

My first reaction to the death of Salvador Allende Gossens was shock and deep sorrow. Sorrow not only for the loss of a man whom I respected greatly, but also for the loss of his vision for Chile. Allende was committed to democracy. His goal was to achieve a socially just world. For Allende, social justice could exist only in a system in which the people of the society cooperated rather than competed. He believed that economic competition cultivated greed, and hence an unjust allocation of the society's resources. Allende was resolved not to step outside the guidelines of Chile's democratic tradition. If he would lead Chile along the path to socialism, it would have to be within the rules set down by the Constitution. Not once did Allende violate the Constitution despite pressure from the left, and despite the illegal tactics of the political right.

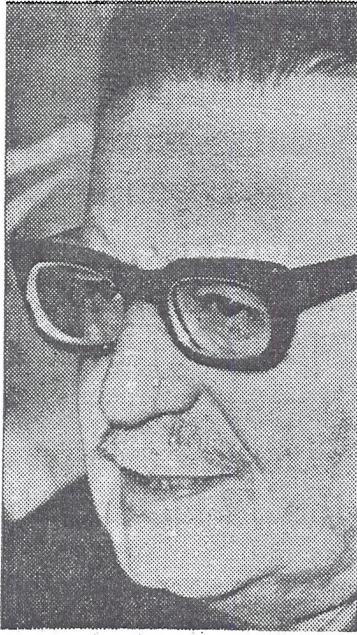
When the military junta toppled Allende's government of Popular Unity, a six-party coalition, it demonstrated an unwillingness to honor the Constitution. The military leaders have chosen to force the will of the minority onto the majority of the Chilean people. The minority right with which the military has aligned itself is the right of one class to impoverish another class.

The majority will attempt to restore democracy in Chile. The result could be civil war: the working classes, intellectuals, the liberal church, and the morally conscious middle sectors and industrialists versus the acquisitive middle sectors and landed elite.

RALPH WATKINS.

Washington.

It is interesting to note that during today's coup d'etat in Chile, United States Naval forces were ordered to steer away from the area so that there would be no appearance of interfer-



ence in Chile's internal affairs. And so, the paragon of the world's democratic governments stood by and watched the violent overthrow of Chile's freely elected, though Marxist, government.

In 1970 when civil war broke out in Jordan, the United States mobilized its military forces around the world for possible intervention on behalf of King Hussein. President Nixon was prepared to interfere in the internal affairs of that Middle Eastern country in order to save a divine right king who was somewhat less than loved by more than half of his subjects, the Palestinians.

Maybe I am old-fashioned, but I always thought governments are instituted among men, deriving their just

powers from the consent of the governed. At least that is what the Declaration of Independence says. Americans have fought and died for that principle. Simple logic dictates that the United States should have left the Jordanians to themselves, and conversely, if ever interference in the affairs of a foreign government was justified, then it was today, and on behalf of President Allende's Chilean government.

These events are further evidence that the Nixon administration is devoid of any devotion whatsoever to principle. When added to the bombing of neutral Cambodia, support for the military dictatorship of Greece, and, of course, the Watergate caper (for which President Nixon has stated he accepts the responsibility), they represent a reprehensible record.

BRUCE J. CASAN.

Falls Church.

A constitutional government, one of the oldest in the hemisphere, was overthrown by force and violence this week. Its duly-elected, lawful president was killed or forced to suicide. At this writing, more than 24 hours after the September 11 outrage in Santiago by a military junta, the President of the United States and the U.S. State Department have had no comment.

Since Mr. Nixon has been outspoken throughout his career in his revulsion at the thought of violent government overthrows here, and since he is no stranger to strong comment and even strong action on political happenings not to his liking in other countries, his silence or delayed comment on this occasion can only feed suspicion that he condones this particular departure from law and order.

RAYMOND D. WATTS.

Rockville.