

**Chilean political refugee**

**Schuz to speak on right-wing coup**

by James Dunlap

At 7:30 p.m., Friday April 4 in the Meditation Room SUB, Bernard Schuz, Chilean political refugee, will show slides and give a background commentary on events in Chile before, during, and after the right-wing coup of September 1973. He will discuss what Canadians can do about the situation there now, and will be open to questions from people in the audience.

Mr. Schuz is a supporter of the *Unidad Popular* (Popular Unity), the left-wing coalition led by Dr. Salvador Allende, which was the government of Chile prior to the coup. He himself was a member of the Socialist party, one of the two largest parties in the *Unidad Popular*. Before the coup he was studying law at the University of Valparaiso and working to increase support for the *Unidad Popular* among students and working youth.

While he is here, Mr. Schuz is trying to get the support of Canadians for democracy in Chile. He wants them to understand the recent events in Chile and know what they can do about the present situation there.

Chile has one of the longest democratic traditions in Latin America. The *Unidad Popular* was the world's first democratically elected Marxist governments. The events which followed its coming to power are therefore of the greatest significance. The issues they raise are critical for the future of Chile, of Latin America, and of the world.

Canadians sometimes approach the Chilean situation with the attitude that communism and democracy are completely incompatible. If "communism" is understood to mean "what has been normal in the Communist countries", this attitude cannot be dismissed lightly. The Communist countries are not democratic as we understand that word.

But it is seldom remembered that in none of these countries was democracy in existence at the time the Communists took power. Hence the possibility of working through "the normal democratic channels" was not open to them.

In addition, there are today several democracies which do have strong Communist parties, notably France, Italy and Japan. These parties have long traditions of working within democratic structures. The right wing in these countries, on the other hand, far from being the guardian of these structures, has a most unsavory history of contempt for and destruction of them.

There is only one country where the theory of communists as the despoilers of democracy has been put to the test: Chile. There it was not the Marxist government which moved to destroy Chilean democracy. In fact, as opposition to it increased in strength and in potential for disorder to the point of crisis, it did not even suspend democracy, as did, for example, our own government at the time of the FLQ kidnappings in October 1970.

Instead it was the opponents of the government who moved against democracy, in September 1973. The right wing moved militarily to oust the government, declaring that it was acting in the interests of "national salvation." Many government supporters fled. The Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches, as well as left-wing political groups, offered aid and comfort to these refugees. Many government supporters who did not get out were subjected to cruelty, violence and injustice at the hands of the new government. Then it emerged that the CIA, without the knowledge of Congress or the American people, had been actively fomenting opposition to the democratic government in Chile. Congress, outraged by this and other apparent CIA misdemeanors, has launched an investigation of that agency.

The American people are reeling from a decade of tragic war in Vietnam with its attendant divisions and shocks, followed by the revelations of Watergate and the hardship of economic recession. But optimistic observers do not believe that even after all this most Americans will condone the flagrant violation of their most sacred political ideals by an agency of their own government.

In Canada, the government itself knowingly and openly took what many Canadians regard as morally offensive action. It recognized the new military government of Chile almost immediately. The explanation

given for this by Mitchell Sharp, Minister of External Affairs, was that recognition did not imply approval, but only acknowledged reality.

But this has not been Canadian policy in the past. For example, Canada took two decades to recognize the government of China. It is hard to quarrel with Canada's wishing now to be more realistic than this. But its recognition of the Chilean junta showed unseemly haste and could easily be interpreted, despite Mr.

Sharp's disavowals, as support for that government.

These are just a few impressions on the Chilean situation from a Canadian whose knowledge of it is limited and who has never been to Chile. But happily you are not dependent on the likes of me for information on it. As a result of the coup, Chilean political refugees such as Bernard Schuz who have and are anxious to share extensive knowledge and direct experience of the situation are now living in Canada.



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