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Letter From President Nixon to Chilean President Frei

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Nota de Archivo: *Washington. Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, INCO COPPER CHILE. Unclassified. President Nixon signed the letter based on Kissinger's recommendation in a May 19 memorandum. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 773, Country Files, Latin America, Chile, Vol. I) Vaky informed Kissinger that he revised the Department of State draft of the letter "to express at least some mild words of caution to Frei." (Memorandum from Vaky to Kissinger, May 17; ibid.)*

Ambassador Korry has delivered your letter of May 4 and explained the nature and background of your proposals with respect to the copper industry in Chile. I am grateful, Mr. President, for your special effort to inform me of the situation.

I understand that officials of your Government have now conferred with senior representatives of Anaconda and Kennecott. Ambassador Korry has also told me of your desire that any new arrangements your Government may negotiate with these companies should be of a mutually satisfactory nature, and of your determination to maintain the traditional respect for legal rights for which Chile is so well known. I know that, given the complex and technical nature of the economics of the copper industry, careful and patient study will be given by all sides to the problem. I share your hope that it will be possible to reach mutually satisfactory arrangements. I am certain, also, Mr. President, that you share my belief in the great importance of maintaining an environment in which private as well as public capital can continue to play a constructive role in economic development.

I was interested to hear of your energetic efforts to control inflation, and can well understand the additional burden placed on the Chilean economy by the continued drought in your country. I know how much suffering and destruction a severe drought can cause, and I was therefore pleased to hear of the recent rains.

I have asked Ambassador Korry to keep me closely informed of developments in Chile, for I share with you a profound desire to maintain and strengthen the good relations which exist between our two countries.

Sincerely,