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Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Pickering) to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft)

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Nota de Archivo: *Summary: This memorandum discussed a proposal, made by Senators Javits and McGee, to have President Nixon make a formal statement concerning the recent coup in Chile and deplore the abrupt end to constitutional government in Chile. Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15 CHILE. Confidential. Drafted by Kubisch.*

Proposal by Senators Javits and McGee that The President Make a Statement About the Situation in Chile

Confirming Mr. Kubisch's telephone conversation early Wednesday evening with General Scowcroft, earlier that afternoon Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Jack Kubisch was asked to go to the Hill for a private meeting with Senator Gale McGee, Chairman, Latin American Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. On his arrival, Mr. Kubisch found that there were other Senators in addition to Senator McGee and that Senator McGee wished to have a confidential briefing from Mr. Kubisch in Executive Session concerning the overthrow of President Allende in Chile.

During the session Senator Javits asked Mr. Kubisch to convey to the White House his hope that the President would consider making a public statement about Allende's overthrow. Specifically, Senator Javits suggested that the Presidential statement "deplore the abrupt end of constitutional government" in Chile, affirm his "great interest and concern" about developments there, and his hope for "early elections" that would return Chile to constitutional government and a free and democratic society. Senator McGee supported Senator Javits' suggestion.

Mr. Kubisch debated with the Senators the advisability of such a statement given the unclear situation in Chile, the fact that what had happened was entirely an internal Chilean matter, and the need for the USG to consider all of its interests in that country including its relations with whatever new government might emerge.

Following the formal session, Senators Javits and McGee repeated informally their suggestion that such a Presidential statement be made but they also recognized that such a statement might be deemed inadvisable for a variety of reasons. They intimated that there may also have been some other reason for handling the matter the way they did—that is, to head off a more undesirable action by the Committee or some of its members.