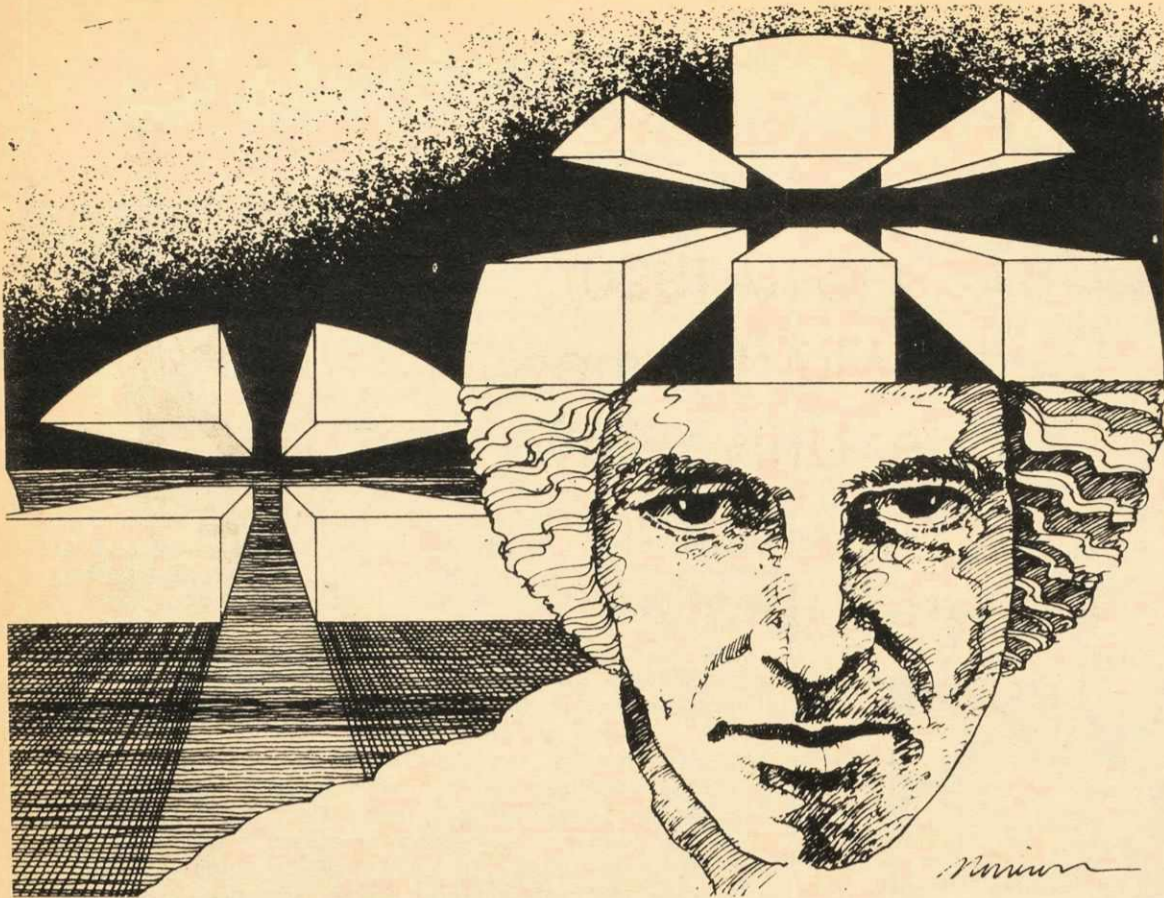


Ambassador cont...



continued from page 5
previously excluded . . .

(22) The question of the right to health in Chile is of special concern to the Group. As a result of the turning over of the health services to private enterprises and the constant rise in the cost of medicines and medical care, the access to public health services by the poor and unemployed sectors of Chilean society has been reduced. Due in part to the difficult economic situation, spreading unemployment and the high cost and unsatisfactory distribution of food, malnutrition remains a serious problem in Chile, affecting especially the children of the lower income groups . . .

If you are trying to be a decent country to work for, how is it that 33 union leaders, representing 14 European and Latin American countries as well as Canada, members of the 56-million-

member International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) committee for the Defence of Human and Trade

Union Rights in Latin America, meeting in Toronto last February 1979, called on the free trade union committee of the world to exert "all effective pressure" in order to bring about the downfall of the dictatorship regime of Chile and Nicaragua? They did not see any other alternative to respond to the "alarming and sickening situation of individual and collective freedom in this chaotic and oppressed region of our hemisphere".

Until you have truly answered those questions, your Excellency, there is no doubt in my mind that "the economic policy adopted by the Government of Chile, by its very nature, tends to sacrifice the needs and aspirations of the vast majority of the population, in particular of the underprivileged strata, while it favours the interests of a small elite of big landowners, financiers and industrialists as well as the military ruling groups with which they are connected" (para. 459, the Cassess report, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, August 1978).

As Canadian, I am not only surprised but shocked to learn the extent of Canadian economic ties with Chile since the military takeover of September 11, 1973. The Chilean national newspaper *El Mercurio* (28 / 10 / 78) notes: "It should not be forgotten that Canada, proportional to the size of its economy, is the foreign country which has committed the greatest resource in Chile." Over the past five years, Canadian-based corporations have pledged nearly one billion dollars in new investments for Chile and Canadian banks have participated in loans worth over a billion-and-a-half dollars. As Canadian, I am ashamed to see us making profits at the expense of the Chilean worker's human rights. Canadian economic relations with Chile are not neutral. If greater profits are possible in Chile, it is because of cheapened labour costs, silenced trade unions, de-nationalization of industry, and cutbacks in government spending and social services. But such conditions can only be created in Chile by their dictatorial imposition upon the Chilean population, by force of arms. Canadian economic relations help consolidate the Chilean dictatorship and encourage its continued violations of human rights. Where the corpse is, the vultures assemble!

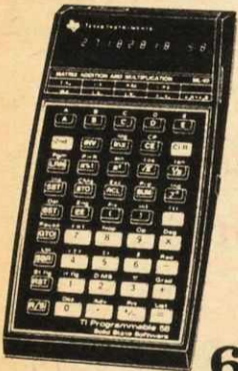
The late Pope Paul VI has reminded us all that: "It is not licit to increase the wealth and the domination of the strong, while leaving the poor to their misery and adding to the servitude of the oppressed."

Sincerely yours,
Dr. Jacques Goulet, S.T.D.
(Associate Professor—
Religious Studies Dept.)
Mount St. Vincent University,
Halifax, N.S.

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