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Memorandum From Viron P. Vaky of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)

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Nota de Archivo: *Washington. Source: National Security Council, Nixon Intelligence Files, Subject Files, Chile, 1970. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for information. Kissinger wrote, "make memo to Pres. recommending contacting the cut out," in the upper right-hand corner. Vaky explained his reason for not following this instruction in Document 57. In a covering note to Kissinger on another copy of this memorandum, Winston Lord wrote, "Note last paragraph where Vaky says meeting may be necessary before Sept. 4 because of State opposition. Vaky knows scheduling difficulties + will try to avoid meeting." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 774, Country Files, Latin America, Chile, Vol. II)*

Chile and Phase 2

Yesterday the Special Review Group agreed that CIA would present a specific staffed plan to implement Phase 2.

Up to now, the Ambassador and Station have been under explicit instructions not to discuss or explore such an operation with any Chilean asset. The Group yesterday did not specifically address the question of whether the Station should try to gather information or judgments from Chileans for the purpose of the staffing it was asked to undertake.

This morning the Agency told me that they cannot staff a plan well without consulting the man who would be the Chilean cut-out (and who is in fact already our cut-out for Phase 1). They argue that there are a number of things they can only guess at—e.g., how much money is needed, precisely how many people would be susceptible, etc. A good judgment on these things would require probing and exploring with the Chileans who know. The Agency proposed to have the Station Chief contact the cut-out only on an exploratory, no-commitment basis to ask simply how such an operation might be structured and what would be required. Risk here is very minimal; we are working with him now anyway.

State opposes this, and Alex Johnson called me on it to protest. His objection is that this tips our hand to the Chileans before we have really decided if we would do it anyway. He thinks we need not take that chance because we would not be delayed that much if we waited until after the September 4 election to do it. He said we might not want to do it at all. He observed, as an example, that it would make no sense for us to get involved if the Chilean elements were not going to get involved, and that we should act only at the necessary margin to make an operation effective. I pointed out that we could not judge those things until we explored the Chileans' reactions. In any case his arguments seem to me to rationalize his (and State's) basic opposition to the whole idea of a Phase 2 operation, and they underline the fact that the 40 Committee has never decided in principle to undertake such an operation.

Johnson flatly refused to okay the Chilean contact, and was prepared to appeal to you. To avoid the delay of in-fighting, I agreed to a proposal that the Agency do the best it can in-house in staffing a specific plan by Monday. The idea would then be that this would be immediately examined to determine:

(a) if it was enough to permit the basic decision on whether to mount a Phase 2 operation; or

(b) whether we needed to contact the Chilean cut-out now in order to make that basic decision or in order to move promptly on September 5 if necessary.

I agreed to this for the following reasons: (a) I had never really contemplated anything but an in-house staffing now anyway; (b) there is no use in arguing about how much more we need for adequate staffing; we may as well do what we can and prove its adequacy or inadequacy; and (c) we won't be delayed significantly anyway since the in-house staffing ought to be ready Monday or Tuesday.

You should, however, understand the following:

1. State is opposed to the idea of Phase 2: they are hoping we will never have to use it. They do not want to do anything by way of staffing with Chilean assets unless there is a basic policy decision to proceed with this operation.

2. The 40 Committee never made such a policy decision; it is going to have to do so before September 4. While I had hoped that a meeting might be avoided and a telephone poll on the staffed plan suffice, it is clear now that you are going to have dissent and that a meeting is probably going to be necessary.