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# Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Chile (Korry) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)

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***Nota de Archivo:*** *Santiago. Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 777, Country Files, Latin America, Chile, 1970. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. A note attached to the message reads, "General Haig: Copies have been given to HAK and you. Vaky copy is being held pending your approval." Haig wrote, "No copy to Vaky." However, Vaky most likely saw the message. A September 14 memorandum from Kissinger to President Nixon summarizing Korry's backchannel message was sent under cover of a September 17 memorandum from Vaky to Kissinger recommending that the memorandum from Kissinger to President Nixon be forwarded to the President. The Vaky memorandum to Kissinger bears the notation, "DRY [David R. Young, Jr.] hand carried to AB [Alexander Butterfield] 9/18." There is no indication that the President saw the memorandum from Kissinger. (Ibid., Box 774, Country Files, Latin Amer*

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415. To: Henry Kissinger (for delivery prior to 0800 hours of 14 September). From: Ambassador Korry.

1. This responds to your message re Santiago 3462.

2. In the two messages sent through CAS channels Sept. 11 (Santiago 2844) and Sept 12 (Santiago 2850), I provided the basic analysis on which this message rests. Santiago 3462 said we were in a very fluid situation and through State and CAS channels today, we reported following late developments of significance:

A. Frei's message to the President via John Richardson and me (Santiago 3644).

B. Frei]'s message to Santiago Garrison commander Gen. Valenzuela and to CG of Carabineros that he intended to resign soon after most patriotic of Chilean holidays (Sept 18–19) to permit, by constitutional methods, interim govt and new elections in which he would stand.

C. Parallel move to have retired Gen. Viaux, leader of last October's army sitdown strike, issue anti-Communist declaration in few days time.

D. Allende's speech to rally Sunday in which he threatened mass take over of factories and farms by "the people" if his victory was "stolen."

E. Plans to make of the big military parade Sept 19th a tremendous anti-Communist rally for Frei.

F. Formation of a joint Alessandri-Frei cum PDC covert propaganda mechanism to inflate Frei and to stiffen backbones of media personnel opposed to Communist takeover.

3. I confess that prior to Secretary's message to me I have encouraged in all prudent ways possible, without risking President's prestige, these above measures. I have also sought to arrange the following:

A. To have the GOC accept Allende's request to seek to calm the panic that is profoundly affecting the economy by having much respected MinFinance go to nation by radio and TV ostensibly to calm people and then recite the horrendous details that are affecting the country, the point being to create the most serious doubts among the masses that supported Allende and to force the Christian Democrats into serious reflection.

B. To have the Church in some form provide support to Frei. I believe that the solemn Te Deum in the cathedral Sept 18th will include an address by a respected prelate that will bolster the Frei position.

C. To have the Armed Forces gently rpt gently reminded that US laws would under certain conditions be automatically invoked by Allende govt actions and would lead to total ban on US arms and spare parts sales, thus leaving Chileans defenseless.

D. To have the Christian Democrats and rpt and the Allende camp reminded that almost all of Chilean industry, which is incomparably larger and more complex than Cuba's, is dependent on U.S. technology, U.S. credits, U.S. machinery.

4. The point of my efforts is to seek a position that at best helps Frei in the constitutional play to stop Allende and at the same time improves our (and PDC) bargaining position with an Allende govt if that is what we shall have to confront. The focus of the pressure is both on the masses and the Christian Democrats, a good many of whom are either ready to rationalize an Allende govt or are so terrorized that they fear for their lives if they oppose his accession. Hence at the minimum I want to increase their bargaining demands; at the maximum I want them to support Frei.

5. I have had to speak with many voices including a semi-public one that is calm, cool and above-it-all. I wanted the US press to report the USG was out of it; they have unanimously done so. I wanted the US business reps to report that my advice was total non-intervention, some disappointment with the election results and business-as-usual; they have done so. I wanted the leaky bureaucracy in Washington to spread the same word and thus keep our true options open. Unfortunately this last effort has been so successful that the Dept failed to forestall the statements of Inter-American Bank President Herrera in Washington and of OAS SecGen Galo Plaza in Vina del Mar and of Latin govts which have served to rule out the constitutional process by accepting Allende as President. The statement of the man responsible for Galo Plaza's accession to the OAS post, Sol Linowitz, as extensively cited by Allende today, is proof of what I mean: Linowitz is responsive if handled correctly. He can correct the impression he has given here.

6. Frei is absolutely correct in wanting the US to say nothing and to do nothing overtly that would make his task harder by converting a constitutional process to defense of US interests. That does not mean that he or I want US to act as if we believe we are impotent. Like my German colleague, I believe it essential that we upend this Soviet triumph, that we not advertise to Latin America and to the world that our own backyard is an open hunting ground. If we can defeat Allende, and if a man such as Frei is the instrumentality, it can only serve our purposes in the region and in the world.

7. Terror is the key weapon now being employed by the Allende forces. But there is a counter-terror weapon—the economy, the condition of the Armed Forces and, as I have suggested to the key Frei men, direct action against the mechanism that trumpets "civil war." Frei must be prepared, as I have told him indirectly, to use blackmail to counter blackmail, to take out every skeleton in the crowded Christian Democrat closet to produce converts among his Congressmen, to be prepared at the opportune moment to have the Carabineros detain the leaderships of the Communist and Socialist Parties, to frighten the hell out of his Armed Forces and to panic the country into more dire economic circumstances.

8. Frei is half-Swiss and he is extremely cautious. He likes his ducks in a complete row. Hence the separate visits to me Friday night of MinDefense Ossa, Senate President Pablo, and the most brilliant organizer in Chile, Raul Saez, were designed by Frei for them to hear my views so as to remove any doubts. He then arranged for the next day the private talk

with Richardson and myself. Now he has gone to the Army and the Carabineros, choosing the Army General to whom last Sunday I delivered a very prudent message of encouragement.

9. I am not certain that Frei really means to resign as he told the two generals. I think he may be engaging in counter-terror of a sort. He knows that Allende is seeking to seduce the Armed Forces with every kind of promise; he knows that that fool Tomic and his colleagues believe in Communist guarantees to the Armed Forces; he knows that Allende has supporters in the Armed Forces. He may well be stirring the pot to stop any recognition by the Armed Forces of Allende (who is actively seeking it and from Viaux too) and to keep them in the constitutional line that he knows is their overwhelming preference.

10. In these circumstances, these are my action recommendations:

A. An immediate effort that involves both clandestine and "background" efforts to have published, particularly in the European respected press, stories about the precipitous Communist take over already of the media, of the universities and of many key elements in the society.

B. A similar effort re the economic situation and the consequences.

C. A similar effort but restricted to select publications re the dependence of the Chilean Armed Forces on US supplies.

D. A specialist to write this material for dissemination to be sent here immediately since no one aside from myself could do the actual writing. He would work under my direction.

E. A deep background by a high, much respected official such as you, for a very select and small group of US editors or publishers on the facts here, based on the material that we are preparing most carefully—such briefing to be done by no later than Wednesday of this week.

F. An effort by the White House to persuade the US carrier, Braniff, and as many scheduled Latin and European airlines to make preparation now to have extra flights from Santiago to Buenos Aires for the period Oct 24th to Nov 3rd so that those many Chileans who are willing to make a fight for their country can be soon assured they will have a way out if Allende is to be President.

G. Dispositions as may be possible to permit me to assure those key Chileans who need such assurance that they will be able to enter the US if this effort fails.

H. An immediate effort with Gen. Lanusse of Argentina, currently in the US, to have the Argentine Govt remain quiet and uninvolved but to have that govt allocate publicly extra funds to handle the flood of Chileans who might leave the country next month—the point being to keep influential groups here to fight the battle but with the knowledge that if they have to leave everything behind at the last moment, they will receive lodging, food, etc.

I. Funds to handle covert support of the new pro-Frei propaganda mechanism and to fund some essential players in the game. A standby-fund for suborning of Congressmen should also be set aside now.

J. The Department support my position that in the circumstances there can be no rpt no disbursement of A.I.D. funds in the pipeline unless specifically recommended by me and that with a threat of civil war, it would be imprudent to permit any A.I.D. new personnel or contractors to come to Chile unless as specifically recommended by me.

11. Finally, I must express my concern that there seems to be a lack of complete understanding between the Department and myself as to the basic US policy line in this situation. I hope that the deliberations now underway will result in a clear policy line and unambiguous support for this Embassy in its efforts to forestall or at least mitigate what could be a serious defeat for the United States. I may add that this Mission in all its elements is in complete agreement and working

harmoniously to support the policy that I have recommended.

12. I wish you to know of my most profound gratitude for the President’s message and for the support he has always provided. It has been indispensable and essential; it is deeply appreciated. With warm regards.