concerns the transition to a collective agriculture. I completely agree with him that this has to be carried out according to the wishes of rural workers; by voluntary and not compulsory means. However, his extensive quotations from Engels and Lenin and his references to the collectivization in Bulgaria and North Vietnam are not directly relevant as they all refer to small peasant proprietors. In Chile the collective organization of the expropriated latifundia involved foremost laborers who were all proletarians and semiproletarians on these large estates.

While I accept Baytelman's reasoning that the organization of collective agricultural enterprises does not necessarily mean a socialist sector has been formed, I do not agree that UP should not have tried harder to promote the advanced type of collective—the CERA (Centro de Reforma Agraria). According to Baytelman, the CERA was an idealistic conception that most peasants opposed. It might well be that certain aspects of the CERAs, such as the socialization of part of the surplus for community development, were too advanced and wrongly conceived given the fact that a planned economy had not been established. But from the political perspective one element of the CERAs was particularly valuable: the incorporation of seasonal wage laborers (*afuerinos*) and some surrounding smallholders (*minifundistas*). It is likely that a greater effort to extend the benefits of agrarian reform to these large peasant sectors would have further widened support for the UP government. Furthermore such an incorporation also makes economic sense. Baytelman views the inclusion of more rural laborers into the reformed sector largely through mechanization. He underemphasizes the need for including *afuerinos* and *minifundistas* and is overoptimistic about their chances of employment in the industrial sector. John Strasma's article concludes that many reformed units employed fewer laborers than previously and did not cultivate the land sufficiently intensively. They therefore could have absorbed a larger number of workers. According to his calculations the reformed sector had on average over seven times more land per unit of labor as compared with the *minifundia* sector and a third more than the private capitalist farm sector.

A debate emerged in the early postcoup literature over the relative importance of internal versus external factors in UP's downfall. The NACLA (North

American Congress on Latin America) group was one of the first proponents of the “invisible blockade” thesis whereby the U.S. government and corporations in particular, together with some other international financial institutions, created economic difficulties for the UP by blocking loans and aid in the hope that this would “destabilize” (in the CIA language) the government. While it is true that such actions did have negative consequences for the Chilean economy and while it is no longer possible for conservative academics to deny CIA involvement in Allende’s overthrow, this still does not mean that the U.S. was the chief cause of UP’s downfall. ROR marshalled convincing economic data to show that despite the “invisible blockade” Chile was able to increase its foreign debt by shifting to alternative sources of finance. The foreign exchange crisis, which became acute in 1973, was largely a consequence of UP’s own economic policy.

The NACLA publication under review implicitly recognizes this as, unlike their previous publications, they no longer uphold the “invisible blockade” as a key element in UP’s failure. Instead they quite correctly shift their argument from a rather crude dependency analysis to a more sophisticated one. The dependency relationship determines a certain logic of capital accumulation shaping a particular economic structure which requires a certain type of economic policy for its reproduction. Such relationships between structure and economic policy do, of course, change according to international and national requirements. In my view, the international capitalist system only has a major influence upon the national system in the final evaluation. In the immediate situation facing Chile during UP, the direct intervention of the national bourgeoisie was the major force in overthrowing Allende. What the Chilean case illustrates is the difficulty, if not impossibility, of initiating socialist change in a dependent capitalist system relying solely on the legal bourgeois political framework. The bourgeoisie is the first to disregard such legality as soon as its interests begin to be threatened.

Most writers in the GLL volume uphold the primacy of internal factors in explaining Allende’s overthrow. Only Tapia Valdés writes that UP failed because of the intervention by the U.S. The U.S. policy of “destabilization” was directed at the middle class to prevent any alliance between it and UP. Although it is true that UP was unable to forge an alliance with most sectors of the middle class, it does not follow that this was the main cause of the overthrow or that the U.S. was primarily responsible. Zemelman reasons that UP failed to win the struggle for power because of lack of unified direction within it. The inability of the political parties to restructure themselves organically for a revolutionary strategy prevented UP from developing a political project at the strategic level and it remained essentially theoretical. However, Zemelman does not specify what this revolutionary strategy—armed or not—would be, nor does he assess its possibility of success.

The predominant position expressed in the GLL book is that the UP should have entered into an alliance with the PDC. It is argued that such an alliance would have avoided the coup and not interrupted the transition to socialism. Two questions arise immediately from this proposition. Would such an alliance have been feasible and would it have allowed the transition to social-

ism to proceed? Tomić is vague about the second question; but he holds firmly that an alliance between the UP and the PDC—or as he expresses it “*la unidad política y social del pueblo*”—was both possible and necessary if the problems of Chile’s capitalist underdevelopment were to be solved. According to him such an alliance was desired by the majority of the people but did not come about because of UP’s policy of dividing and destroying the PDC. Solar, however, holds that UP did not have any clear policy towards the PDC. Maira strongly maintains that the progressive wing never controlled the PDC which, despite appearances, was in the grip of Frei’s conservative wing. The Frei group was clearly against a process of transition to socialism and thus the PDC was never serious about an alliance with UP.

It could even be said that sectors within UP, and Allende himself, overestimated the influence of the democratic sector within the PDC. Allende attempted to reach an agreement with them and was willing to compromise on certain issues to defend the constitutional system. A couple of months before the coup, Allende reopened talks with the leadership of the PDC, but these were soon broken off because of their unacceptable demand that the military assume key positions throughout the public sector, i.e., a virtual surrender by Allende to the military. This was referred to as the “*golpe blanco*” (the white coup). At that stage, however, the Frei group was no longer even interested in a “white coup,” as their support for the bloody version later revealed. The PDC was clearly involved in creating the social and political conditions for military intervention. A few weeks before the coup, the PDC and the rest of the opposition approved a resolution in the Chamber of Deputies stating that the Allende government had committed illegal and unconstitutional acts (a resolution that was itself illegal as there was not the necessary two-thirds majority). The military later seized this opportunity to justify the coup by saying that they were acting constitutionally. It was only when the Frei group realized that the military were not willing to return power to a civil government by calling for democratic elections—which the PDC were confident of winning—that they shifted into opposition to Pinochet and the military junta.

Even today, five years after the coup, the PDC is not willing to join UP in common opposition to the junta—despite pleas by UP. Tomić’s dictum of the “*unidad social y política del pueblo*” is more necessary than ever today. While in certain instances that unity has been developing at the social level, it has not yet materialized at the political level. If Tomić is to be consistent with his statements proclaiming himself to be a revolutionary who favors the construction of “a new socialist, communitarian, pluralist and democratic society” (p. 196), then one would have thought that by now he would have left the PDC and joined those parties which genuinely struggle for those aims.

Solar holds that UP could only succeed by building a wide political front as it did not have a military force of its own and thus the armed option had little chance of success. His analysis concerning a viable option is, if not contradictory, at least incomplete. Contrary to Tomić, he argues that the PDC was unwilling or unable to enter into a “*unidad política y social del pueblo*” with UP due to the former’s bourgeois character. According to Solar, the PDC’s shift to the right

and to a militant opposition is explained by its social base and not by its leadership. If this is the case, then he needs to explain how UP could have avoided the right-wing shift of the PDC supporters—which are largely middle class—without giving up its socialist objectives. If UP was unable to capture sectors of the middle class whilst adhering to the bourgeois democratic framework, it could never hope to gain middle class support if its intention was the eventual overthrow of the political system. It is largely because the middle class were aware of UP's ultimate political objectives—even though these were distorted by the opposition—that sectors moved into militant opposition. Even supposing that PDC leadership desired an alliance with UP (which in my view was not the case) it would have made no difference according to Solar's reasoning owing to the right-wing shift of its middle-class supporters. When Solar's analysis is vigorously followed through, the option of a wide political front seems as unviable as the armed option he discards, if not more so.

Roxborough, O'Brien, and Roddick's point of view differs from all the above-mentioned. They argue that a transition to socialism could only be brought about by an armed insurrection in Chile. Neither UP as a whole nor Allende was willing to adopt such a road to power. What was called for was the formation of "a vanguard party capable of taking on the responsibility for an armed insurrection" (p. 270) and formed by "revolutionary" sectors within UP (i.e., the left-wing of the Partido Socialista, MAPU, and Izquierda Cristiana) plus the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario (MIR)—as opposed to the "reformist" sectors (i.e., the Partido Comunista, Partido Radical, MAPU Obrero-Campesino, and the right-wing of the Partido Socialista). Thus their proposal clearly envisages a split within UP and within the Socialist party as well.

From a post-mortem vantage point, it is easy to maintain that "Allende's faith in bourgeois legality was suicidal" (p. 264). The difficulty is analyzing fully the consequences of this proposition. This, unfortunately, the authors only partially do. The question of which of the two strategies to power had a greater chance of succeeding can never be answered with certainty. It must also be recognized that the one suggested by ROR is more difficult to analyze because it was never implemented in Chile (the other was given at least a trial despite all the errors). Nevertheless it is possible to examine in greater depth the possibilities of this alternative. The fact that the insurrectionist strategy failed to become dominant within UP, or at least to succeed in splitting it, already raises some questions about its feasibility. Furthermore, as ROR themselves recognize, "many working class cadres remained trapped within the theoretical and practical framework of reformism until shortly before the coup" (p. 266). Some workers may have been converted as a result of the attempted coup of June 1973, but even if this was the case, it was too late by then. ROR would probably recognize this themselves as they argue that the vanguard party should have been formed sometime in mid-1972. A host of questions follows from their proposition: Would such an armed strategy have gained mass support? What reaction would such a split of the UP parties provoke within their supporters—confusion, demoralization, violent confrontations, greater militancy and revolu-

tionary fervor, etc.? What effect would it have on the opposition parties—hasten their unity and call for the military overthrow of the government, lead to an alliance between the PDC and the reformist wing of UP? What would the military's reaction be—would a sector have joined the insurrection and provided the necessary arms, or would the coup have been precipitated, or would the constitutional sector within the armed forces have joined the alliance between the PDC and the reformist wing of UP? Et cetera.

ROR devote some analysis to the emergence of "people's power" and its relationship to the parties, but little comfort can be drawn from it. Their own analysis of the people's power suggests that the strategy they propose would have had no mass following and as such would have been unlikely to succeed, unless they think that Chile in 1972 or 1973 was Russia in 1917, when it was possible for a small but well organized revolutionary party—the Bolsheviks—to seize power. In Russia, a situation of dual power developed prior to the revolution with the soviets, but ROR's position as to whether such a situation could have arisen in Chile is ambiguous. At one point they say that the political programme that Cordón Cerrillos (the most advanced of the people's power organizations) put forward was the "clearest possible evidence of the revolutionary consciousness of the Chilean working class" (p. 171), but at the same time they indicate that the workers of Cordón Cerrillos "were entangled in the most dangerous of all illusions: the illusion that Allende as president and the parties which supported him . . . could provide . . . the political means to erect a socialist order out of the resources of the bourgeois State" (p. 172). After these sobering thoughts it is more difficult to argue that their strategy would have succeeded or had a better chance of succeeding than the parliamentary road to socialism. It is unlikely that the formation of a vanguard party would have been able to transform totally the picture as they suggest. It must not be forgotten that the MIR, which most consistently put forward the strategy advocated by ROR, only received about 2 percent of the vote in the CUT elections of 1972. Although the MIR's influence extended beyond this figure, it is a useful reminder if one wants to assess the real possibilities of success of the alternative proposed by ROR.

Another major theme arising from the UP experience relates to the lessons to be drawn from it. Schmitter argues, in his article in the GLL book, that the failure of UP in Chile does not permit the conclusion that the electoral road to socialism cannot succeed in Europe. Furthermore he thinks that the strategy of the "historical compromise" of the Italian Communist party has a chance of succeeding not only as a means of gaining power but also of maintaining it. The thesis of the historical compromise has similarities with Tomić's "political and social unity of the people." The former sustains that an alliance with the middle classes, and thus with the Italian Christian Democrat party, is necessary to provide a majority and prevent the polarization of the social forces, the emergence of fascism, and a coup d'état. But in my view such an alliance is very unlikely to result in a transition to socialism.

While it must be recognized that facile generalizations from the Chilean experience are to be avoided, some authors go too far in stressing the unique-

ness of the UP episode. By doing so they avoid drawing some perhaps painful conclusions that would involve rethinking their strategy and tactics. In the apt words of ROR, "Chile is too close for comfort." Certain arguments are often put forward when claiming that Chile is a special case; for instance: Chile is more vulnerable to economic, political, and military pressure from the U.S. than would be the case in Western Europe. While this may be true for some West European countries, I have no doubt that the U.S. would certainly do its utmost to avoid a transition to socialism in a West European country as the strategic interests at stake are even greater than in Latin America. But, as analyzed before, U.S. intervention was not the major cause of the defeat of the Chilean road to socialism.

Another argument put forward is that Chile, unlike Western Europe, had significant ultra-left groups and these were largely responsible for the polarization of the class struggle and the alienation of the middle class. Furthermore, Allende did not take appropriate measures to deal with them—meaning to repress them. As shown by ROR, such a position disregards the fact that most factory and farm seizures were the outcome of pressures stemming from below, i.e., directly from workers and peasants, who perceived such actions as being in their immediate interest and even in the interest of UP. Many seizures were actually defensive responses to bourgeois offensives, such as the "bosses' strike" in October 1972 and the attempted coup of June 1973. Thus it is likely that in a West European context, a government committed to a socialist transition would also be faced at some point with an acute intensification of the class struggle unless it resorts to repressing its own supporters. Yet others argue that it was the UP government's mismanagement of the economy that brought about its downfall. The implication is that other left-wing governments who follow the electoral road to socialism will be able to maintain themselves in power by avoiding those economic mistakes. But the economic problems faced by UP were largely political in origin and would arise in other contexts. The conclusion, therefore, is that for those concerned with socialism, the Chilean experience provides fundamental lessons that require serious reflection and cannot be swept aside.

A genuine claim for the uniqueness of the Chilean case can be made in relation to its dependent insertion within the capitalist world system. To what extent this suggests the parliamentary road to socialism is viable in a dominant country is a question that cannot be answered here. Nevertheless, the following remarks are appropriate as they are partially raised in the books under review. For ROR, dependency status is not of major relevance in determining the success or failure of the parliamentary road to socialism. They argue that in both dominant and dependent countries "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery and wield it for its own purposes" (p. 264). They therefore focus on analyzing the strength of those revolutionary parties which adopt an insurrectional strategy as being a crucial factor in creating the conditions for a socialist transition. The possibility of a socialist revolution in the dominant countries is viewed as even less likely than in Chile because of the insignificance of insurrectionist revolutionary parties or movements there.

Without denying the importance of the existence of such revolutionary parties for the success of a socialist transition, their analysis is at times voluntaristic because they do not take sufficient account of the constraints imposed on socialist change in countries like Chile. These constraints are largely due to their dependent character and are particularly restrictive during the present stage in the process of world capitalist accumulation. Núñ, in his short but brilliant contribution to the GLL book, analyzes how the new dependency relationship of Latin American economies imposes a different pattern of capital accumulation which links the economy closer to the world capitalist market. In order to be internationally competitive, wages have to be reduced to a minimum. The new pattern of capital accumulation, which attempts to solve the crisis of the previous import substitution industrialization stage, entails a transition to a new type of state. This explains the emergence of authoritarian regimes in various formerly bourgeois democratic Latin American countries. In those countries the working class had been able to achieve some gains during the import substitution industrialization phase. The authors of NACLA's paper analyze very competently the economic and political crisis arising out of the contradiction between the growing need of capital to superexploit labor and the growing political strength of the working class. The UP government reflected this growing working class power for a brief period, until the logic of dependent capital reasserted its dominance with a vengeance.

Alas, instead of a transition to a socialist regime, Chile is experiencing a transition to an authoritarian-corporate regime under the military junta. Kaufman raises the question of whether such an experiment can be successful in Chile. He argues that such historical factors as external dependence, delayed industrialization, and a "medieval catholic heritage" (whatever that means) are conducive to consolidating authoritarian corporate rule in Chile. However, other historical factors, notably the existence of strong centrist and rightist parties, the highly mobilized "popular sector" led by Marxist parties, and the political inexperience of the military pose serious obstacles for the viability of a stable authoritarian corporate regime. He thus thinks that the development of a more overtly "fascist-totalitarian" system is unlikely and the alternative of the "Argentine path" of unstable electoral politics without Marxists is more plausible.

NACLA focuses its analysis on the viability of the junta's economic model. Contrary to ROR, who view the junta's economic policy in terms of mismanagement, mistakes and collapse, NACLA recognizes that the military government has been successful in establishing the foundations for a period of economic growth by completely restructuring the Chilean economy. They have introduced a labor policy that allows the superexploitation of labor, dismantled the public sector enterprises, reduced the social services, trimmed the bureaucracy, reorganized and expanded the private capital market, encouraged the transfer of capital to export activities, furthered the monopolization of the economy, and are attempting to create favorable conditions for the penetration of foreign capital.

Although the junta has been successful in restructuring capital in favor of the monopoly bourgeoisie, the economy has hardly expanded. After five years of military rule the real gross national product per capita has still not overtaken the level achieved by UP in 1971 (surprisingly, NACLA fails to point this out). Furthermore, to achieve such a dismal economic record, the junta has brutally driven down real wages, slashed consumption, regressively redistributed income, massively expanded unemployment, and intensified work (as mentioned by NACLA). The rapid expansion of nontraditional exports is only a partial success as it has been achieved by reducing the level of internal consumption. As the junta's economic policy is essentially based on a repressive political system, the authors of the NACLA document consider it highly questionable that it can provide the basis for sustained economic growth. However, they do not provide any major arguments to justify their assertion, especially in view of the fact that other authoritarian regimes have been successful to some extent in obtaining high rates of economic growth for long periods.

The real test for the junta's economic policy lies, in my view, in their ability to increase substantially the historically low rate of capital accumulation. So far the rate of investment is still below that achieved during the 1960s despite the massive redistribution of income from wage earners to capitalists. Capitalists have been reluctant to invest their increased profits and what little expansion there has been is insufficient to absorb the fall in public investment. NACLA fails to bring up this issue as well and does not provide data on capital accumulation (they only present some data on foreign investment in 1976).

Finally, the book edited by Amtman, Fernández, and Menanteau-Horta is a collection of papers and discussions presented at a seminar on "Sociology of Rural Development and Transfer of Agricultural and Livestock Technology." The seminar was held in late 1975 and organized by the Department of Sociology of the Universidad Austral de Chile in Valdivia with the cooperation of the University of Minnesota (St. Paul) and the financial assistance of A.I.D. (Agency for International Development, U.S.). The book is distinguished by its mediocrity and tragically reveals the cultural poverty prevailing in Chilean universities today. The once distinguished university system has suffered a cultural involution since the coup when the junta appointed generals as rectors. The militarization of the universities resulted in large-scale dismissals of critically minded academics, students, and even administrative staff, and in the suppression of intellectual freedom. (For a valuable critical analysis of the junta's cultural policy, see the article by Bule in GLL.) It borders on the tragicomic when one of the participants affirms in relation to the theme of the seminar that "la actual coyuntura Chilena permite la discusión franca de materias tan importantes" (p. 43)—"the present Chilean conjuncture allows frank discussion of such important topics."

Except for one or two, the papers presented in this "open" seminar lack scholarship and originality, and the discussion is superficial. None of the participants analyzes the social and economic consequences of the junta's agrarian policy let alone is critical of them. Those policies have resulted in rural anti-

development—socially as well as technically. With the agrarian counterreform, most of the landlords have been able to recuperate part or all of their former *latifundios* (estates). This, together with repression, has reestablished the political dominance of landlords and new rural capitalists in the countryside. Traditional social relations have emerged again, such as the *inquilinaje* (labor-tenant system) and the *mediería* (sharecropping). The economic performance of the junta's agrarian policy has been dismal. Yields have fallen dramatically for certain crops—a veritable “green counterrevolution”—largely as a result of huge price increases in fertilizers, pesticides, and high-yield varieties of seeds, and increases in interest rates. However, the agrarian policy has been successful in increasing agricultural exports, but in some cases this is the result of a fall in internal consumption rather than an increase in production. The inability of the seminar participants to tackle the above-mentioned crucial and dramatic issues is a major weakness of the book.

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