


MEMORANDUM FOR:

Circumstances & consequences of a
military coup, if one should happen,
discussed on pages 5-7.

DISSEM
UND USE ONLY
AGENCY

1 August 1973


(DATE)

IN CHILE

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NSC

By GRG NARA, Date 8/16/00

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

(47)

The abortive military revolt on 29 June capped a period of sharply rising political tensions. Its repercussions have further strained the fabric of Chilean society and threaten to overwhelm what is left of the military and civilian commitment to constitutionality and democratic processes after almost three years of political polarization.

President Allende appears to be trying to defuse the situation, but his own supporters are proving nearly as troublesome as his opponents. At the same time, increasing number of military officers are coming to believe that, if the armed forces cannot correct what is wrong with Chile by forcing Allende to find a political solution, they may have to take matters into their own hands.

This memorandum discusses the dynamics of the current situation, suggests several possible outcomes, and examines some consequences for the US that would arise from a successful military coup.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

file

1 August 1973
[REDACTED]

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

CONSEQUENCES OF A MILITARY COUP IN CHILE

Summary

The abortive military revolt on 29 June capped a period of sharply rising political tensions. Its repercussions have further strained the fabric of Chilean society and threaten to overwhelm what is left of the military and civilian commitment to constitutionality and democratic processes after almost three years of political polarization.

President Allende appears to be trying to defuse the situation, but his own supporters are proving nearly as troublesome as his opponents. At the same time, increasing number of military officers are coming to believe that, if the armed forces cannot correct what is wrong with Chile by forcing Allende to find a political solution, they may have to take matters into their own hands.

This memorandum discusses the dynamics of the current situation, suggests several possible outcomes, and examines some consequences for the US that would arise from a successful military coup.

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It looked, last March, like a promising year for Allende. His Popular Unity coalition came through with 43 percent of the vote in nationwide congressional elections. The six-percent increase in the coalition's total over the 1970 presidential returns was a psychological victory for Allende, and he appeared eager to press ahead with his plans for "building socialism."

After the election, however, new socialist initiatives prompted the opposition Christian Democratic and National parties to harden their positions. They began to challenge the government with increasing frequency and severity.

At the same time, a significant realignment was taking place within Allende's governing coalition that was to have an almost immediate effect on his ability to maneuver. The Communist Party, reevaluating its strategy of caution and compromise, decided that it was futile to seek a dialogue with the Christian Democrats when the opposition was seeking to bring down the government. The Communists concluded that Allende's failure to deal firmly with the opposition was damaging the coalition, and they joined the Socialists in pushing for a tougher stand. This shift eroded Allende's ability to play off one party against the other for his own ends.

Political tensions rose sharply during May and June as a prolonged strike by copper workers put further strains on Chile's battered economy. As supporters and opponents of the government tested their strength in the streets of the capital, Allende tried to ease tensions by coaxing the military back into the cabinet. But he could not come up with a formula that would meet the military's stiff preconditions and yet be acceptable to UP leaders.

The last week in June was a watershed. On 29 June, a group of relatively low-level coup plotters in an armored battalion launched an attack on the presidential palace. The uprising was put down less than three hours after it began by loyal forces under the direct command of Army Commander Prats and other pro-government generals.

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The abortive revolt was a wild gamble on the part of a small group of plotters who hoped other units would join the rebellion once the shooting started. Ironically, the military as a whole may have emerged with its image of defender of constitutional order enhanced.

Initially it appeared that the government's success in putting down the revolt might be just the boost Allende needed to manipulate the military back into the cabinet, strengthen his hand vis-a-vis the Socialists and Communists, and deal decisively with the opposition.

The military, however, refused to budge from its insistence that it will return to the cabinet only if given the power to make policy changes. Allende was forced to name a new cabinet made up of civilians. The Socialists, Communists, and extreme leftist groups began pressing Allende to take over the factories their workers occupied on the day of the abortive revolt. In addition, they started to distribute weapons to their followers in preparation for what they apparently see as inevitable conflict with the military and the opposition parties. The illegal arms issue in turn has rallied the opposition back to the attack, with some rightwing groups hoping that nationwide strikes and terrorist action will provoke the military into taking over the government.

This trend of events has left the armed forces more troubled than ever. The military have been concerned over the regime's manifest intent to impose Marxist teachings in the schools, the existence of paramilitary forces, and the occupation of factories. They are particularly disturbed over the stepped-up arming of the government's civilian supporters and by attempts to subvert military discipline. Serious coup plotting, dating from well before the maverick attempt of 29 June, continues among certain officers in the three services. The plotters' main problem -- still unsolved -- has been to ensure the cooperation of key army units in Santiago. The feeling that something must be done to relieve the nation's problems seems to be spreading, especially in the navy and air force where ranking officers reportedly are under intense pressure from their juniors to act.

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[REDACTED]

While there is increasingly open coup talk in navy and air force circles, there is also recognition of the need for army support. Army Commander Prats remains the prime obstacle. He is so strongly opposed to a coup that he reportedly has told troops to disobey their commanders if they are ordered to participate in any move against the government. None of the plotters appears to have a viable scheme for getting around Prats, but the present level of tension is such that another desperation move, possibly directed against Prats as well as the government, is a continuing possibility.

A Look Ahead

The course of events over the next few months may take a new turn, or -- in typically Chilean fashion -- the crisis may simply continue. A protracted period of political unrest is a distinct possibility; even deterioration into civil war cannot be ruled out. Some break in the crisis seems more likely, however. This could come in several ways, ranging from a political "solution" relieving tensions but solving nothing, to a military takeover bringing fundamental changes.

In the following paragraphs we discuss what might happen in the event that the military does decide to move against the Allende government,

Military intervention could come in a number of forms that would produce varying results.

Military Rule With Allende. A first possibility is that Allende would remain as President but the military would fill all cabinet and important sub-cabinet positions. Such a move could take place with or without the leadership of General Prats, and the military would maintain that no coup had taken place. Many UP supporters would lose their government jobs, however, and Allende would become little more than a figurehead.

The Christian Democrats would support an arrangement of this kind because it would maintain a facade of constitutionality and would seem to guarantee that presidential elections, which the party is confident of winning, would be held as scheduled in 1976.

The National Party probably would support the arrangement, or at least not oppose it.

The Popular Unity parties would be infuriated, but they probably would defer action until it was clear what kind of policies the military planned to follow. It is more likely than not, however, that eventually the Socialists and Communists would turn to violent opposition.

Leftist extremist groups such as the Movement of the Revolutionary Left would militantly oppose such an arrangement from the beginning.

Complete Military Takeover. A second form of intervention -- an outright military coup that ousted Allende -- would risk immediate violence on the part of Popular Unity supporters in the defense of socialism and Allende. Even though not all government policies are avidly backed by supporters of the regime, Allende retains great personal popularity. More than this, a coup against Allende would be seen by the UP parties as the effective end of their role in the government.

The militant members of the Communist, Socialist, and Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) street brigades and at least some of the recently armed workers probably would be willing to take on the armed forces despite the military's superior firepower.

The outcome of such a confrontation is uncertain -- neither side is prepared for a prolonged struggle. Assuming that the armed forces prevailed, there would still be strikes, demonstrations, and other forms of protest. Repressive measures would be necessary.

The Christian Democrats would support an all-military government only so long as elections were guaranteed. If the military showed signs of wanting

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to stay in power beyond 1976, Christian Democratic support would evaporate.

The conservative National Party's support for an all-military government would be less conditional.

Coup by Lower-Level Officers. A third possibility, holding the least promise of long-range success, would be a coup in which middle ranking officers acted independently of the military hierarchy. Such a move would encounter all the reactions noted above and would create divisions within the military.

The possible forms of military intervention discussed above have similar implications for the US.

Consequences of a Military Coup

Favorable for the US. An outright military takeover would have some benefits for the US. The first elected Marxist government in the Western Hemisphere would have ended in failure, and the successor government, while nationalistic, would be favorably disposed toward the US.

The demise of the Allende government would be a psychological setback to the cause of doctrinaire socialism in the hemisphere, even though the regime has not had the wide influence on other countries that many anticipated. A new government would almost certainly eliminate the subversive activities -- limited as they are -- being carried out against certain neighbors, and the free-wheeling operations of the Cuban embassy would be curtailed, if not stopped completely.

The military probably would try to find some face-saving device for settling the copper expropriation/compensation dispute with the US. It would, of course, be a largely symbolic settlement, intended to produce a political reconciliation, because Chile would still lack funds for any meaningful payment.

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All potential leaders of a move against Allende realize that, without prompt and large-scale support from the US, the new government could not survive.

The government probably would open the doors to private foreign investment, under specified conditions and perhaps only in "non-strategic" sectors of the economy. The government would not depart drastically, however, from the nationalist policies of its predecessors.

A military government probably would seek the assistance of the most highly qualified and least partisan civilian technicians available. It probably would ask former president Frei and other opposition leaders to recommend qualified individuals who have not been political activists.

After some, perhaps considerable, bloodletting, Chile could eventually achieve a greater measure of political and social stability than has been the case under Allende. This would depend on how skillfully the military handled the situation, and how successful they were in gaining popular support for their efforts to damp down political agitation and relieve economic distress.

Unfavorable Consequences. A number of consequences of a military coup would be less favorable for the US and for the internal stability of Chile.

The overthrow of the Popular Unity government by the military would not bring about a complete reversal of policies initiated by Allende. Indeed, a military government could even be instrumental in strengthening rather than reversing some socialist programs.

Socialism in Chile is based on widely held political beliefs and supported by a large part of the electorate. Many Christian Democratic programs are socialist in nature. The majority of military officers probably want to continue programs that are welfare-oriented and designed to distribute the nation's wealth more evenly. While the military does not favor the wholesale elimination of small- and medium-sized private industries, it has little quarrel with government takeover of basic industries.

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Other actions of the Allende government simply are irreversible at this point. The most obvious of these is the expropriation of the US copper interests, which was approved by practically all political sectors and is regarded as an expression of national sovereignty. Another is the illegal takeover of farms, either by peasants or government agencies. The military knows that further seizures and expropriations must be stopped if farm production is to be increased, but a concerted attempt to remove those already occupying lands would be unlikely.

A new government would not find it easy to maintain public order and bring about economic recovery, its essential tasks. The armed action that would be needed to deal with recalcitrant supporters of the previous regime might have to be prolonged indefinitely, and it could escalate into a wide-ranging civil war. This danger would be enhanced under a new government headed by lower-level officers.

Under these repressive circumstances, necessary support, especially financial, from various foreign sources would be severely curtailed. In addition, the US would be expected to undertake a massive economic aid program to rescue Chile.

A military government would lack effective leadership even with the support of the most qualified technicians. Chilean military leaders are capable in their own fields but are not as politically minded as their Brazilian or even Peruvian counterparts. The difficulty they have experienced in formulating a coordinated plan to overthrow Allende provides a preview of the difficulties they might experience in ruling the country.

A military regime could not count on the continued support of groups that oppose the present government under all circumstances. Such support, however, would be essential in restoring stability. The Christian Democratic and National parties would not be likely to back the military if it appeared that their own interests were to suffer. Political

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support might well be conditioned on a military promise to adhere to a strict timetable for calling new elections, a promise the military might be unwilling to make. Some of these misgivings would be reduced if Allende remained as a constitutional president with greatly reduced powers in a military-dominated government of national reconciliation.

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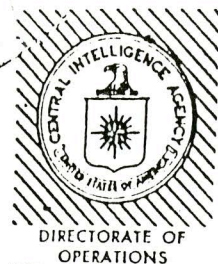
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DIST 6 SEPTEMBER 1973

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Authority NSC

By SRB, NARA, Date 8/16/00

SACH

COUNTRY: CHILE

DOI: [REDACTED] SEPTEMBER 1973

SUBJECT: COMMENTS BY PRESIDENT SALVADOR ALLENDE ON
THE CURRENT ATTITUDE OF THE MILITARY TOWARDS
HIS GOVERNMENT AND THE CURRENT POLITICAL
SITUATION

[REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ON [REDACTED] SEPTEMBER 1973, PRESIDENT SALVADOR A L L E N D E
HELD A MEETING [REDACTED]
ALLENDE SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THAT THE PRESENT MILITARY MINISTERS

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
SECRET [REDACTED]

(classification)

(dissem controls)

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WILL LEAVE THE CABINET IF HE DOES NOT CHANGE HIS PRESENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POLICIES. ALLENDE SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THERE EXISTS AN AGREEMENT AMONG THE THREE BRANCHES OF THE ARMED FORCES THAT WHEN THE MILITARY MINISTERS LEAVE, THE ARMED FORCES WILL REQUEST HIS RESIGNATION. ALLENDE ALSO SAID THAT THE PRESENT ATTITUDE OF THE ARMED FORCES IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE U.P. GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES. [REDACTED], ALLENDE FEELS THAT THE ARMED FORCES CONSIDER IT IMPOSSIBLE TO COOPERATE WITH THE U.P. GOVERNMENT, AND HE BELIEVES THAT THEY WILL CONFRONT THE GOVERNMENT WITH FORCE. ALLENDE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HAD INFORMATION THAT THE SITUATION WITHIN THE NAVY WAS VERY DELICATE AND THAT THE NAVAL OFFICERS IN VALPARAISO WERE EXERTING CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE ON ADMIRAL RAUL MONTERO, NAVY COMMANDER IN CHIEF, TO RESIGN AS CINC.

2. [REDACTED] ALLENDE WAS ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE MASS RALLY HELD ON 4 SEPTEMBER TO CELEBRATE THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF ALLENDE'S ELECTION. ALLENDE SAID THAT HE FELT AS THOUGH HE HAD JUST ATTENDED THE FUNERAL OF THE COUNTRY. HE SAID THAT MOST OF THOSE ATTENDING THE RALLY WERE PEOPLE WHO SUPPORTED THE GOVERNMENT, BUT HE NOTED THAT THEY WERE NOT

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[REDACTED]
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AN ARMED FORCE TO BE USED IN A CONFRONTATION WITH THE MILITARY. HE SAID THAT THE POPULAR POWER WAS A GOOD TERM FOR SPEECHES, BUT, REALISTICALLY, THE PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT HIM ARE WITHOUT WEAPONS. AND THEY COULD NOT FACE THE ARMED FORCES FIRE POWER SUCCESSFULLY. HE SAID THAT IT WAS HIS BELIEF THAT HIS PRESENCE AT THE HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT LEAD TO A CONFRONTATION WHICH COULD RESULT IN 100,000 DEATHS. MEMBERS OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCCH) WHO WERE AT THE MEETING PROPOSED PROVIDING ARMS TO THEIR PARTY MEMBERS. ALLENDE REJECTED THE IDEA SAYING THAT IT WAS TOO DANGEROUS BECAUSE THE ARMED FORCES PROBABLY WOULD REACT FORCEFULLY AS SOON AS THEY LEARNED OF ANY EFFORTS TO ARM PARTY MEMBERS. ALLENDE CONCLUDED THAT THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS IS A POLITICAL ONE.

3. ALLENDE HAS ACCEPTED THE FORMATION OF AN "OPERATIONAL COMMAND," WHICH WILL BE HEADED BY FORMER GENERAL CARLOS (P R A T S) AND WILL INCLUDE ADONIS SEPULVEDA AND ERIC SCHNAKE OF (PS), ANSELMO SULE AND HUGO MIRANDA OF THE RADICAL PARTY (PR), ORLANDO MILLAS AND VICTOR DIAZ OF THE PCCH, OSCAR GARRETTON AND

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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(classification)

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[REDACTED]
JAIME G A Z M U R I, OF THE UNITED POPULAR ACTION
MOVEMENT (MAPU), ALBERTO J (E R E Z) OF THE CHRISTIAN LEFT,
AND RAUL (DAVID) L E B O N OF THE INDEPENDENT POPULAR ACTION,
THE COMMAND HAS DECIDED TO TAKE SECURITY MEASURES SUCH AS
REMOVING FILES FROM U.P. OFFICES. ALSO DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN HELD
BUT NO DECISIONS HAVE BEEN REACHED REGARDING THE POSSIBLE
CREATION OF "LIBERATED ZONES" TO BE USED IN THE CASE OF A
MILITARY COUP D'ETAT; THESE ZONES WOULD CONSIST OF CONCEN-
TRATIONS OF U.P. MEMBERS IN DESIGNATED ZONES IN SANTIAGO AND
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

4. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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DATE 1 SEPTEMBER 1973

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Authority NSC

By 5061 NARA, Date 8/21/00

COUNTRY

/CHILE

DOI

AUGUST 1973

SUBJECT

VIEWS OF THE CHILEAN ARMY COMMANDER IN CHIEF

ON POSSIBLE MILITARY INTERVENTION IN HIS

COUNTRY,

1.

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(dissem controls)

[REDACTED] MET WITH A NUMBER OF SENIOR CHILEAN ARMY OFFICERS, INCLUDING GENERAL AUGUSTO PINOCHET, ARMY COMMANDER IN CHIEF, AND ORLANDO URBINA, CHIEF OF STAFF.

2. [REDACTED] REPORTED HIS FINDINGS TO [REDACTED] HE CLAIMED THAT HIS CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL PINOCHET WAS VERY FRANK AND OPEN, COMMENTING THAT THE LATTER APPEARS TO BE RESIGNED TO AN EVENTUAL OVERTHROW OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT BY FORCE, BUT ONLY WHEN ALL OTHER AVENUES TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY HAVE BEEN CLOSED. [REDACTED] SAID THAT PINOCHET APPEARS TO BE FRIGHTENED BY THE SPECTRE OF CIVIL BLOODSHED AND HE AFFIRMED THAT THE ARMY AS AN INSTITUTION WOULD NOT UNDERTAKE A COUP D'ETAT UNTIL THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE CALL FOR SUCH ACTION. PINOCHET FURTHER COMMENTED THAT THE POLITICAL PARTIES MUST ASK THE MILITARY TO INTERVENE BEFORE HE PERSONALLY WOULD

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(classification)

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CONSENT TO MOVE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT.

3. [REDACTED] INFORMED [REDACTED] THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN IMPRESSED WITH GENERAL URBINA AND DID NOT TRUST HIM. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE [REDACTED] CHIEF OF STAFF REFUSED TO DISCUSS THE [REDACTED] SITUATION AND EVEN AVERTED HIS EYES WHEN TALKING ABOUT NORMAL MILITARY MATTERS. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: PRIOR TO HIS MEETING WITH URBINA, [REDACTED] HAD BEEN TOLD [REDACTED] THAT URBINA WAS A LEFTIST; THUS, HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD URBINA MAY HAVE REFLECTED THIS PREJUDICE.)

4. [REDACTED] ALSO REPORTED THAT MOST OF HIS [REDACTED] ARMY CONTACTS EXPRESSED THE FEAR THAT THE CURRENT SOCIAL/POLITICAL STRIFE IN THE COUNTRY HAD DAMAGED CHILE'S ABILITY TO DEFEND HERSELF FROM POSSIBLE PERUVIAN AND/OR BOLIVIAN ATTACKS. THESE OFFICERS CONTENDED THAT THE PRIMARY PROBLEM WOULD BE THE LACK OF FUEL AND FOODSTUFF FOR THE ARMY IN THE EVENT THAT SUCH AN ATTACK TOOK PLACE. [REDACTED] COMMENTED THAT HE HAD DOUBTED THE SERIOUSNESS OF SUCH FEARS UNTIL HE HAD HEARD THEM EXPRESSED MANY TIMES. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: HOWEVER JUSTIFIED, IT IS BELIEVED THAT CHILEAN ARMY FEARS ABOUT AN INVASION BY PERU

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OR BOLIVIA ARE REAL. THESE FEARS RESOLVE AROUND THE ASSUMPTION THAT THESE TWO COUNTRIES COULD NOT PASS UP AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CHILE'S WEAKENED POSITION TO REGAIN TERRITORY WHICH WAS LOST IN THE WARS OF THE PACIFIC.)

5. [REDACTED]

6. FINALLY, [REDACTED]

TOLD [REDACTED] THAT THE USSR CONSIDERS THE CHILEAN REVOLUTION A FAILURE AND DESTINED TO BE TERMINATED BY

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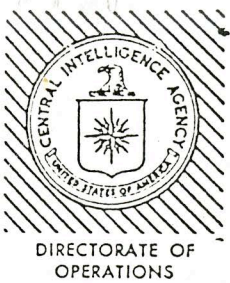
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(dissem controls)

MILITARY ACTION. [REDACTED] ADDED THAT ONE COULD NOT EXPECT
SOCIALISM TO GROW OUT OF THE PRESENT CHAOS IN THE COUNTRY.

7. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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DIST 7 SEPTEMBER 1973

COUNTRY CHILE

DOI AUGUST 1973

SUBJECT DESIRE OF THE [REDACTED] FOR
CONTACT WITH THE GUILD MOVEMENT

SANITIZED COPY

1. [REDACTED]

TOLD A LEADER OF THE GUILD MOVEMENT ON [REDACTED] AUGUST THAT THE MILITARY OFFICERS OPPOSED TO THE GOVERNMENT DESIRED REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE GUILDS. [REDACTED] SAID CONTACTS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO OCCASIONS WHEN

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Authority NSC

By SR6 NARA, Date 9/29/00

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ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER HAD INFORMATION TO COMMUNICATE, BECAUSE OF THE DELICATE POLITICAL SITUATION. HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT CHILE WOULD NOT FALL UNDER MARXIST DOMINATION, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT KNOW HOW OR WHEN THE COUNTRY WOULD BE SAVED.

2. [REDACTED] SAID THAT BLAME FOR CHILE'S PROBLEMS DID NOT BELONG ENTIRELY TO PRESIDENT SALVADOR A L L E N D E, AND THAT THE POLITICAL PARTIES WERE ALSO AT FAULT. HOWEVER, THE MILITARY WERE VERY IMPRESSED, HE SAID, BY THE CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION OF 22 AUGUST AND WERE INTENSIFYING THEIR CAMPAIGN TO "DISARM THE ENEMY." [REDACTED] ASKED THE GUILD LEADERS TO BE PATIENT AND HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE MILITARY.

3. GUILD LEADERS CONTINUE TO LACK CONTACT WITH THE ARMY.

4. [REDACTED]

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(classification)

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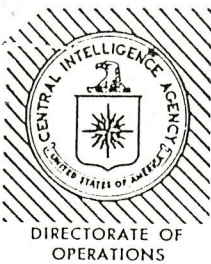
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DIST 7 SEPTEMBER 1973

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NSC
By GRB NARA, Date 8/16/00

COUNTRY: CHILE

DOI: EARLY SEPTEMBER 1973

SUBJECT: COMMENTS OF SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS REGARDING
THE RESULTS OF THE 28-29 AUGUST COUNCIL
OF GENERALS MEETING

1.

2.

GENERAL

AUGUSTO PINOCHET, ARMY COMMANDER IN CHIEF, SENT A
MEMORANDUM TO PRESIDENT SALVADOR ALLENDE
AS A RESULT OF THE 28-29 AUGUST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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(classification)

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4. [REDACTED] SAID THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK FOR THE ARMY AT THIS TIME IS TO STRENGTHEN ITS OWN INTERNAL UNITY AND, AT THE SAME TIME, JOIN FORCES WITH THE AIR FORCE, NAVY AND CARABINEROS TO MAINTAIN A COMMON POSITION OF STRENGTH.

[REDACTED] SAID THAT, IN HIS OPINION, SEPTEMBER WILL BE A DECISIVE MONTH IN THE CONFLICT TO RID CHILE OF MARXIST CONTROL.

5. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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ACTION IS TO TAKE PLACE EVEN IF PRESIDENT SALVADOR A L L E N D E
DECIDES TO REMOVE NAVAL COMMANDER IN CHIEF RAUL M O N T E R O
BEFORE 10 SEPTEMBER AND REPLACE HIM WITH ADMIRAL JOSE
M E R I N O, COMMANDER OF THE FIRST NAVAL ZONE IN VALPARAISO.

COMMENT: PRESIDENT ALLENDE WAS TO MEET WITH ADMIRAL MERINO DURING THE EARLY AFTERNOON OF 7 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBLE REMOVAL OF MONTERO AS CINC. THE NAVY HAD EXPECTED ALLENDE TO NAME MERINO AS CINC ON 7 SEPTEMBER. THIS APPARENTLY DID NOT HAPPEN.)

2.

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S. H. C. B. E. S.



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Authority NSC

By GR67 NARA, Date 8/16/00

1. [REDACTED]

2. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] THE NAVY IS SCHEDULED TO INITIATE A MOVE TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT SALVADOR A L L E N D E IN VALPARAISO AT 8:30 A.M. ON 10 SEPTEMBER.

[REDACTED] SAID THAT THE AIR FORCE (FACH) WOULD SUPPORT THIS NAVY INITIATIVE AFTER THE NAVY TAKES A POSITIVE ACTION, SUCH AS

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

(classification)

(dissem controls)

PAGE 2 OF 5 PAGES

TAKING OVER THE PROVINCE OF VALPARAISO, ISSUING AN ULTIMATUM DEMANDING ALLENDE'S RESIGNATION, OR THREATENING TO MOVE AGAINST SANTIAGO. [REDACTED] NOTED THAT ADMIRAL JOSE MERINO, COMMANDER OF THE FIRST NAVAL ZONE IN VALPARAISO, IS ATTEMPTING UNSUCCESSFULLY TO DELAY THIS ACTION UNTIL 12 SEPTEMBER WHEN HE EXPECTS TO BE NAMED AS NAVY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF (CINC).

3. [REDACTED] THAT AFTER THE NAVY TAKES A POSITIVE ACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, THE FACH WILL MOVE TO SILENCE ALL GOVERNMENT RADIOS. AT THE SAME TIME THE FACH PLANS TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL RADIO NETWORK USING EXISTING OPPOSITION RADIO STATIONS SUCH AS RADIOS BALMACEDA, MINERIA AND AGRICULTURA.

4. [REDACTED] THAT FACH CINC GENERAL GUSTAVO LEIGH HAS CONTACTED ARMY CINC GENERAL AUGUSTO PINOCHET ON THIS MATTER, AND PINOCHET HAS SAID THAT THE ARMY WILL NOT OPPOSE THE NAVY'S ACTION. [REDACTED] BELIEVES THAT ARMY UNITS WILL JOIN IN THE COUP AFTER THE FACH LENDS ITS SUPPORT TO THE NAVY. HOWEVER, HE DID NOT KNOW IF THE ARMY GENERALS WOULD ACTIVELY SUPPORT THE NAVY AND FACH EFFORT TO OVERTHROW ALLENDE. GENERAL LEIGH, HOWEVER, PLANS TO CONTINUE HIS CONTACT WITH PINOCHET AND OTHER ARMY GENERALS THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD OF 8-10

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
~~SECRET~~

(classification)

(dissem controls)

PAGE 3 OF 5 PAGES

SEPTEMBER.

5. [REDACTED] THAT GENERAL ARTURO Y O V' A N E OF THE CARABINEROS (UNIFORMED NATIONAL POLICE), HAS PROMISED TO SUPPORT THE COUP AND HAS GUARANTEED THE SUPPORT OF THE CARABINERO NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS SCHOOL, THE SPECIAL SERVICES GROUP AND THE PALACE GUARDS. [REDACTED] ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO SEIZE THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE AND ALLENDE'S RESIDENCE, BUT WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE CARABINEROS, THE ARMED FORCES SHOULD BE ABLE TO GAIN CONTROL OF THESE STRATEGIC LOCATIONS.

6. [REDACTED] BELIEVES THAT A COUP COULD OCCUR ON 10 SEPTEMBER OR AT LEAST DURING THE WEEK OF 10 SEPTEMBER. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH COULD STOP A COUP ATTEMPT. [REDACTED] THAT IF ALLENDE RESIGNS, CALLS A

PLEBISCITE OR ANNOUNCES THE FORMATION OF AN ALL MILITARY CABINET,

THIS COULD LEAD TO A POSTPONEMENT IN THE NAVY'S PLANS. [REDACTED]

THAT ADMIRAL MERINO, WHO IS WELL RESPECTED BY JUNIOR NAVAL OFFICERS IN VALPARAISO, MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONVINCE THE PLOTTERS IN VALPARAISO TO DELAY THEIR PLANS FOR SEVERAL DAYS.

7. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: PRESIDENT ALLENDE IS UNQUESTIONABLY CONFRONTED WITH THE MOST SERIOUS THREAT FROM THE ARMED FORCES TO HIS CONTINUANCE IN OFFICE SINCE HIS ELECTION THREE YEARS AGO. AT THE SAME TIME IT HAS

~~SECRET~~

(classification)

(dissam controls)

TO BE RECOGNIZED THAT THE PRESIDENT STILL HAS SOME ROOM TO MANEUVER. HE COULD THROW OFF THE TIMING OF THE PLOTTERS OR STOP THEM COMPLETELY BY AN INITIATIVE ON HIS PART WHICH WOULD MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND/OR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. TO AVERT THIS PRESENT THREAT, THE PRESIDENT SHOULD TAKE SOME KIND OF ACTION ON 8 OR 9 SEPTEMBER. HE ALREADY HAS HAD ONE MEETING ON 8 SEPTEMBER WITH LEADERS OF HIS COALITION AND ANOTHER IS SCHEDULED FOR 5:00 PM ON THE SAME DATE. ACCORDING TO RADIO PORTALES, NO AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PRESENT CRISIS DURING THE FIRST MEETING. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER OR NOT THE POPULAR UNITY LEADERS, ESPECIALLY THE SOCIALIST PARTY, WILL GIVE HIM THE SUPPORT NECESSARY TO REACH AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE MILITARY OPPOSITION. THUS, TIME COULD RUN OUT ON THE PRESIDENT, ESPECIALLY IF HE IS NOT AWARE THAT HE IS FACING A 10 SEPTEMBER DEADLINE. IT ALSO SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED THAT AT A CERTAIN POINT IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR THE PRESIDENT TO STOP A MOVE BY THE NAVY NO MATTER WHAT CONCESSIONS HE MIGHT MAKE. DEPENDING ON THE MOMENTUM THE COUP ACTION HAS DEVELOPED AT THE TIME HE MAKES HIS VIEWS KNOWN.

8.

~~SECRET~~

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Document Number: P 50

Document Date: 9 / 8 / 1973

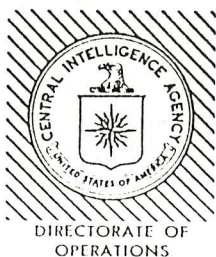
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PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES

EXC SS 11

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DIST 10 SEPTEMBER 1973

COUNTRY: CHILE

DOI : 9 SEPTEMBER 1973

SUBJECT: POSTPONEMENT OF A MOVE BY THE CHILEAN NAVY TO OVERTHROW
THE GOVERNMENT ON 10 SEPTEMBER 1973

SACIA

1. COMMENT:

REPORTED THAT THE NAVY WAS SCHEDULED TO INITIATE A MOVE TO OVERTHROW
THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT SALVADOR ALLENDE IN VALPARAISO AT
8:30 A.M. ON 10 SEPTEMBER 1973. THE REPORT ALSO SAID THAT THE AIR
FORCE WOULD SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE AFTER THE NAVY TAKES A POSITIVE
ACTION, SUCH AS TAKING OVER THE PROVINCE OF VALPARAISO, ISSUING AN
ULTIMATUM DEMANDING ALLENDE'S RESIGNATION, OR THREATENING TO MOVE
AGAINST SANTIAGO.)

~~SECRET~~

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DECLASSIFIED

Authority NSC

By GRG NARA, Date 8/16/00

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

(classification)

(dissem controls)

PAGE [REDACTED] OF [REDACTED] PAGES

2. THE ACTION SCHEDULED BY THE NAVY FOR 10 SEPTEMBER HAS BEEN POSTPONED. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: IT MAY BE RESCHEDULED FOR LATER DURING THE WEEK, POSSIBLY 11 SEPTEMBER.)

3. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] LT. COLONEL ALBERTO MARTIN OF THE CARABINEROS (UNIFORMED NATIONAL POLICE) ON 9 SEPTEMBER ABOUT THE PLANNED MILITARY ACTION. MARTIN WORKS IN THE CARABINERO COMMUNICATIONS UNIT AND WAS SCHEDULED TO TAKE CHARGE OF CUTTING OFF THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS IN THE EVENT OF A COUP. MARTIN SAID THAT THE COUP ACTION ORIGINALLY PLANNED FOR 10 SEPTEMBER HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL 6:00 A.M. ON 11 SEPTEMBER.)

4. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] THIS LATEST DELAY PROVIDES PRESIDENT ALLENDE WITH ADDITIONAL TIME TO WORK HIS WAY OUT OF THE PRESENT CRISIS.)

5. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

Ref: 10-1-8
Coup prospects

SECRET [REDACTED]

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

CHILE

SANITIZED COPY

Chile

DECLASSIFIED
AUTHORITY NSC
BY [REDACTED] NARA [REDACTED] DATE [REDACTED]

SECRET [REDACTED]
NIE 94-73
14 June 1973
[REDACTED]

SECRET/

THIS ESTIMATE IS SUBMITTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AND CONCURRED IN BY THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense, the NSA, and the Treasury.

Concurring:

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Director, National Security Agency

The Director, Division of International Security Affairs, Atomic Energy Commission

The Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury

Abstaining:

The Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of his jurisdiction.

WARNING

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, USC, Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited.

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exemption category 58(2),(3)
Automatically declassified on
Date Impossible to Determine

SECRET/

~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

CHILE

NIE 94-73

CHILE

~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

CHILE

PRÉCIS

This Estimate assesses the situation in Chile with particular emphasis on the prospects for the consolidation in power of President Allende's Marxist regime. Allende has already made considerable gains in strengthening his minority government through revolutionary economic changes that weaken his opposition and enlarge his own constituency. But this strategy has led to endemic economic and political turbulence which could undercut his popular support, solidify his opposition, and alienate the armed forces.

Over the next two or three years there will be a series of political crises and confrontations which serve as tests of strength between the Allende regime and its opposition. The final section of the Estimate outlines three possible courses of development: (1) Allende could be held by his opposition to a standoff, with neither side registering substantial gains, and with the political future remaining very much in doubt until the 1976 presidential election. (2) Allende could consolidate his regime to the point where the opposition could neither constrain his actions nor raise a serious electoral challenge. (3) Allende's Marxist regime could be repudiated either by a major reduction of his freedom of action imposed by the military, or, in extreme circumstances, by his removal from office via a coup.

At this juncture, a *political standoff* seems the most likely course of development. The chances for *consolidation* or *repudiation*, while less likely than those for *standoff*, appear roughly equal, one to the other.

The US lacks powerful and reliable levers for influencing the outcome. US encouragement of the forces within Chile that constrain Allende's behavior could have some impact on the course of events, though at best a very limited one. Continuation of the present array of US economic pressures against Chile, within the context of a "cool but correct" diplomatic posture, can help assure that Allende's economic troubles—which are largely of his own making—will persist as a major political liability.

THE ESTIMATE

I. ALLENDE'S POLITICAL POSITION

1. President Allende took office in November 1970 with only 37 percent of the popular vote, yet with a pledge to carry out an irreversible socialist revolution within a constitutional framework. He has already registered important gains in political strength during the first half of his six-year term, and he wields formidable assets for effecting still further gains. His liabilities are also imposing, however, and he has not yet consolidated the power of his Marxist regime.

Goals and Assets

2. Allende's strategy is to use his vast executive authority to effect revolutionary economic and social changes—a process which strengthens his hold on power. More specifically, he has forced the pace of the state takeover of the economy and of redistribution of income in order to weaken his opposition in the middle and upper classes and to enlarge the support for his Marxist coalition among the poor.

3. Especially during his first year in office, Allende worked within an environment favorable to far-reaching change. The 1970 elec-

tion was widely viewed in Chile as a mandate to accelerate the restructuring of the economy begun by the previous administration. His swift action in confiscating US copper interests added the force of nationalism to the political momentum for revolutionary policies.

4. The extent of Allende's success so far was revealed in the March 1973 congressional election, in which his Popular Unity (UP) coalition received 43 percent of the vote. These returns indicated that the bulk of low income Chileans believe that the Allende regime has improved their condition, or at least is working in their interest. Some among the middle income groups, especially youths, also support his revolutionary goals.

5. The growth in support for the UP reflects Allende's skill at political maneuver as well as the popularity of his measures. He has held together most of the elements of his unwieldy coalition, which includes hardline extremists as well as pragmatic politicians. He has been exerting increasingly effective influence on the hierarchy of his own obstreperous Socialist Party, though he still is challenged by an influential faction which agitates for a more aggressive revolutionary pace. The Commu-

nist Party, in contrast, serves him well as a disciplined and moderating force within the UP. Reflecting the line of their Soviet mentors, the Communists see little point in risking their hard-won position *within* the government through unnecessary provocation of the opposition and the military.

6. Allende has been particularly effective in dealing with the armed forces, in part because of their apolitical tradition. Though generally sympathetic with the need for social and economic changes, most military officers are wary of Marxism and deeply concerned about the turbulence engendered by Allende's rule. Yet the army chiefs, because they fear that a coup could ignite large-scale popular resistance, have felt they must work to avoid national disaster *through* rather than *against* Allende.

7. Allende has encouraged this constitutionalist bent via regular praise of the military and generous extensions of funds for perquisites and equipment. More important, whenever a crisis brews he is quick to engage the military on *his* side as constitutional president. This was most evident in November 1972, when he asked three top officers to join his Cabinet temporarily, to bring an end to major disorders and pave the way for holding the March election in relative stability.

8. Allende's hand is strengthened by the divergent interests of the opposition parties, as well as by their demoralization over the UP's electoral gains. The Christian Democrats (PDC), Chile's largest party, have their own socialist traditions and initially lent qualified support to Allende's program. Since 1971, they have stiffened their opposition and joined in an uncomfortable alliance with the National Party, the second largest anti-UP group. Since the Nationals represent economically-privileged Chileans, this association costs the PDC some of its popular support. Finally,

allegations of past US intervention in Chilean politics on behalf of anti-Allende forces serve to tarnish the image of key opposition leaders.

Liabilities

9. Allende's most obvious liability is that he remains a *minority* president in a highly politicized society. His opponents control the Congress and are influential in the judiciary. They also hold important assets in the news media, the educational system, organized labor, and certain sectors of the economy. The constitutionality, not to mention the efficacy, of his every move comes under vociferous political attack. Thus, he can advance towards his goal of restructuring the country only in fits and starts and through an unprecedented extension of executive authority.

10. More fundamentally, his strategy for cementing the UP's hold on power creates economic and political tensions which could undercut the gains he has made. The UP's reckless policies and feckless management of the swollen state sector have given rise to endemic economic turbulence. After an initial spurt in 1971, industrial output has gone into a protracted decline, while agricultural output has fallen by more than 25 percent. These shortfalls, combined with the rapid expansion of the purchasing power of the poor and with near runaway inflation, have made a shambles of domestic trade. Shortages of essential goods, queues, black marketeering, and political manipulation of the distribution system have become the order of the day. Allende's current policies will not revive domestic production, and he will continue to be saddled with a deteriorating economy.

11. Allende's immediate economic concern is the anticipated stringency in food and fuel supplies during the winter months ahead (June-September). He is undertaking a major expansion of food imports and of state con-

trols over distribution, to favor the poor. But because of the unprecedented pressure on port and distribution facilities and on the bureaucracy, irregularities in supplies will irritate most Chileans, including many of the poor.

12. Chile is also experiencing an erosion of respect for constituted authority, as political and special interest groups increasingly resort to direct and forceful action to protect and advance their interests. The style was set by Allende's practice of stretching the law to speed the state takeover of the economy. Leftist extremists—largely independent of Allende's influence—go one step further with illegal seizures of farms, factories and stores. Rightwing groups, representing dispossessed and threatened owners, counter with their own disturbances, and at times clash with the militants of the left.

13. The problem now extends beyond the activity of extremists and reflects a polarization of society which is wearing away the Chilean predilection for political compromise and abhorrence of bloodshed. The major political parties have paramilitary auxiliaries and student affiliates geared for militant action. Business and professional associations are ready to use direct action to protect their economic stake (e.g., the "bosses strike" of last October). And so are the copper miners, the government workers, and other privileged labor unions who fear that the regime's efforts to aid the poor will be increasingly at their expense. So far Allende has been able to contain political violence short of a major blood-letting. But political disturbances have become nearly as commonplace in today's Chile as economic breakdowns.

II. ALLENDE'S FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS

14. Chile's foreign economic relations reflect both the UP's dismal economic performance and Allende's skill at political maneu-

ver. The country is saddled with a huge and rising foreign debt and a parlous credit rating. From 1970 to 1972, exports fell by nearly 25 percent, while imports rose by over 35 percent. (Food imports jumped from \$150 million to \$400 million.) The Allende government sustained a \$540 million trade deficit in 1972 by obtaining credits from new sources, including politically motivated aid from the USSR and others; by defaulting on debt repayments to old creditors, mainly the US; and by allowing net foreign reserves to run deeply into the red.¹

15. A similar pattern is evident so far in 1973. Thanks in large measure to Allende's cultivation of a favorable international image, the Chilean revolution is regarded with sympathy by many non-Communist as well as Communist governments. Thus, most West European countries have been reluctant to take a hard line on Chilean repayment of old debts and a few have extended new lines of credit. For certain new creditors, it is a case of good business as well as good politics. Argentina, and even Brazil, have extended credits for goods that they could not easily sell elsewhere (buses, tractors, and such).

16. Because of a recent sharp rise in world prices, Chile stands to increase its earnings from copper exports in 1973 by about \$200 million. This should help prevent any serious deterioration in Chile's import position, but only if old and new creditors do not toughen their terms. On balance, Chile is likely to

¹ About \$1 billion in economic assistance was extended to Chile during 1971-1972, mostly for development projects. The latter includes \$400 million in Communist development loans on which little has so far been drawn. Among the key credits which met Allende's immediate import needs were (a) \$100 million in hard currency from the USSR; (b) food shipments from Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, and the People's Republic of China; and (c) \$85 million in balance-of-payments support from the International Monetary Fund.

remain dependent on political favors and subject to day-to-day strains in trying to maintain imports at a politically-acceptable level.

17. Allende has petitioned the USSR for massive economic assistance to strengthen the UP regime for the long haul. The Soviets are interested both in increasing their influence in South America and in the UP's success as a model for a Marxist revolution through election. Yet they do not want another Cuba on their hands in terms of forking out regular, extensive balance-of-payments assistance to a foundering economy. Soviet caution also reflects doubts about Allende's ability to survive in office, as well as concern about antagonizing the US by pushing too vigorously for influence in the Western Hemisphere. Thus, on the one hand, when Chile has pleaded a desperate need, Moscow has extended some emergency help. But, on the other hand, it has advised Allende that he must shore up his economic position through an austerity program and by improving relations with the US in order to increase credits from traditional Western sources.

III. THE UNITED STATES AND THE ALLENDE REGIME

18. Allende derives considerable benefit at home and abroad from an adversary relationship with the US. Yet he sees advantages in pressing for certain kinds of cooperation, if obtainable on his own terms. Thus, he has kept lines open to Washington on possible Chilean compensation for the expropriated US copper companies.² For both political and

² Chile has recently been touting, as a means for solving the compensation dispute, a 1914 treaty, which provides for addressing bilateral difficulties through a special international commission that would render *non-binding* recommendations. Allende might invoke the treaty in hopes of setting aside the compensation dispute for a prolonged period, during which he might hope that his relations with the US would appear sufficiently improved to enable Chile to garner increased foreign credits.

economic reasons, however, he would not agree to pay compensation except as part of a favorable package deal, including lenient terms for rescheduling of the outstanding debts to the US (over \$1 billion) and the opening of generous new lines of credit, mainly through international lending agencies. In short, Allende does not want either to repay his US obligations or to straighten up his international accounts generally, at the cost of domestic retrenchment.

19. Though increasingly dependent on foreign economic aid, Allende's Chile is largely insulated from external controls over its domestic politics. This reflects its geographic remoteness from the world's powers, the political sophistication of its population, the willingness of a large number of countries to proffer assistance, and the very complexity of its internal political scene. Consequently, the US lacks powerful and reliable levers for influencing the political outcome in Chile.

20. US encouragement of the forces within Chile that constrain Allende's behavior could have some impact on the ultimate political outcome, though at best a very limited one. Continued US cooperation with and assistance to the Chilean military, for example, would contribute to their willingness to stand up against certain policy initiatives by Allende (e.g., acceptance of sizable Soviet military assistance).

21. Continuation of the present array of US economic pressures against Chile, within the context of a "cool but correct" diplomatic posture, can help assure that Allende's economic troubles—which are largely of his own making—will persist as a major political liability. But if the US were to institute a policy of open and all-out economic pressure, Allende would gain more political strength from wrapping himself in the flag than he would lose because of the additional economic burden. Besides, Chile would probably attract

increased aid on political grounds from Communist countries, from certain European countries (despite US pressures), and from sympathetic neighbors (in particular, Peronist Argentina). The outcome would be the same whether or not the US policy were explained on the basis of the Hickenlooper Amendment and other restrictive US legislation.

IV. CONCERNING CHILE'S FUTURE

New Turbulence Ahead

22. Encouraged by the March election, Allende is pushing ahead with his strategy of strengthening the position of the UP by measures that appeal to low income groups and by attacks on remaining opposition strongholds, especially in the private economy but also in the news media and the educational and judicial systems.³ He will be prepared to retreat temporarily under heavy opposition pressure, or when needed to keep the military on his side. But for the most part he will try to ride out the tensions generated by his policies, because he is unwilling to risk undertaking the major reordering of priorities—towards austerity and discipline—needed to spur economic growth and stem political violence.

23. There are no scheduled nation-wide popular elections to test the success of Allende's strategy until the municipal contests of 1975 and the presidential race of 1976. In the meantime there will be a series of political crises and confrontations—some triggered by the regime's initiatives, some by the resistance of the opposition to his right or the provocations of the zealots to his left. The outcome of these tests of strength will depend on the

³The private sector still accounts for between a third and a half of national output, and consists mainly of small enterprises in agriculture, manufacturing, retail trade, motor transportation, and professional services.

interplay of a series of complex factors: Allende's skill; the opposition's will; the provocations of the extremists; the popular mood; and, increasingly, the reaction of the military.

What Role for the Military?

24. The inevitable succession of political crises seems likely to draw the military into a more open and important political role. But what role? There is evidence of growing anti-UP feeling and coup plotting within the armed forces, and also of a growing willingness among opposition politicians to look to the military for support in curbing Allende's strength. Many navy and air force leaders apparently already feel that strong measures against Allende are urgently required. The picture in the army, by far the key service, is less clear. A few generals and a substantial number of middle grade officers also appear anxious to constrain Allende's hand. But in part because of fear of touching off a civil war, the top leadership, especially Commander-in-Chief Prats, continues to weigh in against a coup.

25. A successful coup would probably require extensive high-level support in all three services, and at least tacit approval by the *Carabineros*, the national police. The necessary support might be quickly forthcoming in the event of very widespread disorders or such a complete economic collapse as to imperil the security of the country. Short of these contingencies, broad military support seems unlikely unless there is (a) a major decline in Allende's popular appeal, (b) a broad commitment to a coup by the political opposition, and (c) an intransigent posture by Allende in the face of demands from the military. On balance, there would seem to be only an outside chance of a successful military move to force Allende from office at this juncture.

26. Much more likely would be the return of military leaders to the Cabinet, under terms negotiated with Allende. Such an arrangement would, in effect, strengthen rather than weaken Allende's hold on office, at least initially. But the military would probably attempt to curb certain UP policies which they believe are exacerbating tensions, and to crack down against extremists on both the left and right. The subsequent dynamics could work either for or against Allende and the UP.

Three Alternative Lines of Development

27. The following paragraphs outline three possible lines of development in Chile over the next two or three years: a political standoff; consolidation of the UP; repudiation of the UP. At this juncture, a *standoff*, in which neither Allende nor the opposition registers substantial gains in political strength, seems the most likely course of development. The chances for *consolidation* or *repudiation*, while less likely than those for *standoff*, appear roughly equal, one to the other.

28. *Standoff: Neither Side Registers Substantial Gains.* Allende would experience further gains in some aspects of his political position but perhaps reverses in other aspects. The net effect would be no major shift in the present balance of political power. Through skillful maneuver he would weaken the opposition somewhat further. Yet the UP's popularity would still be hindered by the economic and political turbulence. Though he might call upon the military to shore up his regime during rough periods, Allende would remain sufficiently independent to continue along his established policy direction. For their part, the military would be able to set some limits on Allende's political initiatives. The opposition too would be able to place constraints on Allende's freedom of action and to criticize his regime vigorously.

29. Under these conditions, the rules of the political game would not be changed basically and the way would still be open to a competitive presidential contest in 1976. Without the charismatic Allende, who would not be eligible to run, the Marxist parties would face difficulties in maintaining the unity of their coalition. The opposition would face similar problems of maintaining unity, since the platform of any Christian Democratic candidate, while emphasizing promised improvements in the quality of government, would probably accept a significant number of the socialist measures already in effect. Thus, the political future of Chile would remain very much in doubt at least until the electoral lineup for 1976 became clear.

30. *The UP Consolidates Power.* In this case, Allende would effect gains so substantial that the UP would emerge from the 1973-1974 period effectively entrenched in power. The opposition would be unable either to constrain Allende's political initiatives or to offer a serious electoral challenge. This development would probably require, in addition to strong initiatives by Allende, a thorough demoralization or discrediting of the opposition through major blunders on its part (e.g., counterproductive violence or a failed coup). The military would lend at least tacit approval to a more authoritarian government. The regime would still face debilitating economic problems, internal political disputes, and various manifestations of popular discontent. But, with the acquiescence of the general public, Allende would have done away with constitutional checks on his authority and with effective criticism from the media.

31. *Repudiation of the UP.* Allende would either suffer a major reduction in his freedom of action because of military dictation in the areas of economic policy and public order, or, in extreme circumstances, be removed from office via a coup. This case would probably

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require that the public get fed up with mounting inconvenience and disruption and that the opposition be able to pin the blame for Chile's difficulties squarely on Allende's mismanagement. Also, Allende's ability to manage crises (especially his ability to use the military towards his own ends) would have to be reduced—for instance, by tensions within the UP created by the revolutionary zealots. The military might well insist that technicians or representatives of political groups not now

associated with the UP be brought into the Cabinet. Concern that the armed forces would be blamed for all of Chile's difficulties would probably motivate military leaders either to go ahead with the scheduled presidential election or to arrange for a special one. The chances that an anti-UP political combination would do well in the elections would be enhanced. But the outcome would depend principally on the relative popular appeal of the candidates and how—in a new situation—the political forces were arrayed.

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DIST 8 SEPTEMBER 1973

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Authority

NSC

By

GRB

NARA, Date 8/16/00

COUNTRY: CHILE

DOI : SEPTEMBER 1973

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF SOME LEADERS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC)
ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF MILITARY ACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT
AND THEIR CALL FOR A PARTY DECISION ON ITS ROLE IN THIS
ACTION

1. AS OF SEPTEMBER 1973 A GROUP OF NATIONAL LEVEL LEADERS OF
THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PART,

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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(classification)

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AND SEVERAL, UNNAMED CONGRESSMEN, WAS CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE REAPPRAISAL BY THE PDC OF ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS A MILITARY COUP D'ETAT. THESE LEADERS BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE INCREASING INDICATIONS THAT THE CHILEAN ARMED FORCES ARE APPROACHING A DECISION TO CARRY OUT A COUP AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, AND THAT THE PDC MUST DECIDE WHAT ITS POSITION WILL BE IF SUCH AN ACTION OCCURS. THIS GROUP OF NATIONAL LEVEL LEADERS FEARS THAT IF THE MILITARY IS SUCCESSFUL IN ITS ATTEMPT AND ESTABLISHES A MILITARY GOVERNMENT, THAT GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE AGAINST ALL POLITICAL PARTIES AND WOULD SUPPRESS MANY POLITICAL RIGHTS. THESE LEADERS BELIEVE THAT THE ROLE OF THE PDC SHOULD BE TO PARTICIPATE IN AND SUPPORT A MILITARY INTERVENTION, ESPECIALLY IF IT APPEARS THAT THE MILITARY WILL TAKE ACTION IN ANY CASE. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE PDC, BY ITS SUPPORT, WILL BE ABLE TO GUIDE AND INFLUENCE THE INTERVENTION AND THE SUBSEQUENT MILITARY GOVERNMENT ALONG "INSTITUTIONAL" LINES.

2. DURING THE WEEK OF 4 SEPTEMBER, THERE WERE AT LEAST THREE INCIDENTS IN WHICH ARMY PATROLS PERFORMED BODY SEARCHES ON PDC CONGRESSMEN AND AIDES DESPITE THEIR PRESENTATION OF THEIR PARLIAMENTARY DOCUMENTATION. [REDACTED] COMMENT: SUCH BEHAVIOR BY THE MILITARY TOWARDS CONGRESSMEN IS UNPRECEDENTED, AND PDC CONGRESSMEN INTERPRET

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
~~SECRET~~

(classification)

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THIS AS A GROWING CONTEMPT BY THE MILITARY WITH POLITICIANS AND THE
POLITICAL PROCESS,) [REDACTED]

3. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] THAT THERE IS

GROWING SENTIMENT IN THE ARMED FORCES TO REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN
THE 19 SEPTEMBER ARMY DAY PARADE. [REDACTED] SAID THAT THIS FEELING
IS ESPECIALLY STRONG AT THE CHILEAN MILITARY ACADEMY.

4. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED] TOLD [REDACTED] ON
7 SEPTEMBER THAT MIGUEL S A L A Z A R, PDC YOUTH LEADER AND PRESI-
DENT OF THE FEDERATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS (FESES), AND GULLERMO
Y U N G U E, A PDC YOUTH LEADER AND FORMER FESES PRESIDENT, HAD
ARRANGED TO CONTACT TWO UNIDENTIFIED ARMY GENERALS TO INFORM THEM
THAT, IN THE EVENT OF ANY COUP ACTION TAKEN BY THE MILITARY,

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

(classification)

(dissem controls)

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THE PDC YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS WOULD POSE NO DIFFICULTIES OR RESISTANCE TO THE MILITARY, BUT WOULD RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REASSESS SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS BY A MILITARY GOVERNMENT.)

5. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: SEE [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] FOR INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE MILITARY ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE WEEK OF [REDACTED] SEPTEMBER. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE PERIOD OF THE 18-19 SEPTEMBER NATIONAL HOLIDAYS HAS BEEN THE OCCASION FOR RUMORS OF MILITARY MOVES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE PAST.)

6. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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