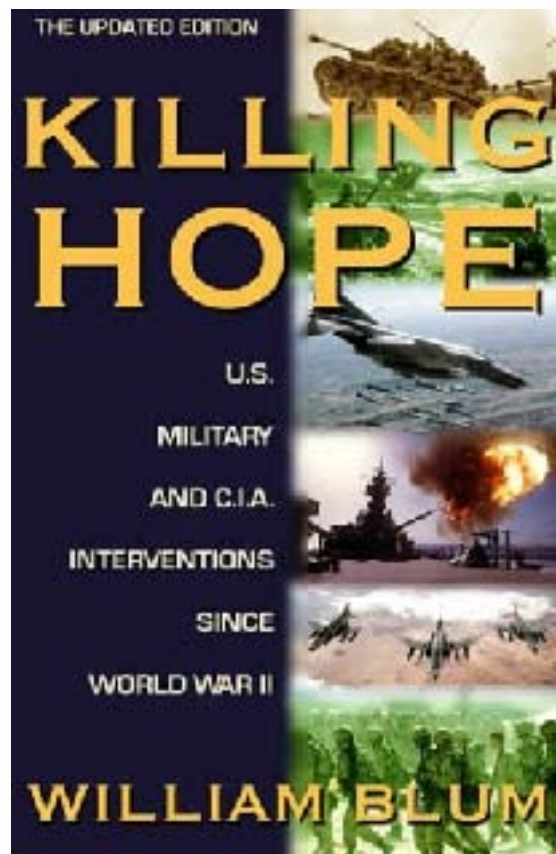


Chile 1964 – 1973

**A hammer
and sickle
stamped on
your child's
forehead**

An excerpt from **KILLING HOPE:**
US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II

WILLIAM BLUM



This excerpt consists of Chapter ?? of

KILLING HOPE

US MILITARY AND CIA INTERVENTIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II

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When Salvador Allende, a committed Marxist, came within three percent “of winning the Chilean presidency in 1958, the United States decided that the next election, in 1964, could not be left in the hands of providence, or democracy.

Washington took it all very gravely. At the outset of the Kennedy administration in 1961, an electoral committee was established, composed of top-level officials from the State Department, the CIA and the White House. In Santiago, a parallel committee of embassy and CIA people was set up.

“U.S. government intervention in Chile in 1964 was blatant and almost obscene,” said one intelligence officer strategically placed at the time. “We were shipping people off right and left, mainly State Dept. but also CIA, with all sorts of covers.” All in all, as many as 100 American operatives were dedicated to the operation.

They began laying the groundwork for the election years ahead, a Senate investigating committee has disclosed, “by establishing operational relationships with key political parties and by creating propaganda and organizational mechanisms capable of influencing key sectors of the population.” Projects were undertaken “to help train and organize ‘anti-communists’” among peasants, slum dwellers, organized labor, students, the media, etc.

After channeling funds to several non-leftist parties, the electoral team eventually settled on a man of the center, Eduardo Frei, the candidate of the Christian Democratic Party, as the one most likely to block Allende’s rise to power. The CIA underwrote more than half the party’s total campaign costs, one of the reasons that the Agency’s overall electoral operation reduced the U.S. Treasury by an estimated \$20 million – much more per voter than that spent by the Johnson and Goldwater campaigns combined in the same year in the United States. The bulk of the expenditures went toward propaganda. As the Senate committee described it:

In addition to support for political parties, the CIA mounted a massive anti-communist propaganda campaign. Extensive use was made of the press, radio,

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films, pamphlets, posters, leaflets, direct mailings, paper streamers, and wall painting. It was a "scare campaign", which relied heavily on images of Soviet tanks and Cuban firing squads and was directed especially to women. Hundreds of thousands of copies of the anti-communist pastoral letter of Pope Pius XI were distributed by Christian Democratic organizations. They carried the designation, "printed privately by citizens without political affiliation, in order more broadly to disseminate its content." "Disinformation" and "black propaganda" – material which purported to originate from another source, such as the Chilean Communist Party – were used as well.

The scare campaign played up to the fact that women in Chile, as elsewhere in Latin America, are traditionally more religious than men, more susceptible to being alarmed by the specter of "godless, atheist communism". One radio spot featured the sound of a machine gun, followed by a woman's cry: "They have killed my child – the communists." The announcer then added in impassioned tones: "Communism offers only blood and pain. For this not to happen in Chile, we must elect Eduardo Frei president."

Other scare tactics centered around warnings of Russian control, and that the left would confiscate everything near, dear and holy.

The committee report continued:

The propaganda campaign was enormous. During the first week of intensive propaganda activity (the third week of June 1964), a CIA-funded propaganda group produced twenty radio spots per day in Santiago and on 44 provincial stations; twelve-minute news broadcasts five times daily on three Santiago stations and 24 provincial outlets; thousands of cartoons, and much paid press advertising. By the end of June, the group produced 24 daily newscasts in Santiago and the provinces, 26 weekly "commentary" programs, and distributed 3,000 posters daily.

One poster which appeared in the thousands showed children with a hammer and sickle stamped on their foreheads.

Newspaper articles from elsewhere in Latin America which supported the

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political lines of the CIA campaign were collected and reprinted in Chile. Undoubtedly, many of these articles had been written in the first place by CIA stations in the particular countries. There were also endorsements of Frei solicited from famous personages abroad, advertisements such as a “message from the women of Venezuela”, and a vitriolic anti-communist radio broadcast by Juanita Castro, sister of Fidel, who was on a CIA-organized speaking tour of South America: “If the Reds win in Chile,” she said, “no type of religious activity will be possible ... Chilean mother, I know you will not allow your children to be taken from you and sent to the Communist bloc, as in the case of Cuba.”

The Senate committee also revealed that:

In addition to buying propaganda piecemeal, the [CIA] Station often purchased it wholesale by subsidizing Chilean media organizations friendly to the United States. Doing so was propaganda writ large. Instead of placing individual items, the CIA supported – or even founded – friendly media outlets which might not have existed in the absence of Agency support.

From 1953 through 1970 in Chile, the Station subsidized wire services, magazines written for intellectual circles, and a right-wing weekly newspaper.

Of one subsidized newspaper, a State Department veteran of the campaign recalls that “The layout was magnificent. The photographs were superb. It was a Madison Avenue product far above the standards of Chilean publications.”

The same could be said about the electioneering itself. Besides running political action projects on its own in a number of important voting blocks, the CIA directed the Christian Democrats’ campaign along American-style lines, with voter registration, get-out-the-vote drives, and professional management firms to carry out public opinion surveys. To top it all off, they sent for a ringer – an election specialist from the staff of that eminent connoisseur and guardian of free elections, Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago. What the function of Daley’s man in Chile was, can only be guessed at.

Several of the grassroots programs funded by the CIA were those run by Roger Vekemans, a Belgian Jesuit priest who arrived in Chile in 1957 and founded a

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

network of social-action organizations, one of which grew to have 100 employees and a \$30 million annual budget. By his own declaration in 1963, Vekemans received \$5 million from the CIA as well as a like amount from AID to guide his organizations' resources in support of the Christian Democrats and Eduardo Frei, with whom Vekemans had close relations. The Jesuit's programs served the classic function of channeling revolutionary zeal along safe reformist paths. Church people working for the CIA in the Third World have typically been involved in gathering information about the activities and attitudes of individual peasants and workers, spotting the troublemakers, recruiting likely agents, preaching the gospel of anti-communism, acting as funding conduits, and serving as a religious "cover" for various Agency operations. An extreme anti-communist, Vekemans was a front-line soldier in the struggle of the Christian Democrats and the Catholic Church against the "liberation theology" then gaining momentum amongst the more liberal clergy in Latin America and which would lead to the historic dialogue between Christianity and Marxism.

The operation worked. It worked beyond expectations. Frei received 56 percent of the vote to Allende's 39 percent. The CIA regarded "the anti-communist scare campaign as the most effective activity undertaken", noted the Senate committee. This was the tactic directed toward Chilean women in particular. As things turned out, Allende won the men's vote by 67,000 over Frei (in Chile men and women vote separately), but amongst the women Frei came out ahead by 469,000 ... testimony, once again, to the remarkable ease with which the minds of the masses of people can be manipulated, in any and all societies.

What was there about Salvador Allende that warranted all this feverish activity? What threat did he represent, this man against whom the great technical and economic resources of the world's most powerful nation were brought to bear? Allende was a man whose political program, as described by the Senate committee report, was to:

Redistribute income [two percent of the population received 46 percent of the income] and reshape the Chilean economy, beginning with the nationalization of major industries, especially the copper companies; greatly expanded agrarian

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

reform; and expanded relations with socialist and communist countries.

A man committed to such a program could be expected by American policy makers to lead his country along a path independent of the priorities of US foreign policy and the multinationals. (As his later term as president confirmed, he was independent of any other country as well.)

The CIA is an ongoing organization. Its covert activities are ongoing, each day, in each country. Between the 1964 and 1970 presidential elections many of the programs designed to foster an anti-leftist mentality in different sections of the population continued; much of the propaganda and electioneering mechanisms remained in place to support candidates of the 1965 and 1969 congressional elections; in the latter election, financial support was given to a splinter socialist party in order to attract votes away from Allende's Socialist Party; this reportedly deprived the party of a minimum of seven congressional seats.

The Senate committee described some of the other individual covert projects undertaken by the CIA during this period:

- Wresting control of Chilean university student organizations from the communists;
- Supporting a women's group active in Chilean political and intellectual life;
- Combatting the communist-dominated Central Unica de Trabajadores Chilenos (CUTCh) and supporting democratic [i.e., anti-communist] labor groups; and,
- Exploiting a civic action front group to combat communist influence within cultural and intellectual circles.

In 1968, at the same time the CIA was occupied in subverting unions dominated by the Chilean Communist Party, a US Senate committee was concluding that the Latin American labor movement had largely abandoned its revolutionary outlook: "Even the Communist-dominated unions, especially those which follow the Moscow line, now generally accept the peaceful road as a viable alternative."

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

“I don’t see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist because of the irresponsibility of its own people.” Thus spoke Henry Kissinger, principal adviser to the President of the United States on matters of national security. The date was 27 June 1970, a meeting of the National Security Council’s 40 Committee, and the people Kissinger suspected of imminent irresponsibility were the Chileans whom he feared might finally elect Salvador Allende as their president.

The United States did not stand by idly. At this meeting approval was given to a \$300,000 increase in the anti-Allende “spoiling” operation which was already underway. The CIA trained its disinformation heavy artillery on the Chilean electorate, firing shells marked: “An Allende victory means violence and Stalinist repression.” Black propaganda was employed to undermine Allende’s coalition and support by sowing dissent between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, the main members of the coalition, and between the Communist Party and the CUTCh.

Nonetheless, on 4 September Allende won a plurality of the votes. On 24 October, the Chilean Congress would meet to choose between him and the runnerup, Jorge Alessandri of the conservative National Party. By tradition, Allende was certain to become president.

The United States had seven weeks to prevent him from taking office. On 15 September, President Nixon met with Kissinger, CIA Director Richard Helms, and Attorney General John Mitchell. Helms’ handwritten notes of the meeting have become famous:

One in 10 chance perhaps, but save Chile! ... not concerned with risks involved ...
\$10,000,000 available, more if necessary ... make the economy scream ...

Funds were authorized by the 40 Committee to bribe Chilean congressmen to vote for Alessandri, but this was soon abandoned as infeasible, and under intense pressure from Richard Nixon, American efforts were concentrated on inducing the Chilean military to stage a coup and then cancel the congressional vote altogether. At the same time, Nixon and Kissinger made it clear to the CIA that an assassination of Allende would not be unwelcome. One White House options-paper

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

discussed various ways this could be carried out.

A fresh propaganda campaign was initiated in Chile to impress upon the military, amongst others, the catastrophe which would befall the nation with Allende as president. In addition to the standard communist horror stories, it was made known that there would be a cutoff of American and other foreign assistance; this was accompanied by predictions/rumors of the nationalization of everything down to small shops, and of economic collapse. The campaign actually affected the Chilean economy adversely and a major financial panic ensued.

In private, Chilean military officers were warned that American military aid would come to a halt if Allende were seated.

During this interim period, according to the CIA, over 700 articles, broadcasts, editorials and similar items were generated in the Latin American and European media as a direct result of Agency activity. This is apart from the “real” media stories inspired by the planted ones. Moreover, journalists in the pay of the CIA arrived in Chile from at least ten different countries to enhance their material with on-the-spot credibility.

The following portion of a CIA cable of 25 September 1970 offers some indication of the scope of such media operations:

Sao Paulo, Tegucigalpa, Buenos Aires, Lima, Montevideo, Bogota, Mexico City report continued replay of Chile theme materials. Items also carried in New York Times and Washington Post. Propaganda activities continue to generate good coverage of Chile developments along our theme guidance.

The CIA also gave “inside” briefings to American journalists about the situation in Chile. One such briefing provided to Time enlightened the magazine as to Allende’s intention to support violence and destroy Chile’s free press. This, observed the Senate report, “resulted in a change in the basic thrust” of the Time story.

When Allende criticized the leading conservative newspaper El Mercurio (heavily funded by the CIA), the Agency “orchestrated cables of support and protest from foreign newspapers, a protest statement from an international press association, and world press coverage of the association’s protest.”

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

A cable sent from CIA headquarters to Santiago on 19 October expressed concern that the coup still had no pretext or justification that it can offer to make it acceptable in Chile or Latin America. It therefore would seem necessary to create one to bolster what will probably be [the military's] claim to a coup to save Chile from communism.

One of headquarters' suggestions was the fabrication of:

Firm intel[ligence] that Cubans planned to reorganize all intelligence services along Soviet/Cuban mold thus creating structure for police state ... With appropriate military contact can determine how to "discover" intel[ligence] report which could even be planted during raids planned by Carabineros [the police].

Meanwhile, the Agency was in active consultation with several Chilean military officers who were receptive to the suggestion of a coup. (The difficulty in finding such officers was described by the CIA as a problem in overcoming "the apolitical, constitutional-oriented inertia of the Chilean military".) They were assured that the United States would give them full support short of direct military involvement. The immediate obstacle faced by the officers was the determined opposition of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, René Schneider, who insisted that the constitutional process be followed. He would have to be "removed".

In the early morn of 22 October the CIA passed "sterilized" machine guns and ammunition to some of the conspirators. (Earlier they had passed tear gas.) That same day, Schneider was mortally wounded in an attempted kidnap (or "kidnap") on his way to work. The CIA station in Santiago cabled its headquarters that the general had been shot with the same kind of weapons it had delivered to the military plotters, although the Agency later claimed to the Senate that the actual assassins were not the same ones it had passed the weapons to.

The assassination did not avail the conspirators' purpose. It only served to rally the army around the flag of constitutionalism; and time was running out. Two days later, Salvador Allende was confirmed by the Chilean Congress. On 3 November he took office as president.

The stage was set for a clash of two experiments. One was Allende's "socialist"

experiment aimed at lifting Chile from the mire of underdevelopment and dependency and the poor from deprivation. The other was, as CIA Director William Colby later put it, a “prototype or laboratory experiment to test the techniques of heavy financial investment in an effort to discredit and bring down a government.”

Although there were few individual features of this experiment which were unique for the CIA, in sum total it was perhaps the most multifarious intervention ever undertaken by the United States. In the process it brought a new word into the language: destabilization.

“Not a nut or bolt [will] be allowed to reach Chile under Allende”, warned then-American Ambassador Edward Korry before the confirmation. The Chilean economy, so extraordinarily dependent upon the United States, was the country’s soft underbelly, easy to pound. Over the next three years, new US government assistance programs for Chile plummeted almost to the vanishing point; similarly with loans from the US Export-Import Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, in which the United States held what amounted to a veto; and the World Bank made no new loans at all to Chile during 1971-73. US government financial assistance or guarantees to American private investment in Chile were cut back sharply and American businesses were given the word to tighten the economic noose.

What this boycott translated into were things like the many buses and taxis out of commission in Chile due to a lack of replacement parts; and similar difficulties in the copper, steel, electricity and petroleum industries. American suppliers refused to sell needed parts despite Chile’s offer to pay cash in advance.

Multinational ITT, which didn’t need to be told what to do, stated in a 1970 memorandum: “A more realistic hope among those who want to block Allende is that a swiftly-deteriorating economy will touch off a wave of violence leading to a military coup.”

In the midst of the near disappearance of economic aid, and contrary to its warning, the United States increased its military assistance to Chile during 1972 and 1973 as well as training Chilean military personnel in the United States and Panama. The Allende government, caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, was

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

reluctant to refuse this “assistance” for fear of antagonizing its military leaders.

Perhaps nothing produced more discontent in the population than the shortages, the little daily annoyances when one couldn’t get a favorite food, or flour or cooking oil, or toilet paper, bed sheets or soap, or the one part needed to make the TV set or the car run; or, worst of all, when a nicotine addict couldn’t get a cigarette. Some of the scarcity resulted from Chile being a society in transition: various changeovers to state ownership, experiments in workers’ control, etc. But this was minor compared to the effect of the aid squeeze and the practices of the omnipresent American corporations. Equally telling were the extended strikes in Chile, which relied heavily on CIA financial support for their prolongation.

In October 1972, for example, an association of private truck owners instituted a work-stoppage aimed at disrupting the flow of food and other important commodities, including in their embargo even newspapers which supported the government (subtlety was not the order of the day in this ultra-polarized country). On the heels of this came store closures, countless petit-bourgeois doing their bit to turn the screws of public inconvenience – and when they were open, many held back on certain goods, like cigarettes, to sell them on the black market to those who could afford the higher prices. Then most private bus companies stopped running; on top of this, various professional and white-collar workers, largely unsympathetic to the government, walked out, with or without CIA help.

Much of this campaign was aimed at wearing down the patience of the public, convincing them that “socialism can’t work in Chile”. Yet there had been worse shortages for most of the people before the Allende government – shortages of food, housing, health care, and education, for example. At least half the population had suffered from malnutrition. Allende, who was a medical doctor, explained his free milk program by pointing out that “Today in Chile there are over 600,000 children mentally retarded because they were not adequately nourished during the first eight months of their lives, because they did not receive the necessary proteins.”

Financial aid was not the CIA’s only input into the strike scene. More than 100 members of Chilean professional associations and employers’ guilds were graduates of the school run by the American Institute for Free Labor Development in Front

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

Royal, Virginia – “The Little Anti-Red Schoolhouse”. AIFLD, the CIA’s principal Latin America labor organization, also assisted in the formation of a new professional association in May 1971: the Confederation of Chilean Professionals. The labor specialists of AIFLD had more than a decade’s experience in the art of fomenting economic turmoil (or keeping workers quiescent when the occasion called for it).

CIA propaganda merchants had a field day with the disorder and the shortages, exacerbating both by instigating panic buying. All the techniques, the whole of the media saturation, the handy organizations created for each and every purpose, so efficiently employed in 1964 and 1970, were facilitated by the virtually unlimited license granted the press: headlines and stories which spread rumors about everything from nationalizations to bad meat and undrinkable water ... “Economic Chaos! Chile on Brink of Doom!” in the largest type one could ever expect to see in a newspaper ... raising the specter of civil war, when not actually calling for it, literally ... alarmist stories which anywhere else in the world would have been branded seditious ... the worst of London’s daily tabloids or the National Enquirer of the United States appear as staid as a journal of dentistry by comparison.

In response, on a few occasions, the government briefly closed down a newspaper or magazine, on the left as well as on the right, for endangering security.

The Agency’s routine support of the political opposition was extended to include the extreme rightist organization Patria y Libertad, which the CIA reportedly helped to form, and whose members it trained in guerrilla warfare and bombing techniques at schools in Bolivia and Los Fresnos, Texas. Patria y Libertad marched in rallies in full riot gear, engaged repeatedly in acts of violence and provocation, and its publications openly called for a military coup.

The CIA was engaged in courting the military for the same end. Providing military equipment meant the normal presence of US advisers and the opportunity for Americans to work closely with the Chileans. Since 1969, the Agency had been establishing “intelligence assets” in all three branches of the Chilean armed services, and included “command-level officers, field- and company-grade officers, retired general staff officers and enlisted men.” Employing its usual blend of real and

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

fabricated information, along with forged documents, the CIA endeavored to keep the officers “on the alert”. One approach was to convince them that, with Allende’s approval, the police investigations unit was acting in concert with Cuban intelligence to gather information prejudicial to the army high command.

Newspapers in Santiago supported by the CIA, particularly *El Mercurio*, often concentrated on influencing the military. They alleged communist plots to disband or destroy the armed services, Soviet plans to establish a submarine base in Chile, North Korea setting up a training base, and so forth. The papers stirred up hatred against the government in the ranks, and in some cases entire columns were published which were calculated to change the opinion of a single officer, in one case an officer’s wife.

The Agency also subsidized a number of books and other kinds of publications in Chile. One was a short-lived anti-government newsletter directed at the military. Later the CIA made use of a weekly humor and political magazine, *SEPA*, aimed at the same audience. The cover of the 20 March 1973 issue featured the headline: “Robert Moss. An English Recipe for Chile – Military Control.” Moss was identified by the magazine as a British sociologist. A more relevant description would have been that he was a “news” specialist associated with known CIA media fronts. One of these, *Forum World Features of London* (see Western Europe chapter), published Moss’s book, *Chile’s Marxist Experiment*, in 1973, which was widely circulated by the junta to justify its coup.

Moss was associated with a CIA-funded think-tank in Santiago which went by the supremely innocuous name of the Institute of General Studies. The IGS, amongst other activities, conducted seminars for Chilean military officers in which it was explained, in technical, apolitical terms, why Allende was a disaster for the economy and why a *laissez-faire* system offered a solution to Chile’s ills. There is no way of measuring to what extent such lectures influenced future actions of the military, although after the coup the junta did appoint several IGS people to top government posts.

The CIA’s Santiago station was meanwhile collecting the operational intelligence necessary in the event of a coup: “arrest lists, key civilian installations and personnel

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

that needed protection, key government installations which need to be taken over, and government contingency plans which would be used in case of a military uprising.” The CIA later asserted that this information was never passed to the Chilean military, a claim that does not give one the feeling of having been united with the probable. It should be noted in this context that in the days immediately following the coup the Chilean military went directly to the residences of many Americans and other foreigners living in Santiago who had been sympathetic to the Allende government.

The government contingency plans were presumably obtained by the Agency through its infiltration of the various parties which made up Allende’s Unidad Popular (UP) coalition. CIA agents in the upper echelons of Allende’s own Socialist Party were “paid to make mistakes in their jobs”. In Washington, burglary was the Agency’s tactic of choice for obtaining documents. Papers were taken from the homes of several employees of the Chilean Embassy; and the embassy itself, which had been bugged for some time, was burgled in May 1972 by some of the same men who the next month staged the Watergate break-in.

In March 1973, the UP won about 44 percent of the vote in congressional elections, compared to some 36 percent in 1970. It was said to be the largest increase an incumbent party had ever received in Chile after being in power more than two years. The opposition parties had publicly expressed their optimism about capturing two-thirds of the congressional seats and thus being able to impeach Allende. Now they faced three more years under him, with the prospect of being unable, despite their best and most underhanded efforts, to prevent his popularity from increasing even further.

During the spring and summer the destabilization process escalated. There was a whole series of demonstrations and strikes, with an even longer one by the truckers. Time magazine reported: “While most of the country survived on short rations, the truckers seemed unusually well equipped for a lengthy holdout.” A reporter asked a group of truckers who were camping and dining on “a lavish communal meal of steak, vegetables, wine and empanadas” where the money for

it came from. “From the CIA,” they answered laughingly.

There was as well daily sabotage and violence, including assassination. In June, an abortive attack upon the Presidential Palace was carried out by the military and Patria y Libertad.

In September the military prevailed. “It is clear,” said the Senate investigating committee, “the CIA received intelligence reports on the coup planning of the group which carried out the successful September 11 coup throughout the months of July, August, and September 1973.”

The American role on that fateful day was one of substance and shadow. The coup began in the Pacific coast port of Valparaiso with the dispatch of Chilean naval troops to Santiago, while US Navy ships were present offshore, ostensibly to participate in joint maneuvers with the Chilean Navy. The American ships stayed outside of Chilean waters, but remained on the alert. A US WB-575 plane – an airborne communications control system – piloted by US Air Force officers, cruised in the Chilean sky. At the same time, 32 American observation and fighter planes were landing at the US air base in Mendoza, Argentina, not far from the Chilean border.

In Valparaiso, while US military officers were meeting with their Chilean counterparts, a young American, Charles Horman, who lived in Santiago and was stranded near Valparaiso by the coup, happened to engage in conversation with several Americans, civilian and military. A retired naval engineer told him: “We came down to do a job and it’s done.” One or two American military men also gave away clues they shouldn’t have. A few days later, Horman was arrested in his Santiago residence. They knew where to find him. He was never seen again.

Thus it was that they closed the country to the outside world for a week, while the tanks rolled and the soldiers broke down doors; the stadiums rang with the sounds of execution and the bodies piled up along the streets and floated in the river; the torture centers opened for business; the subversive books were thrown to the bonfires; soldiers slit the trouser legs of women, shouting that “In Chile women wear dresses!”; the poor returned to their natural state; and the men of the world

in Washington and in the halls of international finance opened up their check-books.

One year later, President Gerald Ford was moved to declare that what the United States had done in Chile was “in the best interest of the people in Chile and certainly in our own best interest.” The remark could have been punctuated with a pinch of snuff.

What the United States had done in Chile, thought Gerald Ford, or so he said, “was to help and assist the preservation of opposition newspapers and electronic media and to preserve opposition political parties.” The reporters present were kind, or obsequious, enough not to ask Ford what he thought of the junta’s Chile where all opposition, of any kind, in any form, in any medium, was forbidden.

It was of course de rigueur for some other officials and congressmen to assert that what the United States had really done in Chile was repel the Soviet threat to the Western hemisphere. But Soviet behavior toward the Allende government simply did not tally with any such hypothesis; the language of US intelligence reports confirms that: “Soviet overtures to Allende ... characterized by caution and restraint”; “Soviet desire to avoid” another Cuba-type commitment; Russians “advising Allende to put his relations with the United States in order ... to ease the strain between the two countries.”

A CIA study of 7 September 1970, three days after Allende’s electoral victory, concluded:

1. The U.S. has no vital national interests within Chile. There would, however, be tangible economic losses.
2. The world military balance of power would not be significantly altered by an Allende government.
3. An Allende victory would, however, create considerable political and psychological costs:
 - a. Hemispheric cohesion would be threatened by the challenge that an Allende government would pose to the OAS [Organization of American States], and by the reactions that it would create in other countries. ...

WILLIAM BLUM / **KILLING HOPE**

b. An Allende victory would represent a definite psychological set-back to the U.S and a definite psychological advantage for the Marxist idea.

The “tangible economic losses” likely referred to the expected nationalization of US copper-mining companies. This in fact occurred, with no compensation paid to the companies by the Unidad Popular, which calculated that due to “excess profits” over many years the companies actually owed Chile money.

“The reactions that it would create in other countries” ... What can this mean but that the people of other countries might be inspired to consider their own socialist solution to the economic and social problems that beset them? Allende’s Chile might thus turn out to be that specter that haunted the corridors of official Washington: a successful example of an alternative to the capitalist model.

Washington knows no heresy in the Third World but genuine independence. In the case of Salvador Allende independence came clothed in an especially provocative costume – a Marxist constitutionally elected who continued to honor the constitution. This would not do. It shook the very foundation stones upon which the anti-communist tower is built: the doctrine, painstakingly cultivated for decades, that “communists” can take power only through force and deception, that they can retain that power only through terrorizing and brainwashing the population. There could be only one thing worse than a Marxist in power – an elected Marxist in power.

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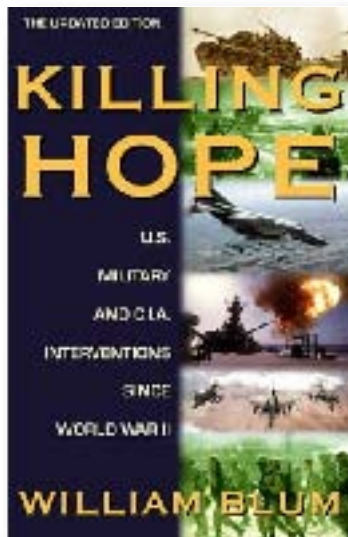
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