DECLASSIFIED // UNCLASSIFIED

Conversation Between President Nixon and Secretary of the Treasury Connally

Identificador Archival:	frus:frus1969-76ve16/d103
Agencia Emisora:	NSC / Casa Blanca
Fecha del Documento:	1972-02-08
Colección / Serie:	FRUS 1969–1976, vol. E-16: Documentos sobre Chile, 1969–1973

Nota de Archivo: *Summary: Nixon and Connally discussed the Chilean economy. Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Conversation 320–28. Sensitive But Unclassified. According to the President's Daily Diary, Nixon met first with Connally, Kissinger, and McNamara in the Executive Office Building at 3:15 p.m. The conversation transcribed here—which the editors transcribed specifically for this volume—began after McNamara and Kissinger left at 4:20 and continued until Nixon and Connally both left at 5:06. (Ibid., White House Central Files)*

[Omitted here is a brief exchange on Robert S. McNamara, President of the World Bank.]

Nixon: Now, on the Chilean thing, despite the pressure with Allende, I do—I know the argument that Chile—that the Chilean Foreign Minister made, that—I'm sure everybody's saying it'll weaken the dollar. So be it. I think, of course—I just don't think—I just don't think that you can, you can keep Allende down there. John, [unclear], they brought this on themselves. They're ruining the Chilean economy with their expropriation and everything else. Now, for us to step in and rescue it, means that we are subsidizing, basically, the communization of Chile.

Connally: That's right.

Nixon: To hell with it.

Connally: That's right.

Nixon: Do you agree?

Connally: Absolutely.

Nixon: All right.

Connally: Let Russia—let Russia support them, if they have no other option.

Nixon: I think we should—

Connally: Hell, Russia can't support themselves, Mr. President.

Nixon: Right. [Unclear]—

Connally: And they're coming to us and saying, "We're not making [unclear]. We want to trade with you. We want—"

Nixon: That's right.

Connally: "We want your credits to develop our resources." They need their support to come from Russia.

Nixon: You see, Cuba sucks from Russia a million dollars a day, and that's one of the reasons we are not going to change our attitude toward Cuba. Let them talk. Let them pay a million dollars a day. Now, the same with Chile: If the Soviet, the Russians, have to support them, then they will have to be supported by the Russians. The way that Chile—if they want more support from us, they must come a long way. That—we won't tell them that but they will know damn well. They'll get the message.

Connally: Well, he [Allende] just lost two elections. I don't know if he's doing so well down there with his communization.

Nixon: You're right.

Connally: I think he's in trouble. And I believe, just hold his feet to the fire and he'll be in trouble.

Nixon: And that's—and we would pull him right out of the trouble, or help to pull him out, if we got together with the Paris Group and—

Connally: Well, if we do, Mr. President, we're going to do to him, we're going to do to Chile what we did to Argentina 25 years ago. We let the Peróns run high, wide, and handsome there, and they destroyed Argentina for a quarter of a century.

Nixon: Yeah.

Connally: Argentina has got no chance.

[Omitted here is further discussion of Argentina, U.S. foreign economic policy, and other matters unrelated to Chile.]