

Chile: Detouring the Road to Socialism, 1970-1973

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Leftist revolutionaries often resort to armed struggles after exhausting other avenues of change, to reach an executive position to carry out agendas that benefit their country's working class. However, Chile experienced a different revolution, one involving the ballot box and multiple campaign attempts. Salvador Allende rose to the position of President of Chile through electoral means, a rare occurrence in Latin America as many other attempts at revolution in the hemisphere were met with armed struggles and bloodshed, as seen in the uprisings to oust the Bautista regime of Cuba and the Somoza family of Nicaragua. In 1970 Salvador Allende led a coalition, Unidad Popular (Popular Unity—UP), consisting of Socialists, Communists, and people of other leftist ideologies. The UP coalition was an attempt to gather support and ultimately landed Allende the office of the presidency. Chile doesn't have a two-party system like that of the U.S., rather they're a representative democratic republic—making room for multiple parties to participate in elections. Allende ran in a multi-party race, where their congress, functioning under a proportional representation, decides who wins if no one receives a majority vote, a victory typically goes to the top vote-getter. Once in office, Allende carried out policies aimed to benefit the Chilean working class as proposed in his “Popular Unity Government: Basic Program” in 1970. In the short term, results looked promising with an increase in wages, job creation, as well as the nationalization of copper mines, electrical plants, and railroads among other assets. Allende had inherited a damaged economy from his

¹ The author, being also an editor, recused themselves from the editing process regarding this article. It received no special treatment and was required to conform to all standard requirements.

predecessor Eduardo Frei who advocated reformist policies that left Chile in debt and division. In the long run, Allende was struggling to meet his intended goals of a peaceful transition to socialism, with the weight of opposition on his home front in Chile, the American press as well as the Nixon Administration and then-Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, intervening in Chilean politics.

Allende's goal was to transition from wealth being concentrated in the hands of the few, to investing in the working class, and he intended to make it happen through nationalizing several private institutions while not resorting to violence. Allende was one to 'play by the book' as opposed to his counterparts in other parts of Latin American who resorted to guerrilla warfare. Allende was also not in favor of implementing an authoritarian-like rule, as capitalists and conservative critics might suggest. This stance by Allende was bold considering just years earlier Fidel Castro of Cuba, a friend of the Allende administration, overthrew the Bautista regime through an armed struggle with guerrilla warfare tactics.

The tactics that Castro used were influenced by the revolutionary Augusto Cesar Sandino of Nicaragua, who emerged victorious against U.S Marines in an armed conflict in the late 1920s.² Once in power Castro and his allies would target political opposition and the right-wing press. Public trials and executions of the former dictator's henchmen were held, with the intent of securing the survival of the revolution. While Allende shared much of Castro's political ideologies, he chose to pursue them through electoral means rather than with violence.

Allende's approach gave new hope to the Latin American region to transition to a system that benefited the poor and working-class, without the necessity of bloodshed. Though Allende assumed power constitutionally and ruled fairly, opposition on Allende's home front and foreign

² Marc Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 113

intervention severely slowed his ability to put his agenda into practice, most notably by an antagonistic Congress that failed to cooperate by providing funds Allende requested. An American-backed coup staged by General Augusto Pinochet overthrew him from office, Allende lasted from 1970 to 1973. Sufficient evidence demonstrates the American press, covert operations, as well as economic and political intervention obstructing Allende's path to socialism— as well as a combative right-wing on his home front.

Allende Behind The Wheel: Fueled By A Leftist Ideology

“Chile's Leading Marxist: Salvador Allende” by Juan de Onis from the New York Times, portrays Salvador Allende as hopeful, yet still met with criticism. In this piece, it starts with Salvador Allende being introduced as a medical student forty years prior, exposing himself to Marxist-Leninist criticism of the capitalist society. As a medical student at the University of Chile, Allende entered politics during the dictatorship of General Carlos Ibanez (1927-1931). His student opposition activities landed him jail time, but despite this, he rose VP of the student federation the same year he received his medical degree in 1932. In 1933, Allende along with former student leaders and Marxist intellectuals founded the Chilean Socialist Party, Allende being elected national deputy in 1937.³ Between 1937 through 1939 Allende held a position as Regional Secretary of Valparaiso (Secretario regional de Valparaiso), as well as being elected a deputy, (equivalent to a congressman in the U.S) in their parliamentary elections of 1937⁴. His experience as a student activist and his medical practice in provincial cities enabled him to reach that position through legitimacy. In 1939, he became Minister of Health in the Popular Front

³ Tedeschi, Sara K, Theodore M Brown, and Elizabeth Fee. “Salvador Allende: Physician, Socialist, Populist, and President.” American journal of public health. © American Journal of Public Health 2003

⁴ BCN. Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, “Salvador Allende Gossens. Presidentes De La República En El Congreso Nacional,” (BCN. Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, January 1, 1970)

Coalition, under President Pedro Aguirre Cerda. That same year, Allende's leadership was put to the test through a natural disaster, with relief efforts earning him a national and positive reputation⁵. Allende then published his book, *Socio-Medical Problems of Chile*, attacking Chile's capitalist system and blaming it as a cause for illnesses and malnutrition amongst the poor and working class. Allende's history in the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, credits him with more than 100 bills, specifically on social security, health policies, and women's rights.

This *New York Times* article proceeds on how Allende claims to be a different type of revolutionary by setting himself aside from Fidel Castro or Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam. At the time, there was a lot of skepticism of the government in Latin America with Allende saying,

“There are many Latin Americans who do not believe that the electoral process of bourgeois democracy can produce good government.”⁶ and following with, “they would favor power achieved only by a revolution of the masses, by the armed struggle. A victory by the electoral route will be difficult for us, but it is the best way by far for Chile.”⁷

Leading his leftist coalition Unidad Popular and having ties to the Chilean Communist Party, many of his proposals had anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic sentiment. He proposed a program that would nationalize major companies, and develop close ties to other communist countries such as North Vietnam, China, and Cuba. At the height of the Cold War between the Soviets and the U.S, it was politically advantageous to develop ties to other ideologically aligned nations, to promote the best chances for Unidad Popular's program. That same program called for the nationalization of the banking system, agrarian reform, and the elimination of the political and

⁵ Juan de Onis Special to The New York Times. 1970. Chile's leading Marxist: Salvador Allende. *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, September 7, 1970.

⁶ Juan de Onis, "Chile's Leading Marxist: Salvador Allende,"

⁷ Ibid., 9

economic power of Chile's wealthy families. Allende recognized the resentment that the working class had towards the few rich families that formed the only private economic group in Chile, where the state already controlled most basic enterprises such as: oil, railroads, and power.⁸ Allende was well aware of the wealth inequality that plagued Chile saying, "bourgeoisie structurally dependent on foreign capital" is to blame for poverty, lack of housing, and hunger.⁹ He came into office intending to end this inequality and beginning "the construction of socialism."¹⁰ He goes on to say that Chile would have a unique approach, not following other countries in their violent revolutions, stating that the nation was "better off industrially than Cuba at the start of her Revolution."¹¹ Allende dreamed of a legislative approach to replacing the old system with a new one, as opposed to arming the proletariat and lighting up Molotov cocktails.

One key step towards his plan would be the replacement of the present constitutional system, placing legislative power in two houses: the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. An elected body would select new judges for the supreme court. Reporters asked Allende at a news conference if his left-wing coalition would establish a one-party system and he answered "never!" as he maintained the support of the Communist Party as well as other radical left groups in his broad coalition¹². Allende's campaign intended to portray to his voters that his government would be fierce with foreign imperialists and oligarchs but compassionate to the working people of Chile. However, the demonization of leftist figures is a common tactic used by the American press. A critic of Allende said, "He will seem to be gentle, but it will be the iron fist in the velvet

⁸ Juan de Onis, "Chile's Leading Marxist: Salvador Allende,"

⁹ Juan de Onis, "Chile's Leading Marxist: Salvador Allende,"

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

glove. If he is elected it will just be a matter of time before most of Latin America becomes Marxist.”¹³ Allende was shown to be an optimist, loved by the Chilean people, and trusting of Chile’s democratic structures by ruling out the option of violent revolution, yet is met with criticism by the American Press.

Allende at the Polls

Marc Becker’s book, *Twentieth-Century Latin American Revolutions*, in the chapter, “The Chilean Road Socialism,” dissects the political activity before and during Allende's Presidency. In 1952, Salvador Allende campaigned for President for the first time, running under the Socialist Party of Chile.¹⁴ In that first attempt, Allende had poor showings and placed last in a field of four, however, with this attempt Allende did not intend to win, but rather lay his groundwork for his future attempts.¹⁵ In 1958, Allende ran as the candidate of the Chilean Socialist and Chilean Communist parties, of which were part of a coalition, *Popular Action Front*, to help increase Allende’s chances of an electoral win.¹⁶ He had better showings this time around with his support increasing fivefold, but still narrowly lost to Jorge Alessandri who received 36% of the vote, Allende earning 28%. Jorge Alessandri led a coalition of traditional liberal and conservative parties.¹⁷ Conservative Jorge Alessandri held office from 1958 to 1964. Salvador Allende had lost by 33,500 votes out of a 1.2 million cast.¹⁸ The narrow defeat inspired leftists to push Allende to claim power through extra-constitutional means. However, Allende held on to his faith in Chile’s traditions and institutional order. Fairly and without protest,

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ BCN., “Salvador Allende Gossens.”

¹⁵ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 139.

¹⁶ BCN., “Salvador Allende Gossens.”

¹⁷ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 139.

¹⁸ Ibid., 139.

Allende conceded defeat and encouraged congress to designate his conservative rival as President. All the same, conservatives were struck with fear at Allende's growing support and the increased left-populist sentiment during the 1958 election. That same fear pushed for the abandonment of Alessandri in order to rally behind the centrist Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei in 1962, to prevent a socialist victory—Eduardo Frei held the office of the presidency from 1964 to 1970. His victory would not have been made possible without the backing of both conservatives and centrists. Eduardo Frei played a large role in creating the state of the country Allende would later inherit.

A Reformist Predecessor

Eduardo Frei is remembered as a reformist and that left behind a hurting economy that Allende then inherited. While Frei was in office, he promised a “revolution in liberty.”¹⁹ Chile under Eduardo Frei saw the most progressive political activity in Chilean history, from an increase of education spending to agrarian reform in 1967²⁰. That same land reform expropriated land from a feudal style estate, legalizing peasant unions, and even encouraging the formation of cooperatives. Though these reforms were heading in the right direction, the Chilean people did not feel the efforts were sufficient enough to bring about the profound transformation in their society they felt was necessary. Frei was elected to a second reform, attempting a partial nationalization of the copper mines—the goal was to strengthen domestic control over the industry and increase earnings from exports²¹. Chile shifted away from its dependence on copper since the creation of synthetic alternatives contributed to the collapse of the nitrate industry earlier in the century. The copper industry in Chile was held almost entirely by U.S based

¹⁹ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 139

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 139

²¹ *Ibid.*, 139

corporations. Kennecott Corporation owned Chile's largest copper mine in the world, *Mina el Teniente*. Mines were profitable, but their wealth flowed to the U.S rather than remaining in Chile. Frei believed the full nationalization of the copper mines was too expensive, which instead led to a 'Chilenization' of the copper industry in which the government bought part ownership of the mines, hoping to reinvest the profits and double production.²² Chile purchased fifty-one percent of Kennecott Corporations and twenty-five percent of Anaconda Co., but in the end, the results were unsuccessful. Due to contracts, much of the profits continued to flow to the companies and not into the pockets of Chilean laborers.²³ Frei's efforts made him out to be a reformist through his "Chileanization" of the copper industry, but failure in having wealth flowed back into the hands of the workers and still concentrated in those at the top.

With help from friends: U.S. Covert Actions & Relations

It is crucial to note that most of Freis' reforms came into being with foreign aid and covert planning from the United States, only to have these loans create a burden for Chile. A policy carried out by the JFK administration, resembling the Marshall Plan, entitled the Alliance for Progress, enacted in 1961, was intended to flex the muscles of capitalism and portray the United States as a champion for economic development. The intention was to attract moderate reforms to prevent another Cuban style Revolution in the western hemisphere and halt any more Soviet influence on the Latin American region. Chile was its exhibit and would receive more aid than any other country involved in the program.²⁴ The U.S. also played a handsome role in the 1964 election through meddling. Also the CIA contributed three million dollars to Frei's

²² Ibid., 140

²³ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 140.

²⁴ Ibid., 140

electoral campaign and an additional seventeen million dollars in anti-Allende propaganda most notably when, “large amounts of funds were channeled into the opposition media, notably *El Mercurio*, to help the ongoing propaganda campaign”²⁵ The CIA left it’s print on Chile before and during Allende’s presidency and is often brushed off. CIA officer, Jack Devine, published in *Council on Foreign Relations* journal that a strategy was carried out on supporting Allende’s domestic political opponents and making sure Allende did not dismantle the institutions of democracy: the media outlets, political parties, and labor organizations that formed the Chilean opposition.²⁶ Devine arguably mentions *El Mercurio* never used propaganda to deliberately mislead readers towards Allende’s government economic policies, however emphasizing stories on government seizures of private property and specter of economic disaster.²⁷ In any case, American intelligence was still present and loaded language like, seizures of private property, reflects on their stance for Allende.

The article, *Democratic Peace and Covert War: A Case Study of the U.S Covert War in Chile*, covers a number of the steps and phases enacted to obstruct fair elections in favor of Salvador Allende’s challenger. Phase 1 involved the Kennedy Administration’s aims to influence the outcomes of the 1964 presidential election, this action took various forms but consisted of two main factors. (1) Direct funding of the Christian Democratic Party candidate, Eduardo Frei, and (2) massive anti-Allende propaganda campaigns.²⁸ An estimate of roughly \$4 million was spent by the CIA on about 15 clandestine action projects for the 1964 election, and other claims state that approximately \$20 million was invested into the Frei Campaign. Frei’s electoral victory

²⁵ Jaechun Kim, "Democratic Peace and Covert War: A Case Study of the U.S. Covert War in Chile." *Journal of International and Area Studies* 12, no. 1 (2005), 31

²⁶ Devine, Jack. "What Really Happened in Chile: The CIA, the Coup Against Allende, and the Rise of Pinochet." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 4 (2014), 29

²⁷ Devine, "What Really Happened in Chile:[..]", 29

²⁸ Kim, "Democratic Peace and Covert War:[..]", 30

proved that these campaigns were a success for the US.²⁹ However, Frei failed to live up to the growing demands of Chilean society.³⁰ His moderate reforms were too extreme for conservatives and not radical enough for leftists. Heavy debt became a burden and triggered an increase in inflation, and his progressive reforms strained relations with conservative allies. The midterm congressional election had a shortage in support for the traditional liberal and conservative parties, falling from 43 percent in 1965 to 31 percent in 1965.³¹ These poor showings also led to the dissolution of their parties, leading to the reconstitution in 1967 of liberals, conservatives, and right-wing radicals as a National Party. With this new face, the conservative bloc gave a better showing in the 1969 congressional elections, resulting in scoring twenty percent of the vote.

Allendes Inauguration

For the 1970 presidential election, a big portion of Chile's political spectrum moved significantly leftward. Going back to the beginning of the article, it shifts to portray him as the solemn winner of a plurality, and becoming the 'President-Elect', as called in the U.S, at the age of 60 and proclaiming himself as a Marxist.

Allende, once more running as a leftist candidate as the head of *Unidad Popular*, (UP, Popular Unity) coalition³². UP consisted of socialists, communists, Christian Democrats, Christian socialists, and other dissident radicals. Under their campaign, UP published the "Popular Unity Government: Basic Program", in 1970. This document brought awareness to

²⁹ Ibid., 30

³⁰ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 140

³¹ Staff Report of The Select Committee to study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence activities United States Senate. 1975. Review of Covert Action In Chile. Edited by Frank Church and John G. Tower. U.S. Intelligence Committee on Intelligence. U.S. Government Printing Office, 5.

³² Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 144.

Chile's dependence on imperialist powers and global capitalism, and how their export economy did not benefit the Chilean people. Some economic policy goals this program advocated for were; the nationalization of national monopolies, natural resources (copper, iron and nitrate mine), banks, and infrastructure (electricity, railroads, air and sea transportation)³³. This program was the basis by which they UP ran their campaign for Salvador Allende. *The Washington Post, Chile Inauguration: A Leftist Fiesta*, gives an account of who was present and what took place during the Inauguration. The then-Assistant Secretary of State, Charles Meyer, met Allende for 45 minutes on November 4th, 1970. The conversation was kept secret but Meyer reported it to be 'serious and friendly', and essentially was sent to acknowledge Allende's victory on behalf of President Nixon³⁴. Though Allende's position was extremely critical of the U.S government, Allende did seek to establish normal relations with mutual respect.³⁵ Latin American exiles and representatives from other Communist countries, even those with no formal relations with Chile, were having a good time at the inauguration³⁶. These same "out-of-power" leftists and delegates from North Vietnam, China, North Korea and Cuba celebrated in the courtyard of the presidential palace and toasted to the ascension of Allende.³⁷ Though the newly ascended president of Chile welcomed representatives of 65 nations Chile to hold diplomatic relations with, the favored guests were those of trade unionists, leftist militants, and especially Cuban representatives. Their welcoming was broadcasted and the press was also called in to record the greetings and then lead to a series of interviews with local television and radio newsmen. Leftists, militants, and delegates of Chinese and South American backgrounds gave interviews to

³³Ibid., 144.

³⁴ Lewis H. Diuguid and Foreign Service Washington Post. 1970. "Chile Inauguration: A Leftist Fiesta." *The Washington Post, Times Herald* (1959-1973), Nov 05, 1970.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

media outlets. Though the article only portrays the festivity, it was convenient to have allies of similar political left-leaning ideology because of the aggression the U.S was giving, notably funding Eduardo Frei to secure his victory. The last thing Allende would want is extra aggression from foreign powers and hostility for his policies and agenda.

The Socialist Route: Your Destination Is On The Left

Allende's policies consisted of nationalizations and expropriations that the workers themselves demanded and were partially started through his predecessor. On December 21, 1970, Allende called for the nationalization of the foreign-owned copper industry that made up three-quarters of the country's exports. This action was well-received and popular support was given since the previous Eduardo Frei started partial ownership through his "Chilenization".³⁸ On July 17, 1971, the Allende administration nationalized the large copper mines with the unanimous support of congress; and to United Nations principles. Chile compensated the corporations for the book value of the mines, minus excessive profits of which Allende argued the higher-ups would keep more than fair, and that these mines rightfully belong to Chile³⁹. Coal, Steel, International Telephone and Telegraph, and Ford soon followed in the nationalization wave and disrupted foreign firms. Workers pressured Allende in an attempt to force him to move more quickly on the expropriations and nationalization; workers occupied management offices and refused to leave until an expropriation took place. By the end of 1971, the Popular Unity had taken over more than 150 industries, hence meeting the expectation for workers. Agrarian reform was under fast pace under The Popular Unity Government and was an extension from the 1967

³⁸ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 146

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 146.

Agrarian reform under his predecessor Frei.⁴⁰ Agriculture in Chile was a less important source of employment and export products than other Latin American countries. This situation meant less resistance to agrarian reform, which made the government move fast with a massive agrarian reform program.⁴¹ Allende managed to distribute more land in a year than Frei had in six. To make agriculture an increasing source of employment and export, agricultural production must increase, and the expropriated land had plans for organized cooperatives and land titles given to peasants. This agrarian reform consisted of and included more than just expropriation, farmers needed credit, and access to physical capital (equipment, tools, supplies). However, due to the fast pace, the government could not provide these amenities, affecting how successful the program would be practiced.⁴² The failure to meet these amenities was a result of opposition from Congress and even those on the left arguing the pace of implementing Allende's program.

A rise in disagreements on the leftist side dealt with the pace of direction the government should take, given that their 1971 short term achievements reflected in 1972 on rising inflation, shortages, and lack of foreign exchange. Congress refused to increase taxes, which resulted in a scarcity of funds for public works projects that initially brought their short-term goal into fruition. These acts left the middle class alienated and extreme leftists felt these problems stemmed from governmental inaction. The Marxist Chilean administration managed to get a major redistribution of income and it led to an increase in demand, but unfortunately, it did nothing to increase production to satisfy it. The Cuban leader, Fidel Castro, pointed out in further reading how "Marxism is a revolution of production; Allende's was a revolution of

⁴⁰ Ibid., 146.

⁴¹ Ibid., 146.

⁴² Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 147

consumption”⁴³, championed by Castro's goal of a drastic increase of sugar production in the 1960s, while Allende focused more on increasing wages and triggering an increase in demand in consumption

Take The Next Exit On Your Right: Detour Ahead

Allende experienced roadblocks from all angles. On his homefront in Chile for example, despite having congressional support, opponents in both the legislature and judiciary created barriers for the Popular Unity nationalization efforts. Particularly the oppositional Congress refused to provide funding for Allende’s socialization programs, leaving Allende no choice but to use laws during the Frei Administration to his advantage and move ahead.⁴⁴ On a different corner, the nationalizations gave the U.S. a convenient reason to cut aid, increased economic aggression, aid from the “Alliance for Progress Program”.⁴⁵ The U.S. hand didn’t stop there, it held a big role in economic obstruction for Chile:

“Declassified NSC records and a memo show conclusively that, after the inauguration of Allende, the Nixon administration moved quietly and quickly to shut down multilateral and bilateral foreign aid to Chile, intervening at the World Bank, IDB, and the Export-Import Bank to curtail or terminate credits and loans to Chile. In a memo prepared by Kissinger for the National Security Council(NSC), he explicitly stated that the U.S. policy toward the new Allende government was to reduce existing U.S. assistance and investment”⁴⁶

⁴³ Lewis H., and Foreign Service Washington Post. Chile Inauguration: A Leftist Fiesta. *The Washington Post, Times Herald* (1959-1973), Nov 05, 1970.

⁴⁴ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions*, 146.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴⁶ Kim, "Democratic Peace and Covert War[...]" 34.

The U.S has been involved prior to Allende in office and once in office moved discreetly to obstruct financial means for his Popular Unity government, Allende had roadblocks on all corners of his homefront and from the meddling U.S.

To no surprise, The *Wall Street Journal* published a piece strongly criticizing Allende and his reforms under, *Wrecking Chile to Build Marxism*, by Everett G Martin, on November 13, 1972. Nationwide strikes, consisting of independent truckers and protests from the middle class erupted against the Marxist policies. The view on these policies framed them as temperate remedies, considering inflation had increased by one hundred percent and no sight of it to halt that inflation.⁴⁷ Chile's main source of foreign exchange, copper, running short leading to unsatisfactory copper productions, and homegrown foods weren't proving to be sufficient.⁴⁸ A specific action like doubling wages triggered inflation and the seizure of farms both big and small only aggravated the food shortages. Arguably, Allende's antagonistic Congress and the hand of the U.S. provided barriers in easing the rising problems.

Epilogue

On September 11, 1973, army general Augusto Pinochet, appointed by Allende, led a military coup that ousted Salvador Allende and the Popular Unity government. This took place on the day Allende had planned to announce a plebiscite to resolve the economic crisis that the country was facing⁴⁹. When the Presidential Palace was being bombarded and under attack, Allende and a small group of close supporters in his government attempted to defend themselves and hold off for as long as they could. He made a last radio broadcast in the final moments that stated, "history was on the side of the workers and that they would determine the future of the

⁴⁷ Everett G. Martin, "Wrecking Chile to Build Marxism." *Wall Street Journal (1923 - Current File)*, Nov 13, 1972, 18.

⁴⁸ Martin, "Wrecking Chile to Build Marxism," 18.

⁴⁹ Becker, *Twentieth-century Latin American Revolutions.*, 150

country”.⁵⁰ Coup plotters made it clear that once captured, Allende would not go into exile peacefully and opting for torture, Allende instead took his own life away with a Kalashnikov rifle that Fidel Castro gifted him.⁵¹

Conclusion

Salvador Allende, the Marxist to reach an executive position in Latin America by its democratic rules, unfortunately, didn't achieve a successful socialist Chilean society. Despite his very best efforts, and his impressive record of activism since his youth, it's proven that Allende had no place to go on his homefront with the opposition, foreign economic obstruction from the U.S. and the American Press. Make no mistake, Salvador Allende was extraordinary as a person with a great history in politics since he was a student at his university. His medical background landed him the title of Health Minister and he exercised his administrative skills quite well. Allende definitely wasn't a quitter, given that he attempted multiple times to run for office and always increasing his support with the backing radicals, communists, and socialists. Though having the American press portraying him very negatively, he did not rule as an authoritarian and left behind violent ideas or a single-party system. He was respected as he was made out to be by other socialist countries, as shown in his inauguration. But once in practice, his program did have positive results, while in the long run failing to simmer down inflation rates and causing his coalition and other leftists to argue the pace of the reforms and causing the middle class to be left out. Not to mention the antagonistic Congress that set roadblocks against him and U.S economic intervention. This should not be taken as a model which proves democracy and socialism are

⁵⁰ Ibid.,150

⁵¹ Ibid., 150

incompatible. A dictatorship is not the solemn way to achieve socialism, the Chilean experience offers no evidence of that, and as Paul N. says, “It is not inherent in socialism to be inefficient.”⁵², it would be unfair to make these conclusions, must a leftist be elected fairly in the western hemisphere or elsewhere.

⁵² Rodan Rosenstein, Paul N. “Why Allende Failed.” *Challenge* (June 1974), 7

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