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In the September 27 Gateway article by Vidya Thakur titled "Violent revolution for social transformation," addresses itself to the recent events in Chile. It contains a very distorted analysis of the Allende experience, and completely misses the lessons to be drawn from the coup.

Further, the article addresses slanders against the Young Socialists, who criticize Allende. What is Thakur's method of dealing with the positions on the

Allende regime contained in the last issue of *Young Socialist*? First, he is not willing to take the arguments up rationally and explain why he thinks they are wrong. It is apparently easier for Thakur to hide behind epithets like "Young Nixonists," which he throws around freely; than to develop coherent critique of our real political positions.

This style of arguing is reminiscent of the method of 'red-baiters' who attempt to stop people from hearing and considering the ideas of socialists

by simply labelling them 'Communists' and denying them the right to speak. As well the method is similar to that of Stalin and his followers who seek to label revolutionary Marxists as 'fascists' of 'agents of imperialism', and at times violently attempt to stop their ideas from being heard.

We think that such methods have no place in the left. Debate in the working class and student movements is vital to their healthy development, both theoretically and in action. The

Young Socialists are quite willing to match our ideas and our arguments against others on the left, as well as on the right. We are confident enough of the validity of our ideas that we don't need to throw around phrases like 'Young Nixonists.'

Thakur's analysis of the events leading up to the Chilean coup, and his assessment of the lessons to be drawn, are completely off-base. Allende is hailed as a "great man," and his name is put alongside that of Che Guevara. According to Thakur, Allende's policies deserve no blame for the defeat of the Chilean masses. Let us examine the real situation as it developed in Chile.

The election of Allende's Popular Unity Coalition took place in 1970 on the crest of the wave of struggles of the workers and peasants. Many people around the world including the Communist Party and members of the NDP heralded this as an example of the achievement of socialism without revolution. The Young Socialists disagreed and continually warned of the danger that following such a theory posed.

The Popular Unity Coalition was not socialist, nor was it able or willing to carry through the socialist transformation of Chile. The coalition which included capitalist parties as well as the Socialist and Communist parties, was based on a compromise program. As Allende put it after his election in 1970, "the program of the Popular Unity is not a communist program nor is it a socialist program, it is a convergence of opinion." As well, in order to get the support of the Christian Democrats, Allende agreed not to alter the judicial structure, the army, and the police, which are the main bulwarks of the rule of the capitalist class. Allende tried to balance off the wishes of the Chilean exploiting class against the impatience and demand for change of the poor and oppressed.

The owners of the industry and land were not about to give up their possessions and their control simply because they lost an election. They chose to bide their time until the existing government could be replaced by one more suitable to their interests. What was needed were policies which would facilitate the independent organization of the workers to defend themselves and their interests.

Allende's contribution was to continue to encourage the masses to place their confidence in the "loyalty" of the army. Rather than encouraging the workers to arm and organize themselves, and to take control of the land and factories which rightfully belong to them, Allende did just the opposite. He

misled the masses; he discouraged them from arming themselves to be able to defend themselves from the violence of the army and the capitalist classes.

The revolutionary transformation of society will inevitably be accompanied by some violence — but it will equally inevitably be the violence of the oppressors and the privileged seeking to maintain their privileges. The working class and peasants, who constitute the majority must be prepared to defend themselves against the violence of the capitalists. Vidya Thakur makes the discovery that "to transform the capitalist state into a socialist one is now a myth." (emphasis added)

I am afraid this is not a new idea for Marxists. Marx and Lenin both wrote that it is impossible for the working class to use the existing state for its own interests. The capitalist state must be destroyed and replaced by a state which operates in the interests, and under the direct control, of the oppressed. The standing professional army and police

would be replaced by the armed working people themselves. Allende's policies led directly to the disorganization and disorientation of the working people which paved the way for the junta to come to power.

The 'lessons' to be drawn from the experience of Chile are not intended for academic debate, and neither are they new. Time after time, when the lessons of the class struggle have not been learned and applied, then the workers and peasants are condemned to pay with their blood. The attempt by Allende to ignore the lessons of history led the Chilean oppressed into a death-trap.

In Indonesia in 1965 the Communist Party, with the backing of Mao Tse-Tung carried out policies similar to Allende's which led to the massacre of half a million alleged 'Communists'.

An understanding of the meaning of the Chilean coup is absolutely crucial to the workers and student movement.

The Canadian Communist Party has consistently lauded Allende's government as an example of "the peaceful road to socialism." It is an example they propose to be followed elsewhere...

The Young Socialists and League for Socialist Action have challenged the Communist Party to a public debate on the Meaning of the Chilean Coup. It will take place on Friday Oct. 5 at 8 p.m. in SUB 104.

Don Wiley
Young Socialists

To each his own

Starting Sunday, the northbound lanes of 109 Street between 82 Avenue and 88 Avenue will have a new look: new signs, new lane markings and new traffic patterns.

The reason?

We're separating the buses from the other traffic, and giving them the curb lane for their own use.

This experiment will give all of us the opportunity to see if exclusive bus lanes work, and how they work.

It also means changes in driving patterns because buses, traffic to the 105 Street Bridge and traffic to the High Level Bridge will each have its own lane.

Northbound Left Hand Lane: This lane will be used by traffic going over the High Level Bridge. Left turns will not be permitted between 82 Avenue and the High Level Bridge, so traffic from the south wishing to go to the university area must turn left at 82 Avenue.

Northbound Centre Lane:

Traffic turning onto Walterdale Hill enroute to the 105 Street Bridge, or making right turns north of 82 Avenue will use the centre lane. This traffic must yield to buses in the curb lane at all times. Buses will have an advance green light, but they will also have the right-of-way whenever the lights are green for northbound traffic.

Traffic will not be allowed to proceed to the High Level Bridge from the centre lane. Right turns off 109 Street north of 82 Avenue will be made by moving from the centre lane into the curb lane in the block immediately before the right turn (again remembering that buses have the right-of-way) and turning at the next intersection, or at any business establishment on that block. Right turns onto Saskatchewan Drive, however, must be made from the centre lane.

Northbound Curb Lane: This lane will be for the exclusive use of Edmonton Transit buses. The only exception will be traffic making right turns. All northbound traffic must yield right-of-way to buses in this lane.

Traffic from 84 Avenue, 85 Avenue or 86 Avenue making a right turn onto 109 Street must enter the centre lane.

Traffic from 87 Avenue making a left turn onto 109 Street must enter the centre lane or the left hand lane depending on their destination.

Southbound traffic from the High Level Bridge will not be permitted to make a left turn onto Saskatchewan Drive.

To properly evaluate this experimental project, we need your comments and questions. Please address them to:

Bus Lane Project
Edmonton Transit System
10030-84 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta

or phone 439-4971 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

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