DECLASSIFIED // CONFIDENTIAL

Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon

Identificador Archival:	frus:frus1969-76v21/d20
Agencia Emisora:	NSC / Casa Blanca
Fecha del Documento:	1969-10-21
Colección / Serie:	FRUS 1969–1976, vol. XXI: Chile, 1969–1973

Nota de Archivo: *Washington. Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 773, Country Files, Latin America, Chile, Vol. I. Confidential. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates it was returned on October 23.*

Reported Military Revolt in Chile

Press reports from Santiago indicate that two army regiments are involved in a move against the government. [less than 1 line not declassified] was informed by the Commander of the National Police (Caribineros) that fighting erupted in Santiago at 9:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The Associated Press reports that officers who tried to seize command of the Yungay Regiment located just north of Santiago were blocked by loyal troops and were arrested. However, rebellious officers reportedly have taken command of the Tacna Regiment in Santiago. The dissident officers are led by General Robert Viaux, who was commander of the First Army Division in Antofagasta until last week when he was forced to retire. Viaux had demanded the resignation of the Defense Minister and pressed for higher pay and a greater political role for the military before his forced retirement. Viaux reportedly is with the Tacna Regiment. Thus, the apparent immediate cause of the insurrection involves the Army’s discontent with inadequate pay scales and growing dissatisfaction with lagging professionalism within the ranks.

The Government has reported the military insurrection and urged the people to remain calm. The Government said that the army command “has taken the necessary measures to subdue the mutineers,” who are reportedly led by recently retired officers. The Government has set up a nation-wide radio and TV hookup but has given no further details of the revolt at this time.

We do not have a clear picture of the seriousness of the revolt or the extent of the fighting in Santiago. We do not know whether other Army units and the well-armed Carabineros will support the government. Embassy Santiago believes that the Army is not yet united behind Viaux. Any military insurrection by the normally a-political Chilean military must be considered serious. I will forward to you shortly a more detailed analysis of the implications of the situation.