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# Memorandum From Viron P. Vaky of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)

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Chile

There are fundamental differences among operating agencies as to how Allende is to be perceived and what the US interest in this situation is. Most of these are honest differences, but they are differences.

The truth of the matter is that no policy decision on how to treat or perceive of Allende has been made or articulated in a way which the bureaucracy can perceive or understand. I have not been privy to all that has gone on. If opinions or orders have been expressed, they have not trickled down. I affirm to you that at lower levels of the bureaucracy there is honest confusion and honest belief that no final decisions have been made. In an ambiguous situation, operators who have to make daily operational decisions will do so on the basis of what they think they ought to do. And since there is a variety of opinion regarding what ought to be done, there are a variety of decisions without coherent pattern. This is even more true when you consider agencies normally peripheral to foreign policy formulation such as AEC, NASA, Ex-Im Bank, all of which have operations in Chile.

How we are to perceive and treat Allende is particularly crucial now, because:

—it is increasingly the central point whether we are talking about what to do prior to October 24 or what we do if Allende comes to power;

—everyone agrees that the chances of Allende being denied access to power is considerably less than even; put in reverse this means that there is a considerably better than even chance that we will have an Allende government in Chile in a month. Yet we have no thought-out strategy and no game plan for that contingency;

—there are an indefinite number of complex little decisions that will have to be made in the next several weeks. A sample list is attached.

We commissioned NSSM 97 precisely to determine a conceptual premise and general posture for dealing with Allende which would in turn be expressed in the little operational decisions we had to make. The bureaucracy looks to that paper as the vehicle by which decisions will be made.

We stand vulnerable to the charge that we did not reach policy decisions through the reasoned NSC system of examination of the situation and alternatives on which we have prided ourselves.

Recommendation

That you have the SRG meet on NSSM 97 as soon as possible and that a Presidential decision be explicitly made on the issues, either through a memo or a full NSC meeting.