

Speaker blames U.S. for Chilean turmoil

By HEATHER McCLENAGHAN
Of the Emerald

American corporations and the United States government learned how to deal with revolutionary governments in Latin America for the first time with their successful overthrow of Chile's democratically-elected socialist government in 1973.

Edward Boorstein, author, economist and former adviser to Chilean Pres. Salvador Allende, said American economic sabotage and domestic subversion throughout Allende's three years in office eventually toppled the Popular Unity government.

This tactic allowed the United States to keep its public image unblemished by eliminating the need for direct military involvement, Boorstein said.

Boorstein will be speaking at the University through Friday. He will discuss "The Struggle for Chile — A First Hand Analysis" at 8 p.m. Thursday and "The Cuban Revolution — Where It's Come

From and Where It's Going" at 8 p.m. Friday. Both lectures are scheduled for the EMU Forum room.

While working for the Allende government, Boorstein saw his friends and co-workers "cleverly undermined by the United States government's invisibility."

"Essentially what the U.S. did was very simple," Boorstein said. "The CIA built up an organization that could be used to overthrow Allende's government. They penetrated all strata of Chilean society — trade associations, political parties — and it wasn't just the CIA. American military attaches, state department workers, they all set about trying to produce economic and military chaos in Chile. Their stated goals were to 'bring about the proper moral and psychic environment for a coup.'"

Boorstein said well-orchestrated plans were drawn up in advance of Allende's inauguration for the eventual violent overthrow that resulted in executions, tortures and mass arrests of



Photos by Perry Gaskill

countless Chileans. Boorstein cited Senate investigation committee evidence, information from the infamous ITT papers, government documents and his own experience in Chile as proof of U.S. involvement.

Boorstein said Richard Nixon ordered CIA chief Richard Helms to make sure Allende would not see his inauguration. When a CIA scheme failed and Allende came to power, the United States put its intelligence network into operation.

Boorstein said a run on banks was organized by CIA personnel who told Chileans to withdraw their funds from accounts "before that Marxist gets in."

Meanwhile, American business interests who supplied Chile with needed goods were advised to "drag their feet" by William Broe, head of the CIA's clandestine services division.

These pressures combined with a CIA financed truckers' strike in October 1972 would have paralyzed the Chilean economy if workers had not stood firm, Boorstein said.

But the damage done to the

country's economy was irreversible. Inflation rose to more than 300 per cent and a shortage of essential products set in. A large black market prospered making fresh meat and vegetables available only to the wealthiest Chileans.

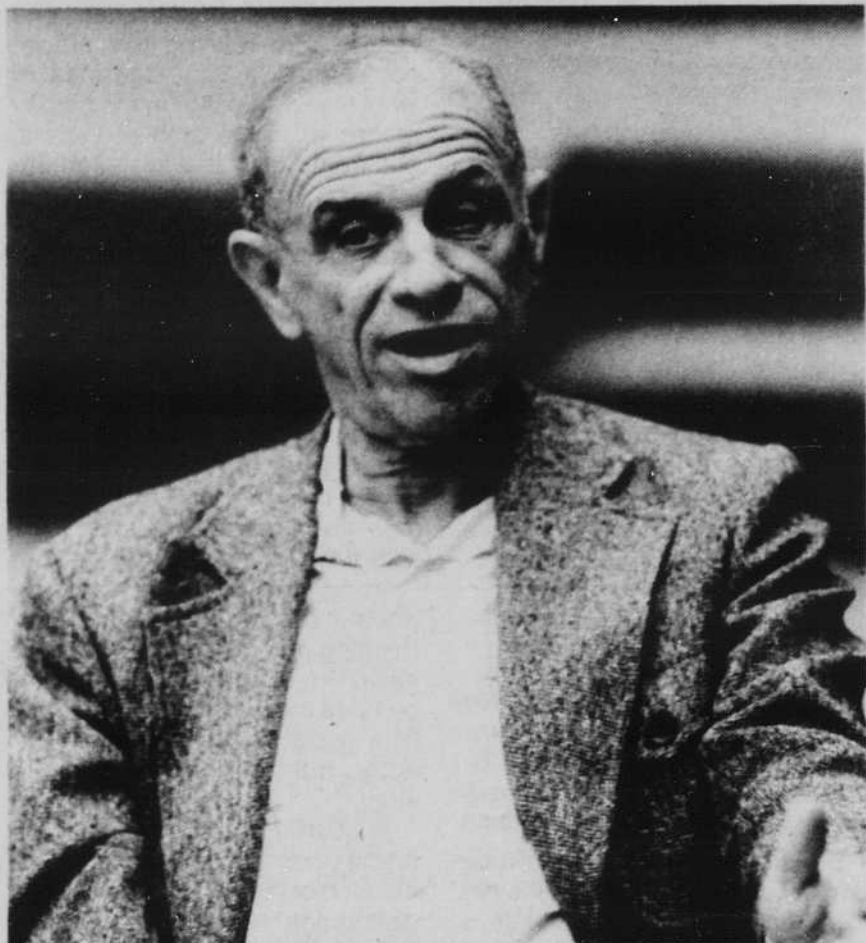
Despite the foreign blackmail, Boorstein said, March congressional elections gave Allende's Popular Unity Party 44 per cent of the vote — eight per cent more than Allende received when he was elected three years before.

After the elections the American interests knew a coup was their only hope for control, Boorstein said. From that point on, he said

there was no peace in Chile.

In a book to be published in June, "Allende's Chile: An Inside View," Boorstein traces his first-hand recollections of the final months, days and hours of Allende's government.

"Revolutions teach," Boorstein said. "They telescope events that otherwise would take decades to work out. During a revolution, the different classes pull pistols out of their holsters — you find out very quickly where people stand. The Chilean revolution was unique in that it was the first democratically-elected socialist government to come to power."



Edward Boorstein

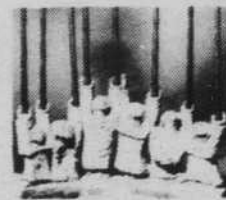
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