

Lost in Chile: A Dream . . .

To the Editor:

The fact that President Allende, as you stated in your Sept. 12 editorial, ". . . attempted to bypass both Congress and the courts" is hardly justification for bombing the Chilean presidential palace and overthrowing the Government by force. In the U.S., the President has bypassed the Congress, ignored the courts, caused runaway inflation and even been suspected of breaking the law. Yet there is no support for impeachment, let alone shellings, bombings and murder. Any implication, by your paper, that Allende's actions justified the violence against him is immoral.

The real tragedy of the coup is the lesson it presents to radicals and social reformers. As a pacifist I had often pointed to Allende to prove to my more militant friends that it is possible to use the democratic system for reform. Now all I hear is, "I told you so." Whatever his failings may have been, he reached his position by legitimate, democratic election. The fact that his opponents bypassed their own system to unseat him proves to many that reforms cannot be achieved through legitimate means.

The fact that the only elected Marxist Government in the history of the world has been overthrown by force only gives legitimacy to those Marxist governments that have come to power through violence. They can now say, "There is no other way."

With the death of Salvador Allende the world has lost a great leader; but more than that, we have lost a beautiful dream.

KATHERINE TODD
Bronx, Sept. 12, 1973

. . . And an Alternative

To the Editor:

Contrary to the expectations of the Nixon Administration and I.T.T., the military coup that toppled the Chilean socialist regime of Salvador Allende is not in the best interests of the United States, nor is it in the best interests of peace and freedom in Latin America.

John F. Kennedy once said: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." Allende's electoral victory just three years ago was heralded as a "revolution by the ballot." The *via Chilena* was an alternative to guerrilla warfare and violent revolution on the road to socialism. Latin America, if not the rest of the Third World, was no doubt watching to see if capitalism would yield in the face of legal defeat. But it will not; military governments short on democracy now control most of Latin America.

Peaceful revolution, as Lenin expected, is a contradiction. In time the Latin American masses will again seek to alter their exploited status. In doing so the example of Chile will no longer provide them with an alternative.

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