To Isobel Whitelegg

Stafford Beer's Project Cybersyn Operations RoomImage courtesy Liverpool John Moores Special Collections and Archives

Isobel Whitelegg
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Isobel

Thanks for the suggestion to explore the Stafford Beer archive in the LJMU library. I spent some time with the materials last week. I've never before given much thought to the history of cybernetics, but I find myself quite interested in Beer's Cybersyn project applying the cybernetics of organisations to the development of the public sector in Allende's Chile. I have to say that (more than the theories) it's the political and literary (or politico-literary) character of the story that appeals to me. There's a very affecting 'humanistic' aspect to it. You've seen the initial letter of invitation from Allende to Beer from 1971? There's also a letter that, in a way, closes the Cybersyn episode. It's from one of his associates, and was written shortly after the Pinochet coup of 11 September 1973.

My dear Stafford,

When Ross died you cabled: 'Our Ross is dead. Let us celebrate whatever immortality may mean.' Your words are in my mind now since our Chile died. Let us mourn mortality for what it is.

In sorrow and pain, and
in friendship and love
always your
Heinz
If you'd like to develop some project around this archive, I'd be keen to talk to you about that.
Best wishes
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