
BOOKS

Patricia Verdugo: *Allende. Como la Casa Blanca Provoco su Muerte* ("Allende: How the White House engineered his death").

Santiago: Catalonia (2003), 207 pages.

Peter Kornbluth (ed.): *Los EE.UU. y el Derrocamiento de Allende. Una Historia Desclasificada*. ("The Pinochet File:

A declassified dossier on atrocity and accountability")

Santiago: Ediciones B (2003), 224 pages

THE PERSISTENCE OF MYTH: CHILE IN THE HURRICANE OF THE COLD WAR

Joaquín Fermandois

I would have liked my final impressions to have given a more complete and vivid picture of this country and its friendly people, so accustomed to be called the "England of Latin America".

However, Chile is completely absorbed in a process of internal political and economic struggles. Politics invades all of its thinking, its literature, its art, absolutely everything...on one side compromise, on the other emigration or complete passivity, there's seems to be no other choice. If Chile has some sort of importance in the world, it is because the struggle between the Marxists and the anti-Marxists, as well as the one between the various Marxist groups, is being carried out in open society and not behind an iron curtain.

(Ambassador D.H.T. Hildyard, 1973)

This perceptive report, drawn up by the British ambassador after the parliamentary elections of March 1973, is the counterweight to the interpretation that the crisis and the collapse of the "Chilean experience" had been manipulated from Washington. The latter is the image that has persisted about the development of events in Chile at the beginning of the seventies, in the main press and in political debates throughout the world. It

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is not an idea that is shared by a considerable number of studies from one tendency or the other about the Unidad Popular (the Popular Front) but it is the notion that has penetrated public opinion the most in many parts of the world and, to a certain extent, in Chile as well. On the 30th anniversary of September 11th 1973, even Chilean television, on various channels, broadcast the same message, if we listen carefully to the semantics in the language of TV: that the CIA (or generically the United States) played a leading role in the fall of the Unidad Popular.

Parallel lives and events

It is not the first time in the history of Chile that an image of this type has tried to take hold of “the record” irreversibly. The interpretation of the civil war of 1891 that it had been provoked by the intervention of English capitalists and consequently English imperialism persisted for a long time. The thesis of Hernan Ramirez Necochea, the tenacious Communist historian who was dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Education at the University of Chile, is very well known in Chile¹. Today there are few people who would defend the thesis put up by Hernan Ramirez and that same image of 1891 of 1891 has lost force in contemporary Chile.

In its time this history helped to lay the foundations of another, that of the self-perception of the Left, and particularly of Salvador Allende himself, about his role in the years of the Unidad Popular. There is little doubt about how Allende took his personal strategy and his image as the heroic paradigm from the “Martyr President”. His model was always Jose Manuel Balmaceda, and he felt that he not only the person to continue his work but also to complete it. Not only that: there was also a family link in that his grandfather Ramon Allende Padin, doctor and well known satirical and irreverent journalist, had been an active member of the non-clerical camp. He was also the Grand Master of the Masons. His father, Salvador Allende Castro, and was a Balmaceda supporter and paid his dues for being on the losing side.

From 1900 onwards Balmaceda was already one of the patron saints of the Left of the 20th century, although it is difficult to believe that this liberal leader would have had much in common with the theories that were developed during the century. Curiously enough, in spite of the fact that this type of interpretation was consecrated by Pablo Neruda in his *Canto Gene-*

¹ Hernan Ramirez Necochea: *Balmaceda y la Contrarrevolucion de 1891* (1969).

ral, the figure of Balmaceda has undergone a certain eclipse in the political language of the present Left, in its two versions of the Concertacion and “anti-globalisation”. This is surely due to the stardom that Allende achieved and to the unexpected political gesture of his death.

There are a lot of histories of Balmaceda that point to him being the victim of English imperialism. Out of the many books that have been written about this episode, perhaps the most illuminating is that of the English historian Harold Blakemore, that few have bothered to read.² From before 1970 Allende had made a reference to Balmaceda almost obligatory. Between 1970 and 1973, this was converted into a “parallel life”, a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy, which, at heart, consisted of leading the way towards political extremism in the three years of his government. Although the dark hand of Fidel Castro was behind the need to have an heroic finale if the enterprise should fail (which would have personal consequences that many of his enemies never suspected of him), we can presume that he chose the attitude of Balmaceda as his model. Meanwhile there was another experience in Allende’s life, that of Pedro Aguirre who faced a military uprising known as the “Aristazo” on August 25th 1939. At the time of the threat, “they say” that Don Pedro remarked that they would only take him out of the Moneda (the Presidential palace) dressed in a “wooden suit”. This left a deep impression on his young Minister of Health, Salvador Allende.

The image is also complemented by one of an epic fight against a foreign enemy. With this Allende is associated on the one hand with the anti-imperialist tradition of the Left born around 1900 and, on the other, with the inheritance of the “patriotic Chile” that had been formed in its final stages by the War of the Pacific. There was a common tendency towards nationalism for the Left in the 20th century that was co-opted in Chile mainly by the Marxists. As the United States had been the hegemonic power throughout the 20th century, and Chile had had difficulties with her during the 19th, it was not strange that “anti-Americanism” was an integral part of this type of patriotism: and certainly Washington has been concerned with internal Chilean politics since 1940.

More than fighting “imperialism”, “anti-imperialism” helped to play a powerful role within internal politics, explaining away its rivals in Chile as partners or puppets of imperialism. In 1891 the anti-Balmaceda forces had been nothing more than pawns in the struggle of “capitalism in its imperialist phase”, according to Marxist orthodoxy. This can be seen very

² Harold Blakemore: *Gobierno Chileno y Salitre Ingles 1886-1896: Balmaceda y North* (1977). (*Chilean Politics and British Saltpetre 1886-1896: Balmaceda and North*, London 1974)

well in Allende's final speech on the 11th of September 1973 where "foreign capital, imperialism united to reaction, created the climate for the Armed Forces to break with their tradition"³.

A large part of Chilean politics in the 20th century was guided by this supposition or by criticism of it. In principle, this is neither strange nor worth rejecting. Chile is part of a world history and the political identity of the country has been constructed from the patrimony of ideas that have existed in modern politics from the beginning of the 19th century. The country moves within a field of forces that it is conscious of. Another is to gather knowledge of things from the perspective of ideology. The claim that a pure knowledge "of the facts" exists, beyond the ideological perspective, that can serve as instructive for the action of the politician or for those responsible for the state, brings a manipulation of public life via the service of ideas or ideologies not clearly expressed. The same is valid for its apparent opposite, to subordinate action to a general idea which supposedly provides us with an analytical and animated vision to lead us into the future.

Anti-imperialism and "conspiracy"

Anti-imperialism or "anti-North Americanism" has been a powerful motor of Latin American politics and its vision of the world. In Chile all political forces and ideas have been either pro- or anti- North American at different times during the 20th century. All have asked for North American intervention or something like it at one moment or another, and obviously not at the same time. Chilean communism was pro North American during the 2nd World War (as from June 22nd 1941, the day of the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union). The Chilean Left, including the Communists, from the end of the 70's to the end of the 80's, was asking for a kind of North American intervention against the military government (an intervention which for others existed). The Right showed more than a trace of "anti-Yankeeism" during these same years⁴.

Anti-imperialism has been a favourite recurring weapon in public politics in Latin America. Underlying this is the thesis that the United States is the principal culprit for the general problems of societies south of the Rio Grande. This has been the El Dorado of the anti-Establishment forces of the region, although it also has planetary explanations in that the United States

³ Quoted in the magazine *Bicentenario*, 2 Feb. 2003, page 290.

⁴ Part of these ideas are developed in Joaquín Fernando: "Pawn or actor? Chile in the Cold War (1962-1973)", 1998.

arose as the global power during the course of the 20th century⁵. Certainly it is the emotion that dominates every “conspiracy theory” at the moment of taking positions, not only regarding inter-American relations but also regarding any type of diagnosis of our societies. We believe we have found the thread of the plot that leads to the culprit, to the puppet master sprawled on his chair in some large North American city.

The United States as a society has been a unique phenomenon, and not only in the sense that any historical event is unique, unrepeatable in its individuality: a great power that speaks in a moral and moralistic language, that does not separate itself from the prosecution of its own interests, that many times has attracted and repelled at the same time and with the same actors, that plays an essential role in the world and yet is also turned inwards to itself and whose leaders have never been manifestly educated to understand the world (with the exception of the now evanescent Eastern establishment that came to prominence thanks to the 2nd World War). As happens with every historical phenomenon, North American society cannot be understood exclusively by the explanations that the country itself has given: that seems obvious. Nor can it be explained as being the result of a Russian Revolution type of conspiracy, as the result of a “Judaeo-Bolshevik” one, or with even a small grain of credibility, as the result of the machinations of the Imperial German High Command. But this is what these two books are asking us in understanding the history of Chile under the Unidad Popular.

The “conspiracy theory” arises out of the unquenchable human need to deliver simple explanations for complex events and processes. In itself this is not a bad thing. If a good explanation of the direction or succession of events is not only simple but also credible, it makes an undoubted contribution to knowledge. In the “conspiracy theory”, things are a little more complicated. In its simplest form, which can be an honest one, it lends a taste of mystery to the manipulator who is hiding in the shadows. To this simplicity is added the supposed existence of a complex network that will be revealed by the accusation. Thus it acquires the connotation of a contemporary parabola, that is almost the same as the imagery found in the world of mass communication, the media, and which is so perfectly translated into the soap opera, in the radio and later the television version.

Confronting a reality that seems astonishing to us, we always react with a “what’s behind it all?”. It is partly through a sense of morbidity, partly through the refusal to understand and assume the quota of responsi-

⁵ For a recent explanation of this theme, see Jean Francois Revel: *La Obsesion Antiamericana Dinamica, Causas y Incongruencias* (2003)

lity that falls on all of us for the development of events that the “conspiracy theory” constitutes one of the most extensive and recurrent political myths in the history of our times.

“Myth” here is not to be taken as a manifestation of some archaic knowledge that expresses, via history or parabola, a profound and irreplacable reality of things. This is the concept that, for example, anthropologists use. For myth, we understand here something simple, like “a tale my father told me”, a very easy anecdote that serves as a short cut for understanding things. It is a piece of narrative that gives the illusion of truth and totality: that in showing how if something can be revealed that was previously hidden, this will bring to light a reality that has also been concealed up to now.

Spy stories have been an inexhaustible source of the “conspiracy theory” and have all the ingredients to represent the status of myth. John Le Carre and Ian Fleming, with his famous James Bond, are the most complicated versions of this type of “tale”. Few times do we pause to reflect that espionage, and its most dangerous component “covert action”, only show the weakest link in the chain. The activity known as intelligence reaches its true dimension only when it begins to be analysed. Analysis can never separate itself from categories that have been formulated out of public information. This is the reason that there is no explanation for a social event of a minimum complexity, and which can be understood by using confidential material, that bears any relation to a “conspiracy theory”.

To understand the politics of a certain country towards another or any relationships between societies, various areas have to be connected. There is a latent infantilism in thinking that on finding the thread of a conspiracy, this will lead you instantly to an explanation of events, both in terms of authors and victims, and to a lesson in morality. If things were really like that, like the “Jewish world conspiracy” for example, it would be impossible to understand how any country or regime could have resisted the desires of the United States. If the government of Salvador Allende, with a GDP of almost 10 billion dollars at the time, could be overthrown by spending 6.5 million dollars, why wasn’t this repeated in other parts of the world? Was it maybe the ingenuousness and democratic spirit of the leaders of the Unidad Popular and the unlimited treachery of the opposition that permitted such an extraordinary return on the investment?

To reason in this manner is completely puerile: it is also as puerile to maintain that the “CIA overthrew Allende” as it is to say that the United States had nothing to do with it or that Cuba (and the Soviet Union) did not play a role. Chile is part of an international system: it is part of an interna-

tional society which makes it possible for its political actors to identify themselves with external forces, that are seen to be part of the national interest or whatever is held to be such. Before we go along this route, which explains much more than the word “conspiracy”, let us have a look at what these two books are about.

The authors and their work

In the first place, let us examine the background of both authors, Peter Kornbluth and Patricia Verdugo. Within Chile the first is known in a circle of specialists and NGO's dedicated to human rights. In 15 years of work he has created the “National Security Archives”, destined to reveal the more obscure causes of North American Foreign Policy during the last decades. Although Nixon is the principal villain of the piece, others, both before and after, do not escape from the magnifying glass of this researcher. It is difficult to call Kornbluth a scholar. Revising his career and this book, to which he has added another this year on the politics of Washington during the years of Pinochet, we can quickly see that he is an author who follows one emotion, that of censuring and denouncing the foreign policy of the U.S.A. as immoral.

In this sense Kornbluth belongs to an old tradition of radical and bitter self criticism within the US, where since the 50's an atmosphere of criticism began to be formed that had, as its objective, the “anti-communist” foreign policy known as “containment”. Anti-communist liberalism, that had impregnated a large sector of the Democratic establishment in those years, was evaporating and things speeded up because of the situation engendered by the Vietnam War. From then on criticism of American society, a cause which has never lacked nor will lack for themes or justifications, passed to denouncing her foreign policy. Kornbluth is a typical product of this process, which sees only faults in US Foreign Policy after 1945.

Looking through the book, the reader will notice that there is no evaluation whatsoever of the literature that has been written on the subject. It is as if he is tacitly corroborating the declaration of war made by Susan Sontag in her book “*Against Interpretation*”, that whatever has been said about an event puts limits on an uninhibited look at it (a recommendation that M/s Sontag refutes in the same book). For Kornbluth, nothing of what has been written about Chile and particularly about North American policy there, has any validity. There is no intellectual history about it that has to be understood. He writes his book almost as if the documentation had been

published as recently as yesterday and he is revealing it to point the finger at Washington'' treachery.

In reality, Kornbluth's book has no explicit thesis. From beginning to end he unfolds his thesis according to the principle "let the sources speak for themselves", but if fact organising them in such a way that everything that happened in Chile pointed to Nixon and Kissinger and their use of the CIA as their instrument. It comes nearest to being a thesis when it says, at the end that "the history of the efforts of the United States to demolish Chilean democracy and support the consolidation of Pinochet's dictatorship continues to be in limbo" (page 131). The author has a technique of insinuating things that the unwary reader cannot evade, even though he himself is careful enough when formulating his ideas. This is not because of analytical prudence but because he appears to believe that to study reality is not a problematic activity but a simple one, like tracing the end of a single thread back and finding the whole skein of wool.

Patricia Verdugo is a writer of a different calibre. She is a journalist who has become successful since the publication of her book *Los Zarpazos del Puma* in 1989, which dealt with General Arellano's "Caravan of Death" in October 1973. Her life underwent an irrevocable transformation with the assassination of her father by security agents in 1975⁶. The motivations behind this act were not clearly political, which made it more treacherous and highlighted its criminal nature. This probably added a real dramatic edge to her determination to denounce the excesses and everyday criminality that existed in several of these organisations. It also gave a moral force to her writing.

All of this does not mean that each book should not be judged on its own merits. In those mentioned above there is evidence that they are to a great extent products of "investigative journalism", even though they are not too fluent in relating the events they describe to the big picture. In the present case, we are talking about a book with a limited scope, of "journalism" in the worst (and sometimes unjust) sense of the word: superficial and suffering from a lack of historical and political knowledge and analytical maturity. She mixes up facts and transforms several biographical elements of Allende, for example, with the main story that she wants to tell, which is that of North American policy towards Chile, so that the result is a hagiography of the President. The result is the classic ennobling story of good versus evil, without any intellectual or descriptive weight.

While Kornbluth takes his history from documents—which is no big thing—Patricia Verdugo combines all sorts of events, not in a historical

⁶ The theme of her book *Bucarest 187* (1999)

synthesis of the period, but in a mixture of fact and supposition. Neither of the two bothers to make reference to studies on the period or in incorporating any of their arguments. Neither of the books talk about Paul Sigmund and Mark Falcoff, who are probably the Americans that have done the most work on the theme of North American policy towards Chile, on the basis of this type of documentation.⁷

It is certain that some of the affirmations that are made here are perfectly debatable for the simple fact that knowledge of these types of events, like any type of human reality, is always going to be debatable. In the stories that the authors relate nothing can break the picture of a perfect police investigation, that supposedly discovered each one of the felonies described by the authors.

The two books have another thing in common. They follow a North American centred conception of world affairs. Everything is plotted and carried out in and from Washington. There are no other histories that make sense, except beautiful rebellions like the one led by Allende and the Unidad Popular. These is still more marked in Kornbluth, for whom (without even proposing it or being conscious of it) the Chileans are puppets of Washington to such an extent that one cannot understand how Allende actually emerged. Both authors point to the initial support given by the Nixon administration to the military regime but neither of them mentions the tug of war between the two governments from 1977 onwards. In fact, as from the beginning of 1975, Washington began to view Pinochet as a liability, even though there wasn't much they could do about it. This theme cut across relations between both countries until 1989 and it is a chapter both fascinating and full of the ironies of history. Obviously to have focused on this would have destroyed the picture presented in the book. It would have led the author to discuss the typical complications that lead the historian to present a picture that is neither black nor white.

There is nothing strange in this perception that the authors put forward —and Kornbluth in particular— of an omnipotent United States. The country has managed to become such an extraordinary phenomenon of modern history that, once inserted into the world conscience of the 20th century, it has also managed to provoke fear and to be perceived as a threat, and not only among “progressives”. People have associated the United States with unlimited power, and this naturally tends to provoke reactions

⁷ Mark Falcoff *Modern Chile. A Critical History* (1989); Paul E. Sigmund *The United States and Democracy in Chile* (1993). One can also refer to Joaquín Fernandois *Chile y el Mundo 1970-1973. La Política Exterior del Gobierno de la Unidad Popular y el Sistema Internacional* (1985).

of distrust. At the same time, the masses throughout the world (and not only them) have absorbed that outstanding product of North American society which is mass culture: this has given it the quality of a “paradigm”, even though it has not always been admitted, but many times confirmed tacitly in people’s conscience and outwardly vehemently denied. What the United States has achieved as a power is also what produces envy and a reasonable level of distrust.

In Latin America this has given birth to what is called the “love-hate” relationship with the USA. In itself it might be a reasonable answer. The basic attitude of a civilised man towards someone who discriminates should be that he is able to distinguish those attributes that we consider to be positive in a society and is capable of avoiding those results or influences that we identify as harmful.

In the Latin American case the anti-North American attitude reflects too often a frustration with the mediocrity of its own political civilisation, perhaps the nucleus for the underdevelopment of the Ibero-American world. More seriously, anti-Americanism is not only the reflection of a feeling of historical failure but is also one of its causes. It acts as an easy excuse for proposing demagogic policies as well as an excuse for abdicating out of politics as the “gringos take control of everything”. In Chile, which in fact has not been the country most affected by this kind of epidemic, we can illustrate this by examples taken from the history of copper, where our under-development is in fact due our frittering away the profits or to our history of subsidies⁸. The latter was a result of the assumption in Chilean politics that, in order to balance the fiscal budget, resources for investment had to come from the United States. It was therefore necessary to “recover” what the United States or “imperialism” had robbed from Chile.

This mentality is a reflection of various assumptions and above all of them floats the “mother idea” of the omnipotence of the USA. In this there is a combination of two things: the “conspiracy” theory together with the refusal to accept any responsibility for “underdevelopment”. In general the fundamental problems of our countries are explained away as the result of “foreign interventions”, “imperialism” and “globalisation”. With all their supposedly omnipotent power, why does it not occur to North Americans to help those countries to “develop” and therefore have them as allies with the same interests and without any feelings of envy, in much the same way as the Europeans, secure allies though jealous ones and constantly at logger-

⁸ Regarding subsidies and copper, see Joaquín Ferrel “El Sistema Corfo y la Época del “Subsidio” en Chile, 1939-1973” (2002) and “La Larga Marcha a la Nacionalización: El Cobre en Chile, 1945-1971” (2001).

heads with Washington? But this won't do. Firstly because it destroys the other assumption, that the United States takes advantage of our needs and uses our wealth. And secondly because if Washington wanted to do this but could not carry it out, the idea would suddenly emerge that maybe the United States is not so omnipotent after all and therefore everything bad cannot stem from Washington.

Sometimes this idea of the omnipotence of the United States comes from the same critics of Washington. The case of Kornbluth is a good example. There is a tradition of self-accusation, a feeling of sin, probably as a result of Protestant roots, which impregnates all culture in North American society. A double edged sword, it can be the road to hypocrisy or a neurotic feeling of blame that resolves itself in fits of an arbitrary exercise of power or contrition. This is one edge. The other is one that makes freedom subject to criticism and self-criticism, a basis for the state of law and the limits of power, one of the pillars of North American democracy.

A greater paradox is that this idea of omnipotence sometimes penetrates the exercise of power in Washington itself. We are seeing this in the case of Iraq where there is no doubt at all that the "neo-conservatives" (or *neo-cons*, as they are known generically) are sincere in their belief that the United States "can do everything" and are disposed to pay any price whatsoever to "defend freedom", as John Kennedy expressed it so strongly a little more than forty years ago.

It is no surprise, therefore, that from studying the internal papers of responsible North Americans the perception emerges that with will and American "daring", they can take on the most reckless enterprises. And make a success of them. Like every great power and society that has managed to be admired (and hated) as a model, it develops a very high opinion of its own importance, including a belief in its own infallibility. There is something adolescent about the gaze that many North American leaders have when they look at the world. This is reflected in the documents that are quoted by Kornbluth and Patricio Verdugo, although if they had shown an iota of subtlety they could have also found the reverse.

Here we are coming to the theme that lies at the bottom of this article. We will concentrate on two aspects that will help us to understand the facts: the documents concerning the attempt by Washington to stop Allende becoming President and those that show the support given to the opponents of the Unidad Popular during the following three years. The question is: are these documents as sensational as the publicity that accompanies these books makes out? The authors make a lot of the words "docu-

ment” and “declassification”, as if written history was a mere paraphrase or copy of documents.

In fact, everything that they quote, as well as the thousands of pages that have been declassified these past ten years, do not basically add an iota to what was already known. And what was that? That the Church Commission Report as well as the hearings about Chile and the totality of the documents of ITT that were published, taken together say quite a lot more than what was made known in its turn by Jack Anderson and the Chilean government in 1972. In synthesis, all this documentation amounts to some two thousand pages. Very few people (almost nobody) in Chile and only a few dozen in the United States read these documents after 1975 when they were published.

Do these thousands of pages, where the majority of the names of the people who appear are blanked out, tell us anything more? It is my conviction that they add practically nothing. And neither does what the writers “reveal” in their books, which can only impress those who have known about these things by hearsay. In a marginal way they do have some novelty, but they do not manage to modify the picture painted by those authors who studied the material in detail. To sum up, in some aspects they help to *complete* the picture but not to modify the judgement.

Once again we can point to some modest examples. For the period of the elections of the 4th of September to the change of government on the 3rd of November, they could indicate that the White House followed plans to promote a coup after the 15th of October. What has been confirmed by the North American government and repeated at various times by Henry Kissinger is that after that date efforts to prevent Allende from assuming the Presidency stopped.

(The Americans, beginning with Kissinger, insist that they only saw this as a means to make a new election possible, in which Eduardo Frei would stand. Few believe this to be so and I certainly share the opinion of the authors here: what they wanted was to prevent Allende from coming to power, if necessary by the intervention of the military).

Kornbluth quotes various documents that show how this policy continued up to October 22nd, the day of the attempt on Schneider, even though they are not convincing enough to prove that this was not the result of inertia on behalf of intelligence groups whose orders never arrived immediately. It does seem, in fact, that they were on the look out to see if there was to be some sort of attempt. It also shows something that was already being insinuated in the documentation opened in 1975: that the Americans—the CIA —were very sure that Frei sympathised with the idea of being

deposed by a coup. If Frei really was fully informed and supported the idea, then it is a conclusion that cannot be reached solely by using these documents. (“The government of the United States shared Frei’s opinion that a military solution would be the only option”, Kornbluth page 144). Everything else is merely speculation, whether intelligent or not.

Anything new that these books quote about the three years of the Unidad Popular is to be found in Kornbluth, since Patricia Verdugo only uses the theme of documentation to relate a sensationalist story or anecdote, albeit an entertaining one. Maybe it helps to amplify the rumour, which the Americans picked up, that General Pinochet was against the Unidad Popular, and that maybe he could head a coup, even though they did not find him qualified enough to do so.

Track 1 and Track 2: the “conspiracy”

These were the names that, in 1974 and 1975, the Church Commission gave to the North American policy towards Chile between September 5th and October 22nd 1970. It was part of a policy undertaken since at least 1962 to prevent the installation of a Marxist government in Chile: in fact the United States had begun to finance several political groups, all anti-Nazi ones, since 1940. It was to demonstrate that internal Chilean politics was of interest for American security. The Christian Democrats also received help from their European counterparts. On the other hand, as the studies of Olga Ulianova, published in this journal, have shown the USSR began to finance the activities of the Communist Party at least from the middle of the 50’s.⁹ Already in the 2nd half of the 60’s the Cuba of Fidel Castro was training young Chileans, ardent supporters of an armed revolution, to carry out any tasks that might be necessary at some moment in Chile’s future development.¹⁰

Chile was part of the Cold War, because of games being played by actors outside the country. And also because the great question of the political world —Towards what future should our country march?— was the crucial question around which Chilean politics was being organised.

⁹ Arturo Fontaine, “Estados Unidos y la Union Sovietica en Chile”: and Olga Ulianova y Eugenia Fediakova, “Algunos Aspectos de la Ayuda Financiera del PC de la URSS al Comunismo Chileno durante la Guerra Fria”, both in *Estudios Públicos*, 72, Spring 1998. Also Olga Ulianova, “La Unidad Popular y El Golpe Militar en Chile: Percepciones y Analisis Sovieticos” (2000).

¹⁰ Cristián Pérez, “Salvador Allende, Apuntes sobre su Dispositivo de Seguridad: El Grupo de Amigos Personales (GAP)” (2000).

This reached its highest point when the country tried a change of identity with the Unidad Popular government: afterwards they would try another. What was the final result that we saw in the decade of the 90's? Something that was not very different if we had tried out a few simple reforms between the 60's and the 70's. This is not, however, the theme for here.

The point we are dealing with is how significant and important was the North American participation. We believe that in the first stage of September and October 1970, in what is called Tracks 1 and 2, it played a marginal role in the development of events. On the other hand, later on, the importance of finance played a greater, but much less decisive, one even though it has to be recognised that all this needs to be deliberated in more depth. In any event, the presentation of documents is not that simple.

Before continuing we must ask ourselves the question if the aid offered by the Americans and the Soviets is immoral, amoral or moral? I am afraid that the answer is not that clear. In a political system where the rules of the game are assumed from the legitimacy of the system itself, to ask for external aid could be seen as "treachery" to the fatherland, to democracy and to the tacit political contract that has been established between citizens. However if politics becomes a war in which the adversary, at a given moment, is deprived of the possibility of defending its rights and interests, does it not become legitimate for one of them, or both, to appeal for external help? The opponents of the Unidad Popular believed this between 1970 and 1973: its supporters believed the same after September 11th and moreover the latter were submitted to a "real" war. The Unidad Popular also believed in another type of legitimacy than representative democracy and its opponents believed that they were having the wool pulled over their eyes when Allende and the leaders of the Left talked about "constitutional loyalty".

All of this came together to create the events that we are commenting on here, after the surprising triumph (surprising for his opponents, that is) of Allende on the 4th of September 1970. For the great majority of those who did not vote for Allende, his triumph had the force of a paralysing and almost terrifying but certainly worrying impact. Allende's victory was a narrow one: he even got even less as a percentage of the votes than he had in 1964. He won with the same amount of votes with which he had lost in 1958 against Jorge Alessandri and tradition demanded that Congress, when choosing between the first two majorities, should choose the first one, although previously there had always been some kind of negotiation. Any other strategy would have necessitated some political co-ordination between the candidature of Alessandri, La Moneda and the Christian Democrats and it was highly improbable that this would have succeeded.

It is an incredible but revealing fact about the political weakness of the Right, that on the night of September 4th Alessandri and the people who represented him went to sleep without giving one explanation to at least the people who voted for him, which showed that he was as paralysed as they were. The days that they stayed silent were decisive for convincing people that Allende's victory was irreversible, which in point of fact it was.

Frei appeared to be stunned, and to judge by the photos of the time and by what leaked out, he was strongly impressed and on the verge of a depression. He was under no illusions about the situation that the country would live through when the Unidad Popular consolidated their power. The Right supported any plan, including the possibility of electing Alessandri to Congress, so that he could later resign and open the way for a new election in which Frei, supposedly, would emerge victorious. It would have been a "peaceful" coup which would have opened the doors to a confrontation as serious as that of 1972-1973. In any case, to the contrary of what so many interpretations of the "coup strategy" of the Right show, what this most demonstrated was its bewilderment and its "renunciation" of politics. Here maybe was a sign towards a profound authoritarianism, although it was an illness that in a different way also affected the other political forces in Chile.

Perhaps a majority of the Christian Democratic leadership abhorred the triumph of Marxism as much as it abhorred the Right: we can safely say that the majority of their electorate did. But the dice had been cast. A considerable part of their parliamentary members were not disposed to enter into the slippery game of electing Alessandri and another part would rather vote for Allende than "deliver their vote to the Right".

In the Armed Forces the reaction was more mixed than anywhere else. All its *Weltanschauung*, its world vision and dynamic were mainly anti-Marxist: *mainly but not exclusively*. Internally what was not necessarily anti-Marxist could weigh as much as what was. The principal emotion that dominated was that it was "civvy business (i.e. civvy in military jargon meaning civilian), said somewhat deprecatingly, a reflection of the indifference that the uniformed ranks felt for others. This reflected their real ties with the institutional order, by feeling themselves separated and isolated and slightly superior while at the same time experiencing some negative discrimination.

This state of mind did not reveal any great respect for Chilean political institutions per se, but accentuated military tradition and the difference in functions between themselves and the state. Was this a mistake? Yes, even though an analysis of the constitutional loyalty of almost all the politi-

cal actors would reveal similar problems. Certainly these sentiments were not homogeneously shared among the officer corps and there was no lack of people who would put anti-Marxism above other feelings.

Obviously we cannot forget that there was another line of thought. Since 1967 there had been unrest among the ranks, which broke out in the “tacnazo” (revolt of the Tacna Regiment) on the 21st of October 1969. This still did not manage to create a “coup” culture but equally it could not be said that things were like they were at the beginning, of the 60’s.

And what was the attitude of Eduardo Frei? He always had something Sphinx like about him: a small portion of that is always necessary for the statesman. Little or nothing revealed itself into a concrete attitude. The little showed that he was profoundly affected by Allende’s victory and thought that he, Allende, would not be able to contain the advance of the Marxist parties towards a confrontation, that in his own opinion the country was heading towards catastrophe and that he ordered his supporters to collaborate with a transition team from the Unidad Popular. On the other hand, he never publicly and clearly disavowed the Alessandri “formula” (his election for Congress, his renunciation and a new election in which Frei could participate). More importantly until the 22nd of October he failed to mobilise the security apparatus to stop the world of conspiracy inside and outside the Armed Forces and the forces of order: and he never talked to the body of senior officers to advise them that the “constitutional way” would be the best manner of defending democracy and preventing a complete take over of power by the Marxist coalition, which was a real threat then and would form the nucleus for a later confrontation. Frei, like Alessandri, did not seem to be capable of designing a strategy during these months. It was as if he went into his shell.

(Perhaps, and this speculation is mine, he had in mind the memory of half a century back when in 1924 a military junta exiled Arturo Alessandri, who then returned in glory and pomp the following year. Perhaps also he didn’t mind the idea of a coup because he could late appear as restoring democracy. But wouldn’t he also have taken into account that half a century ago Carlos Ibañez also appeared on the scene, a typical military caudillo with political ambitions, who in fact remained in power?)

The people on the Right were assured that Frei had been consulted previously about Alessandri’s declaration on the 9th of September, which would open the possibility of his election and subsequent resignation, a very dangerous game to play indeed. Even if this was not so, it was obvious that there was some sort of tacit understanding, although it is also probable that Frei would not have said anything explicit. That was his character. And

maybe the same Americans only assumed that this was Frei's opinion or knew of it via intermediaries. In the interview that was carried out at the Centro de Estudios in 1997, Edward Korry (the US ambassador in Chile between 1967 and 1971) was emphatic in maintaining that he practically did not see Frei during this period and that when he was with him they never talked about the situation.¹¹

It is difficult to believe these affirmations. Eduardo Frei was venerated by those Americans who had to do with Chile. In the Chilean political scenario, his government and the Christian Democrats in general were the ones who could most be understood by the North American political culture. It is almost as if there still exists "a pact of silence" in respect to whether there was any type of direct communication with Frei on the theme at all. Moreover one has to presume that Frei himself was not going to go and tell the Americans what he was thinking.

The preparations for organising a military uprising, that the Americans also supported, were somewhat laboriously prepared, since the enthusiasm for such an undertaking was rather tepid (or even provoked a certain aversion) among those in uniform, even though there was not much sympathy or much belief in the Unidad Popular, except among a handful of officers. What was prepared by a coalition of several generals, the most prominent among whom was the head of the Santiago garrison Camilo Valenzuela (but which also included up to a certain point the head of the Navy, Admiral Hugo Tirado), and a group of civilians and retired servicemen, was a complicated manoeuvre: decapitating the army by kidnapping its Commander in Chief, Rene Schneider and getting Frei to nominate a military cabinet. Afterwards, everyone assumed that things would turn out automatically. It had all the hallmarks of a reckless enterprise and it can be seen that co-ordination was never secure between the different parties as the same CIA documents show.

We get two clear impressions from the same documents quoted by Kornbluth and Patricia Verdugo. On the one side the insecurity and risk in organising a coup. And this was not because many of the civilian and military leaders were thinking "We shouldn't do this because it's unconstitutional". No, we are talking about something else. They believed that they could see the irreversible danger that faced the country if a Marxist regime consolidated itself. There were very few that maintained "democracy saves democracy". Many began to say that probably "El Chicho (Allende) wasn't that bad" and that maybe he wanted them to save him from the parties that

¹¹ Edward M. Korry, Joaquín Fernando, Arturo Fontaine Talavera, "El Embajador Edward M. Korry en el CEP" (1998).

were accompanying him. The same had been said about Aguirre Cerda and Gonzalez Videla and at the end nothing happened. Another important point, that revolved around Christian Democrat sensitivities, was one which maintained that as the structures of the country needed to be changed anyway, and a dose of socialism was inevitable and necessary (and very good as well), one had to support the future government of Allende up to where one could.

Obviously, surrounding the conspiracy, or more accurately, the various and more or less chaotic conspiracies in progress, were human factors that combined anti-democratic ideological passion (or despair with democracy which is not the same thing) and professional adventurism, which explain how the tragedy unfolded.

To sum up: there was an obvious reluctance to embark on a coup that appears in the documents mentioned by both the writers, Patricia Verdugo and Kornbluth, but which is a perspective that is beyond their intellectual perception. This lack of a “climate” to carry out a coup is what brought the forces of the CIA to a complete standstill. It is certain that various different groups were in contact with members of the US embassy (who at the same time on this occasion were at the orders of the CIA), as well as with agents of the same agency who had arrived in the country outside the embassy system. It is interesting to note the fact that for these groups —the ones of Viaux and Camilo Valenzuela— it was important to know that the United States supported their actions and that it would compensate them if things went wrong: at least this is the somewhat cryptic tone of the documents.

But they were certainly not creatures of the CIA. The agency received orders to create chaos but they could do nothing, except observe jumpiness of many Chileans. The tenor of the same reports is one that shows the agents revealing their impotence because there is nothing they can do. Kornbluth’s book makes it difficult to refer to the document, since he quotes textual sentences in commas, without clear references, such as the case of Frei’s supposed involvement (page 39). When the American funds began arriving in Chile at the end of September 1970, things had fundamentally been decided. A typical report from one of the CIA agents in Chile at this time is:

There is now in existence the rumour of a possible coup and that it needs the authority of Frei to take the following steps: 1. Resignation of the cabinet. 2. Creation of a new cabinet consisting of purely military figures 3. Nomination of Frei as interim President. 4. Frei has to leave the country” (page 142)

The speculative character of the text is quite typical of this type of report. It is amazing that reports like these could be the basis for any real expectations of the White House. The truth is that the CIA agents often seemed to repeat what were only rumours or gossip and send information with completely factual errors, while at other times were reasonably au fait with the situation.

New information, not quoted by the authors, shows how the same ambassador Korry was fed up with carrying out a policy based on wishful thinking and fanciful information. On October 6th he sent a cable to Washington saying that “we should stop trying to verify all these reports and be prepared to be completely surprised by whatever action the Armed Forces undertakes [...] for this I am instructing them (the CIA in Chile) to desist carrying out their standard efforts to obtain information regarding possible military movements”¹². Obviously the agents in Chile had to follow to the letter the orders from the White House, where they apparently believed that in Chile one could do anything, create economic chaos or suborn the Congress. As far as the first was concerned Allende’s election produced a very understandable shock, although chaos was avoided: with regards to the second, although not believing that all the senators and representatives were little angels, the same developments showed that things were not that simple.

The failure of intellectual perspicacity or the monomaniac adhesion to a “story” makes the authors fail to understand the desperate irony of the CIA agents in Santiago, who saw that at most a dangerous situation could be created for everyone, as we can see in this cable of October 10th which they sent to their HQ at Langley:

“1. The Station has arrived at Viaux’ solution via a process of elimination: a) the solution of the High Command is unattainable. B) Frei’s solution is also unattainable (this refers to the “Alessandri formula”). C) As far as the solution of the regimental commanders (one supposes this refers to the military heads of regions) is concerned, the Station lacks the power to make these commanders instinctively obey the directives of the High Command.

2. Under these conditions what can Viaux achieve? He could divide the Armed Forces: the fence sitters will look at the ups and downs of the battle before taking sides. The butchery would be considerable and prolonged as this would be civil war. In the best circumstances the Armed Forces would make a pronouncement and create an unpredictable situation.

¹² Quoted in Kristian C. Gustafson, “The Dangeorus Second Track. The CIA in Chile and the Assassination of General Schneider”, *Studies in Intelligence*, 47, 1, 2003.

5. All that has been mentioned does not pretend to be an exhaustive list of all the key factors that could have weight in the final decision. You have asked us to provoke chaos in Chile. Through Viaux we have provided you with the formula for a chaos in which it is very improbable that there would be no bloodshed. It would be impossible to conceal North American participation. The Station team has considered all the plans suggested by their counterparts at HQ very seriously. We have come to the conclusion that none of them have the remotest possibility of achieving the objective (of the American government). From here on, the card of Viaux, in spite of all the attendant risks, may commend itself to you.¹³

This is an extraordinary document which the authors not only quote from partially but whose subtle irony escapes them. We can see the desperation in the comments of the agents in Chile because they cannot control events. Taking them together with reports from the Church Commission we can come to the same conclusion. The history of those sixty days is an example of North American impotence, at least if we understand it as Washington manipulating events.

All this has a somewhat macabre colophon. When Schneider was wounded in the kidnapping attempt (he died three days later), the agents in Chile believed that the coup was unfolding, since in the new state of affairs General Valenzuela was effectively the new head. "It seems as if Valenzuela's group will use this incident (sic) as a pretext for beginning the coup" (Kornbluth, page 161).

How ingenuous! The fact that Schnieder was gravely wounded killed the potential coup from the start. Moreover Frei ordered an operation to detain all those involved as quickly as possible, making it quite clear where the threads of the plot led. The country, horrified, felt that something irrevocable had happened: together with the assassination of Edmundo Perez eight months later this marked the end of the peaceful republic that, many believed, was the mark of the country. In any case there was no better proof of how uncontrollable events were for their presumed manipulators in Washington.

The international factor in the political civil war 1970-1973.

Chile has never been an island. It was born as a consequence of the European expansion of the 1500's. It was born as a republic as a consequence of the cycle of the creation of modern politics between the 18th and

¹³ Kristian C. Gustafson. See note 13.

19th centuries. In the 20th century it was the country with the most modernised institutions in Latin America. There was Marxism and anti-Marxism before the Russian Revolution: the Popular Front of the 1930's developed a political culture very similar to its European counterparts. Allende and Pinochet became universal symbols. There is nothing strange about British Ambassador Hillyard's observation that in Chile the same battle was being waged that had been waged in Europe some decades previously. There was nothing rare in the fact that Chileans identified with one or the other great universal models. The United States, the Soviet Union and Cuba were as much external powers as role models for Chilean society.

The United States did it tacitly, since it did not have a political sensitivity as well defined as the Marxist movements, although its attraction was perhaps no less penetrating for being more subtle. On the other hand the change in direction which was going to be given to the country by the Unidad Popular was unthinkable without the concrete models in place in the Soviet Union and Castro's Cuba. The Soviet Union had participated in the financing of Chilean communism and gave its clear support to Allende, although much less than Chilean Marxism had anticipated. Castro, on the contrary, was a gravitating presence in the Chilean experience. He organised the most military part of the Chilean Left and clearly vetoed any possibility that the Unidad Popular might reach a negotiated settlement with the forces of the political opposition. This was not the action of an "agent" or a shady conspiracy but the Chilean expression of a universal possibility, adoringly sustained by huge sectors of the populace but feared and fought against by others.

Chile was also part of Latin American society, with more sophisticated institutions that were not necessarily more refined in content. From here comes the quiet irony and surprise of Her Majesty's ambassador. The country decided its future not via an international war, such as England fought in 1940, but in one of those political battles of the 20th century that combined the character of a "political civil war" with global symbolism such as the Spanish Civil War. Its great model *was* the Spanish Civil War. The difference? That between 1970 and 1973, the war was fought fundamentally without weapons since the war was fought fundamentally without weapons since they were only used potentially, as a threat rather than anything else. When the time arrived, the military rising had massive popular support (how much? That will always be in the realms of speculation) from a majority political position, and everything was carried out at a minor cost than feared, but one that was greater than necessary.

So once again, what are the new documents that the authors base their works on or reproduce with regards to White House policy? We can say that they contain very little that isn't already known, and the books give us no reason for re-thinking about the events. They insist on an "invisible blockade" on Chile like "another Vietnam", because of the refusal of Washington to continue giving loans. That depends on which crystal ball you look through. Why should Washington go on giving loans to a government which maintained that all Chile's ills stemmed from imperialism? Wasn't it the objective of the Unidad Popular to "break with imperialism"? The true dynamism of the world comes from the "Socialist bloc", was the central thesis of the Unidad Popular: it was a system that had no incompatibility with the peoples it freed from the imperialist yoke. At the end, nothing is added to what is already known.

There is nothing new in the White House policy of helping to maintain an opposition via economic aid. Here we are talking about 6.5 million dollars. None of the documents mention the "lorry loads", except in insignificant numbers, and that was in the Church Report of 1975. It is probable that this aid did arrive but we do not know this from any "revelation" on behalf of the authors. The North American government said, excusing itself, that its objective was to permit the opposition forces retake power via elections and not to destroy democracy.

From many of the sources, one can come to the conclusion, without it being a wholly false one, that the message sent to the Armed Forces was that the United States would support them if they took power. In a report of the 14th of March 1973 there is the comment:

We must make it very clear that we do not support a coup attempt, unless it is clear that it can count on the support of the majority of the Armed Forces and the democratic opposition parties, including the PDC (Kornbluth, page 117).

We can see American strategy, that had discarded the enterprise of trying to create a coup in September and October 1970 for being useless and unproductive, more clearly here. They were going back to the strategy, recommended from the beginning by Ambassador Korry, of supporting an opposition that was being placed between the devil and the deep blue sea. Later on, the institutional crisis that "Fidelismo without Fidel" was thinking of carrying out—and which it partly managed— would place all the actors in an impossible situation.

We can also see that the Americans were well informed about the fact that within the High Command there was first of all a state of mind and

later a project to depose Allende, motivated by an anti-Marxist sentiment that was now dominant. They had people that informed them. With all this, their knowledge of the plot was not much different from that which was circulating among the leaders of the Unidad Popular and known to Allende himself.

What is there new in this documentation? That the Americans, it seems, knew already in 1972 that Pinochet, being basically a professional, was thinking about the possibility of military intervention. First they knew through a story related by his son's girl friend and afterwards more directly or through his conversations when he was in Panama. Something of this Pinochet said himself in the first version of his memoirs, entitled "*El Día Decisivo*" in 1980.

More interestingly Kornbluth brings new material to light on the strategy of delivering monetary support to the opposition. This was nothing intrinsically new except that he adds a little more detail. He describes the financing of the Christian Democrat Party's structure and the vital importance (although it seems that not everyone in Washington believed it) of *El Mercurio* known as a medium of information and reference. If this news paper fell before the subtle and not so subtle pressures exerted by the Unidad Popular, then the opposition would begin to fall apart.

Certainly it would have been embarrassing if this had been publicly known, as would have been the revelation of Soviet aid to the Communist Party or the extent of Cuban involvement in the preparation of an illegal armed contingent in which the Castro's own embassy participated directly or even the letter from the same embassy to Allende on July 29th 1973, urging him to a confrontation and death. At the same time, all this was suspected.

We can see what they say about *El Mercurio* on April 1972:

As far as the impact on the public and political effectiveness is concerned, Allende's government and the political opposition consider that *El Mercurio* is the most effective medium for spreading anti- Allende information in Chile [...]. *El Mercurio* continues to be subjected, in various ways, to harassment by the government. If Allende is decided to shut *El Mercurio* up, it is probable that he could find the means to do so via some legal mechanism, not withstanding the financial support from the United States government. Under those circumstances a decision to give additional financial support should not be based on financial considerations but on a value judgement regarding the importance of trying to consolidate the existence of a newspaper with political ends" (Kornbluth, page 187).

The author of the report believes that this confirms the irresistible march of La Moneda (i.e. the government) towards strangling the opposition through so called “legal” means. And it is not as if the Americans found a very “tame” opposition in Chile. In the middle of the tension that was created by the mobilisation of the Unidad Popular first of all and then the counter mobilisation of the opposition, everyone realised that resources were the most important.¹⁴ In a struggle with global significance, it was natural that the opposition should receive help from external forces in moments when the operation of the Constitution was beginning to be put in question. It is also clear that nobody had paid too much attention when the same thing had happened previously and financial support had begun to arrive in the 60’s or even earlier in the 40’s. Later on the idea acquired a certain respectability, when funds were being channelled via more fashionable media such as the National Endowment for Democracy in 1980.

In any case, there is no doubt about the perception of the opposition to the Unidad Popular that they were heading up a one way street. Renan Fuentealba, President of the Christian Democrats during the first two years of Allende’s government, was one of 13 leaders who condemned the 11th of September, although he blamed much of the violence on the “ultra-Left”. In September 1972, when Fuentealba met with an official from the US embassy, Richard Schwarz, in the house of businessman Juan Abogabir, he commented that the government forces of the Unidad Popular were closing around the opposition so irremediably “that it would die of asphyxia”.¹⁵

What does this mean? In the first place that the funds allocated by the United States to the opposition could have played an important role in its mobilisation. As the bulk of the economy passed every day more into the hands of the state —into the hands of the officials of the Unidad Popular— and also maybe the bulk of the black market, the little amount that was channelled by the CIA to the opposition could have had considerable and perhaps decisive weight. This is conjecture and something to ponder about.

In the second place, that in this significant global battle, the external forces, Soviets, Cubans and Americans, viewed the political civil war like moving through a narrow defile where it could go one way or the other. And the opposition were nearer to a pessimistic rather than an optimistic reaction almost to the end, to the middle of 1973.

The opposition was not completely devoid of funds, discounting the support from the United States channelled via the CIA. The very fact of

¹⁴ On this theme see Joaquin Fermandois, “Transición al Socialismo y Confrontación en Chile, 1970-1973” (2003).

¹⁵ Interview of Richard E. Schwarz with Renan Fuentealba in the house of Juan Abogabir, September 29th 1972, NARA, Chile Declassification Project, Human Rights in Chile, Section 2, Volume 1.

mobilisation assumed a quota of enthusiasm, a sense of extreme danger and sacrifice that made them put up their own funds, even though there were signs of these being depleted. It would be probable that in the future there would not be much funding from the US government. The growing crisis of Watergate was beginning to paralyse Nixon's administration. This is, of course, the opposing hypothesis ("what would been the result if such and such thing had happened in another way?").

From myth to understanding

All this brings us to a very simple fact, in order to conclude the reflections that these two publications have awoken, by supposedly stirring up "memories" of what happened thirty years ago. There have been two great images that have wanted to stick in the minds of Chileans. One of them is that the violence which the Unidad Popular managed to unleash, and which it prepared, legitimised the initial violence of the military regime and its "excesses". This was to be a great political myth, in the sense defined here as myth, maybe as Gaetano Mosca, the Italian political thinker of a hundred years ago, would have defined it, in that a part of the country believed it for a certain amount of time.

The second great myth: that the Unidad Popular was nothing more than another search for a socialism within the Chilean political tradition. This image, which has fought its way through somewhat successfully thanks to the thirtieth anniversary of the 11th of September, has been strengthened precisely because of the excesses of the military government, the murder of political opponents and the confusion of man with the State.

A solution to tie up the many loose ends that these myths leave is to strengthen the idea that the "CIA did everything". A simple reading of the material makes it impossible to confirm this. It is another of those myths which harmfully link history to politics and which point to the acceptance of apparent misfortunes in the development of events. The history of contemporary Chile was the result of choices made by the actors in Chile, like the history that confronts us day by day. This includes the fact that we are subjects who are vitally linked to the world. If we enter into a crisis, if we divide ourselves to the point of conflict, we shall always find "external" actors elbow to elbow with us, whether we find this "natural" or we reject it. Chilean politics will enter into a period of more maturity and consolidation when, instead of welcoming the kind of "myth" propagated by these types of publications, we agree to understand relatively simple events.

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