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Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the 40 Committee (Ratliff) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)

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Covert Political Action in Chile

As a continuation of our covert political action efforts in Chile, CIA proposes that $1 million be approved for FY 1974 to strengthen opposition political parties and private sector organizations to enable them to combat the Popular Unity (UP) Government of President Allende (TAB A).

The UP gained confidence and accelerated its programs after demonstrating considerable support among low income groups in the March congressional elections. Allende has survived an abortive military coup, manipulated the armed forces, controlled dissidents among his own supporters, and dealt with civilian opposition. Many Chileans believe the next six months to a year to be especially critical to the survival of Allende/Marxism.

In contrast, opposition groups have lost some of their confidence and the private sector is under heavy pressure. But they have not given up and want to improve their ability to combat Allende/Marxism. Since January 1971 nearly $6.5 million has been spent in support of the opposition forces, but it is unlikely they could survive without additional financial support. Funds would be used to help maintain organizations and media, improve the opposition's electoral support (especially among low-income groups), and to counter UP efforts to implement its revolutionary program.

The $1 million total would be divided as follows: [dollar amount not declassified] for the Christian Democrats, the only opposition party deemed able to make significant inroads into the UP's electoral strength; [dollar amount not declassified] for the National Party, which plans to maintain its inflexible anti-Allende position; [dollar amount not declassified] for the two radical splinter parties; [dollar amount not declassified] for business, unions and professional groups (under close scrutiny of the Ambassador); and [dollar amount not declassified] for contingencies. Funds have not been budgeted and must come from the Agency's reserve.

State, Defense, JCS and CIA 40 Committee principals concur.

Recommendation

That you approve $1 million for FY 1974 support of opposition political parties and private sector organizations in Chile.