

ASSOCIATION FOR BRITISH CHILEAN FRIENDSHIP.

The association for British Chilean Friendship wishes to express its utmost horror at the events of the past few days in Chile. They surpass in atrocity anything that has occurred in Latin America in living memory. The ABCF was formed by people in Great Britain who warmly welcomed "the socialist course on which the Chilean people have embarked, through the broad democratic alliance known as Popular Unity."

We have followed with admiration the endeavours of the UP government to reduce glaring inequality, raise the standard of living of the vast mass of the impoverished people of Chile and enlarge educational and social opportunities.

We have been impressed with the involvement of the people in the running and control of their own lives; through participation in the factories and workplaces and on the land; through local neighbourhood committees and committees to control supplies and prices; through the accessibility of ministers and government departments to ordinary citizens. This may not have gone far enough or fast enough, but we are convinced that the Chilean people were trying to solve the great problem of our age - control of the riches of the earth by the people and for the people.

This is the Marxism which the rebel Junta want to extirpate from the soil of Chile; it is the cutting down of this great surge of initiative by the working people that Frei, former Christian Democrat President who has the evident support of multinational corporations and of the United States government, has called a "necessary surgical operation". This is the reason for what seems to be widespread murder of the leadership and active membership of the Popular Unity parties.

We do not believe this is the end of the story. Millions of people cannot be held down for ever by the brute force of bombs and tanks. All over Chile true democrats and patriots are resisting, organising and preparing for the overthrow of the fascist military coup. It will be a long hard struggle and it is impossible to forecast its development.

But this we know. It is the duty of all democrats, champions of liberty, socialists all over the world to do everything within their power to uphold the principles of Popular Unity, not just today but in the long bitter months with lie ahead.

In Britain we demand that our government shall not recognize the illegal Junta, no matter what its claims to "control the country" by brute force. We demand that the Ambassador Senor Bunster be accorded proper protection and respect as the true representative of the Chilean people.

We call upon all members of trade union, political and other organisations, and especially our own members, to get their branches and national committees to bring pressure to bear on the government and to continue to act in every possible way to express their solidarity with the people of Chile.