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Memorandum of Conversation

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Nota de Archivo: *Washington. Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 774, Country Files, Latin America, Chile, Vol. III. Secret; Nodis. Drafted on December 8. The conversation was held in Kissinger's office. In a December 9 meeting with Hewitt, Jarpa made the following additional points: "A confrontation between the Communists and Socialists is inevitable. When it occurs, Allende will seek the support of the armed forces in ridding himself of Communist domination. The armed forces will provide that support in order to get rid of Soviet and Cuban foreign influence. The result could be a Socialist government backed and participated in by the armed forces and based as much on nationalist as on Marxist ideals." Both this memorandum and the December 9 memorandum of Hewitt's conversation are attached to a December 10 memorandum from Nachmanoff to Kissinger. In it, Nachmanoff noted that the*

Senator Jarpa, Nacionalista Senator from Chile

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

Ashley C. Hewitt, NSC Staff

Arnold Nachmanoff, NSC Staff

Chilean Developments

With respect to the present political situation in Chile and its probable development, Senator Jarpa made the following points:

—A majority of Chileans are socialist in their sympathies. If they are offered a choice between capitalism and socialism they will choose the latter.

—However the majority are also patriotic nationalists and if given a choice between the Communist variety of socialism linked to the Soviet Union and an exclusively national variety they will choose the latter.

—The situation of Allende is inherently unstable and he must move either to the right or the left. Movement to the left means falling prey to the Communists and he will make every effort to avoid that.

—The future of Chile will probably be decided by the outcome of a struggle between the Communists on the one hand and the Armed Forces on the other. He believes the Armed Forces have the better chance of winning this struggle.

—However a government such as that in Brazil or Argentina cannot be hoped for in Chile because of the fundamentally socialist persuasion of the majority, including the majority of the Armed Forces. The best that can be hoped for is a nationalist government, socialist in its philosophy, and dependent on the military. Peru is an example of this kind of government.

The Senator said that before leaving for the United States he had visited both President Allende and the Foreign Minister and told them that he would be calling on Assistant Secretary Meyer and other high officials. At that time Allende and the Foreign Minister made the following points:

—His government would make no compromising commitments with the USSR.

—His government would not permit the establishment of Soviet military bases of any kind in Chile.

—His government would not permit the conduct of subversive operations against other countries based in Chile.

—His government would not interfere in any way with the friendly relations maintained between the United States and other governments in the hemisphere.

—His government hoped for friendly relations with the United States.

When asked what, in his view, the policy of the United States should be towards Chile, Jarpa said that we should:

—Apply indirect pressures.

—Leave open avenues for Allende to move toward the center from his present position on the left, as the Senator believes he will be obliged to do by circumstances.

—Resist anti-US actions and initiatives of the Allende Government in the political field.

When asked about the plans of his party for opposing Allende the Senator said that the PN plans stiff resistance on an issue-by-issue basis and has already begun by seizing control, together with the Christian Democrats (PDC) of the Budget Committee in the Senate—a most significant political event. However, the PN did not plan a blanket or high profile opposition to Allende on broadly ideological grounds since this would be counterproductive. Ideology has little public appeal in Chile, and attacks based on these grounds might tempt the government to loose the extreme left wing organizations for purposes of actions of retaliation.

Concerning developments in the hemisphere generally, Senator Jarpa said there was definitely a current of socialism or radicalism that could be distinguished throughout the region, but on balance he felt this current was more apt to lead to National Socialist or Nasserist type governments on the Peruvian model than to Communist governments.

Concerning Chile’s foreign relations, Jarpa said that relations with both Peru and Bolivia are at a peak at the moment but are sure to go down hill as ancient rivalries reassert themselves, which they inevitably will.

(Remarks made earlier—while waiting in the White House Lobby)

Senator Jarpa commented that the PN was prepared to forget its long-standing differences with the PDC—in fact had forgotten them—but this was not true of the PDC which was still influenced by its own left wing and the MAPU, a breakoff splinter that now forms part of Allende’s UP coalition.