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Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon

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Chilean Developments—Situation Report

Intensive shooting and explosions were heard late this morning in downtown Santiago and in outlying industrial areas. A radio station controlled by the junta said that "extremist groups continue to resist the action of the Armed Forces in downtown Santiago." There is no hard information as yet concerning the scale of the fighting, although ham operators monitored in Buenos Aires report many deaths resulting from "serious confrontations" between army troops and factory workers in the suburbs of the capital.

The military radio network is still Chile's sole source of information. There has been no official mention of Allende's fate, despite unofficial reports of his death, probably by suicide.

Press reports quote Mexican President Echeverria as expressing "deep regret" at the coup. Echeverria stressed Mexico's loyalty to the principle of non-intervention and expressed solidarity with the people of Chile and confidence that Chile "would soon find again the way for a democratic and peaceful life." Echeverria offered asylum in Mexico to Allende's supporters.

The WSAG met this morning and based upon those deliberations we are adopting a public line that this is an internal situation in Chile and that as to the question of recognition the issue has not arisen—in any event, we do not recognize individual governments, but rather countries. We will keep a low-key posture to allow time for Latin American governments and possibly some Europeans to announce the continuation of their relations before we make any direct statements in order that we can defuse any charge of our implication which would not only be damaging to us, but more importantly to the new Chilean Government. We will, however, have Ambassador Davis discreetly let the new leadership know informally that we are favorably disposed. We are preparing a list of possible responses to likely aid requests which we can anticipate at an early point from the new Chilean Government.