DECLASSIFIED // CONFIDENTIAL; PRIORITY; EXDIS

Telegram From the Embassy in Chile to the Department of State

Identificador Archival:	frus:frus1969-76v21/d22
Agencia Emisora:	Departamento de Estado
Fecha del Documento:	1969-10-22
Colección / Serie:	FRUS 1969–1976, vol. XXI: Chile, 1969–1973

Nota de Archivo: *Santiago. Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 23–9 CHILE. Confidential; Priority; Exdis.*

4449. Subject: Statement of CIA Spokesman. Ref: State 178765.

1. Under Secretary Patricio Silva called me to Ministry this evening to register sharp protest on subject. (AP story on spokesman's statement has so far appeared only in Ultimas Noticias but it takes little imagination visualize what El Siglo's front page will probably look like tomorrow.)

2. Silva said he speaking officially and formally for President Frei and GOC. Asked that USG take immediate steps prevent further statements this kind and use influence with wire service agencies to put an end to additional stories about subject.

3. Again emphasizing that he speaking officially, Silva said he wished to communicate to me that "suspicions" exist among "high officials" GOC re possible involvement CIA in events of last few days. He did not specify who these officials might be but remarked that there were certain indications which had raised "suspicions."

4. Silva concluded with statement that Chilean media coverage of story might provoke popular anger directed against USG and its installations here. Said that measures had been taken to assure adequate protection available for our buildings.

5. In reply, I made following points: (1) Could not testify to accuracy of quotation but I would regret any such imprudent statement by U.S. official. (2) USG has no influence with wire services and does not attempt exert any. Story is now a fact, in any case, and we have no means influence how it is played here. (3) I felt safe in assuring GOC without consulting Washington that there would be no further statement of this type from any USG spokesman.

6. As for "suspicions," I said that I simply could not believe this was serious matter. Policy of USG friendship and support for Frei administration and Chilean democracy too clearly established over long years to allow responsible govt. officials entertain such notions. CIA is part of USG, responsible to the President and my government assumes responsibility for its actions.

7. Silva said that he was entirely serious, reiterating that remarks were official. I said in that case I could only express deepest personal disappointment, an attitude I was sure Department would share.

8. Silva hastened to say that he did not mean suggest there were any doubts whatsoever in GOC about friendly, cooperative policy of USG—a policy for which Frei and Christian Democrats most grateful. However, "past experiences"—which he refused elucidate—indicated that there not always full "coordination" of actions USG agencies and thus "suspicions" not illogical.

9. I rejected his explanation, and said I still found such “suspicions” unimaginable. There is only one USG policy and all agencies follow it. We would not be surprised find this sort of thing among the hostile and uninformed, but the GOC is another matter. I ended by saying that what he had said went down badly with me, as it surely would in Washington.

10. Silva told me that Ministry had not and would not inform Chilean Embassy in Washington of this matter. I replied merely that I would, of course, report conversation in full to Department. (My own strong preference, however, would be to keep Santa Maria and friends in the dark.)

11. Comment: This rather nasty business reflects nervousness and intemperance with which GOC has treated various aspects of its current troubles. I am still uninclined treat “suspicions” seriously, except as indication of considerably less than friendly attitude toward USG in some circles of GOC.

12. At same time, I have to say that we made this particular trouble for ourselves. CIA spokesman’s remarks were injudicious, inane and completely uncalled for. We have pointed out that up to this time no one has attempted connect Embassy or USG with General Viaux’s adventure—a unique experience for me. But now, that old familiar scapegoat is again available.