

Editorial Slowdown on Chile

An indication of the significance of the coup in Chile has been coverage of Chilean affairs by the North American media during the past year. There is little difference between Canada and the United States in this respect. What difference there has been is probably due to the somewhat larger liberal minority in Canadian media circles.

The following paragraphs appeared originally in the September 5, 1974, issue of *The Village Voice*. They are from a column by Alexander Cockburn, who analyzes the American press weekly. The excerpt from his column is a good example of the influence and attitude of those who opposed Allende.

junta; how it works and does not work; what has happened to Chilean communities in this savage upheaval.

This is not to say there has been a total absence of news. . . . The problem is one of editorial attitude, and for many editors Chile has virtually ceased to exist. As so often there was more publicity given to the menace of socialism rather than the actuality of fascism.

There were, of course, journalists who had a soft spot for the junta right from the day Allende was shot, or rather, in the days preceding when the junta was laying its plans, with American help. Such a one was **Everett Martin** of the *Wall Street Journal*, who filled optimistic reports about the junta and defamation of Allende. Earlier this year Everett Martin was indeed given the **Polk award** for his coverage of Chile. **Larry Birns**, Professor of Latin American Studies at the New School for Social Research in New York, was sufficiently exercised at this award to make some enquiries into how it came about.

The committee which adjudicated entrants for the award in the area of Latin American coverage was composed of three people: **Henry Raymont**, formerly of the *New York Times* and presently a privately affluent correspondent of *O Mundo*, a newspaper which appears in Brazil (which of course enjoys total censorship); a lady whose main expertise lies in the Middle Eastern part of the world; and finally **Eduardo Schijman**, a Chilean resident of New York and correspondent for *El Mercurio*, the pro-junta newspaper in Chile. Schijman was selected by Raymont.

Schijman turns out to work at the Chilean Trading Corporation in the World Trade Centre. The trading corporation is a Chilean state agency. Furthermore it emerges that Schijman had been sending Martin's articles to the corporation's mailing list of businessmen in an effort to display "the new face of Chile" and the beneficence of the Chilean generals. Birns wrote to Schijman and pointed out his evident conflict of interest. He also wrote to Raymont, who had once remarked to him that he thought Martin's copy 'sophisticated', suggesting that the committee be reconstituted. So far he has received no reply. I dare say he never will. All the same, it is sad to think that the Polk award is now being bathed in these muddy waters. **George Polk** was a T.V. newsman who was killed in Greece after the war. Polk was trying to cover both sides of the savage civil war there. In the opinion of many he was murdered by the government agents for giving too much time to the Communist guerrilla insurgents."



"A year ago next Wednesday, on September 11, 1973, the government of Salvador Allende was overthrown. I wrote then that news from Chile would gradually slide down the columns of the newspapers until it came to a full stop in the business section, where we could read details of the negotiations of copper companies such as Anaconda and Kennecott with the military junta. This prediction was more or less accurate. As compared with the torrent of verbiage that accompanied Allende's last six months in power, the denunciation of his wild economic policies and his 'threatened' (though never actually achieved) onslaught on the Chilean constitution, there has been little in the way of

serious analysis of the present regime's policies.

We heard a great deal about inflation under Allende, running at a percentage point a day at the end; less about inflation now, which runs at a percentage point and a half every day. We heard about the 'possibilities' of authoritarian rule if Allende continued in power. But Allende had no secret police, no political prisoners, no censorship. The junta has a secret police, it has 6000 political prisoners, and it has almost total censorship — apart from the three newspapers which fervently support it. There are more generals on active service in Chile than there are in the United States. We hear very little about the actual structure of society under the

Dialogue

by Ken MacDougall

I've come to the conclusion, after watching the first four games of the Canada-U.S.S.R. hockey series, that the best thing that could possibly happen to hockey in this country, the land of the game's birth, would be for someone to give sports announcers laryngitis, sports writers broken arms, and have someone in the Civil Service post, Post-Master-General Bryce Mackasay to Aklavik — and give him a set of Olympic coins as a going-away present.

Now please don't call me anti-Canadian, because, quite frankly, I'm fed up with that label as well. I'm amazed at the mentality that surfaces whenever "partriotism" enters into a conversation. Critics called John Robertson "anti-Canadian" because he had the guts to call goons ("Finger" Eagleson et al) "walking diplomatic disasters" way back in 1972. Quite frankly, I agreed with him — Eagleson and half of "Team Canada — N.H.L." were merely a walking accident looking for a place to happen. The fact that they brought "glory" to our country is secondary to their real accomplishment — setting back Canada's sporting image several hundred years, into the pre-historic, non-Dominion days. After Eagleson and company's performance, it is a pleasure to watch true sportsmen playing the game of hockey in 1974. With Billy Harris behind the bench, this series would be one of the finest sports spectacles of the year to watch — if there weren't so many people around willing to interpret play-by-play, the "real thing" at centre ice.

Frankly, if I hear one more sports announcer make the comment, "It's our system against theirs." I may not be able to resist the temptation to throw my rum and coke through our soon-to-expire television set. Even C.B.C. is carrying this absurd interpretation into its national news coverage. Such gross hyperboles as "rugged individualism versus stern discipline and dedication to country" flow from the most illiterate of the jock set. I say "illiterate" jock merely because those of more intelligence who indulge in sports activity are intelligent enough to know that, prior to the formation of the Players Association (a union, folks), the price of an N.H.L. palyer's "individualism" wasn't worth the price of a ticket to the farm club in Tulsa. Players were slabs of meat, and little else.

And if this form of tripe isn't enough to make one ill, there's always **Johnny Esaw** and **Howie Meeker** gushing with feigned enthusiasm to make one wonder whether these gentlemen have regressed into second childhood. There's Howie, giving the play-by-play analysis: "Gee Whiz — girls can hit harder than that!" as a Canadian misses his check. Everything's relevant, I suppose — when viewed against a background of **Johnny MacKenzie** high-sticking or **Valerie Kharlomov** spearing, a Canadian narrowly missing the opportunity to serve a Russian player his teeth for lunch could, in some abstract sense, be viewed as "sissified." Or consider the following act by Johnny Esaw: "Ho-Ho-Ho, it's hard not to become affected by Howie Meeker's enthusiasm!" chortles Johnny three seconds after missing his cue, and providing us with the most embarrassing "dead air" time in the series. Never mind Esaw's appropriate choice of words, for God's sake, just pour me another rum and coke — I'm going to need it if this type of drivvel continues much longer throughout the series. Never mind wasting the stuff on the T.V., when it could be serving medicinal purposes.

Then there's the cliché's cliché — the half-time show, featuring ole Number Nine. At this point, we are supposed to break into a chorus of "Gordie Howe is the greatest of them all...", a moronic "tribute" to this great Canadian, that actually sold over a million copies. Can't the powers-that-be, in Canadian sports circles realize that some of their audience is intelligent enough to be turned off by this — **nonsense**, is the best word that I can think up.

Now, there are a lot of things about the television series that I've enjoyed so far. For instance, I've enjoyed the Toronto-Dominion commercials that are being done in Russian. I take off my glasse, and I can't read the English sing-a-long titles that are being flashed across the screen. All that I hear is music in Russian, which brings out thoughts of the Revolution. I also enjoy the commercials because, if Russian technicians ever want to let commercials onto their home television screens, the Toronto-Dominion would lose several propaganda points trying to explain why it is only women who are dishing out money to fat-cat businessmen and women dripping with too many jewels. Ah yes, my mind is a sinister collage of propagandis banality.

What else have I enjoyed? Well, I enjoyed watchin politicians giving out the medals, awards, etc. My logic tells me that this is going to be one of the few times that I can watch a politician get cold feet in front of an audience, so why not enjoy it?

Actually, there is a lot to be said of this hockey series, that many persons interviewed by the commentators have already stated. It is a pleasure to watch hockey played as it should be, by players who actually enjoy what they are doing. And it is a tribute to international sport that the only thing red that flows on the ice surface in 1974 is the paint for the lines.