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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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Chile—Status Report

You had asked that I do a memo to the President asking him to approve contact with the Chilean cut-out to staff an action proposal in the "Phase 2" operation. I have not done so because it is no longer necessary. Both Ambassador Korry and the Station came back saying not only was it unnecessary, but probably not fruitful to make this contact before September 4. The cut-out will not know enough about the situation until then to provide the kinds of judgments the Station would want.

Ambassador Korry and the Station have—inexplicably to me—revised their sense of urgency; they now say it is not only unnecessary but undesirable to move immediately after the September 4 election. They believe we have at least a week or so to get proper readings and prepare without danger and think we should take that time.

CIA is disseminating to the 40 Committee principals this afternoon a paper outlining possible operational alternatives to meet specified situations, and posing the question of whether to proceed, how and when. Agency views on the paper will be available Monday.

My reading is that there will be disagreement among the principals on the whole idea. You therefore have two options: (a) a 40 Committee meeting to thrash out the views; or (b) try to staff a paper to the President with the various views embodied.

My own impression is that this is such a delicate and complicated question, and feelings sufficiently deep, that a meeting is very desirable. I do not believe that staffing it as a memo can give you the feel for it you should have, or that it will meet all of the principals' desire for a hearing.

I will know better when I see the paper and learn more of the agencies' views, and will have a firmer recommendation for you later.