DECLASSIFIED // SECRET; EYES ONLY

Memorandum From Arnold Nachmanoff of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)

Identificador Archival:	frus:frus1969-76v21/d209
Agencia Emisora:	NSC / Casa Blanca
Fecha del Documento:	1971-02-24
Colección / Serie:	FRUS 1969–1976, vol. XXI: Chile, 1969–1973

Nota de Archivo: *Washington. Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 774, Country Files, Latin America, Chile, Vol. III. Secret; Eyes Only. Sent for action. Attached to a February 26 note from Nachmanoff to Kissinger that reads, "Press reports indicate that President Allende announced last night—on nationwide T.V.—that he had invited the USS Enterprise to visit Chile so that its crew could see that Chile is engaged in authentic democracy. He also issued a stern warning against any demonstrations against the ship's visit. It appears that we have been had. After Allende's statement, a turndown of the visit now would be taken as a pretty deliberate snub. It would also be played up in the press as U.S. (read White House) unwillingness to allow our sailors to see the 'truth' about Chile." (Ibid.)*

Proposed Visit of USS Enterprise to Chile

During Admiral Zumwalt's visit to Chile he apparently offered to send the USS Enterprise for a port call to Valparaiso next week. The Enterprise is enroute from the Atlantic to the Pacific and can be in Chilean waters on February 28.

Zumwalt apparently made the arrangements for the visit without checking with the Embassy. Ambassador Korry agreed to the visit after the fact, but has sent in a series of cables (Tab A) indicating several complications and disadvantages of going ahead with the visit. My understanding is that Korry would prefer not to have the visit, but feels that Zumwalt is committed and therefore he (Korry) does not want the responsibility for turning it off. Similarly, State is unhappy about the proposed visit, but is prepared to live with it if Admiral Zumwalt's prestige is on the line. The following is a list of some of the pros and cons of going ahead with the visit:

Pros:

—Would reinforce ties with the Chilean Navy.

—Would be visible reminder to the GOC and Chilean public of U.S. military power.

—Would add one more port where U.S. nuclear-powered vessels have been received (useful precedent).

—Would meet commitment made by Zumwalt.

Cons:

—Would play into Allende's hands by demonstrating to the Chilean military and public just prior to the municipal elections in April that the Allende government is capable of maintaining close relations with the U.S.—would strengthen Allende's image with the military and reassure public opinion prior to the elections.

—Visit could give extremists (MIR) an occasion to protest and demonstrate against U.S. imperialism, nuclear ship; some risk of incidents with sailors on liberty.

—Could give Allende a better case for allowing a Soviet naval visit—visit of nuclear-powered Enterprise might help justify future visit of nuclear-powered Soviet submarine.

—Port call by major U.S. vessel to Chile might be resented by friendly Latin American military in Argentina and Brazil. (Ambassador Lodge feels visit to Chile without visit to Argentina would be most unfortunate. Tab B)

This is a difficult issue, and I do not have the full story of how Zumwalt agreed to a visit by the Enterprise to Chile. Admiral Robinson is attempting to get a debrief from Zumwalt, who has not yet sent in a report on his hour and a half with Allende. (I understand Zumwalt is going to brief Laird, Moorer and Irwin in separate meetings this afternoon.) Defense and Navy are pressing for a decision because of the need to make arrangements for the port call. However, this could be so politically sensitive that you may wish to consider this in the SRG or to consult with Packard and Irwin by telephone.

If Zumwalt's prestige were not involved, I would come down clearly against the visit. If we decide not to send the Enterprise in, we could always maintain that operational requirements made it impossible for the Enterprise to spend two to three days in Chile.

A possible compromise solution—to partially meet Zumwalt's commitment—would be a so-called "fly-on" visit, under which the Enterprise would steam up the Chilean coast approximately 100 miles off shore enroute to the Far East. High-ranking officials of the Chilean Navy would be invited to fly on board for lunch and a tour through the ship. No political figures would be included in the invitation. The Chilean Navy officers would be picked up by passenger-carrying aircraft from the Enterprise in either Santiago or Valparaiso and returned in the same fashion following the visit. Fly-on visits to aircraft carriers are standard techniques when it is not possible or desirable for the ship to enter port. In this case, we could inform the Chileans that pressing operational requirements prevented taking several days for an official port call.

Pros:

—Fulfills Admiral Zumwalt's commitment.

—Maintains ties with the Chilean Navy and keeps the contact strictly within Navy channels.

—Avoids the physical presence of the Enterprise in a Chilean port, with all that implies.

—Minimizes the opportunities for Allende to exploit the visit for political purposes prior to the municipal elections in April.

—Avoids setting a precedent which might be used to justify a subsequent visit by a Soviet nuclear-powered vessel to a Chilean port.

Cons:

—It is a half-measure and might appear so to the Chilean Navy; hence, it can be argued that it does not in fact meet Admiral Zumwalt's commitment.

—No pay-off in terms of impressing the Chilean people with the armed might of the United States.

—No pay-off in terms of adding one more port in which U.S. nuclear-powered vessels have been received.

Whether this solution would be a workable compromise or not depends, of course, on the precise nature of Admiral Zumwalt's commitment.

Recommendation

That you take this situation up with Packard and Irwin today to decide whether to go ahead with a visit by the Enterprise to Chile.