

Union of Revolutionary Communists (Marxists-Leninists-Maoists)

## Allende and Popular Unity: the class character of "people's government"

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During the months of June and July a series of commemorations took place in honour of the hundred years of the birth of Salvador Allende, with strong publicity on the part of the government of Bachelet and the "Communist" Party. The organizations of the so-called "radical left" did not fail to participate in this "Allende mania" either.

The figure of Allende must be considered within the framework of a political experiment which is marked exclusively by electoral participation. A process that ended and went bankrupt in the government of the Popular Unity (UP), and where the late president and revisionism cut their cards to put into practice the "peaceful way to socialism", by means of which, they thought, would be wiped out both "orthodox" and "dogmatic" Marxists and "momios" (the name they gave to fascist sectors).

For this reason, the analysis of the figure of Allende and the UP must be distinguished from any romanticism, mystification or opportunism; all the more that today there are still some to try to deceive the people, making them believe that the struggles are played out in the ballot boxes, and that it is by voting that the people decide their future.

## **CLASS CHARACTER OF THE ALLENDE GOVERNMENT**

The first thing that needs to be highlighted is that Allende was never a revolutionary or a man willing to put the people's struggles at the service of his government.

Allende is characterized by having made his program of government coincide with the lineaments of bourgeois legality.

As a member of Freemasonry (a sect that extols academicism for academicism, individualistic perfection and claims to be governed by bourgeois ideals), he hated the idea of a class confrontation and thought that everything could be resolved by following the legal channels of government authorities.

During his years of presidency, he sought the formula to make coincide within the same line his utopian socialist aspirations and the inviolability of bourgeois law.

Allende was thus confronted with the dilemma of putting himself either at the service of the struggles of the people, or else to rely on the most reactionary sectors to give "legitimacy" to his government. As we know, he bet on the second option.

We must take into account, on the other hand, that since his candidacy for the presidency, Allende assumes the role of the man of consensus, of the representative of a conglomerate which brings together, under his direction, a part of the petty bourgeoisie urban and a sector of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie: Socialist Party, Communist Party, Radical Party, Social Democratic Party, Unitary Popular Action Movement and Independent Popular Action.

Later, a sector of Christian Democracy and of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), which despite its ambiguity, eventually supported Allende and formed a personal security team for the president of the UP.

The government of the UP, far from being a socialist government, was a multi-classist government which dreamed of the establishment of a bourgeois republican system.

In 1970, Allende declared that his government was not a Marxist government and that he was against "all forms of dictatorship".

Guillermo Teillier [the president of P "C" of Chile] himself recognized this: "I draw attention to the fact that the UP integrates forces which had participated in the governments of González Videla and Ibáñez."

This should not surprise us, especially if we consider that the measures applied by the government of Allende are not very different from those of the government of Frei, which are

quite close to those of Alessandri. Likewise, the Allende government repeats a few decrees issued in the 1930s, aimed at saving the economy and stopping the wave of protests.

In addition, the government of Allende has always persisted in the picture drawn by the limits of the bourgeois state-landowner. That is to say that during Popular Unity, the state maintained its character and that could not be otherwise, since the big bourgeoisie was never overthrown.

There was no revolution and even less the seizure of power by the proletariat, yet the bourgeois state-landowner could not cease to exist as if by magic.

There is no revolution in history taking place peacefully, nor a people taking power by the ballot box. Without revolutionary violence, there is no transformation.

The crowning of revisionist politics with the election of Allende, far from being the manifestation or the corollary of popular struggle, has become the buffer for popular struggles which have been developing strongly since the 1950s and which took on even more strength in the 1960s.

But if the government of Allende was not led by the proletariat, by whom was it? As we have said, the UP government was a multi-class conglomerate which united a sector of the urban petty bourgeoisie and a wing of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

To understand this, we must take a look at the international situation of the time: at the beginning of the 1970s, the two imperialist superpowers were already fighting for control of Latin America: the United States and the Soviet Union (who after Stalin's death abandoned the socialist path and became imperialist).

If it is true that the United States, since the 1920s, had succeeded in excluding English imperialism from the control of strategic companies in Chile, with the government of Allende opens the possibility of excluding Yankee imperialism for the benefit of the Soviet social-imperialists, who were not lagging behind in carrying out fascist policies, armed invasions, coups and to suppress the people.

In summary, Chile was part of the spoils for which these two imperialist superpowers were fighting and this was reflected in the internal political quarrel in the two currents of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in Chile: the pro-Yankee current (Christian Democracy) and the pro-Soviet current represented by the leadership of the UP.

As proof of this quarrel, there are also the internal contradictions of the parties, for example the birth of the Christian Left, product of the split of a group of militants of the DC deciding to pass in the camp of the UP.

History provides us with ample evidence showing clearly that the election of Allende and the implementation of the plans of the UP only meant a change of hands of the staff, not the destruction of the Bourgeois-landowner state, much less the construction of socialism in Chile.

Likewise, abundant material confirms that once Allende is elected, an attempt is made to half-mast the fighting spirit, by replacing popular struggles with sedatives and by calling on workers to “not put a stick in the wheels of government Which means in other words not to go beyond reformist policies, to abandon its fighting positions and leave everything in the hands of "representatives of the people".

### **THE ALLENDE AND UP MILITARY POLICY**

The Armed Forces are the backbone of the State and the guarantee of the maintenance of the dictatorship. It is for this reason that whoever wants to take and defend Power for the proletariat and the masses must count on a revolutionary army at the service of the people.

In the case of Allende and the UP, we know that they only had small, moderately militarized groups, which were in no way capable of breaking the fascist military machinery.

More importantly, inside the UP there was no intention of overthrowing the bourgeois Armed Forces. On the contrary, their mission was to bet on the historic division within them in order to win a part of the military for their cause and to dismiss the other.

The pro-Yankee sectors thought the same, and after carrying out the coup, they wiped out all the soldiers who could have opposed them.

The government of the UP and in particular Allende did not have a policy of arming the masses for the revolutionary struggle, on the contrary, the calls launched from the government gave all their confidence to the Armed Forces.

To support this policy, Allende invented the theory that the Armed Forces of Chile were republican and pacifist and went so far as to say that: "The Armed Forces of Chile are democratic armed forces, it is the people in uniform ... (Speech on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Socialist Party).

This idea of the Armed Forces of Chile as democratic forces is a literally baseless thesis. Anyone who has a vague idea of the history of Chile is aware of the role of the Armed Forces as a shock element in the hands of the most reactionary sectors.

It is therefore unforgivable that Allende and the UP have squinted on the numerous occasions which saw men in uniform acting against the people.

An important argument against this false theory of the “democratic” Armed Forces consists in reviewing the annals of the soldiers during the strikes and protests of the beginning of the 20th century (Carne meeting in 1905, Massacre of Santa María in 1907), the persecution mid-century Communists once promulgated the "Cursed Law" and the great repression carried out on April 2 and 3, 1957 (strike of las chauchas), and the imposition of fascism in the ranks of the bourgeoisie and military commanders in the 1950s, 60s and 70s in Yankee military schools.

But Allende insisted on hammering out the idea that we should trust the murderers of the people. In a letter to Patricio Aylwin of August 23, 1973, Allende boasts that his government was the only one who had the will to incorporate the Armed Forces "as an institution with great national tasks".

Even stronger, the day of September 11, 1973, Allende declares: "In a first stage, we must see the answer, I hope positive, of the soldiers of the fatherland, who swore to defend the established regime which is the expression of the will of the citizens, and who will accomplish their task which makes the prestige of Chile with their professionalism which makes the prestige of the armed forces. In these circumstances, I am certain that the soldiers will be able to fulfill their duty. "

This means that on the very day of the coup, during the assault on the Junta, Allende kept the idea that the Armed Forces would respect their civic mandate. In a highly subjective argument, Allende declared: "I ordered the army troops to head towards Valparaíso to quell the putschist attempt. (September 11, 1973).

Thus, on September 11, 1973, threw the stone at the anti-Marxist theory which tried to distance itself from the class struggle, by claiming that all sectors undertook to fulfil "national tasks".

Lenin had already said that to be a Marxist it was not enough to recognize the class struggle, but to extend it to the recognition of the need for the dictatorship of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The problem is that Allende did not even recognize the need for class struggle; rather, his aspirations turned to the need to reconcile classes within "citizen government".

This is what he highlighted a few days before the coup: "I solemnly reiterate my decision to develop democracy and the rule of law. (Communiqué of August 22, 1973 in response to the

Government's declaration of illegitimacy issued to the Chamber of Deputies and calling for a coup d'état).

He forgot to say, as Lenin argued, that there is no "democracy" in the abstract; that "democracy" is, necessarily, the "democracy" of a social class. Hence the impossibility of a "democracy for all Chileans".

Either there is democracy for the big bourgeoisie and oppression for the proletarians, or else democracy for the proletariat and the people and oppression for the big bourgeoisie.

Finally, it should be noted that "the rule of law" is always the rule of bourgeois-landowner rule of law. There is nothing socialist about these two concepts of democracy "in the abstract and rule of law".

This shows, on the other hand, that the UP government is part of a bourgeois government process and that the struggle for state control during the Allende government was an inter-bourgeois.

In summary, the experience of the UP could in no way be a socialist experience or a preparatory stage for socialism, since it had relegated workers and their organizations to the background, highlighting the need to maintain the UP pact without arousing the antipathies of reactionary sectors.

Allende did not consider capitalism and socialism to be antagonistic.

Rather, he believed that capitalism could gradually transition to socialism, in a kind of painless childbirth, while maintaining the old apparatus that for years had guaranteed the existence of capitalism and the oppression of the Chilean people.

His hope of avoiding any type of confrontation was fertile ground for the action of the Junta and its organizations. The "patriotic" soldiers, in whom Allende trusted so much, were the very ones who did not hesitate to grab their weapons against the people of Chile.

His pacifist socialism was nothing but a vain hope which ended up drowned in a lake of blood.

## **GOVERNING WITHOUT OPPOSING FASCISM**

Allende never questioned the idea that any action should go through the route imposed by the bourgeoisie.

It is for this reason that he decided to nationalize some companies of strategic monopolies, such as copper, tin and cement, by means of the purchase of the means of production and the compensation by millions of imperialist capital.

The agrarian reform (which was only the continuation of the reform of Frei) was done by following the same way: by laws of purchase and sales of grounds.

This led to conflict with sectors of the poor peasantry who had already decided for the direct expropriation of the domains of the big landowners.

In the few companies where the industrial proletariat had expelled the capitalists, taken control and boosted production, Allende sided with the big bourgeoisie and asked the workers to return the keys to the occupied factories, with the idea of behind them win the leadership of Christian Democracy.

While workers were persuaded to lower their guard and "fight" fascism only by producing more goods, the pro-Yankee sectors spurred a large boycott campaign, led and funded directly by the United States government.

The boycotts against the UP government consisted not only of the paralysis of strategic sectors such as mines and part of transport, but also of a planned provocation of food shortages and attempted coups.

Faced with these attacks, Allende did not see in the masses the remedy for ills, but he trusted more submission to the reactionaries to fulfil the duties established by law and put everything in order, assuming that everyone had to submit to the civic mandate.

The workers faced the boycott by redoubling their efforts in production, carrying industries at arm's length, creating food distribution and rationing organizations; but that was not enough, the workers demanded that the government make bolder advances and show its support.

But the government continued to enjoin them "patience, more patience", believing that it could transform the situation by gaining a parliamentary majority and the sympathy of certain putschist sectors.

It was the people who bore the brunt of the boycott, he who had to walk long hours on the roads to get to his work station and wait in long lines to get a minimum of food. The boycott enriches the shameless beings who lived on the black market and the big capitalists who thanks to this recourse reduced the people to misery.

When things reached the breaking point, Allende and the revisionists did not hesitate to launch their call "No to the civil war!" », Maintaining their hopes in the submission of the monopoly capitalists to their laws.

But what happened always happens, when a sector of the big bourgeoisie is threatened, it does not hesitate to violate its own laws and take up arms against the masses, the problem being that at this time Allende had disarmed the people.

Instead of fighting the Yankee assault with an anti-imperialist mass struggle, the leadership of the UP and Allende advocated capitulation.

Later, members of the UP recognized that Allende was thinking of calling a plebiscite, which would have resulted either in the political defeat of the UP and the fall of the country into the hands of pro-Yankees, or in recognition "Citizen" of the government of Allende.

In any case, one or the other result would have done nothing but curb the mass movement which had been in turmoil since the 1960s and which went beyond reformist policies.

Like all bourgeois sectors which call themselves "revolutionary", the UP feared the armed workers as much as they feared fascism. And the UP began to use fascist means of control to stem the popular movement.

Allende did not hesitate to enact the "gun control law" which prohibited anyone who does not wear a uniform from carrying a weapon.

The enactment of this law was the conclusion of two points of departure for the members of the UP and Allende: a) that by controlling the possession of weapons and disarming the workers' sectors, Christian Democracy would side with the UP, and b) that a large sector of the Armed Forces would side with the government.

The "Arms Control Law" is being enacted as many unions and organizations are moving from peaceful struggles to armed confrontation.

The result of the promulgation of this law was to legally prevent the arming of the class, with violations of union headquarters and workers' homes by the gendarmes, the military and the security forces, most often ending in arrest and charging the most active members.

But this law which directly attacked the popular organization did nothing to disarm the reactionary sectors: the fascist group "Patria y Libertad" camped in all the demonstrations and reactionary gatherings of Santiago; the support marches to the UP were attacked with shots fired from the Christian Democracy building, the members of which kept total impunity; CIA members entered Chile without much difficulty to finance and give courses and training to the shock executives of Chilean fascism.

This law remained in force even after the trial coup of 1971, a putschist attempt where the pro-Yankee sectors made their hands for the Coup d'etat of September 11, 1973.



## **ALLENDE DEATH AND THE BANKRUPTCY OF THE UP**

On the last day of his life, Allende flanked by a group of 40 people took up position in the Palace of Moneda, with the aim of repelling the attacks of the Armed Forces against the presidential palace.

Despite this, Allende continued to instil in the people the idea of non-resistance, declaring: "Let them occupy their work stations, let them come to their factories, keep calm and serenity."

Finally, after many hours, the resistance inside the building gave way and Allende was killed. During the 1980s and 1990s, his supporters sang in chorus "Allende did not give in, he fought rifle in hand!".

By putting this forward, they sought to throw a veil on all the errors and failures peculiar to those who claim to make the revolution by the ballot boxes, while saying that it is enough to grab a weapon a single day to atone for bourgeois sins.

By thus celebrating the figure of Allende as a revolutionary wrestler, they are doing a disservice to the people and the genuinely revolutionary sectors, who rather than claiming the Allendist heritage should learn from the failure of the UP's they really want to make a revolution.

In recent times, there have also been various groups who call themselves "critics of reformism" or "anti-neoliberals" and who seek to resuscitate an image of "Allende Combatant" opportunistically trying to raise Allende to the rank of "eminent fighter for the sovereignty of peoples" and "anti-imperialist".

Something which demonstrates on the one hand their opportunism which deals with history and on the other hand their incapacity to draw lessons from it in a scientific way. The death of Allende and the failure of the UP, in this sense, do not represent a defeat of the people, but a defeat of the Chilean revisionism which used the people and part of the State as a lever to achieve its objectives.

We must note about this point: if the vast sectors of the people put their hopes and their forces in the government of the UP, it was neither the people nor the proletariat who assumed the leadership of this government.

Thus, the people demonstrated during this whole period the same thing that they demonstrate today: that they are ready for the struggle and that they have no intention of dodging the path of the class struggle.

For this reason, if the people had really been at the head of this process, they would not have hesitated to sweep away all this reactionary and fascist mire embedded in the various organs of the state apparatus and of production.

In these days when the fascist sectors shout on all the rooftops that Marxism is anachronistic and obsolete and when on the other hand the revisionist organizations gargle with references to the UP and to the "example of Allende", to justify this their participation in the next elections, it is necessary to explain, as broadly as possible, that today as yesterday, the people will get nothing by falling behind the bourgeoisie and its institutions; that it is necessary that the people led by the proletariat be able to forge their instruments (Party, Front of masses, Army).

It is only in this way that we guarantee that the struggles of the masses cannot be used as springboards for "democratic governments" or as currency for those who oppose the revolution.