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Redefining Human Rights: Non-Governmental Organizations, United State Foreign Policy in  
Chile, and the 1970s

BY

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**Human Rights Redefined:  
Non-Governmental Organizations,  
U.S. foreign policy in Chile,  
and the 1970s**

By: Michael Spencer

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Eastern Illinois University History Department

## **Introduction**

On September 20, 1973, Frank Teruggi Jr., a U.S. citizen, was arrested by a joint effort between the Chilean military and the U.S. intelligence community. As Chilean police stormed Teruggi's apartment in Santiago, thousands of people were being arrested, displaced, tortured, and murdered by the junta in the opening weeks of the regime's effort to consolidate power. Yet, just three years earlier, Chile had attracted socialists from across the world with the promise of a future arranged around the Marxist vision of Salvador Allende. Teruggi was among those who chose to take part in this transformation. The Teruggi case offers a direct insight into the efforts of the Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile, which organized a campaign to report directly from Chile on the status of human rights, settle Chilean refugees in Chicago, demand the immediate end of United States financial backing of the military junta, and raise awareness of the overthrow of the Popular Unity government on September 11, 1973. For six years, the committee advocated for an end to the human rights abuses committed under General Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, as well as an end to the political and economic support provided by the United States.

Doris Strieter, the chair of the Chicago Committee, reflected in the summer of 2016 on the organization's decision to couch its opposition to the Pinochet regime within the rhetorical framework of human rights. Fearing that the committee would be dismissed as leftist sympathizers, they sought the banner of human rights in part because it offered a shield against the reactionary temperament of American Cold War ideology. The human rights focus was therefore present “from the very beginning,” which gave the movement “a broader base to pull

from” by shifting any Marxist associations to the periphery.<sup>1</sup> In essence, the committee adopted human rights-based advocacy out of a Cold War political necessity. In the 1970s, non-governmental human rights organizations like Amnesty International and Helsinki Watch (now Human Rights Watch), which have since become ubiquitous symbols for reportage and advocacy in the international community, faced a similar choice.<sup>2</sup> Those tactics of reportage and advocacy, still the chief concern of human rights NGOs, were the primary activities that the Chicago Committee conducted in the aftermath of the junta.

The spread of human rights NGOs in the 1970s was largely responsible for the reemergence of human rights rhetoric and the formation of mechanisms for calling attention to abusive states. Yet, this process narrowly defined human rights as physical security rights, civil rights, and political rights. Missing from the mechanisms developed by the human rights movement in the 1970s was a method for advancing the economic, social, cultural, and collective rights that were codified by the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. As Strieter explained in 2016, the extent of the repression in Chile convinced committee members that they could not afford to have their cause derailed by an American attitude that was dismissive of anything focused too intently on socio-economic equality. For instance, the Chicago Committee published a full-page advertisement in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on November 2, which called for “a commission of distinguished Chicagoans” to travel to Chile and investigate “violations of the human rights of Chilean citizens and foreigners in Chile.” The advertisement defends Allende on the basis of his being democratically elected by the Chilean people. The intention was to “pressure” the junta “to respect human rights of all Chileans by publishing violations of rights...” The advertisement called for the United States to “guarantee the personal safety” of those who

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<sup>1</sup> Doris Strieter, (chair of the Chicago Committee) in conversation with the author, August 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Iriya, Akira, “A century of NGOs,” *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 3 (1999), 421-435.

had been arrested or displaced by the coup by offering asylum, work visas, and employment for victims of Pinochet's repression.<sup>3</sup> Despite efforts to reassert the cultural, social, and economic aspect of the post-war human rights agreements at Helsinki throughout the decade, non-governmental organizations confined the movement to civil, political, and physical security rights because of the inherent challenges non-state actors faced in defining, advocating, and implementing those elements of human rights doctrine.

Broadly, the purpose of this project is to discuss the development of United States foreign policy and the formation of the human rights movement during one of the most repressive moments of state violence in the twentieth century. However, this thesis also interrogates the definition of human rights in the 1970s. It appeals to historians in the field to consider this aspect of the narrative. If human rights-based NGOs were forced by the political climate of the Cold War to narrow the definition of human rights, then that represents a significant shift away from the principle of universalism that guided the drafting of the post-war agreements. The Chicago Committee used human rights to advocate for physical security, civil, and political rights because such a decision shielded the organization's advocacy from allegations of communist sympathy. This is not to say that committee members were consciously altering the definition of human rights, indeed those rights championed by the group are central to the UNDHR, but that does not make the human rights articulated by the Chicago Committee the same as the universal and holistic post-war human rights agreements. If the appearance of human rights as an international norm in the 1970s represents a contingency of the post-war moment, then scholars must be careful not to conflate post-war aspirations with Cold War politics.

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<sup>3</sup> "A Murderous Tyranny Has Fallen Upon Chile," *The Chicago Sun-Times*, November 2, 1973. Box 1, Folder 9 of The Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

This analysis of the Chicago Committee will coalesce around the efforts of committee members, through the Commission of Inquiry, to produce a report on the human rights abuses in Chile. In focusing their critique on civil, political, and physical security rights abuses, the committee participated in reconstructing the scope of human rights in the 1970s. The following section examines the existing historiographical basis for studying human rights. Ultimately, it advocates for an intervention of in the historiography that focuses on localized case studies on the role of NGOs in shaping the human rights movement. This will allow the ensuing narrative of the Chicago Committee to be understood as a representative case study for precisely the sort of organization that scholars have identified as critical to the reclamation – and likely redefinition – of human rights. The narrative of Frank Teruggi, Jr. offers an interesting vehicle for connecting Chicago to the events in Chile. By contextualizing his decision to leave the country within the struggle between the Nixon administration and the Chilean political movement that brought the Popular Unity government to power, it becomes possible to understand the political context, to which the Chicago Committee responded.

### **Historiography**

Historians largely ignored the development of human rights as it pertained to United States history, and to the world at-large, until the first decade of the twenty-first century, when the American public was called to arms under the banner of democracy, freedom, and the protection of human rights in Iraq and Afghanistan. Confronted with the paradox of the Bush Doctrine's reliance on aggressive war to defend these values, historians began to ask when, how, and why human rights came to matter in the arena of international relations. Furthermore, if these rights matter, then how are they perceived in the minds of policymaking elites? This historiographical essay will address the growing body of human rights literature and its

limitations as a largely intellectual history. As a deeply intellectual history, the focus of the literature is often on the philosophy, personality, and literature read by elites and policymakers. The overthrow of Chilean democracy is at the nexus of the historical study of U.S. foreign policy, the human rights movement, and Latin America. This essay engages human rights within the historiography of United States foreign policy toward the Chilean military coup d'état in September of 1973, an event that human rights historians identify as formative for the international human rights regime. My analysis of this literature will focus on how historians have reconciled the U.S. government's support for Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship of Chile with the human rights movement and the notion of the "American Mission."

My narrative of the Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile adopts the analytic lens advanced by individuals like Aryeh Neier, founder of Human Rights Watch and former director of the American Civil Liberties Union, who contends "that the driving force behind the protection of human rights worldwide, today and for roughly the past thirty-five years, has been the nongovernmental human rights movement."<sup>4</sup> While this does not discredit the importance of post-war human rights agreements, this framework places the agitation of nongovernmental human rights organizations as a distinct contingent at the forefront of the development of the human rights movement in the 1970s.

The first challenge historians have faced is distinguishing human rights from the longer arc of the rights claim in western society. Since the thirteenth century, the effort to enjoy certain rights has defined the struggle to wrest power from the state. Indeed, the course of Western civilization's modern history has been largely driven by the rights claims of various groups against the modern state. The rights claim seems to hover above the West as an inextricable part

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<sup>4</sup> Aryeh Neier, *The International Human Rights Movement: A History* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012), 7.



of prevailing cultural notions about the rule of law and the role of the individual in society. Starting definitively with the Magna Carta in 1215, a new class of people began to carve out a commercial sector of the economy, a development that was instrumental in the capitalist transformation of western society and the world.

By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this process had led to the creation of a more egalitarian state. The modern state replaced its feudal predecessor and enshrined property rights, not through claims of divine right, but through natural law and the property-owning individual's consent to be governed. Enlightenment ideology saw rights as flowing only from a legitimate state. Accordingly, the modern state was the mechanism that secured bourgeois property rights and simultaneously denied individual rights to anyone who failed to meet stringent property requirements. No where was this idea more formative than in British North America, where in 1776 a group of elites who forged a state that made land ownership the key determinant for claims of political and civil rights.

Meanwhile, the overthrow of absolute monarchy in France was achieved under the banner of social revolution, one that brought forth the *Declaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen*, or the Declaration of the Rights of the Man and of the Citizen. The notion that a person possessed rights as a natural-born citizen was declared in France for the first time in 1789. However, the bloody upheaval in France and the shift of power in British North America both fail to explain how Western society arrived at the understanding of individual rights as something self-evident in human dignity. As historians have started to take up human rights as a meaningful element of the post-World War II world, they have begun to examine this process of development. In 1948, when the *United Nations Declaration of Human Rights* was adopted by U.N. member-states in both the East and the West, the international community took its first step

toward codifying and universalizing human rights.

The development of the individual rights claim in the west between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries is enticing and important to consider for historians who want to interrogate the principle of universality, a concept imbued in the UNDHR but challenging to reconcile with the distinctly European historical narrative of the rights claim. Therefore, the interaction between human rights and U.S. foreign policy could begin no earlier than the years following the Second World War. The crisis of Western industrial capitalism in the 1930s had led to the rise of fascism in Europe, which culminated in a crisis over the accountability of states and individuals for their actions in the international community.

Rather than view human rights as the result of an increasingly enlightened and globalized civilization, the impetus for post-war human rights agreements originated in the observation that the modern state's capacity to commit atrocities had advanced to unprecedented level. Meanwhile, the international community was impotent in the face of such violence. Historians who study human rights have begun their analysis with the basic assumption that U.S. diplomats and policymakers actively intended to establish an international regime that placed the rights of all people at the center of its agenda after World War II. Surely, Elizabeth Borgwardt's *A New Deal for the World* is indicative of this assumption. She grounds the UNDHR in Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" and in the Atlantic Charter between the U.S. and Great Britain. Surely, Samuel Moyn's contention that it was the Jimmy Carter administration that shifted U.S. foreign policy toward support for the human rights regime is a thesis that also upholds the assumption that human rights is an aspect of the "American Mission."

Yet, it is incredibly challenging to reconcile the Nixon, Ford, Carter, and Reagan administrations' support for repressive regimes with the simultaneous advancement of human

rights movements, agreements, and rhetoric. In an effort to meet this challenge, my research into human rights and U.S. foreign policy has led me to examine Chile in the 1970s. The episode that unfolded in Chile after the military coup on September 11, 1973 is largely acknowledged as the one of the major events that catalyzed the human rights movement.<sup>5</sup> However, this acknowledgement is a recent development in the historiography. An entire body of work on the justification of U.S. support for the Pinochet regime was produced before Borgwardt's book in 2005. As the following section will demonstrate, human rights became an increasingly important part of how historians thought about Chile, even in the decade before historians began to specialize in the study of human rights. First, though, the next section will explore the literature on U.S. relations with Chile.

*Defining Human Rights and Interpreting the Internal Record*

One of the fundamental challenges presented in the historiography on Chile is the extent to which the public was initially misled about the role and strategic interests of the U.S. in overthrowing the Popular Unity government. Rather than attempt to piece together what was known by authors at each stage in the historiography, an exercise that inevitably leads to a hopeless interrogation of the motives of various historians and journalists, this section evaluates the literature regarding the coup across three areas: the presented definition, if any, of human rights, the portrayal of U.S. strategic interests, and the extent to which the presented narrative is reconciled by the internal record. Throughout the historiography on Chile, physical, civil, and political rights become synonymous with human rights. This human rights terminology is particularly apparent beginning in the 1980s, which bolsters the suggestion that NGOs participated in a reconstruction of human rights in the decade after 1973. The secondary purpose

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<sup>5</sup> See Moyn, 140-51.

of the following section is to highlight the extent to which Allende's program became less and less accountable in the literature for the conditions that brought about the junta as the Nixon administration's praxis became more evident throughout the last three decades of the twentieth century.

The influence of the Nixon administration's public relations smoke-screen is evident in books like *Chile's Marxist Experiment*. Calling the book, “a dossier on the appalling economic legacy of the Allende government,” Robert Moss described the failures of the Popular Unity government as “the product not merely of incompetence but of a calculated strategy for the conquest of power.” While a writer for *The Economist*, Moss published the book in 1973, almost immediately after Allende was overthrown. It goes as far as to suggest that the military coup was an organic revolution that was born out of the economic failings inherent to socialism. Furthermore, Moss attempts to legitimize the coup on the basis of resistance from other branches of the Chilean government and the pleas of certain trade union leaders.<sup>6</sup> Notably, human rights is not involved in Moss' treatment of the “Marxist experiment.” A decade later, however, human rights was in the fabric of how people discussed the Pinochet regime's legacy in Chile.

Samuel Chavkin, a journalist like Moss, was a correspondent in Latin America and an editor for the U.N. radio service. In the preface to his 1982 book *The Murder of Chile*, he places human rights front and center. The preface of the book immediately pivots to “a report by its Human Rights Commission Rapporteur, the United Nations General Assembly at its meeting in December 1981, approved a resolution condemning the Pinochet regime,” and to take immediate measures to halt the repressive policies of the military government.”<sup>7</sup> The stories of human rights violations were no secret to those who lived under Pinochet's dictatorship and the outside

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Moss, *Chile's Marxist Experiment* (New York: Halsted Press, 1973)

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Chavkin, *The Murder of Chile: Eyewitness Accounts of the Coup, the Terror, and the Resistance Today* (New York: Everest House, 1982), 9.

world. By the early 1980s, the press, the international community, and the populace had begun to demand an explanation for why the military regime was supported by Western power. That explanation was eventually produced by the intelligence community under the Chile Declassification Project.

After over a decade of repression in Chile, “The American business community in Santiago had been uncomfortable with the increasingly negative tone of U.S. policy toward the regime.” A delegation of lobbyists was sent to Washington in 1986 to oppose economic sanctions against Chile. Meanwhile, the Chilean economy was beginning to be profitable once more. Although unemployment was still high, “Chile's external accounts were improving” as “Chile's central bank had become one of the first entities to offer debt swaps, which allowed promissory notes from foreign-creditor banks.” This discussion of Chile's economic progress in the 1980s was published by Mary Helen Spooner in 1994. Crucially, Spooner points out that “although the economy was improving [by 1986], the regime's human rights record was deteriorating.”<sup>8</sup> In 1996, Pamela Lowden wrote *Moral Opposition to Authoritarian Rule in Chile, 1973-1990*. Lowden discusses the role of the Catholic Church in placing human rights at the center of the opposition to the coup. She goes as far as to claim the the Vicariate of Solidarity was “created in 1976 by the primate of the Chilean Catholic Church to defend human rights in the face of their systematic violation by the Pinochet regime.”<sup>9</sup> Though she is writing before the study of non-governmental organizations became central to the study of human rights, Lowden is one of the first examples of historical inquiry into the organizations that advance the human rights regime. She identifies an important aspect of domestic organizational opposition to human rights violations by describing how the Vicariate of Solidarity activated “those most

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<sup>8</sup> Mary Helen Spooner, *Soldiers in a Narrow Land* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 215-7.

<sup>9</sup> Pamela Lowden, *Moral Opposition to Authoritarian Rule in Chile, 1973-90* (Oxford: MacMillan Press LTD, 1996), 1.

closely touched by the repression” of the military government. These were the “first lay human rights groups to be formed.”<sup>10</sup>

In 1999, the Clinton administration succeeded in pressuring the intelligence community to declassify a significant part of the internal record regarding U.S. efforts in the mid-twentieth century to undermine the Chilean government. In all, 24,000 documents were brought to light by the Chile Declassification Project. Peter Kornbluh, a senior analyst for the National Security Archive, produced the authoritative work on the collection in 2003. Fourteen years later, *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* is still the basis for historical understanding of the covert operations directed and supported by the U.S. to destabilize the democratic and increasingly socialist government in Chile. Kornbluh's book calls the declassification project an effort “in the name of human rights, justice and history.” In *The Pinochet File*, Kornbluh highlights the most pressing evidence in the internal record regarding the Kennedy, Nixon, Ford, Carter and Reagan administrations' efforts to prevent Allende from coming to power, to destabilize the Chilean state, to perpetuate a military coup d'état, to support the illegal dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, and to cover the trail of evidence left behind by operations in Chile.<sup>11</sup>

Across its seven chapters, *The Pinochet File* demonstrates that, between 1961 and Pinochet's arrest in 1998, U.S. policy actively supported the creation, consolidation, and preservation of the Chilean military state as a legitimate sovereign. Starting with the Kennedy administration, the U.S. worked to subvert the populist tide of Chilean politics, a tide that had been steadily rising since the early 1930s.<sup>12</sup> After failing to stop Salvador Allende from

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: A Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*, (New York: New Hill Press, 2003), xvi.

<sup>12</sup> Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File*, 1-78. For an examination of memory and periodization of Chilean history, see

ascending to the presidency on his fourth attempt in 1970, the Nixon administration began to formulate a plan for opposing Allende's new Popular Unity government. Nixon was primarily concerned about “the prospect that [Allende] can consolidate himself and the picture projected to the world will be his success.” Kornbluh furthers this point when he methodically outlines the federal government's attempt to put maximum pressure on the Allende government by funding opposition parties and taking steps to stifle the world copper economy, which comprised 80% of Chile's exports.<sup>13</sup>

Kornbluh subverts Moss' argument by demonstrating how the lack of economic and governmental stability under Allende was precisely the agenda of the Nixon administration. The line coming from the White House was that the economic troubles in Chile were owed exclusively to the ideological ineptitude of Allende's Popular Unity government. In his 1971 State of the Union Address, Nixon told congress that the U.S. wanted to “have the kind of relationship with the Chilean government that it is prepared to have with us.” Yet, just two months earlier, Nixon ordered the federal government to take every action, short of public exposure, to bring about the demise of the Popular Unity government while planning to speak in public “about the benign nature of the U.S. approach toward Chile during the Allende years.”<sup>14</sup>

A great deal regarding the Pinochet regime's rights abuses was clarified by the declassification project and Kornbluh's analysis. Ultimately, the military regime was “responsible for the murder, disappearance and death by torture of some 3,197 citizens” over the seventeen year dictatorship of Chile. He outlines the autocratic ascension of Pinochet in 1974 to the position of Supreme Chief of the Nation and finally to “President of the Republic,” a title he held until 1990. The Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA) was officially formed in June of

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Lessie Jo Frazier, *Salt in the Sand* (London: Duke University Press, 2007), 21-57.

<sup>13</sup> Kornbluh, 118 (Doc 1).

<sup>14</sup> Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File*, 80.

1974 as the arm of the military junta. As the secret military police force, DINA continued many of the repressive policies that marked the first months of the dictatorship. However, the CIA was aware as early as January, six months before the official formation, that DINA was detaining Chilean citizens and operating outside the ministry of defense as Pinochet's personal brute squad. DINA sought to expand Pinochet's reach beyond the Chilean borders, particularly in Argentina but also in the United States, where former Chilean minister Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt, an American, were killed by DINA on the streets Washington D.C in 1978. In the wake of this incident, U.S. policy began to shift away from support for the Chilean dictatorship.<sup>15</sup> DINA's role in murdering two people in the metropole and reports of the junta's efforts to engineer Sarin gas, a lethal biological weapon, were instrumental in forcing U.S. policy into a position of outward opposition to the Pinochet regime. The insistence of the human rights movement made support for Pinochet an untenable position by the 1980s on the grounds of its continued abuse of physical, civil, and political rights.

Kornbluh's book makes it clear why historians must use Chile as a case study for understanding how human rights were understood and recognized within the scope of U.S. Cold War foreign policy. The overthrow of a democratically elected, albeit socialist, government and the ensuing human rights violations provided a clear cut opportunity to take up the rhetoric of human rights as a way to critique Nixon and Pinochet outside of the context of Cold War politics. One of the problems for American policymakers and the intelligence community is the relatively abundant public access to the internal record. The modern state constantly struggles to hide its actions from public view and, in doing so, ironically intensifies the push for transparency. Chile is one area in which historians now have access to a comparatively complete body of

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<sup>15</sup> Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File*, 153-99.



documentation. The trouble with human rights violations is that they tend to be the first thing the state will try to cover up or mask as legitimate efforts to protect national security. Therefore, historians will be hard pressed to create a narrative that accurately considers the issue of human rights without access to the internal planning of the pertinent state actors. The Chile Declassification Project has yielded a great deal of information that drastically changes how historians understand the definition of human rights in U.S. rhetoric and policy during the 1970s.

In 2016, Stephen Rabe critiqued the triumphalism in historian's portrayal of U.S. Cold War policy. Under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, in concert with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, "Cold War imperatives triumphed over a defense of human rights," because of the way Pinochet's atrocities in Chile were accepted as a means to an end.<sup>16</sup> Rabe points to Kornbluh's research to demonstrate the disdain Kissinger showed for human rights, which the secretary called "silly." Kornbluh says that, "In meeting after meeting," Kissinger asserted that cutting off aid to Chile in the name of human rights was naïve because it failed to understand the value of propping up the Pinochet regime.<sup>17</sup>

### *Intellectual History and Human Rights*

Clearly, under Nixon and Ford, the guiding value of U.S. foreign policy toward Chile did not focus on the objective enjoyment of human rights in Latin America. Nor did it focus on the democratic self-determination of the Chilean people. Why, then, is such significance ascribed to Franklin D. Roosevelt's Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter? Why, then, have historians claimed that President Jimmy Carter replaced self-determination with human rights as the primary rationale of U.S. foreign policy in the 1970s despite the fact that U.S. support for Pinochet continued for nearly a decade after Carter was inaugurated? In Samuel Moyn's book,

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<sup>16</sup> Stephen Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 145.

<sup>17</sup> Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File*, 225-6.

*The Last Utopia*, he argues “that as the 1970s continued, the identification of such causes as human rights struggles snowballed, continuing across the world throughout the decade.” The snowball reached critical mass in 1977, when the Carter administration declared support for a rights-oriented foreign policy and re-emphasized the commitments the U.S. made at Helsinki throughout the decade.

Elizabeth Borgwardt's *A New Deal for the World* singles out the Atlantic Charter, which was meant to “afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.” Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met in secret in August of 1941 to forge the joint declaration of Anglo-American solidarity against the advance of Nazi Germany. The charter was described by Roosevelt as a “star” by which to steer the ship of Western society. Crucially, Borgwardt says the charter spoke “explicitly of individuals rather than state interests – to use the phrase ‘all the men in all the lands’ in place of a more traditional reference to the prerogatives of nations – (which) was positively revolutionary” because it “hinted that an ordinary citizen might possibly have some kind of direct relationship with international law.”<sup>18</sup> Borgwardt eloquently connects the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms to the suffering of the Great Depression, as well as the rise of fascism, and then forms a narrative that connects these ideals to the influence of the Roosevelt principles on the UNDHR.<sup>19</sup> A great deal of this influence was owed to policymakers who “saw the charter as a constitutive blueprint that would fill in the content of these thin and abstract freedoms and rights.” In a historiography full of intellectual and literary analysis, Borgwardt's *New Deal* is substantial.

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<sup>18</sup> Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2005), 4-5.

<sup>19</sup> See Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001), for more on the Roosevelt's and their role in shaping the international mechanisms of the human rights regime.

One reason limitation of Borgwardt's book is that it only spends fifty pages on what happens after 1945. Among the “forgotten legacies” of the Atlantic Charter described in the epilogue, Borgwardt posits that to the Nixon administration, “and particularly to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger,” human rights was a threat to its multilateral foreign policy goals. Her focus is on the congressional opposition “to the U.S.-supported overthrow” of the Popular Unity government. “Democratic congressional representatives started arguing for cutting off U.S. military aid to chronic human rights violators.”<sup>20</sup> Borgwardt does not explore beyond this point, in keeping with her focus on the Atlantic Charter's effect on policymakers. It is tempting to criticize the lack of detail in this argument, but that ignores what is important about Borgwardt's *New Deal*. She has produced a historical examination of how U.S. foreign policy goals during the Second World War were formative in the creation of seminal human rights declarations.

At the start of the Cold War, “the international consensus about human rights was an aggressive one.” The atrocities of World War II and the impotence of the former League of Nations convinced member states that protecting human rights required an organization “to have some teeth in it.” Johannes Morsink details this method in his exhaustive text on the UNDHR, which describes the method for legitimizing the declaration as “generally activist-- and perhaps even interventionist.” The Economic and Social Council released a mandate in 1946 that solicited a declaration of human rights as well as required the “protection of minorities,” “the prevention of discrimination on grounds of race, sex, language or religion,” and any matter that was expressed in the declaration.<sup>21</sup>

The UNDHR is devoted in large part to securing legal human rights. The framers knew, “The nazification of the German legal system taught... that the strongest protection against

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<sup>20</sup> Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 268-9. See page 276 for discussion of the international tribunals, under whose jurisdiction Pinochet was arrested in London in 1998, which were rooted in the Nuremberg Principles.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid 12-3.

systematic human rights violations is the kind of legal system offered in the first articles of the declaration.” Economic, cultural, and political rights are laid out in the last three-quarters of the declaration. Article 22 introduces these rights with the disclaimer that they be pursued by national and international cooperation, with the realization of these things, as Morsink says, “to depend on the resources of each state.”<sup>22</sup>

The cause of human rights in the U.S. was at a “crisis” point at the end of the 1960s. The invasion of South Vietnam had spilled over into the surrounding region and the civil rights movement was boiling over. For Moyn, the ideological chaos of the mid-twentieth century was owed to the failure of political utopianism. Throughout the 1970s, the moral utopia envisioned by the human rights regime emerged from an acknowledgement that the modern state was largely unable to overcome the forces of poverty and political repression. Following on the heels of the failed Prague Spring in 1968, the seizure of power in Uruguay in the summer of '1973 and preceding the 1976 junta in Argentina, “socialism with a human face died in Eastern Europe, [but] it received its deathblow elsewhere with the assassination of Chilean president Salvador Allende in September 1973.” Socialist revisionism was demonstrated to be no more tolerable in the Soviet sphere than in the regions under U.S. influence. Moyn says human rights replaced political utopianism because it provided “an alteration of plausible hopes,” which “had to occur.” While the “human rights optic” was “rapidly” rising around the world, the mechanisms of response developed slowly. Crucial to developing this optic were NGOs, particularly the still-new Amnesty International, which was “active in gathering information and raising consciousness about infractions” in Chile and Uruguay.<sup>23</sup> This method of reportage intended to

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid 332-34.

<sup>23</sup> Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 140-72.

shame states for committing, and tacitly approving, of human rights violations.<sup>24</sup>

*The Last Utopia* is the work of an intellectual historian. Rights-oriented histories often center on the progression of elite ideology, without much to say about the outcomes of the policies that are the result of that ideology. These problems are also present in another prominent and relevant part of the historiography. Historians such as Lynn Hunt, Mark Philip Bradley, and Joseph Slaughter have advocated for an understanding of individual rights from the perspective of literary development. Starting with the epistolary novel of the eighteenth century, Lynn Hunt contends that the emergence of novel reading was central to the development of empathy, which Hunt identifies as under-developed before this period. This literary methodology is owed for significant contributions to the human rights historiography because it is one of the only existing routes to connecting the concept of self-evident rights that originate from the state to the concept of self-evident rights that originate from a person's status as a human.

Hunt offers three popular mid-eighteenth century novels, *Julie*, *Clarissa*, and *Pamela*. In these novels, readers encounter women who are caught between social obligation and their sense of self and morality. These reactions brought about “social change and political change... because many individuals had similar experiences.” These experiences created a new social context and suggest that historians use a new methodology for understanding the evolution of humans rights. Readers recognized that the autonomy of women was already thoroughly limited in eighteenth century society. Thus, the women in these influential eighteenth century novels “come to stand for individuality itself.”<sup>25</sup>

The method of literary analysis has been used by historians to address not only the

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<sup>24</sup> See Katherine Sikkink, *The Justice Cascade* for the most authoritative social scientific work on how NGOs apply pressure domestically and internationally to leverage states into acknowledging when and where human rights violations occur.

<sup>25</sup> Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights* (New York: Norton and Company, 2007). 34-48

challenge of determining where modern conceptions of rights are rooted but also to challenge the relevance of the human rights regime. Joseph Slaughter's book *Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law* seeks to formulate a literary analysis of individual rights within the post-war context. Like Rabe, Slaughter puts the issue of Cold War triumphalism front and center. Those who “extol legal normalization itself as a sign of humanity's advancement” are diminishing the significance of those instances when powerful interests have committed atrocities with the tacit approval from the very states tasked with setting international policy. The human rights movement has “indeed achieved rhetorical, juridical, and political hegemony in international affairs,” but the movement formed in the wake of the war crimes committed by modern states.<sup>26</sup> The creation of the UNDHR was mandated by the U.N. Charter to enshrine the dignity of the individual as a method of prevention rather than advancement.

*Recommendations for the Historical Study of Human Rights*

The human rights historiography begs for something more concrete and substantial. While the intellectual and literary history that currently dominates the historiography is undoubtedly important, it does little to explain the role of wealth and power in shaping the definition of human rights. The UNDHR spells out an extensive list of civil, political, physical security, economic, social, cultural, and collective rights, which are all declared to be universally recognized principles not just in those places that signed the U.N. charter, but in every society in the world. This is an important fact to consider when the practical definition of human rights in the rhetoric of organizations, policymakers, and historians often limits human rights to physical, civil, an political rights and glosses over the universalism that underpinned the first international

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<sup>26</sup> Joseph Slaughter, *Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007) 2.

human rights agreements. This narrow human rights definition in the literature is indicative of the shift in ideology that is at the center of this project.

A narrowed human rights framework makes it easier for scholars to ultimately sell a message of triumphalism, one that happens to replace the brand of triumphalism that, until relatively recently, monopolized the western historical study of the Cold War. By extending human rights only to the physical security, civil, and political rights of the individual, historians ignore the calls for other foundational human rights like equitable wealth distribution and the rights to collectively organize. The challenge posed by these rights to the prevailing structures of global capital is instrumental redefining human rights in the 1970s. Yet, historians are unlikely to spend much time defining human rights, which allows them to champion the advancements of the human rights movement while conveniently ignoring the inconsistencies of the application of human rights during the Cold War.

### **The Path to the Stadium**

Frank Teruggi, Jr. was born in 1949 and raised in Des Plaines, Illinois. Over the course of the next two decades, the United States was enveloped in the Cold War. It was during his childhood that Teruggi sat in front of his ham radio, engaging people from around the world in conversation and chess matches. Catholicism was an important ideological influence for Teruggi, who became an adult during the 1960s. The Teruggis were a working class family of adequate means. The grandson of a first-generation American, Teruggi attended a Catholic elementary school, where he excelled, earning a scholarship to a Catholic college preparatory school. At the Notre Dame Academy in Niles, Illinois, Teruggi learned Spanish and intensified his global focus.

After graduating in 1967 from the Notre Dame Academy, Teruggi enrolled at the

California Institute of Technology. It was during his first year of college that the second Latin American Bishops' Conference took place in Medellin. The attending bishops affirmed the rights of the impoverished and laid the blame for their woes at the feet of the major industrial powers in the region and the effects of globalization more broadly. While in California, Teruggi founded a chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society. The SDS was an offshoot of the League for Industrial Democracy, a social democratic education organization. Founded in 1949, the SDS was most prominent during the the Vietnam War, which it vehemently denounced. Over the summer after his first year in California, Teruggi was back home in Chicago and was active with the Chicago Area Draft Resisters. He marched with CADRE at the Hiroshima Day peace march, which commemorated those who were killed by the use of nuclear weapons by the U.S. on two Japanese cities. Teruggi was among demonstrators at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, where protestors decried the invasion of South Vietnam by the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. Before the end of the summer, Teruggi was arrested for disturbing the peace at an art fair in the northern suburbs of Chicago. A small group of people, including Teruggi, staged a mock protest that critiqued police brutality.

Over the next two years, Teruggi's political interests turned to Latin America and a burgeoning liberation theology. He became a part of the Chicago Area Group for Latin America, which was geared toward raising awareness of political and economic injustices in the region and critiquing the role of U.S. backed corporations and agencies in contributing to these issues. In 1968, Teruggi attended school in Santa Barbara for his sophomore year. He protested the war by participating in a solidarity fast and publicly burning his draft card. In his third year of college at the University of California at Berkeley, he affiliated himself with the North American Congress on Latin America. It was through his connections at NACLA that Teruggi heard first-hand about



the socioeconomic transformation that Allende was attempting after the election of the Popular Unity Party in 1970. In 1971, Gustavo Gutierrez, a theologian from Peru, produced the seminal text of the liberation theology movement, *Teologia de la Liberacion*. In January of the next year, inspired by the Marxist program of Allende and infused with the zeal of liberation theology, Teruggi left for Santiago.<sup>27</sup>

By the time Teruggi was born in 1949, Salvador Allende had been in the Chilean upper house for four years. Allende was born in Valparaiso, Chile in 1908 to an upper-middle class family. After completing a medical degree from the University of Chile in 1932, Allende was a participant in the founding of the Socialist Party in Chile the following year. Throughout the Great Depression and the Second World War, Allende served in elected office and government administration. He was elected in 1937 to the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the national legislature. He was then the minister of health for a leftist coalition government for three years before winning his first of four elections to the Chilean senate in 1945.

Throughout his stint in the senate, Allende ran as a socialist for the presidency. As a result, the U.S. funneled money into various opposition parties starting in 1952. The primary recipient of that investment was the Christian Democrats and their leader Eduardo Frei, who was president for six years between 1964 and 1970. Allende participated in the process of massaging the square peg of Marxism into the round hole of the developing world. Unlike other Marxist revolutionaries in Latin America, Allende was able to advocate for his ideology without relying on arming a class conscious peasantry for guerrilla warfare. The entrenchment of democracy and the progressive attitudes of the Chilean public worked in tandem to create a political climate wherein Marxism was capable of advancing without the violent measures necessitated under

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<sup>27</sup> Lynn Taylor, "Student Knew Risk in Chile," *Chicago Tribune*, 21 October 1973; "Frank R. Teruggi," accessed 8/20/16 at [www.hormantruth.org/ht/bio\\_teruggi](http://www.hormantruth.org/ht/bio_teruggi)

more authoritarian states in the region.

Allende was inaugurated on November 3, 1970. He assumed control of the Chilean government for the Popular Unity Party over the continued efforts and protestations of the U.S. government. Richard M. Nixon, the thirty-seventh President of the United States, had doubled down on the bombing runs in southeast Asia earlier that year. The emergence of socialism, now within the traditional sphere of American power, was a direct threat to Nixon's aim of "peace with honor" in Vietnam. The "leftist contagion," as it was described by the Nixon administration, was loose in Chile. The U.S. needed to find a way to put that genie back in its bottle without appearing to actively undermine the democratic traditions in Chile. In meetings with his cabinet and advisors, Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger actively sought to stop Allende from coming to power in the two months between the election and the inauguration.

In his last year in the U.S., Teruggi returned to Chicago in the spring of 1971. He took up residence south of the Loop in a Spanish-speaking area. He worked as a postal clerk, saving money and improving his second language. While in Denver in early September as a delegate for the Committee of Returned Volunteers, the Federal Bureau of Investigation placed Teruggi under the surveillance. The CRV had been identified by the intelligence community as favorable to the cause of Cuban revolutionaries and the plight of the Third World in general. On January 9, 1971, Teruggi registered at the U.S. Consulate in Chile under a student visa. After staying with a friend, Teruggi and David Hathaway, also a U.S. citizen, took up residence in the Nunoa neighborhood in Santiago. He registered as an economics student at the University of Chile and at the Chilean/French Cultural Institute.

Teruggi joined a group of other U.S. citizens in Chile who wrote for *Fuente de Informacion Norteamerica*. The newsletter published information about U.S. foreign policy in

Chile, opposing its influence on Allende's socialist project. Charles Horman, the subject of the 1982 film *Missing*, which told an adaptation of the events Horman experienced in Chile, also worked for FIN. Identifying Horman and Teruggi as subversives for their connection to the publication, the FBI continued to monitor Teruggi. FIN was closely tied to the CAGLA, the Chicago group that Teruggi was involved with in the U.S. Furthermore, CAGLA was a group involved in the organization and development of the Chicago Committee. As the coup commenced, the U.S. Military Intelligence Group for America in Chile, a clandestine agency that monitored North Americans in the country, shared the information about Teruggi's location and his history of subversive behavior with the Chilean Intelligence Service of the National Defense High Command. Under the direction of General Augusto Lutz Urzua, the intelligence was used as the impetus for the order to arrest Teruggi and his roommate Hathaway.

In 2014, the a Chilean court released a dossier on the Teruggi case. It stated:

“That, in effect, between the night of the 21<sup>st</sup> and the dawn of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 1973, Frank Randall Teruggi Bombatch was killed outside the parameters of any legal proceeding by agents of the State, who had ordered his detention in the National Stadium, and those same agents abandoned his body in the streets of Santiago.”<sup>28</sup>

This summary execution is an example of the standard practice of military officials in the National Stadium, as well as in other detention centers established by the military. All across Chile, the junta declared martial law, jailing, torturing, and murdering political dissidents. Major media outlets in Santiago were dissolved. Allende, the socialist leader whose vision drew

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<sup>28</sup> Decision of Judge Jorge Zepeda Arancibia, Special Prosecutor, 10/3/2014 (found in the University of Texas Repository Letter Enclosures, accessed 9/20/2016)

Teruggi to Chile, died on the first day of the coup as the military stormed the executive building in Santiago. It may have been a bullet from the gun of a Chilean officer that murdered Allende. However, the more accepted version of the story is that Allende committed suicide with a gun that was given to him by Cuban leader and Marxist revolutionary Fidel Castro.

### **The Chicago Committee, the Human Rights Movement, and Chile Under Pinochet**

#### *U.S. Foreign Policy and Chile*

The socialist utopia envisioned by Frank Teruggi Jr. and Salvador Allende was diametrically opposed to the anticommunist realism of the Nixon administration. After assuming office in 1969, Nixon worked quickly to realign U.S. foreign policy with the nation's strategic interests. Boggled down in Vietnam, the geopolitical situation that justified the initial intervention in southeast Asia was alleviated by the anticommunist repression in Indonesia and the deterioration of relations between China and the Soviet Union. The fear that a monolithic communist international threatened to take over the Third World, which initially embroiled the U.S. in Vietnam under the auspices of Domino Theory and the Containment Doctrine, had been substituted for the fear that U.S. hegemony and prestige would be damaged by leaving Vietnam with anything short of a complete tactical and ideological victory. With the Vietnamization of the war underway, Nixon and Kissinger encountered what they deemed to be a true threat to the strategic interests of the U.S. in a democratically elected government in the region claimed within the U.S. sphere since such a notion was claimed for the first time under the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. While Nixon and Kissinger felt that this made the Popular Unity government a significant strategic threat, the administration knew that another protracted international conflict was politically unviable in a post-Vietnam context.

At 9:40 a.m. on November 6, 1970, two days after Salvador Allende was inaugurated, the

National Security Council met with President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to discuss United States policy toward the newly minted Popular Unity government in Chile and its socialist president. Nixon told the security council that, "Our main concern in Chile is the prospect that [Allende] can consolidate himself and the picture projected to the world will be his success." The underpinning of Nixon's policy toward Chile was the same thread of realpolitik that held together the administration's broader policy toward Latin America. First, the policy was concerned with the view of Allende's government in the context of Cold War geopolitics. Calling for a "publicly correct" approach in Chile, Nixon directed the council to stop just short of anything that might subvert the administration's projection of affability toward Chile.

In his 1971 State of the Union address, Nixon told congress that the U.S. wanted to have whatever relationship with Chile that the Popular Unity government deemed appropriate. Yet, for months it had been U.S. policy to subvert Allende and the Chilean government by any means necessary, even going as far as to attempt to foment a military coup d'états. Nixon wanted to "put in more money" to improve relations with the military while giving Allende "cold Turkey" on the economic side. Specifically, Nixon wanted to lean on copper production internationally while cutting back all economic assistance to Chile. In all, the copper industry accounted for eighty-percent of the goods exported from Chile in 1970. Above all else, Nixon wanted to make sure that, "No impression should be permitted in Latin America that they can get away with this, that it's safe to go this way."<sup>29</sup>

Nixon's approach to Chile did not spring, fully-formed, from the president's forehead on that day in November. Since the early 1960s, the U.S. had actively opposed the increasingly

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<sup>29</sup> Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 116-120.

liberal element of Chilean democracy. Between 1962 and 1970, the U.S. spent \$10 million to grow the economy and improve the modes of production in the Chilean private sector. Though Chile lacked a neighbor that posed any existential threat, another \$91 million in aid was dispersed from U.S. coffers to the Chilean military. By the time Allende finally won election in 1970, U.S. ambassador to Chile Edward Korry said the U.S. had a “fiduciary responsibility” to intervene when the democratically elected Popular Unity government came to power.<sup>30</sup> The U.S. investment in Chile's success as a capitalist state was too great for U.S. policymakers to allow Allende to nationalize the holdings of American-owned companies like Kennecott, Anaconda, and ITT.

When Allende won election in 1970, on his fourth attempt since 1952, Nixon launched Project FUBELT in an effort to stop Allende from being inaugurated either by constitutional overthrow or military overthrow.<sup>31</sup> Yet, the Central Intelligence Agency was unable to gain any traction in Chile. The CIA launched a propaganda campaign and allocated money to bribe officials but the Chilean tradition of peaceful transition of power and legitimate democracy proved an insurmountable obstacle for covert action. When Ambassador Korry met with Nixon on October 15, Korry convinced him to end his efforts to foment a coup. However, when Kissinger ended coordination with the Chilean military, he told his contacts to preserve their assets for any future action.<sup>32</sup>

After three years of U.S. funding for opposition political parties, for military development, and for trade unions opposed to the Allende government, Chilean politics were polarized and Chilean society strained to the breaking point. On September 11, 1973, the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 6. Also, Korry's letter was published by the U.S. Congress, Senate, Select Committee to Study Government Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, 118.

<sup>31</sup> Kornbluh points out that the constitutional overthrow in Track One of Project FUBELT was largely geared toward urging out-going President Eduardo Frei to legitimize a military coup, 14.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 29.

Popular Unity government fell to Augusto Pinochet's military junta. Allende died either by suicide or at the hands of Pinochet's forces. According to a CIA memorandum from September 13, the CIA had approved \$6.48 million in funding since January 1971 "for Chilean political parties, media, and private sector organizations opposed to the Allende regime."<sup>33</sup> What followed the coup in Chile was a wave of repression that shocked the senses. A state department memo from November 15 records that 13,500 people were arrested, detained, and often executed by the military government in Chile. Just over three-thousand people were disappeared, shot, and/or tortured to death by the Pinochet regime. In a particularly horrible episode of Pinochet's repression, seven or eight thousand people were summarily rounded up and held in Santiago at the National Stadium.<sup>34</sup> Among the multitudes was Frank Teruggi, Jr. The Chicago Committee arrived two years later on a fact-finding mission to discover what came of Teruggi and the other people who were subjected to the oppressive policies of the junta.<sup>35</sup>

*Chicago: September of 1973 to February 1974*

In the days directly after the overthrow of the Popular Unity Government in Chile on September 11, 1973, small groups of Chicagoans took to the streets to protest the military junta that ousted democratically elected President Salvador Allende. Outraged by a new reign of terror in their homeland, the Latin American Scholars Committee and the Chicago Area Group for Latin America, in conjunction with the Chicago Peace Council, formed the Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile in the fall of 1973.<sup>36</sup> As mentioned before, it was CAGLA that organizationally linked the socialist media outlet that employed Frank Teruggi Jr. and Charles Horman to the United States. It was their association with that media outlet that ultimately led

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 151.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 154-76.

<sup>35</sup> The Charles Horman Foundation's report on the Teruggi case at: [http://www.hormantruth.org/ht/bio\\_teruggi](http://www.hormantruth.org/ht/bio_teruggi)

<sup>36</sup> Information Sheet, March 1974, Box 1, Folder 11, The Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

U.S. intelligence services to inform on Teruggi and Horman to the Chilean military. It is critical to bear in mind this link between the Chicago Committee and the leftist organizations, not only in Chicago, but in Santiago as well, because that link informed the scope of the committee's definition of human rights in their rhetoric and reportage.

In its chartering documents, pamphlets, and advertisements, the Chicago Committee was formed “as a response to the brutal military coup which over-turned Chile's longstanding democratic tradition” and to act as an umbrella organization in Chicago for the organizational direction of a campaign against the human rights abuses under Pinochet's regime. Committee members also coordinated efforts to settle Chilean refugee families in the Chicago area. The committee also organized events in Chicago to demonstrate against the military government in Chile.<sup>37</sup>

Despite their pioneering activism, the committee's interpretation of human rights was defined narrowly as enjoyment of physical security, civil, and political rights for the Chilean people. This definition of human rights is central to this project's investigation of the human rights movement. Like most human rights oriented non-governmental organizations of the decade, the committee launched a commission to report directly on human rights abuses. The focus on this narrowed human rights claim was the product of an effort to separate the Chicago Committee's cause from the socialist and communist left. Under President Richard Nixon's realpolitik, the banner of human rights offered a rhetorical route for arguing against the military junta without being labeled as a subversive leftist group.

The four primary daily newspapers in Chicago covered the coup in the days after the overthrow of the Popular Unity government. Each of them painted a picture of the coup that cast

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<sup>37</sup> Chicago Committee Pamphlet, c. 1976, Box 1, Folder 5, The Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, 1973-2009, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.



the Chilean military leadership as increasingly concerned observers of a Marxist government that violated the Chilean constitution through its social policy and refused to compromise with the country's more conservative voices. However, as Ted Pearson, a Chicago area journalist, pointed out in the *Chicago Journalism Review's* November 1973 edition, Allende was a popularly supported leader and the Popular Unity government had increased its levels of democratic support in the most recent plebiscite. Additionally, more than a million people marched past the presidential palace in Santiago on September 4<sup>th</sup> as a show of support for Allende. Seven days later, the military attacked that very building. Pearson chastised the press for “[having] not tended to correct the misleading story line of the first articles.”<sup>38</sup> It was in the same month that the journalism review critiqued the Chicago media that the committee published a full-page advertisement in the *Chicago Sun-Times*. In a context wherein the U.S. press and government were both sympathetic to the junta, the Chicago Committee and the broader human rights movement narrowed its focus. This context was not an experience unique to the Chicago Committee. The forces that aligned the press and the Nixon administration's reaction to the coup were influential, not just on more localized groups, but on NGOs with a broader human rights focus as well.

The American government and press did report on the preponderance of U.S. economic aid that began to be dispersed to the military government. In a statement released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on September 26, the bureau announced the extension of a \$24 million wheat credit designed to reopen market relations between the U.S. and Chile.<sup>39</sup> By November, *The New York Times* reported that sources within the banking industry in the U.S. and

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<sup>38</sup> *Chicago Journalism Review*, November 1973, Box 6, Folder 4, The Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, 1973-2009, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

<sup>39</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, “Regarding the Financing by the Commodity Credit Corporation,” (September 26, 1973).

Canada had turned over \$150 million in the form of commercial loans since the military junta came to power in mid-September, compared to the \$300 million in short-term loans from American banks across the period between 1958 and 1970.<sup>40</sup> The drying up of the foreign investment, which had flowed so freely to Chile before the election of the Popular Unity government, was a result of the Allende's nationalization of the American-dominated copper and telecommunications industry and his moratorium on the state's debt repayments. The reopening of these reserves was a clear indication of the support of private U.S. capital for the Pinochet regime.

To announce its intentions to the city and combat the portrayal of Pinochet in the local papers, the Chicago Committee published a full-page advertisement in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on November 2, which called for “a commission of distinguished Chicagoans” to travel to Chile and investigate “violations of the human rights of Chilean citizens and foreigners in Chile.” The advertisement defends Allende on the basis of his being democratically elected by the Chilean people. The intention was to “pressure” the junta “to respect human rights of all Chileans by publishing violations of rights...” The advertisement called for the United States to “guarantee the personal safety” of those who had been arrested or displaced by the coup by offering asylum, work visas, and employment for victims of Pinochet's repression. It is important to note that these demands make explicit reference to the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which clearly outlines the individual's right to physical security, due process, and autonomous movement. Furthermore, the Chicago Committee directed attention to U.S. commitments to the human rights regime by calling for an end to diplomatic and financial ties between the U.S. and the junta in Chile. The advertisement makes a clear effort to demonstrate

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<sup>40</sup> Jonathan Kandell, “Private U.S. Loans in Chile Up Sharply” *New York Times* (November 12, 1973).

that the U.S. government and the private sector had provoked the coup. Echoing the sentiments of Ambassador Edward Korry, the Nixon administration is described in the *Sun-Times* advertisement as having put a squeeze on the Chilean economy in order to insure that the aid funneled to Chile since the 1960s did not ultimately culminate in the success of the democratically-elected socialist reform project of the Allende government.<sup>41</sup> The advertisement reported that 13,000 people were dead in Chile by November 2, although a State Department memo prepared for Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on November 15 puts the number between two and three thousand, much closer to the total estimated in recent research.

As the Watergate scandal began to engulf the Nixon administration, the Chicago Committee sponsored a rally that brought Hortensia Bussi Allende to Chicago to speak at DePaul University on behalf of her late husband. On December 16, Bussi addressed a crowd of a couple thousand Chicagoans about the realities of the military government in Chile. In the crowd that day was Doris Strieter, a Maywood village trustee, a member of the Chicago Peace Council, the wife of Lutheran minister Thomas Strieter, and the mother of two daughters. Strieter and her husband became involved with the Chicago Committee at the end of 1973. She became a co-chair of the committee with John Coatsworth, a Latin American historian at the University of Chicago. The organization and the protests that occurred around the Bussi Allende rally were instrumental in bringing Strieter on board. As a part of their work with the Committee, the Strieters settled roughly seventy Chilean refugees in the Chicago area.<sup>42</sup>

Also among the committee's ranks was Frank Teruggi Sr., the father of Frank Teruggi Jr., who had tried desperately since the coup to discover the fate of his son. He was among the

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<sup>41</sup> "A Murderous Tyranny Has Fallen Upon Chile," *The Chicago Sun-Times*, November 2, 1973. Box 1, Folder 9 of The Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

<sup>42</sup> Joan Giangrassie Kates, "The Rev. Thomas W. Strieter, Civil Rights Champion, 1933-2014" *The Chicago Tribune* (30 April 2014).

Chicagoans asked to join the Chicago Commission of Inquiry on its fact-finding mission to Chile. Strieter and Teruggi Sr. became close throughout the process, sharing thoughts about the role of the U.S. government in Teruggi Jr.'s death. In 2016, Strieter described Teruggi Sr.'s efforts as, "like a machine." Strieter estimated that he sent 200 letters to various officials and traveled 14,000 miles in order to piece together the series of events that led to the murder of his son. Though Teruggi Sr. described his views of the U.S. government as amicable, which could not be said for his son, Teruggi Sr. was convinced that officials in Washington D.C. and Chile had shown a complete lack of concern for his son.

The chief concern of the committee at the end of 1973 and the first month of 1974 was to continue circulating its three thousand petitions and create a commission to report directly from Chile on the status of human rights in the country.<sup>43</sup> Letters were sent to Kissinger, Pinochet, and the embassies in Washington D.C. and Santiago on behalf of the committee. They requested the appropriate authorization and access to information for the Chicago Commission of Inquiry. The members of the commission also familiarized themselves with the available literature on the Pinochet regime's conduct.

On February 16, 1974, the ten members of the Chicago Committee's Commission of Inquiry arrived in Chile. Among them were Strieter and Terruggi Sr., as well as Joanne Fox-Przeworski, who wrote the commission report. The rest had a background in the religious, business, and collegiate communities and purported to have a variety of different social and political backgrounds. The purpose of the commission was to "examine... human rights in Chile" and focus public attention on the Pinochet regime's political prisoners. The commission

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<sup>43</sup> The Chicago Committee's petitions also called for a congressional investigation into the role of the federal government in supporting the junta in Chile. Kissinger actively defended the Nixon administration's record, downplaying the support by suggesting that any attempt to provoke a coup was ended when Project FUBELT was terminated.

also sought to make prescriptions about where aid might be effectively directed. The report defines human rights as those specified in the U.N. Declaration, which the commission of inquiry deemed a “direct obligation” of the U.S. in light of prior commitments to the U.N. and the World Court.<sup>44</sup> That being said, the substantive focus of the commission was primarily on physical security and anti-torture rights. A broader definition, one which might have included economic, social, and collective rights alongside physical, civil, and political rights, risked evoking the ghost of Allende and associating the group with the left.

*The Report of the Chicago Commission of Inquiry*

Over the course of twelve points, the report of the Chicago Commission of Inquiry evaluated the human rights situation in Chile. A total of sixty-five interviews in Santiago, Valparaiso, and at El Teniente copper works, revealed “a systematic and organized” “campaign of terror” driven by numerous “politically motivated detentions.” The overarching theme was the unlimited military authority exercised by the Pinochet regime. The commission reported that the junta had detained nearly 18,000 people as of January 20, 1974, with 80,000 people passing through the military prison camps since the coup the previous September. This campaign of terror was driven by “no legal procedures” as defined by Chilean law.<sup>45</sup> Witnesses recounted the widespread use of torture. Universities were taken over by the military as students and faculty were summarily dismissed and tuition was instituted at state schools. Many newspapers and magazines were shut down by the junta, which also purged archives containing periodicals that supported the Popular Unity government. Despite couching their critique on the basis of a human rights scope narrowed to civil, political, and physical security rights, the report

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<sup>44</sup> “Report of the Chicago Commission of Inquiry into the Status of Human Rights in Chile; Santiago, Chile; February 16-23, 1974,” Box 10, Folder 12, The Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

<sup>45</sup> The basis for this argument was curtailed access to legal representation and a lack of published records of legal proceedings as well as a lack of public access to the trials.

reveals an economic element to the repression. Approximately 160,000 people were expelled from their jobs because of their perceived support for the Popular Unity government. In the process, the Chilean military usurped and targeted certain unions. In 1975, inflation and unemployment increased as Pinochet worked to implement the plans of the Chicago Boys, a contingent of American economic advisors who planned the post-coup Chilean economy.<sup>46</sup>

The report specifies a range of methods through which, “[t]he terror is sustained.” This terror was central to the junta's explanation to the international community for the harsh repression of the people in Chile. Through propaganda campaigns, restrictions on the free movement of citizens, the appearance of corpses “in the Mapocho River in Santiago and elsewhere,” warrantless searches and seizures, the circulation of lists that compelled citizens on the list to turn themselves in, the encouragement of “patriots' to inform on suspicious persons,” threats against labor organizers, unchecked military authority, and the detention of dissidents, were the central mechanisms of control employed by Pinochet. The education system was also the subject of intense scrutiny and control as any subversive elements were curtailed through the military's direct administration of universities, as well as primary and secondary schools.

The reportage “of assaults, enemy plans, sabotage, resistance, arms caches, etc.” were among the “[o]fficial reasons cited for the continuance of the 'state of war'” that was maintained by the junta. This report was substantiated by the instance when the regime privately circulated lists that it claimed contained the names of individuals that Allende's Popular Unity government had singled out for execution. These lists, which included a large number of persons with little record of political activity and even members of the left, were shown privately to individuals working for the military in the detention centers as a method for motivating and justifying the

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<sup>46</sup> “Report of the Chicago Commission of Inquiry into the Status of Human Rights in Chile; Santiago, Chile; February 16-23, 1974,” Box 10, Folder 12, The Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

heinous acts they were ordered to perform. Released prisoners corroborated this information to the commission, which “reported that soldiers, while beating and torturing, screamed, 'You bastard, you savage, you were going to kill me.'” The junta also published claims in the Santiago paper *El Mercurio* that communists had attempted to sabotage electrical towers around the city.

The imposition of a curfew, the restriction of free movement, and the use of arbitrary search and seizure were also crucial methods of control in Chile during the first months of the coup. These were the mechanisms for imprisoning dissidents without charge or legal counsel. In Santiago, the members of the commission were subject to a veiled threat by the chief of the detention camps that they did not need to request permission to visit the prisoners at Estadio Chile if they were to “just stay out after curfew... we'll take you right there.” From 1 a.m. to 5 a.m., no one was allowed on the streets without being subject to detention by the regime. The commission devoted significant portions of the report to descriptions of search and seizure, which can be substantiated by the narrative around the Teruggi case. In certain cases, the Pinochet regime executed individuals immediately upon being located. The searches were regularly targeted toward working class areas of Santiago.

Because of the nature of the identification system in Chile, the gathering of statistics on individuals detained, executed, or disappeared by the regime is complicated. “In many cases personal identification cards were carried by the head of the household. A detention or death often leaves the family without any documents and thus paralyzes its movements.” Therefore, if the head of household was disappeared by the regime, the entire family was then unable to produce the necessary identification to avoid detention. A good example involves the execution of a university employee:

[I]n the case of Dr. Enrique Paris, psychiatrist at the University of

Chile, his wife claimed the body at the morgue one month following the takeover but the authorities would not issue a death certificate. According to Chilean law, passports for her two small children could not be issued because the father's authorization is needed.<sup>47</sup>

This represents a particularly sinister avenue for eliminating the regimes enemies.

For two months before the commission arrived in Chile, the military published lists of individuals who were to turn themselves in for questioning and trial. It also encouraged individuals to inform on each other. They threatened the imprisonment of individuals, regardless of a verdict, if they did not report within five days. The commission was able to find evidence that the junta used this as a mechanism for disappearing and executing political enemies, such as Dr. Jorge Avila, a pediatrician that was confirmed dead in December after he turned himself in on September 19 or 20. In a particularly shocking instance of denunciation, an informant reported his neighbors to the regime for holding a political meeting. When the authorities arrived, they arrested the informant for breaking curfew along with the men and women he had turned in. The commission reported that the men, including the informant, were all shot by the police. "The women were raped at the police station by drunken policemen and released."<sup>48</sup>

As a result of the repression, the commission reported that 150,000 individuals were dismissed from their jobs for political reasons. A pre-coup law entitled workers to severance pay, but the junta permitted individuals to be fired without this compensation. In the few instances in which the severance pay was dispersed, the runaway inflation in the Chilean economy after the coup rendered this compensation moot. In most instances, workers were

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.



simply forced to resign, thereby forfeiting these benefits.

*The Commission Report and the Teruggi Case*

The report details the behavior of the U.S. embassy in Santiago toward Americans in Chile during the coup. The report says the embassy made “no serious effort to protect” U.S. nationals. Frank Teruggi Sr. went with the commission of inquiry to find answers about the fate of his son. He discovered that Teruggi Jr. had reached out to the U.S. embassy for protection in the days after September 11, but he was told to report his situation to local authorities.

On February 17, Mr. Frank Teruggi, Sr. visited the house (at Hernan Cortes 2575, Santiago) where his son had lived while studying economics at the University of Chile. There he found on a telephone book the U.S. Embassy number in Frank Jr.'s handwriting. (Beside the embassy number was an extension number which could not have been obtained from the directory itself.)<sup>49</sup>

In a meeting with General Oscar Bonilla on February 21, Teruggi, Sr. reported that the minister of the interior expressed surprise that Teruggi, Jr. was detained by authorities even after David Hathaway was released. The general apologized on behalf of the junta if further investigation “revealed that Frank died as a result of 'negligence' on the part of the military.”<sup>50</sup> According to the commission's report, Teruggi, Sr. received evidence from the testimony of a “well-known” Chilean woman who had been imprisoned at the National Stadium. She filed the report after she heard that the commission was in Santiago. She reported at the embassy of a “Western European country” that students in Santiago were arrested by the military as early as September 11 and

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

were taken to the National Stadium. Foreigners received especially harsh treatment. Officials interrogated, tortured with electricity, badly beat, and carved the words “foreign dogs” into the backs of non-Chilean prisoners. They were repeatedly subjected to simulated executions by firing squad. The testimony of the female refugee identified a foreigner called Frank who was suffering from particularly grievous injuries.

The version of the story reported today by the Charles Horman Truth Foundation holds that, nine days after the coup, the Chilean military arrested Teruggi, Jr., tortured him for two days, and then shot him seventeen times with an automatic weapon in the National Stadium. While other Western embassies had threatened to sever economic ties to Chile if its citizens were harmed by the junta, the report accuses the U.S. embassy of making the assumption that people who sought asylum must have “leftist sympathies.”<sup>51</sup> Teruggi Sr. is largely credited by the commission with discovering the fate of his son.

#### *The Committee After the Commission*

For the remainder of the decade, the Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile continued to work in opposition to the Pinochet regime. The committee organized rallies and educational conferences in the Chicago area. On March 10, 1974, less than a month after returning from Chile, the Commission of Inquiry gathered before the public at the Midland Hotel Ballroom in Chicago. All ten members of the commission answered questions about the situation in Chile. The discussion focused on the the repression of political dissidents and the limitations of access to civic life.<sup>52</sup> It raised funds for its efforts to settle Chilean refugees in July of 1974, on its way to settling over seventy families. However, in the years between 1975 and 1979, the committee began to shift towards organizing its efforts toward generating a cultural

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, [Box 1, Folder 10], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

awareness of Chile in Chicago. In 1979, the committee became the Pablo Neruda Cultural Center under the continued guidance of John Coatsworth. Named for the Chilean poet, diplomat, and 1971 Nobel Prize for Literature winner who campaigned for Allende in 1969 before being appointed Chilean ambassador to France, the cultural center presented art, film, and the traditional daily life of Chile. Furthermore, the cultural center aggressively pursued grants from the city to fund programming at the center.

In 1980, the cultural center spearheaded a campaign in Hyde Park, which declared a boycott of grapes and other produce from Chile. The Hyde Park Community Leaders issued a public statement condemning the sale of any such products that might benefit the Pinochet regime.<sup>53</sup> While the shift to a cultural center represents a transition away from the elements that made the Chicago Committee an NGO in the vein of the early iterations of Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch, the organization maintained a commitment to its human rights rhetoric, even as the emphasis shifted away from reporting. In 1992, nearly twenty years since September 11, 1973, the Pablo Neruda Cultural Center was disbanded. It is worth considering Neruda's affiliation with the communist party and the decision to name the cultural center after him. Despite having been motivated in the days of the committee to avoid being associated with the left, board members of the cultural center seem to have abandoned this apprehension as the political objectives of the organization became less central. Therefore, the preeminence of the Cold War politics to the human rights advocacy of the Chicago Committee is bolstered.

### *Contextualizing the Chicago Committee and the Human Rights Movement*

Where does this narrative of the Chicago Committee fit with what has been presented by

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<sup>53</sup> Chicago Committee to Save Lives in Chile Records, [Box 9, Folder 24], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

the historiographical treatment of human rights? First, the committee is easily defined as a non-governmental organization during the years between 1973 and 1979, the vehicle for the human rights movement established in the historiography. Second, the committee was active in relation to the coup in Chile, which historians have identified as central to the emergence of a meaningful human rights regime. The Chicago Committee attempted to apply pressure on the U.S. government domestically and on the Chilean government internationally to obey international human rights norms. Furthermore, it publicized human rights abuses, just as the most effective non-governmental organizations have done in the arena of human rights. Additionally, the committee engaged in efforts to resettle Chilean refugees and dissidents in the Chicago area, another pillar of the modern human rights NGO. As this was one of many organizations within the U.S. that opposed the military regime in Chile, the fact that military control endured for seventeen years with varying degrees of support from U.S. policymakers is instructive.

This analysis of the Chicago Committee, the human rights historiography, and the historiography concerning the 1973 coup demonstrates the need for a historical perspective that focuses on the construction of human rights and the international systems that took shape as a result. Primarily, this project demonstrates that the groups and individuals who took up the banner of human rights in the 1970s did so as a way to shield themselves from the capacity of the U.S. government to easily discredit subversive narratives as sympathetic to communism. If non-governmental human rights organizations were successful on any level, it was because of the movement's ability to appeal to a wider base while using the terminology of human rights, not because NGOs appealed the entirety of the rights codified by the international community after the Second World War.

The position of the Nixon administration on this matter can be boiled down to what the

president told the National Security Council in November of 1970. In that instance, it was the global image of American power and prestige that dominated the calculations of Nixon's top advisors. The rise of the Allende regime threatened to demonstrate a democratic route to socialism in the sphere of influence that the U.S. had claimed since the declaration of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823. Nixon and Kissinger's *realpolitik* compounded this tendency of U.S. policymakers by fundamentally subordinating the commitments the U.S. had made to defend human rights in the post-war agreements. This narrative is challenging to reconcile with the emphasis that historians have placed on the 1970s as the genesis of an impactful human rights on U.S. foreign policy. It is even more challenging to connect the impetus for the post-war agreements with the reality revealed by Chicago Committee chair Doris Strieter. Namely, that it was out of a Cold War political necessity that the rhetoric of human rights was utilized in the name of physical security, civil, and political rights in Chile.

It seems apparent that the ability of the human rights regime to sway U.S. foreign policy was limited. The assassination attempt in the U.S. capital is what finally forced the Reagan administration to reassess its approach to Chile, not the abuses of the three thousand Chileans killed over a decade earlier. Not only was the human rights movement subverted in Chile by the repressive tactics of the junta with the tacit approval of the U.S., but the definition of human rights was curtailed by the political limitations of American Cold War foreign policy. This analysis clearly reveals a need and a methodology for further historical inquiry into how human rights have been defined and applied both in reality and in the historiography.

### **Epilogue: The Teruggis and the Human Rights Movement**

There is a certain level of symmetry between the story of Frank Teruggi, Jr. and the ideological conflict between human rights, Marxism, and capitalism since 1948. In much the

same way that Frank Teruggi Sr. went to Chile looking for an explanation for his son's loss of physical, civil, and political rights; so, too, did the human rights movement redefine itself in the political context of the 1970s. When Teruggi Jr. was arrested and murdered in September of 1973, Frank Teruggi Sr. worked tirelessly to find the truth about how his son's physical security, civil, and political rights came to be fatally violated by the Pinochet regime. However, for those like Teruggi Jr., who were enthusiastic supporters of Allende's vision of socioeconomic equality in a democratic society, the overthrow of the Popular Unity government represented the end of much more than physical, civil, and political rights. In the mind of Nixon and in the minds of the Marxist supporters of Allende, the first chance at the sort of non-violent socialist revolution described in Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto* became a casualty of the strategic interests of the United States in Chile. In the wake of the overthrow of the Popular Unity Government and the death of Frank Teruggi Jr., the political stakes of appealing for socioeconomic rights had been made abundantly clear. The public's democratic attempts to gain those socioeconomic rights resulted in the absolute deterioration of the physical, civil, and political rights of the Chileans. Ultimately, this historical research asks the reader to consider which of these three ideologies is more representative of the concept of human rights by praxis. This is why it is so critical to interrogate the definition of human rights, rather than further confuse the issue by conflating the term with less universal rights doctrines. While the terminology of human rights endures the thirty years after World War II, the human rights movement of the 1970s subordinated the universality of the post-war agreements because it was necessitated in the face of horrific repression and a highly complex Cold War politic.

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