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Comments On Sigmund's two articles.

On the myths article.

-- There is a basic contradiction between myth 1 of the right and myth 5 of the left. While Sigmund denies that Allende was attempting to establish a marxist totalitarian state, he also considers a myth that Allende was a "democratic socialist". It is true -as Sigmund says- that Allende did not have views similar to that of the European social democrats leaders and that he was a marxist, but judged according to what he did while in power (and not for what he may have done if...) he was a democratic president. Apparently Sigmund denies this because i) Allende lied about the illegal importation of 13 crates of arms in 1972 from Cuba, ii) underwent arms training himself, iii) died from bullets of a rifle given by Castro and iv) probably ~~possibly~~ encouraged the financing and arming of a parallel army by members of his Government.

While these 4 points are too feeble to deny Allende democratic stand, points 1 and 2 has no other support that what the Military Junta has asserted. In fact, it was said that they discovered a list ~~of~~ with the contents of the famous 13 crates in Jaime Barrios house (during most of the Allende's term he was the General Manager of the Central Bank) and was murdered after the coup after being taken prisoner at La Moneda). To prove the training they have showed 2 or 3 pictures of Allende with sub-machine guns. Point 3 is, I think, irrelevant and point 4 is not well sustained; Sigmund uses the word Probably.

What it is more important, what Sigmund thinks it was the obvious democratic solution in Chile, it is exactly what Allende was going to do on the September 11 speech, to which the author refers in page 18 (myth 7 on the right). In short, if to say that Allende was a democratic socialist is a myth, then what is Allende ?

Myth 6 on the left (american press was favourable to the Chilean Coup)
 I believe that it is not a myth, in the sense that Sigmund uses this word along his article. I would say that in general the american press was unfriendly toward Allende while he was in Government. It is another matter the way by which the press have dealt with Chile after the coup. The facet that the Junta has been strongly criticised by the american press, it does not deny the fact that they were strongly against the Allende regime. But I do not think that on the left side this myth is such, as to consider that one of the causes for Allende downfall was the attitude of the U.S. press.

Myth 3 on the blockade will be commented later, with the ~~American~~
Foreign Affairs' article.

Sigmund arrives to the conclusion that the coup was the inevitable result of economic policies and a political stalemate "which made majority rule under law almost impossible." (Page 21) I think that this is a new myth. (or perhaps no so new since ~~thannighmingsnampaha~~ some Chilean papers have made comments on similar lines) Without ~~mm~~ going into the argument about the economic policies, it is rather strong to contend that since "elementary principles of economic rationality" (Foreign Affairs p. 340) were ignored, a bloody coup has to be the outcome of that policy. Who is going to decide when it is ~~masa~~ necessary to wait till the next general election to modify erroneous economic policies or that it is necessary to implement a coup. The same line of argument apply to the political stalemate problem. Of course, violence and class fighting was stronger than in other periods but this was not the first time that a political stalemate existed in Chile

The main development for the coup (p.19) it is not mentioned: according to Pinochet, after the March congressional elections it was clear that since Allende got 43% of the vote no "constitutional" solution (impeachment) was at hand to overthrow ~~him~~ him. Therefore, he and 8 other generals,

made a decision for the copper in a meeting held on March 21, 1973 and a written pact was signed. (This statement was made by Pinochet early in August 1974 in a dinner offered to him by the Rotary Club and was reported by the international agencies). Incidentally this should be mentioned in connection with the conspiracy theory developed on page 20.

On the blockade article.

The main line of the argument is that no evidence appears on the so called U.S. blockade. The author distinguishes three periods: from September to November 1970; from Nov. 1970 up to the end 1971 when the Chilean Government declared a payments moratorium and from 1972 and afterwards. While Sigmund recognizes a decline in short term credits from private US banks from 219 million to 32 million "this was not the result not of a coordinated strategy, but of many individual responses to an increasingly cloudy economic outlook in Chile". While this may be true at a later stage, it is difficult to justify this during the second period, this is from Nov. 1970 to Nov 1971 when the moratorium was declared. The clear statement of the Eximbank in August 1971 rejecting the 21 million loan to LAN Chile because there was not enough information about the "compensation" on the expropriation of the copper mining it is I think a blockade. The head of the Bank, afterwards commented that the "door is open" if Chile demonstrated her credit-worthiness. In other words, it seems that the problem was with the so called Allende's doctrine on excess profits.

During the three meetings that Chile and the US had to reach a bilateral agreement on the moratorium it was impossible find a formula because the US side always ask for a payment even a symbolic one, for the US. companies. It is interesting to note that credits to Chile had flown again, ~~again~~ after the agreement on the compensation was reached in July 1974. The Allende's doctrine has been officially buried and Chile will pay for Anaconda only more than 50 million.

The excess profit idea was the main obstacle; in the examples that Sigmund preset of Peru and the UAR this is not the case.

In connection with the IDB loans on page 327 Sigmund says that the last loans were made for two University projects. It is more correct to use the word only instead of last. These two projects were already approved before Allende took office and I believe that was almost impossible to stop it. Moreover, given the complete autonomy that had the University system in Chile, these loans would be administered as they were in fact not by the Government but by the Austral and Catholic University, both controlled by members of the PDC.

The other projects, submitted by the Frei administration on a petrochemical complex, and for electricity and gas were under "study" during the 3 years of Allende government. The 64 million for electricity has now been approved. (By the way, the agreement was signed by the President of the IDB Bank after the agreement on copper was reached... a coincidence...)

I would like a brief comment on each of the four causes for Allende's overthrow:

- 1) runaway inflation caused by massive printing of money. In the twelve month period after Allende inflation has been more than 1000% and massive printing have continued;
- 2) Allende intensification of the class struggle; it seems that the actual leaders have had ~~more~~ stronger tools to intensify the struggle that now has become a war according to official statements;
- 3) Allende's use of legal "loopholes"; apparently today in Chile the loopholes are deeper and wider; ~~more~~
- 4) Complicity in stockpiling arms by leftist groups; I don't think that this was a monopoly of the left only.

To sum up, if these are the ~~main~~ causes for a coup, a counter-coup should be coming. I believe that these causes are one sided; What ~~role~~, if

ma any, played the opposition? What role ~~ma~~ if any was played for those that were being affected by the Allende's measures, either chileans or international corporations? To rise these questions is not to say that there one should find the ~~ma~~ only causes for the ~~mapu~~ coup. Probably some of Sigmund causes are correct, but to think that they are the only ones is like repeating some myths "on the right".