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Telegram From the Embassy in Chile to the Department of State

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4483. Subj: Ambassador's Warning to Frei and Allende. Ref: Santiago 4481.

1. In absence of Acting Foreign Minister Silva, I called MinState Troncoso in Presidential Palace (one of Frei's closest intimates and one of my most helpful contacts) to say that I wanted his advice on what to do now that Allende press was venting most provocative anti-US charges (reftel). I noted that Frei last night in nationwide TV had requested media to avoid inflammatory declarations. The entire Allende media had disregarded this plea and was creating a climate that made me dubious about the personal security of the community for which I was responsible. Additionally, I could hardly avoid the conclusion that the Allende govt wished to demonstrate its hostility to the US in the ugliest manner possible and that I could hardly avoid recommending to Washington actions commensurate with such an attitude, starting immediately.

2. Troncoso replied that it was important to distinguish word from action and that the US should proceed with the greatest caution in how it chose to deal with Allende so as to avoid being a scapegoat. He added that the UP had many components difficult for Allende to control. I agreed but noted that orchestrated propaganda was producing a climate of insecurity for Americans. That to my mind was action. And I wished to know what if anything either Frei or Allende would do about it. I observed we too had Congressmen who had so far kept an admirable silence. I noted that Allende was having a press conference with foreign newsmen in mid-afternoon today and that if he were not clearly informed of the gravity with which the GOC (Frei) viewed the media situation, then the GOC would have to assume the responsibility for my recommendations to Washington. Troncoso replied that he understood and that he thought he could do something via Frei.