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Telegram From the Embassy in Chile to the Department of State

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Summary: Military intentions dominate interest all observers, as Navy command crisis remains unresolved and intense arms searches by military lead to serious shooting for first time. Pres Allende meeting with UP leaders and CINCs. Anti-government strikes continue, as worsening bread shortage leads to takeovers of bakeries by frustrated customers. Closed PDC meetings of last few days produce no public results. Bomb explosions at Governor's offices Aconcagua and telecommunications relay tower serving south Chile. End summary.

2. Detailed reports appeared in morning press 9/8 of meetings yesterday of Navy Admirals with CINC Admiral Montero, and Min Def Letelier, and Admiral Merino with Pres Allende. Sept 8 am radio reports Allende will meet am with UP leaders, pm with military CINCs. According LA Prensa, (PDC), Admirals in line refused accept CINC post, demanded appointment first-in-line Merino. Squadron committed to Unitas exercise remains in Valparaiso, with public reports officers and crews refuse sail until Montero resigns and Merino appointed. MinDef Letelier quoted as angrily stating squadron will sail Monday 9/10. Meanwhile intense arms searches by military continued. FACh raided Sumar textile plant Santiago 9/7 and met sniper fire. Three civilians reported wounded, two more in passing car injured when they failed heed FACh orders to stop, ten arrested. In other incidents, Marines allegedly invaded kindergarten in "Lenin" neighborhood in Talcahuano, causing death by heart failure of old woman, while Army raided construction site in Rancagua and factory in Santiago. On 9/6 Navy searched GDR ship in Valparaiso to inspect relief supplies sent by GDR, without result except threat of protest by GDR Ambassador and outrage of UP press.

3. Transport and merchants strikes continue, while medical strike apparently ended with agreement with government protested by some medical elements (reftel). Government held to hard line with threats by MinEcon Cademartori to cut all supplies to establishments "not honoring contracts" and to funnel food supplies to neighborhood organizations, state organs, and cooperative merchants. MinInt Briones told Senate Public Works Committee Congress has no authority to legislate on transport strike. Municipal employees of Providencia, Las Condes, and Nunoa, upper and middle class districts in Santiago, reportedly joined strike in support guilds. Bread shortage appears to be worsening, with wheat stocks at Port San Antonio cut off by bombing of rail line to Santiago. There were several reports of Santiago bakeries invaded by mobs seeking bread.

4. PDC leadership has been meeting in long, closed sessions with no public statement, except SecGen Cerda comment 9/7 that PDC "decision" might come soon. Other sources quoted to effect PDC may initiate impeachment proceedings Monday 9/10 against MinInt Briones, MinEcon Cademartori, MinAgric Toha, MinJust Insunza for various failures covered in 8/22

Resolution Chamber of Deputies. The PS will rally Sunday 9/9 in support of Navy personnel held for “anti-golpista” (i.e. subversive) activity, and of PS SecGen Altamirano who object court action by Navy.

5. Incidents of violence continued, including bombing of telecommunications relay tower in O’Higgins Province cutting off south from Santiago for estimated 24 hours, and bombing without injuries of provincial Governor’s office in Aconcagua.

6. Leftist press continues heavy play on intentions of arrested Patria y Libertad Chief Roberto Thieme, including his alleged plans to call in US “Ranger” instructors, and to establish clandestine airfields for connections with supporters in Bolivia.