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Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Chile (Korry) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson)

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1. DAO cable “Chilean Military Looking for Way Out” resulted from unsolicited information provided to Chief of Military Group, Air Force Section, by Chilean Air Force CINC. Latter called former to his office on a pretext and poured out his talk. Our man properly reported to me and to Air Attaché who quite naturally felt compelled to inform DIA. Neither Attaché nor Air Force Section Chief are aware of what is going on under the surface. Attempting to stop this kind of reporting would obviously create problems and suspicions. DAO messages will continue to be reviewed in advance by DCM and myself, but we are reluctant to cut off normal reporting—which will naturally reflect to some degree state of play in Chilean Armed Forces—unless matters of extreme sensitivity creep up. In that regard, fact that some in Chilean military would like somehow to find a legal way out is widely known here.

2. I have given our military (except Army Attaché) strict instructions not to seek out their contacts and to make no other efforts to gather sensitive intelligence during this period. These instructions are being followed. However, when—as in this case—our people are sought out, they have no choice but to listen. You can be sure we will continue to keep the profile just as low as possible.