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Memorandum for the Record of a Meeting of the 40 Committee

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Chile

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State—U. Alexis Johnson

Defense—David Packard

CIA—Richard Helms

JCS—Admiral Thomas Moorer

NSC Staff—Viron P. Vaky

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

1. To hold another session at the end of the Middle East WASAG meeting Monday morning, September 21–8:30 a.m.

2. a. Admiral Moorer to prepare material on possible military assistance.

b. Mr. Vaky to prepare material on possible outcomes of proposed action and possible U.S. postures.

A cable from the CIA Station in Santiago was distributed to the principals to read. (Dr. Kissinger has copy.) It was made clear that no one else other than the principals has seen this report.

Dr. Kissinger pointed out that the operation apparently is underway spontaneously, and that he does not see anything that we can or should do. The question was what happens when and if it starts. We will have to examine whether there is anything for us to do in those circumstances.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that it might create widespread violence, perhaps leading to civil war.

Mr. Packard said that he wasn’t sure of that because Allende just might wait for the next round. It is difficult to know how to assess the situation.

Mr. Vaky commented that first it should be understood that the Popular Unity (UP) was a heterogeneous group. Not all of the elements would resort to violence; some, such as the Radicals, might even welcome this turn of events. Secondly, it

was not clear that Allende himself would stay to fight; he might well leave the country. Thirdly, the Communist hard-core and the Socialist extremists probably would resort to violence. They had a labor union core and a local peasant core and might well cause widespread and serious internal a security situations. Another element to consider was the previous intelligence reports that the non-commissioned officers were infiltrated by Leftists and were in sufficient number Allende sympathizers. The question as to whether the troops would respond to orders needed further assessment.

It was agreed that the movement reported in the cable was self-generated.

Mr. Helms confirmed that we were not in specific contact with the military on this point.

Mr. Johnson said that then we really had only two choices: either tell them to turn it off, or encourage them.

Dr. Kissinger said the President would certainly not approve the course of action telling them to turn it off. We do have the choice of merely standing back or egging them on. He saw little point in the latter.

Admiral Moorer and Mr. Helms commented that other Latin American military would stand clear.

Mr. Helms reported a conversation he had with [name not declassified]. It was quite clear that Argentina and Brazil are up-tight. The Bolivian military are apprehensive. Only Peru seemed to welcome the course of events, and there was no idea there that they would intervene in any way.

Mr. Packard said we had to decide how we would like all this to come out. In his view what we wanted was a successful military action but without us involved.

Dr. Kissinger said that if it happens, however, we need to be ready for contingencies. For example, what do we do if there are civil disorders; what do we do if there is civil war; what do we do if asked for equipment.

Mr. Helms pointed out that the Chilean Army might very well need munitions or crowd-control weapons.

Mr. Vaky added that if we were asked to supply them we might consider clandestine channels rather than through MAP.

Dr. Kissinger said that the WASAG meeting on Monday should tack this item on at the end.

It was agreed that the WASAG meeting would be held at 8:30 AM Monday, September 21.

Dr. Kissinger asked Admiral Moorer to prepare a paper on how military assistance might be provided. Mr. Vaky was asked to prepare material on various possible outcomes and recommended U.S. posture.