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Memorandum of Conversations

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Nota de Archivo: *Summary: Chilean Senator Pedro Ibáñez of the National Party informed NSC Staff members Nachmanoff and Hewitt about President Salvador Allende's strategy of attempting to squelch the opposition media in Chile. The NSC officials told Ibáñez to keep the U.S. Ambassador in Chile apprised of Allende's strategy. Source: National Security Council, Nixon Intelligence Files, Subject Files, Chile, 1971–72. Secret. The meetings took place in Room 380 of the Old Executive Office Building. The memorandum was sent to Kennedy by Hewitt under cover of a January 4 memorandum.*

Pedro Ibanez, National Party Senator from Chile

Arnold Nachmanoff, NSC Staff

Ashley C. Hewitt, NSC Staff

Chile

Senator Ibanez called twice, once on Ashley Hewitt and once on Arnold Nachmanoff. Mr. Hewitt sat in on the meeting between Mr. Nachmanoff and Senator Ibanez. In the course of both interviews, Senator Ibanez made virtually the same presentation. He explained in some detail the campaign of the Allende Government against the opposition, especially the opposition media, indicating that the government's tactics are to squeeze off sources of financing one after another until it is no longer possible to conduct an effective opposition. The Senator emphasized the importance of opposition media to maintaining effective opposition, and said that if the government is effective in emasculating the opposition media, all hope of eventually replacing the Allende Government by peaceful and democratic means vanishes.

Senator Ibanez underlined the importance of the media at the present time due to the upcoming by-elections in January 1972. This election will be the first time the opposition will be able to register its strength since the municipal elections of last April. He added that unfortunately the government's tactics of squeezing off sources of financing are having considerable success, and advertising in the opposition media has virtually vanished.

Without actually framing an explicit request, Senator Ibanez strongly suggested that financial assistance from the US to the opposition would be highly desirable at this time. He asked if the proper place to explore problems of this kind was with our Ambassador in Santiago, or here in Washington.

Both Mr. Nachmanoff and Mr. Hewitt listened sympathetically to Senator Ibanez' presentation, indicated concern with the problems faced by the opposition in Chile, and promised that the information and views he conveyed would be brought to the attention of the proper people in the government. In response to Senator Ibanez' question about the proper place to raise problems of this kind, both Mr. Nachmanoff and Mr. Hewitt indicated that the opposition should, by all means, stay in touch with our Ambassador in Santiago and see that he understands the problems being encountered by the opposition. Mr. Nachmanoff and Mr. Hewitt did not comment further on this question.