DECLASSIFIED // SECRET; SENSITIVE; EYES ONLY

Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Chile (Korry) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson)

Identificador Archival:	frus:frus1969-76v21/d219
Agencia Emisora:	NSC / Casa Blanca
Fecha del Documento:	1971-04-07
Colección / Serie:	FRUS 1969–1976, vol. XXI: Chile, 1969–1973

Nota de Archivo: *Santiago. Source: National Security Council, Nixon Intelligence Files, Subject Files, Chile, 1971–72. Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The message is summarized in an attached April 7 memorandum from Nachmanoff to Kissinger.*

Ambassador's Report on Election Program

1. The election results have, I am convinced, proved that a strong anti-Communist democratic opposition can be mobilized and that this half of all Chilean political forces can exercise a significant if not determinant impact on the kind of socialism that Chile will have. By any measure, the results of our electoral program have been a success. The Nacionales hit the maxim of their potential in the circumstances, as did the rump Radicales. Most important of all, the PDC defined itself on anti-Marxist grounds, took the lead in a vigorous anti-Marxist political campaign and consolidated the Frei influence in the party as opposed to the Tomic wing that wishes to work closely with the Communists. PDC leadership was nervous and frankly pessimistic the week before elections; their showing has exceeded their expectations. Frei, Ossa, and Irureta invited themselves to dinner with me tonight as their way of displaying their gratitude for support and for constant counsel.

2. Despite our apparent inability to assist the PDC by furnishing critical items missing from the files on those involved in the so-called copper plot, particularly several telexes between Santiago and Zurich, the PDC hammering on this theme contributed to the decline of the Orthodox Radical Party vote and thus deprived Allende of his clear majority. If those messages could be located they would still have considerable political value here in sustaining the vitality of the anti-Communists.

3. The results in the deep south senate race confirmed our fears. The U.P. candidate won going away and had Zaldivar been in a two-way race the extreme Socialist would have won by a very ample absolute majority. Having now gone through the presidential election experience of "excellent" polls and this latest example of Chilean logic, I am persuaded that people on the spot understand their situation best and that we should restrain our meddling to the minimum and to the basics. The "campaign of terror" that had such effect on the Communist vote this time, while missing the mark in the presidential elections, was much more Chilean in inspiration and execution and did not have the heavy imprint of outside fabrication of the presidential election effort.

4. Given the gloomy circumstances that prevail in Chile, I believe optimal results have been obtained. (It should be borne in mind that in the last municipal elections, the U.P. parties had 44.5 percent of the vote.) The strength of the opposition in these elections will thus have a braking effect on the PCCh and the U.P. plans. The economic circumstances will put enormous strains on the government in the next few months and the working class in particular will be compelled to pay a

large share of the bill that Allende will have to present to the people in one way or another during the remainder of this year. He may well seek to make us the scapegoats for the rise in prices and production difficulties that are certain to come or for the measures that will reduce the purchasing power of the masses. He may feel compelled to accelerate his pressures on the remaining uncontrolled media and on the opposition political parties. But as long as it is the Chileans who remain out in front as the opposition and as long as we maintain a posture of businesslike readiness to deal pragmatically with the Chileans, it is not impossible that surprises will develop here to support wider U.S. objectives in the world. The credentials of the new Soviet ambassador would indicate that Moscow is well aware of the stakes here, is conscious of the economic realities and is prepared to do more if more will be needed, as it surely will.

5. I will recommend in a separate message some modest actions that can sustain both an indigenous opposition and our tactical flexibility. Given the unpromising Chilean structure, we are today, I maintain, in an optimal position: our relations with the Chilean Government are correct and effective; our ability to defend U.S. business interests has been proved in more than a dozen ways; the structure for the difficult if pragmatic negotiations over copper and ITT has been established; Chilean obligations to U.S. creditors are being met on schedule; USG prestige insofar as Chilean matters are concerned is very high (Gabriel Valdes told U.S. newsmen last week that the execution of U.S. policy by me had been thus far extraordinarily good and that judgement has been echoed by the right, the PDC, and the government); the opposition to Communism is overwhelming and the democratic forces in the country are still far from impotent.

6. I am withdrawing as your “Action Officer.” In relinquishing that role, I recognize but do not apologize for my apostasies nor submit excuses for what some deemed excesses of zeal. The pursuit of excellence is a manner, not a measure.