

Letters to the Editor

U.S. Policy on Chile

To the Editor:

Whether it is true or not, many members of this twice- and thrice-bitten American public—and many, many more observers abroad—will believe that our Government had some covert role in the overthrow of Allende's Chilean experiment.

Even if it is not true, the accusation is not exactly a cavil because we so obviously "wished it so."

If it is true it may turn out to be a foreign policy horror several orders of magnitude greater than, say, the deposing of Sihanouk or even the piece of dishonor whose ashes still smoke in Vietnam.

Now every committed Marxist in this world has been served notice that Papa Karl was right in his direst dictum; i.e., that you can't expect to do it by due process.

So the syllogism becomes, for the Marxist mind: "A. Socialism must logically replace Western capitalism and remnant feudalism. B. Chile proves that it cannot be done with the structures of government which have been evolved by capitalism and feudalism. C. Russia, China, Cuba, *et al*, prove that it can be done by fiat, if unfortunately at the expense of political democracy and civil liberty. D. Therefore, . . ."

It doesn't take Socratic powers to complete the syllogism. Confronted by the looming—and gaining—world power of the various Marxist philoso-

phies there may come a day within the lifetime of most of us when we may fervently wish that we had a comfortably operating, democratic Marxist Chile to point to as an alternative.

Whether the C.I.A. or I.T.T., or whoever, finally got to Allende is academic. The truth is that if we had openly committed ourselves to the other thing—the bolstering politically and economically of the first democratically elected Marxist government in the Western Hemisphere—there is every chance that it would still be functioning.

Foreign policy—especially ours—tends to be more reflexive than reflective. Our reflexes are programmed to keep the world safe for capitalism, even while we are affably doing business and sanely exchanging culture with the world's two noncapitalist (fait accompli) giants.

History demonstrates for us—with countless examples and some emphasis—that the foreign policy arena is the harshest of natural environments. Natural science teaches us that harsh natural environments penalize organisms which have slow, or outmoded reflexes.

This citizen resents being a powerless part of an organism which he happens to like but which seems to be stumbling—with him aboard—towards extinction.

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