

U.S.-backed right, led by Pinochet, which destroyed those traditions.) In the municipal elections of March 1971, more than 50 percent of the people voted for pro-Allende mayoral candidates. There was a new urgency to the sentiment expressed by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who—appalled at Allende's victory at the polls the previous fall—had said at a White House meeting: "I don't see why we should have to stand by and let a country go Communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people."

Much of what was at stake then—as now—boiled down to economic exploitation, and the assumed prerogatives of U.S.-based multinational corporations to reap huge profits while poverty remains widespread. The moves of the Allende government to achieve agrarian reform and nationalize the copper industry confirmed the worst fears of the White House and its corporate clients.

What ensued, for years prior to the coup, was an orchestrated "destabilization" campaign. The Anaconda and Kennecott copper multinationals "controlled 80 percent of Chile's copper production, which in 1970 accounted for four-fifths of Chile's foreign exchange," reports author Samuel Chavkin in his book *Storm Over Chile: The Junta Under Siege*. Chile had to be made part of the "Free World" again—for the likes of Anaconda and Kennecott, ITT and Pepsico—just as today in Central America the control of such products as coffee, cotton and sugar cane is under contention.

Mindful of the current cynical brutality of U.S. government support for the contra forces terrorizing Nicaragua, the history of the undeclared "war" against Chile's Popular Unity government provides chilling parallels:

*Massive CIA-funding to the Chilean newspaper *El Mercurio* for its continual denunciations of the Allende government, akin to the U.S.

support for *La Prensa* in Managua.

*In December 1972, nine months before he was murdered in the coup, Allende charged in a speech at the United Nations that "terrorist activities took place in my country which were planned outside our frontiers in collusion with internal Fascist groups." Those activities included assassinations of government officials, and bomb attacks on industries and institutions to spread fear and damage the economy.

*The U.S. launched an all-out effort for cutting off multilateral and bilateral loans to Chile; encouraging internal sabotage and panic buying; owners' shutting down of commercial activities; halting shipments of such vital equipment as transport spare parts. These economic assaults on Chile have their counterparts in current U.S. policies toward Nicaragua.

*A U.S. Senate Select Committee concluded in 1975: "There is no doubt that the U.S. government sought a military coup in Chile."

Since September 11, 1973, the U.S. government has gotten what it sought in Chile. (In Guatemala, wholesale processes of genocide are the continuing result of similar U.S. intervention in that country in 1954. Not coincidentally, the Chilean regime has recently been providing large-scale instruction to the Guatemalan army and its paramilitary forces in techniques of torture, murder and psychological warfare.) Now the U.S. is seeking the overthrow of another government with popular support—Nicaragua. Just as we must defend the Sandinista government, we also need to take responsibility for helping to end the reign of terror inside Chile.

As progressive people in North America, having vowed to end U.S. intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, we have many promises to keep. An end to dictatorship in Chile has got to be one of them.

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