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Minutes of a Meeting of the Special Review Group

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Nota de Archivo: *Washington. Source: National Security Council, Nixon Intelligence Files, Subject Files, Chile, 1970. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. An attached August 20 note to Kissinger indicates that the latest poll results based on a survey conducted [text not declassified] in early August 1970, were as follows: Unadjusted Adjusted Alessandri 38.58 41.49 Allende 28.16 30.06 Tomic 26.93 28.75 Abstention (Undecided) 6.33 Total 100.00 100.30*

Chile (NSSM 97)

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Charles Meyer

Defense

David Packard

William E. Lang

CIA

Richard Helms

[name not declassified]

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

NSC Staff

Viron P. Vaky

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

1. To prepare for the President:

a. an action plan as to how we might prevent an Allende election victory in the Chilean Congress vote on October 24;

b. a recommendation as to whether we should implement such a plan between the September 4 election and the October 24 Congressional vote;

2. To defer discussion of the NSSM 97 paper until after the September 4 election.

Mr. Kissinger asked Mr. Helms what were the prospects for the Chile elections.

Mr. Helms replied that the election would definitely go into the Congress since Alessandri did not have enough votes to prevent this process.

Mr. Kissinger asked if his understanding was correct that the person with a certain margin has traditionally received the votes of the Congress but that in this case Alessandri may not have enough of a lead.

Mr. Meyer confirmed this understanding and said Congress may not follow tradition.

Mr. Kissinger said he understood then that the second runner—expected to be Allende—would then become President. He asked if there was anything that could be done to prevent this, either by increasing Allesandri's margin or by supporting Tomic for the second spot.

Mr. Meyer said we know of nothing that can be done between now and the election.

Mr. Helms added that with available funds and current effectiveness we still could not get enough votes for Alessandri to eliminate Allende.

Mr. Kissinger said he understood that Alessandri would need more than a 5 percent margin if the Congress were to commit themselves to him.

Mr. Vaky said if he should win substantially the compulsion to follow tradition would be much greater. He estimated Alessandri's margin at 80 to 90,000 votes—3 percent—but noted there would be a final poll on August 20.

Mr. Kissinger asked when Congress would vote.

Mr. Meyer replied October 24.

Mr. Vaky noted that the crucial period would be from 2 to 4 weeks after the election on September 4.

Mr. Kissinger agreed there was probably nothing we could do about the election and that the issue would go to the Congress where the outcome was in doubt. He asked what we could do to position ourselves for this 2 to 4 week crucial period.

Mr. Meyer said it was a question of money.

Mr. Helms said we could start finding out what we might do with funds if we had them without running the risk of blowing the election.

Mr. Kissinger said, assuming we go into gear on September 4, could we find out enough in the 3-week period to do us any good? Could we improve our chances if we identified certain individuals now? Are we doing any exploratory work? On the assumption that we do nothing until September 4, if we should decide to move after that time, do we know what orders we would issue and to whom?

Mr. Helms said we did not.

Mr. Meyer said he thought it had been decided at the 40 Committee that we would not proceed.

Mr. Packard asked if we could not decide at least how much money we would have.

Mr. Kissinger asked if we could not have money set aside and have people identified.

Mr. Lang remarked that Alessandri and his party had undertaken an intensive examination of individual Congressmen and have a second phase plan in mind. Frei also has something in mind. We might approach Frei and Alessandri through a third party in order to get them together.

Mr. Kissinger found it hard to understand why we should not have a plan ready by September 4.

Mr. Packard agreed that we should have some idea of money and whom to give it to.

Mr. Helms said he had understood that this planning was taboo.

Mr. Kissinger agreed that any activity before the election was taboo. He thought however, the President will want maximum effort made to keep Allende from winning in the Congress and we could certainly proceed now with the internal staffing of this effort.

Mr. Helms agreed.

Mr. Kissinger said we could discuss the paper after September 4. We would then have until October 24 to implement any decision. The big problem to consider was how to prevent an Allende victory. He suggested that Packard, Helms and the Station Chief prepare a plan and asked if this were agreeable.

All agreed.

Mr. Kissinger asked that the plan be as precise as possible and include what orders would be given September 5, to whom, and in what way.

Mr. Helms agreed.

Mr. Kissinger said we should present to the President an action plan to prevent an Allende victory in the Congress and our view of the desirability of our doing anything, noting that the President may decide to move even if we do not recommend it.