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Climate Control: the Case of Chilean Destabilization

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CLIMATE CONTROL: THE CASE OF CHILEAN DESTABILIZATION

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by Andrew Arlotto

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Sempre Avanti

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INTRODUCTION:

This paper takes its shape around my own personal intrigue with Latin America's authoritarian dictators as well as my fascination with the US intelligence community and the way in which it works with policy-makers. Using Chile in the late 20th century as my case study, I will dive into the event that reshaped not just Chile's future, but also the future of US foreign policy. The aim of this is to focus on the inter-governmental contest between the agencies that make up the intelligence community, chiefly the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and other aspects of US diplomacy, mainly the State Department (State).

Focusing on US foreign policy in this manner allows us to take away the more salient observations and make them broadly applicable. For instance how did the contest between the CIA and State affect the outcomes of Chile? What I mean by this quite simply how did Nixon pave the way for General Augusto Pinochet to lead Chile down what is easily its darkest era. While Gen. Pinochet is not a main character in this piece, he does receive a more formal introduction later on. The main players here are President Nixon, his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Chile's President Salvador Allende, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the US Department of State. This paper is primarily concerned with the ways in which the US foreign policy apparatus tried to handle President Allende and his brand of Marxism.

First and foremost it needs to be recognized that there are many more agencies that function within this apparatus and even more so within the intelligence community, but for the purposes of this paper solely State and CIA are used. A specific lense is cast upon State and CIA here because it appears that throughout President Nixon's term, one aspect of foreign policy was favored and one was left out in the sun to dry. I have spent many dozens of hours poring

over recently declassified State and CIA documents from this time period. Items such as the Church Hearing testimonies from former DCI Richard Helms, dozens of CIA weekly reports, and countless other documents have proved incredibly useful. Just because all of this information is out there publically, and many scholars have done their own research on it does not mean the answer is black and white. As you will see, it is actually quite the opposite.

Scholar Pete Kornbluh has dedicated his entire life to preserving the memory of the Chileans who were persecuted and eventually killed during the regime of Gen. Pinochet and unearthing the horrible atrocities the country of Chile faced during this time. Through his work many of these documents came to see the light, and his work is primarily focused on the years after the military dictatorship had been established. It is the purpose of my work to be able to highlight the inter-governmental conflict between the State Department and CIA, how President Nixon selectively used his available foreign policy tools to help foment a climate that only exacerbated the increasingly volatile internal setting that Allende had been dealing with, as well as the way in which foreign policy develops with the collaboration of intelligence and formal diplomacy organs.

It is here that I combine my love of Latin American politics and culture with my passion for the study of intelligence and the way in which the intelligence community interacts with one another as well as with policy-makers. What intrigues me most about these years is the way in which the US handled the situation from one year to the next, mainly the way in which sequential presidents handled it. To begin with, a bit of background is needed starting with the Kennedy – Frei years which preceded the Nixon – Allende years. Next I move into a more precise questioning of the US intelligence community before the 1970 election and why the

president did not take stock of the intelligence that was presented to him. Finally I move into a discussion about the way in which President Nixon fostered a climate that made a coup possible. That although the US did not actively initiate or support the coup, they certainly did not reject the idea nor did they do anything to prevent it.

Nixon was also coming into office when the threat of Soviet expansion was evident around the world and the pressure to contain it was at an all-time high. When viewing Chile in the context of the broader Latin American region it becomes easier for us to understand that Nixon was more concerned with the spread of Communism through the region as a whole. So when a democratically elected president comes to power on a Marxist platform, the President is sure to respond. The US was threatened by the emergence of another possible Castro-esq regime in the region lest of all risk the election of this regime encourage other countries to follow suit. In reality, I find it unwise to support the claim the Allende would have turned out like Castro did given the fact that Allende wanted to maintain positive and healthy relations with the United States. Despite his policy programs promoting the nationalization of his countries mineral resources Allende was not as dedicated to the Communist ideologies as Castro was. It is true though that some of Allende's UP members were very keen on the idea of violent revolution in Chile, but Allende did not necessarily see eye to eye with these members.

CHAPTER 1: PROPER PLANNING FOR 1964 ELECTION

1.1 – KENNEDY AND FREI

There has been much debate about the who's, what's, and why's of the Chilean coup that saw the first democratically-elected Marxist President of a Latin American country come

crumbling down. Then-President Nixon was no fan of the new leader and did not hesitate to show his distaste for the new regime, but funny enough, the story behind American intervention in Chile goes back well before the Nixon administration. Best stated by the notorious General Ugarte Pinochet, who's violent coup led to the death of Allende and the introduction of one of the bloodiest authoritarian regimes the world has ever seen; "...the drama had begun long before September 4, 1970..."¹. What is significant about this statement is the understanding and acceptance that the climate that eventually fostered the coup had been a long time coming for Chileans. It will become apparent that over time, Allende happened to not apply pressures in the right spots to deal with various mounting pressures within society.

Long before the election of Salvador Allende in 1970, when Chile suffered its own horrific 9/11 events. Long before Nixon was elected, President Kennedy and his administration had realized the significance of Chilean relations and were warned of its place in history, both for the US and for the entirety of Latin America. The United States was involved on a massive scale in the 1964 presidential election in Chile. The Special Group authorized over \$3 million during the 1962-1964² period to prevent the election of a Socialist or Communist candidate. This operation became known as a spoiling campaign. The groundwork for this was laid early in 1961, by establishing relationships with key political parties and creating anti-Socialist/Communist propaganda, as well as initiating mechanisms that had the ability to mobilize and influence large sectors of the population. Projects that range back to the 1950's, such as those conducted among the peasants, slum dwellers, students, and the media provided

¹ A. Pinochet, *The Crucial Day: September 11, 1973* (Santiago 1982) p. 15

² U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, *Covert Action in Chile 1963-1973*, 94th Cong., 1st sess., December 18, 1975s, 14

a large basis for much of this kind of pre-election work. In 1962, the Special Group approved \$230,000 for the support of Christian Democrat (PDC) candidate Eduardo Frei, as well as an extra \$20,000 in support of the Radical Party (PR). Moving ahead now, in May of 1964, the Special Group approved \$160,000 to support PDC slum dwellers and peasant organizations³. As a result of all the funds thrown into the PDC and Frei, he wins the presidential election and in September of 1964 is elected president with 55.7% of the vote, while Allende finishes a distant second with 38.9%. According to the Congressional Report, Allende is quoted in a NY Times article from November 15th of 1965, saying that the US was among “certain outside forces”⁴ that had led to his defeat. This is significant because of the exposure of the US’ hand in this election, elections that historically had been democratically sound.

While one of the most apparent instances of US involvement in any single country’s domestic politics during the 20th century would undoubtedly fall on the Chilean Coup-era in the 1970’s, the actual intervention could date back to as early as the 1960’s. There is no question that the US’ hand in the Chilean Coup and the overthrow of the Salvador Allende regime is one of the most heinous instances of US involvement in foreign politics. But what is surprising, is that the first sign of US involvement dates back to the Kennedy Administration, not the Nixon years. A little background history; in 1962 the leader of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), Eduardo Frei, received \$50,000⁵ from the US’ Special Group which is responsible for overseeing US covert operations. While the PDC ran on a Marxist platform, the support and backing from

³ Ibid., 57

⁴ Ibid., 57

⁵ Ibid., 57

the US makes sense considering the party was staunchly anticommunist. Looking ahead now to the preparation for the 1964 election, where in 1962 the Special Group approves an additional \$180,000 to strengthen the PDC. Around this time, while the CIA and the Special Committee were figuring out which parties to support in order to align the soon-to-be Chilean president with US national interests, President Kennedy organized the Business Group for Latin America (which in 1970 becomes the Council of the Americas). The aim of this group was to promote US corporate interests in the region, and bring in foreign investments into the country. What this group did, that the various US agencies could not necessarily do, for fear of exposure, was channel funds into Chile in the way they saw fit; in a way that would benefit them. This business group, especially in the case of Chile, was created to promote foreign investment in the region, mainly by US corporations.

The CIA and State Department conducted a wide variety of operations during the 1964 Chile presidential election and campaign period, which, according to the 1975 Congressional Report, range from "organizing slum dwellers to passing funds to political parties."⁶ The same report describes U.S. covert action in Chile in 1964 as a "scare campaign which relied heavily on images of Soviet tanks and Cuban firing squads."⁷ In April of 1965 the Special Group authorizes the expenditure of \$3,000,000⁸ in an attempt to ensure a victory for Eduardo Frei, the head of the Christian Democrats, in the upcoming September elections. The effort consisted of direct financial support for Frei, as well as an all-out anticommunist propaganda campaign. Not just the CIA, but the State Department as well shared in the rise of the Frei government. In a

⁶ Ibid., 14

⁷ Ibid., 15

⁸ Ibid., 15

memorandum to the Deputy Under Secretary of State from Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, dated July 1968 denotes the “recommendation of an Embassy election team made up of State and CIA personnel”⁹. This document notes that Ambassador Korry will lead a team within the Embassy in Santiago, that will be working in concert with CIA operatives for the support of the Frei regime. Now it differs from some CIA documents that might appear contradictory. In many of the CIA documents that mention this time period, there is no direct mention of State Department personnel for some of the more detailed covert operations. It is hinted at indirectly that the CIA had gotten approval from the Special Group as a result of Agency cooperation with State, but it is never explicitly said. It appears that from the State document I mentioned above, that State was well aware of the situation in Chile and displayed the disfavor of Allende as well. In a telegram¹⁰ from the Embassy in Santiago to the State Department dated November 1964, State officials met with President Frei and members of his administration to discuss the increased US assistance to his country.

The two teams discussed the loan/aid package Chile was receiving and discussed the balance of payments and debt his country still owed. While there is slight contradiction, it seems reasonable to say that there very well could have been certain activities that only the CIA handled, and some in which the two agencies could function together. For instance the CIA documents regarding the propaganda campaign and covert activities to promote Frei’s presidency during his campaign mention approval by the Special Group, but does not

⁹ Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 303 Committee Files, c. 71, 7/12/68. Secret; Eyes Only. Initialed for Oliver by Sayre

¹⁰ National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, AID(US) 8 Chile. Confidential; Immediate. Passed to the White House

necessarily say that State Department officials were tied to this. This could be significant in terms of planning an escape route in case the US was found out; plausible deniability. If only CIA members were aware of these plans it would be easier to sweep under the carpet. So let the State Department handle the overt support, the channeling of loans and financial aid to improve the Chilean economy, and leave the covert propaganda to the CIA.

1.2 – IMPACT OF TIMELY INTELLIGENCE ON FOREIGN POLICY

In the 1964 presidential election in which Eduardo Frei won, the US played an active role in supporting his campaign and ensuring his victory. Support was channeled to his Christian Democrat party through various intermediaries. But despite the initial help from the US, Frei's PDC grew increasingly polarized towards the end of his tenure. In a Board of National Estimates report¹¹ it is said that not only was Frei's coalition deteriorating, but also that if the CIA were to support the PDC, they should be wary of the potential fragmentation in the PDC. Adding to this, the Staff Report to Study Governmental Operations "concludes that U.S. intervention enabled Eduardo Frei to win a clear majority in the 1964 election, instead of merely a plurality"¹². It is important to note here that the US intelligence community was well aware of the difference between plurality and majority in Chilean elections, which will be important distinction for the 1970 election.

The salient piece to take away from the Kennedy years and its impact on Chilean politics can be seen in the proper use of timely intelligence. What I mean by this is that with a President

¹¹ Board of National Estimates, "Chilean Problems and Frei's Prospects," Special Memorandum, March 4, 1968, in CIA, "Chile Collection."

¹² U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Covert Action in Chile 1963-1973, 94th Cong., 1st. sess., December 18, 1975, 17

who will listen, and an intelligence community who is well apt to give the President everything he needs to make a decision, the US can be effective in its policies. The Kennedy years fully illustrate a cohesive and well-oiled foreign policy machine; one in which the CIA is working with the State Department and vice-versa. The activities that the US engaged in were the proper mixture of covert activities and proper diplomacy, and in the end, the US succeeded in installing Frei. While the Kennedy Administration was reveling in their win in Chile, they did not fully realize the effects of their work, and the world would not fully see the divide in Chile until the 1970 election.

CHAPTER 2: A POLARIZED CHILE

Chile as a result of its long and rich democratic history was not as ripe for the revolution that Nixon and his administration had thought. On the other hand, it could be said that the way the political parties in Chile were split, a civil war was much more likely. It is true though, that in the 1970 presidential election many of the votes cast were for candidates who were offering the Chilean people “radical” change. Commentators are quick to use the numbers from Allende (36%) and Tomic’s (28%) votes to say that much of the population preferred the radical change that not only Allende was offering, but also the same PDC change that Frei had initiated during his tenure. In 1964 Eduardo Frei was elected president and he ran from the Christian Democrat Party (PDC). Allende was a bit like Frei, as both wanted to give Chile “change”, they differed in the degrees by which this change would come. Frei wanted to undergo the “Chileanization”¹³ of US owned copper interests as well as economic stabilization and a more equitable distribution

¹³Ibid., pg. 5

of wealth. The way this program differs from Allende's "Nationalization" of the same interests can be seen in that whereas Frei wanted 51% Chilean control of copper mining, Allende wanted 100% Chilean control. Frei did achieve much during his tenure and was able to garner the support of the peasant class which made up a great deal of the Chilean population at the time. These peasants were encouraged by the agrarian-reform policies that Frei had pushed in his campaign, but it was a little bit too good to be true. Frei failed on numerous accounts. He failed to achieve the amounts of land redistribution, saw a rise in inflation, as well as increased taxes on the middle class, and as a result his PDC would soon lose support for the upcoming election. In a CIA memo from 1968, William Broe denotes the complexities of Chilean politics, and highlights US knowledge of such a ripple in the current;

"the Christian Democrats have encountered increasing difficulty in both the economic and political fields. Inflation which was reduced in the first two years of the Frei administration from a level of about 39% to 17% a year has begun to climb again. In 1967 the rate was 21%. Perhaps even more important than a deteriorating economic situation has been the development of a leftist trend within the non-Communist political parties and a growing political isolation of the Frei administration."¹⁴

It is here that the political isolation of the left-of-center group, the Radical Party, and the right-of-center group, the National Party, feel at odds with Frei and are more willing to collaborate with the FRAP.

As we can see from the CIA memo there was a general knowledge by the US intelligence community that Frei was failing his country and change was inevitable. But equally so, Secretary

¹⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, DDO/IMS Files, Job 79-00207A, [*file name not declassified*] Political and Economic 1968. Secret

of State Dean Rusk in a conversation with Ambassador Tomic in 1968¹⁵ asks the senator on his thoughts about the economic turmoil in his country. Tomic responds that “the situation in Chile was very confused”, that “the moderates within the Radical party were not in control of the party machinery; that the Right was generally discredited and there were many divisions in the non-communist Left. It is necessary that a new combination of forces be brought into being which is not based upon the leadership of an individual, (caudillismo or personalismo) but which expresses the needs and aspirations of the Chilean people”. Tensions within the ruling PDC party came to full fruition in May of 1969 when the party’s national committee reject the demands of its left-wing faction and many hardliners of the PDC declared this proposal as a rebel campaign.

It is here that the PDC chose their candidate for the 1970 election. It is important to note that the Socialist and Communist groups in the PDC would not support Tomic’s campaign. Radomiro Tomic was the PDC candidate and hopeful heir to the throne. He inherited most of Frei’s support, but as one would expect, he caught much more of the backlash too. When a president from a certain party fails to deliver on his promises, it is easy to assume that a candidate running under the same party line will have an uphill battle all the way. After Frei’s failure, and the announcement of Tomic as the PDC candidate, the PDC became so fractionalized, and two new parties arose out of it. The Unified Popular Action Movement (MAPU) and the Christian Left (IC) broke off from the conventional PDC and joined the UP party. Banding together, the Socialists, Communists, Radical and MAPU parties pledged to:

¹⁵ National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL17 CHILE–US. Confidential.

“fight imperialism, the bourgeoisie, and large landowners. The parties also stressed the importance of nationalizing large mining firms, accelerating agrarian reform policies and expropriating large monopolistic firms”¹⁶

As the divide deepened, some PDC members actively sought to remove members of Congress so that Allende would not be able to win the Congressional vote. But, as I was saying, the PDC split was noticeable enough that the CIA became aware of it early, shown by the July 1970 report¹⁷. There were Centrists within the PDC who favored opening up to the Left and there were Centrists who were more inclined to align with right-wing groups and ideologies. There actually was a time when the entirety of the PDC was going to align itself with Allende and the UP, but a consensus was unable to be reached and Allende’s campaign rhetoric and soon to be unfulfilled promises further polarized the Centrists. This is significant because where before these Centrists were at least somewhat part of the mix, they now felt cheated and neglected by Allende.

However, knowing the way in which the Chilean elections are structured make the picture far less drastic as it may first appear. The Chilean Constitution states that if no clear candidate is elected then it is ultimately decided by the Congress based upon the two leading candidates. The takeaway from this is that Allende did not win a clear vote. Jorge Alessandri who represented the Right obtained only one and four-tenths of a percentage point fewer votes than Allende. This shows that the population in Chile, while some inclined to pursue radical change, some were also content with the way the country had been previously going.

¹⁶ Lester Sobel and Chris Hunt, eds., *Chile and Allende* (New York, NY: Facts on File Inc., 1974). 19

¹⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Chiles Election -- the Candidates and Their Programs*, report no. 0525/70 (Directorate of Intelligence, 1970), accessed April 25, 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00875R001100090034-0.pdf>.

Now it also needs to be said that the composition of Allende's Popular Unity party while unique, is not necessarily troublesome for the US. In fact, only the Socialist portion were troublesome. As former Ambassador Korry stated "the Communist party of Chile was the largest, best-led, influential Communist party in the hemisphere"¹⁸, and he is absolutely right. The Communist Party of Chile was an established part of the Chilean political system, and with a direct affiliation to the Soviet Union, it strongly believed in a peaceful coexistence with other world powers as well as approached domestic reform through proper and legal means. It is for this reason as well as their longstanding roots in Chilean politics, that the Communist party should understand the difficulties and obstacles that inhibit any kind of rapid transformation of society. The background and history of the Chilean political system is necessary for one to understand that Allende was not going to be the next Castro. Allende's Socialist party origins lie in the various forms of revolutionary Marxism, meaning anarchism and the shared belief that Communists were too conservative to abide to any revolutionary promises. While Allende headed the UP, he was far more comfortable with his disciplined, realistic Communist allies than of his rash and revolution-crazy party members.

The Chilean Communists preached consolidation and a deal with the PDC, as well as mediation with the US. Allende did encourage the Marxists, by giving them falsified campaign promises from not just this election, but all three of his preceding campaigns. In a way, Allende opened a door that not only could he not close, but he must have lost the key for it too. His democratic victory gave the Socialists hope that their revolution was emerging, and as a result,

¹⁸ Interview with William F. Buckley, Jr., broadcast on *Firing Line* (PBS), September 29, 1974; published as *The Truth About Chile* (Dinex Mineral, Santiago de Chile, 1974).

social disorder began to run amuck. According to a CIA Weekly Summary on *“The Marxist Government in Chile”* that was released in December 2006, but written in December 1970, the Agency notes that following his election, Allende was faced with a “bitter internal struggle for power among the factions of his coalition”¹⁹

Allende did in fact promote certain policies in many of his previous campaigns, that would have given all these different groups hope and enabled him to rally them to his cause. In reality Allende only partially followed through on his campaign promises. As one could expect, the floating middle, meaning the members of the Christian Democratic constituency who favored opening to the Left and members who had more right-wing inclinations was now decisively split. Allende’s policies simply gave the polarization of the Right a far more lethal reality, one that now could be mobilized quickly into a true threat to Allende. The true split can be seen in the way the Socialists, Communists, and other leftist parties believed the President should run the country. The parties that unified around Allende had such differing philosophies that it makes it hard to defend the claim that Allende would have seriously pursued the path of revolutionary Marxism that some of his Socialist backers favored.

2.1 – WHY DIDN’T THE US TAKE MORE STOCK IN CHILE?

When viewing the situation in Chile it is necessary to realize the switch in policy the US undertook. Trying to understand this switch in policy deems it necessary to realize that the US as an entity, meaning all the various agencies and branches that subset it, at the end of the day take their actions based on the president and his views. In the testimony of former DCI Richard

¹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, *The Marxist Government in Chile: Its Evolution, Realization, and Prospects*, Weekly Summary Special Report 43, [pg. 5].

Helms, to the Senate Committee to Study Governmental Operations, in September of 1975, Helms notes the importance of taking action well before it is too late. He acknowledges that in the early '60's when the Kennedy Administration wanted to back Eduardo Frei, it was so done so "a year or two before the election..." and with resources well "enough in advance so they actually did some good"²⁰ What Helms is referring to is the extensive planning, in terms of money and support, that is needed so that covert operations of this sort can achieve the intended result. The intelligence apparatus that makes up the US' intelligence community, meaning the FBI, CIA, NSA, Homeland Security, etc., all act within a larger umbrella of US foreign policy and these agencies, while all handling different aspects of US/world intelligence, have to take barking orders from someone.

As is also the case with all of these agencies, is that the agendas will fluctuate depending upon who is in office. For instance, when Kennedy was in office, he was very adamant about support Frei and he made so very clear early on in his election campaign. Whereas when the Nixon Administration realized that Allende could cause some serious problems for US and Latin American relations, the necessary actions were taken a bit too late. It is also important to note that it is not because the US did not realize what was going on in Chile during this time, just that policymakers were too busy with other things to heed the intelligence agencies warnings.

When looking at a memorandum titled *Policy Decisions Related to Our Covert Action Involvement in the September 1970 Chilean Presidential Election* by the CIA, we learn that the

²⁰ Hearing Held before Senate Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities (1975) (statement of Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms). [pg. 15]

US intelligence community was well aware whom the “main candidates would probably be”²¹. So the US intel community knew that the support for Allende was far higher than previously believed, and in this document they try to ration out what kind of covert action to take to try to sway the election in the US’ favor. It is said in bullet-three, that a joint Embassy/Station proposal for a campaign directed against Allende was submitted to the 303 Committee. This proposal was submitted in December of 1969. What is important from this, is the cohesion between the State Department and CIA. The inclusion of “Embassy/Station”, shows that both agencies were utilizing all their tools to work together on this matter. So, as it seems, in the earlier phases of the planning, both were in the loop. This is rather important to note that both the CIA and State Department were working in unison on this matter.

Later in the same memorandum, it is noted that on March 5, 1970 a similar proposal was resubmitted and it now reflected the State/CIA consensus that the US government should not support any candidate individually, for fear of the backlash. Inside the memorandum, it is apparent that while State and CIA officials were working together on this matter, but were not in total agreement about what steps should be taken. State officials seem more apprehensive about US involvement in any way, but it is stated that both agencies agreed that “spoiling actions”²² should be taken against the Popular Unity electoral front. This proposal was ultimately approved in March by the 40 Committee. I think it is also important to note that the US was very wary of the pressures being exerted on US businesses and government for direct funding of the Alessandri and Tomic forces. While much of the actual numbers and names in

²¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Policy Decisions Related to Our Covert Involvement in the September 1970 Chilean Presidential Elections* (Washington, DC, 1970), pg. 1

²² *Ibid.*, pg.2

this document are blacked out, which is routine for documents of this security level, it is stated that roughly \$1.1 million in foreign business funds went to the Alessandri campaign. As I just said, the exact name of whom gave the money and the exact amount are unknown, it is noted that these funds were given from the US business community to protect US concerns in Chile.

What we can gather from this is that the US business community was worried about the land reform programs that Allende had proposed in his campaign as it would take land and ultimately revenue away from US corporations. So while we can see from this document that the other campaigns were receiving covert funds from the US business community, the US government was not directly involved in channeling funds to either candidate. It is said that “This meeting did not give any further serious consideration to direct support to either Tomic or Alessandri.”²³ In the same document it is noted that “should the tone or content become pro-Alessandri rather than anti-UP, our support will cease.”²⁴ The last thing to make mention of from this memorandum, is that the notion of Phase II was designed to influence a sufficient number of members of congress to “vote in a manner which will assure that he is denied the presidency”²⁵

According to a memorandum for the 40 Committee, titled *Political Action Related to 1970 Chilean Presidential Election* indicates that “on 19 January 1970 representatives of State and CIA...met to discuss the current political situation in Chile and the covert action operations which were being conducted or proposed to reduce the chance of a UP victory”²⁶. In this

²³ Ibid., pg.5

²⁴ Ibid., pg.8

²⁵ Ibid., pg.6

²⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Political Action Related to 1970 Chilean Presidential Election* (Washington, DC, 1970), [pg. 1]

document a brief overview of the political parties in Chile and their polling popularity are noted. The document also establishes the why and how covert action was desired in this case, and what the intelligence community was thinking of Chilean society and politics at the time. This same memorandum makes note that the 40 Committee authorized the covert contacts with members of one political party (ambiguity because this portion of the document is blacked out). But the goal of this authorization was to enable the moderate Radicals within the party to gain more influence.

According to this document the action taken by the CIA and State Department to help influence these parties had failed by and large. The hopeful effect of this covert action was to reduce the chance of the party moving closer to a merger with the Communists and Marxists. This is what is meant by it failed; "this trend was confirmed during the July 1969 convention when dissident moderates were purged from the PR hierarchy"²⁷. While a good amount of this document is blacked out, so the exact amount of funds being given and names of people who were being assisted are unknown, it is evident that the CIA and State Department were heavily involved in Chilean politics during this time and that Ambassador Korry was the main proprietor of this action. Seeing how Ambassador Korry was the main boots-on-the-ground in a sense, so he had a good amount of pull in the early years since it was after all his home turf.

Korry also agreed to two other proposals to assist the PDR. This first effort consisted of financing some kind of trip (blacked out so details are vague) in order to undercut PR and UP strength. The purpose of these trips were to also try to rally Radical voters to unite against the UP. The second effort was more of a direct payment to a PDR staff member so that he can

²⁷ Ibid., pg. 10

“maintain an office to be used for party work”²⁸. What is very important and significant of this level of covert action, which is very apparent in this early document, is that the CIA and State Department wanted to reduce electoral support for the PR and Allende. They did not want it to become “a vehicle for promoting Alessandri’s candidacy”²⁹. This is super significant because it shows that in the early stages of this era, the US was very aware of any kind of affiliation and direct support for other Chilean parties. The US did not want to become a promoter of Chilean politics, this would have been bad press and could lead to serious controversy, so the action was to be directed towards the undermining of Allende’s support rather than the promoting support for Alessandri or others.

The ultimate recommendations proposed at the end of this document are very telling of the level of US support and intervention. The US realized that support for Tomic or Alessandri would be a dead-end and it is stated that it would take a serious amount of financing and support to be able to make Tomic a real contender in the election. But what is also made note of is that the platform on which Tomic would run, would “indicate that a government led by him would be apt to take some actions not consonant with US interests”³⁰. So clearly the US is very much thinking of the long-term strategic aspect of who to support in leading Chile. What is also very indicative of US sentiments towards Allende are heavily viewed in a Cold War-esq lense. It is said towards the end of the document that “Based on Allende’s own views, plus the

²⁸ Ibid., pg.11

²⁹ Ibid., pg.12

³⁰ Ibid., pg.13

public platform of the UP, we must assume that an Allende victory would mean the emergence of a Castro-type government in Chile.”³¹.

CHAPTER 3: NIXON YEARS

3.1 – NIXON AND KISSINGER

Looking back on the Kennedy era, and the mechanisms that were established to ensure Frei’s victory, we now know that some of the usefulness of these assets were “limited for their increased visibility”³². This is increasingly important if we are to try to distinguish why the Nixon administration did what it did. By not having sound means of intervening it becomes more clear why Tracks I & II were established. Much of the scare campaign that happened during Allende’s campaign had not played out the way the US had hoped. While this propaganda campaign did not succeed in preventing Allende from taking office, it had several key impacts in the years following his election. Many of the aspects of mass mobilization and the ideologies that had been planted in the Chilean mind during this campaign, only intensified after Allende’s actual election. The groups that the US chose to covertly fund and support soon became more of a behemoth than the US had previously thought. The media that was at risk of being cut under Allende soon became a prominent focal point of many of the issues that radical and revolutionary Chileans had voiced.

In 1967 Allende founds the Organization of Latin American Solidarity, which is a coalition of leftists groups, and Henry Kissinger is quoted as claiming that it was “Havana based” and

³¹ Ibid., pg.13

³² Ibid., pg.23

“dedicated to armed struggle against the United States”³³. This is one of the long line of statements that Dr. Kissinger made during his tenure, and it should be evident enough that he had serious qualms with the Chilean political leader Salvador Allende. In a memorandum titled *Policy Decisions Related to Our Covert Action Involvement in the September 1970 Chilean Election*³⁴ it is noted that on March 5, 1970 there was a State Department and CIA consensus that the US Government should not take up support for any one candidate, rather should engage in spoiling operations against the Popular Unity (UP) front and their candidate, Allende. On March 25th these actions were approved by the 40 Committee and furthermore, the plans took cognizance of the possible need to directly support one candidate if the prospect of an Allende victory was dawning. In the summary of this memorandum it is noted that there is a “tradition of seven years involvement with the elements of the Chilean polity”³⁵, but it is also noted that the “independent nature” of the Alessandri machine works against any serious considerations the CIA had for supporting the party. What this shows is that the CIA and State Department were wary of the poor structure of Alessandri’s campaign, and did not want to directly fund/support him for fear of overexposure and fear of being found out. What this document also shows, is that the Agency and State were working together, if not at the very least sharing information and opinions in response to the Chilean situation.

Examining this topic and the multiple complexities of the Chilean case, there is a necessity to highlight the role that both President Nixon and his Secretary of State Henry

³³ Kissinger, Henry. *Years of Upheaval*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1982, pg.375

³⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *Policy Decisions Related to Our Covert Involvement in the September 1970 Chilean Presidential Elections* (Washington, DC, 1970).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pg.6

Kissinger played. This one aspect touches upon the reasons why the US intelligence community acted the way it did and show us a great deal about the way the intelligence community interacts with policy-makers; which is a huge takeaway from this whole project. President Nixon came into office after President Kennedy and as a result carried a different view of foreign policy with him. Nixon came into office on the platform to end the war in Vietnam. As a result of this, his foreign policy centered around the fight for Asia, which makes sense. But the president of a world power and a man in his unique position needs to take the uttermost care when handling certain world events. Looking back on what transpired in Chile with Allende and then eventually with Pinochet, we can safely say that had Nixon and his administration focused on properly handling Chile, possibly through a more diplomatic, more overt manner, then certain event might not have unfolded.

Obviously this is speculation as we cannot simply say decisively one way or another what or what could have happened. But when presidents do not actively take full stock of the gathered intelligence, they are at fault. Additionally, Nixon chose to exclude the State Department and Ambassador Korry from the decision-making process let alone even the planning process. This is telling of the kind of diplomatic muscle that Nixon wanted to exercise over Chile. This perfectly shows the presidents favoritism for and usage of the intelligence community and their vast resources over the State Department and more formal diplomacy.

Even the manner in which the US intelligence community viewed a coup in Chile in 1973 is telling of the way the intelligence community works towards a Presidents desired agenda. In early August of that year the CIA stated in an intelligence memorandum that "Army

Commander Prats remains the prime obstacle. He is so strongly opposed to a coup”³⁶ At this present moment, the US intelligence community believes a coup is unwise and that it would not only fail miserably if attempted. But what is even more important is that they realize that a coup would only strengthen Allende and solidify his interior cabinet. Also possibly making the military come to their senses and rejoin the cabinet forces without getting the requested privilege to make policy decisions, which was the main reason why the military did not want to rejoin the Allende government. What this document highlights is that the US intelligence community was aware that any direct contact with the Chilean military would be a dead end. Without top officials pressing for the overthrow of Allende, the military would not budge. It is at this point that the Nixon Administration realizes that too much effort could be costly and blow up in their face. So even despite plenty of early-warnings, and even late ones that the Presidents hopes for a coup was realistically not feasible, the President still went on with his policy of doing anything possible to wreak havoc upon Chile.

3.2 – NIXON’S MINDSET

The case for Chile is an increasingly interesting one, more so than any other country in Latin America in terms of the effect of US and Soviet policies. Eduardo Frei Montalva, Salvador Allende, Augusto Pinochet each represented a position in world politics. The same has not happened with Argentine rulers, nor Peruvian ones. In a certain way the APRA of Peru and Peronism in Argentina are local phenomenon. It would be difficult for them to have taken on the connotations of Chilean leaders who assumed international ideologies or outlooks. It is in

³⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Consequences of a Military Coup in Chile* (Washington, DC, 1973), [pg. 4].

this context, of competing worldviews and ideologies that makes Chilean leaders and politics so interesting. The inflows of US support, mainly monetary support for Chilean political parties reached astonishing heights in the 1960s through the '70s. In 1970, about \$425 thousand were approved to be sent to non-Marxist candidates and then in 1971 another \$3,577,000 was sent to similar candidates. The way in which the US tried to do anything and everything in their power to be able to ensure a candidate of their choosing would win the election proves that the US was more concerned with promoting anti-Marxist/communist ideals and leaders. The way in which two worlds collided, making the country its stomping ground for both Soviet and American policy, makes Chile a clear example of the way foreign policy affected the results of domestic politics.

As Lawrence Weschler writes:

“The enemy -- the International Communist Movement -- is perceived as covertly operating everywhere, all the time, in all fields of human endeavor. The threat is no longer conceived as one of conventional war, nor even as one of sedition (the doctrine's word for armed insurrection), but rather as one of subversion”³⁷

This truly was the perceived enemy during the 1970's for almost all military dictatorships in Latin America. Within this mindset one can understand why these dictators chose to form this intelligence system. What also needs to be understood within this context of international communism, is the strong domestic insurrections that made many Latin American leaders uneasy. Not only did it trouble these leaders, but even more so, it made the US very concerned

³⁷ Lawrence Weschler, *A Miracle, a Universe: Settling Accounts with Torturers* (n.p.: Univ. of Chicago Pr., 1998), [pg. 121]

for the fate of the region. Taking into account the Cold War era mentality of the US, especially with Cuba being a Soviet satellite, the US was more than happy to assist these nations in tracking and hunting down known communist sympathizers and ensuring the longevity of these dictatorships.

The use of covert operations are some of the more atypical forms of foreign policy the US chooses to engage in. Most foreign aid is given through organizations like USAID, with the intent of the US being the promotion of civil society or the strengthening of political parties. This type of clandestine action is controversial to say the least. It is not a proper, let alone democratic, form of foreign policy. Covert action should be used as a last resort, an end-all-be-all option. What this shows is that democracy really was not the goal in the end. The manner in which these operations were set up and carried out and the level of CIA assistance, combined with the true political disregard for things such as human rights show that combatting communism in the region and ensuring Latin American dictators who will align with US interests was the true goal.

What they mean by this is that while many were backing him, such as the media and universities that were highly influenced by the Communists and Socialists. But many wealthy and influential Chileans felt threatened by Allende's proposed policies. So these individuals took it upon themselves to get rid of Allende. But, this coup attempt against Allende never really got off the ground and the shooting of the commander in chief of the army, two days before the election, turned out to be a huge advantage for Allende. For this, the US did not have any say in this matter, it was totally on the Chileans, but the US soon realized the negative affects this would have as the Chilean public was outraged and shocked at the attempt, and the

assassination actually united the politically divided armed forces behind Allende's legal right to the presidency. So once in office, Allende quickly moved to consolidate and named Communists and Socialists to key cabinet positions. Within the language of the CIA document it is evident that the Agency felt threatened by Allende's election. Towards the end of the document it mentions Chile's recognition of Cuba under Allende, and his improved relations with places like Albania, East Germany and North Korea, which demonstrates the fear the US had of a new and democratically elected Castro, in the once model Latin American democracy.

Viewing the Chilean situation in the shadow of the Cuban and Castro era, should not be seen as controversial, despite it being problematic. Intelligence agencies are not fortune tellers, they do not predict the future with 100% certainty. They are meant to look at ongoing situations and developments, in lieu of history. They are to use historical facts, to try to understand ongoing political developments and try to draw connections or interpret reasons for the how and why present situations play out. So while it is problematic the intelligence community used Cuban infiltration as a bit of a scapegoat for much of the developments in Chile, it is not to be seen as incorrect. There is an inherent issue in the intelligence community with faulty intelligence or faulty analysis. This is not to say it is wrong, for at the time it is being done, they believed it to be true. Only in retrospect can we say it is wrong. According to the Background for Chilean Hearings from March 1972³⁸, it is noted that Beatriz Allende, the President's daughter, was married to Luis Fernandez Ona, who was among the Cuban officials that belonged to the Cuban Intelligence Service. Now while this could just be true-love at its

³⁸ "Background for Chilean Hearings," March 22, 1972. CIA Collection, www.foia.state.gov, U.S. State Department. "Cuban Disappointment with the Chilean Experiment,"

finest, it is also noted in this CIA document that since Allende's inauguration, the Cuban official presence has gone from zero personnel to around 54³⁹.

Henry Kissinger is quoted as saying in the Congressional Report⁴⁰ that if Allende were elected president, he will establish some kind of Communist government. But even this being said, it is so rash of Kissinger, and telling of his and the president's wishes for Allende's Chile to equate Allende's administration as that of Castro in Cuba. What it comes down to is that while the Soviet Communist party might be inclined to support Communist parties all over the world, that does not necessarily mean that social revolution is ripe. In the National Intelligence Estimates in Section IV of the 1975 Congressional Report, it is said that these more extreme fears were ill founded. The Report finds that "there was never a significant threat of a Soviet military presence; the export of Allende's revolution was limited"⁴¹. So here we see a clear disconnect between top level policy-makers, and the intelligence apparatus. Kissinger and Nixon let their fear of Communist inroads in Latin America, which is understandable, they did not take proper steps to further analyze/digest intelligence material on the issue. If they would have, they would have seen that Allende was not Castro, nor was his brief time in office even close to that of its Cuban neighbor.

3.3 – WHO AUTHORIZES THE CIA?

The 40 Committee during this time plays the overall team-role in many ways. It is comprised of the Chairman who acts as the quarterback, and his various positions intent on

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Covert Action in Chile 1963-1973, 94th Cong., 1st. sess., December 18, 1975

⁴¹ Ibid., pg.28

delivering him success, in any way is possible. It does not matter how you score a goal, so long as the ball goes in the net. The Committee was made up primarily of CIA officials, as well as key military personnel like the Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and even the Attorney General John Mitchell sat on as a personal friend to Nixon. During the latter half of Track I a different working group comprised of the CIA's Western Hemisphere Division Chief, State Department officials, the National Security Council, and Treasury was created for the implementation of the propaganda and economic action. The political action campaign in many ways was a defeat as it failed to convince Frei to get behind the plan and work with the US, Frei seemed too dedicated to his country's values. The Committee is essentially the governing body for the CIA. In an ideal world, all agencies would work together, so the 40 Committee would be approving joint ventures for the State and CIA. As is noted in the Congressional Report⁴², the CIA should coordinate with the State Department before submitting proposals to the 40 Committee. But as we will see, there were huge differences of opinion with regards as to course of action in Chile within the Committee itself.

The 40 Committee was chaired by Henry Kissinger, and a NY Times article from 1975⁴³ quotes the hearing of Mr. William Colby, who was former DCI, by Senator Symington. The testimony is as follows;

- Senator Symington: Who is the chairman?
- Mr. Colby: Well, again, I would prefer to go into executive session on the description of the Forty Committee, Mr. Chairman.

⁴² U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Covert Action in Chile 1963-1973, 94th Cong., 1st. sess., December 18, 1975. 41

⁴³ Wise, David. "The Secret Committee Called '40'." *New York Times* (New York, NY), January 19, 1975, NY Times Archives edition.

- Senator Symington (incredulous): As to who is the chairman, you would prefer an executive session?
- Mr. Colby: The chairman, all right, Mr. Chairman, Dr. Kissinger is the chairman as the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

When thinking about the amount of time it took for the president and his colleagues to heed the advice of the intelligence community and the work they had already been doing in the region prior to his presidential oath, one can understand that Vietnam was Nixon's main priority. Up to this point I have simply reviewed the environment that was already present in Chile. The Right and Left in Chile were extremely polarized. By highlighting the inner workings of the Chilean political system that the Allende regime came into we can better understand the exact role that the US had in its downfall.. By applying the right pressure on Chilean society, a proper environment for a coup was created by Nixon and his administration. Even though there was no direct Soviet threat, nor an expansion of Allende's revolution to other parts of Latin America, Nixon and Kissinger still played the cool public posture yet also engaged in extensive covert activities. All of those factors plus the strangling of the Chilean economy, exacerbating the turmoil already being felt by the economy led to the perfect climate in which the US did not have to tell anyone how or what to do. The setting was already set and whether the US believed it or not, Chile was ripe for the picking.

CHAPTER 4: THE TRACKS TO DERAILMENT

4.1 – TRACK I

The 40 Committee officially approved the plans for Track I following the September 14th meeting in 1970. This track had three subsections to it including, political action, a propaganda

campaign, as well as economic pressures. The beginning phase to this track consisted of a deceptively constitutional method to ensure Allende stayed out of office, while at the same time implementing a candidate in the US' favor. Both the 40 Committee and the CIA agreed that the "Frei re-election gambit"⁴⁴ was a sound means to an end. What is interesting here is that Track I becomes reality only after Allende wins the plurality and the election will go a Congressional vote. But the original idea actually dates back to 1968 when the US, was too easily influenced by past successes. Meaning the US was a little too quick to get on their high horse and compare foreign policy tools and make the wrongful claim that it will work again same as before. As a CIA memo⁴⁵ dated April 1968 from William Broe to Henry Karamessines notifies him of the initial plan for Track I:

"Using information and analyses provided by the Embassy's political section as well as from the Station has begun to put together a political action program to be carried out within the context of the overt effort. The final political action proposal will be a joint Station/Embassy effort with the Ambassador playing the key role."

The plan for Track I was in a way, similar to the Kennedy years in which various agencies acted as the brains and brawn of US foreign policy. Over the weeks that unfolded, not much of a dent was made into Chile following the Frei re-election gambit and Nixon decided it was time for another route. The propaganda campaign and the economic pressures had a profound impact upon the coup climate. In many ways this was the right way to influence mass sectors of

⁴⁴ U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Covert Action in Chile 1963- 1973, 94th Cong., 1st. sess., December 18, 1975., p.23

⁴⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, DDO/IMS Files, Job 79-00207A, [file name not declassified] Political and Economic 1968. Secret

the population. With the State Department and Ambassador Korry left out of the loop for these phases, it seems evident that Nixon hoped to begin the coup process covertly. By producing propaganda and supporting certain groups already established in Chilean society, the CIA “sought to create concerns about Chile’s future if Allende were elected; the propaganda was designed to influence Frei, the elite, and the military”⁴⁶. When the first political pressure option failed the 40 Committee took to imposing an economic offensive against Chile, which consisted of cutting off all international credits to Chile as well as pressuring firms to reduce investment in Chilean businesses and infrastructure. Ultimately Track I failed to generate the economic crisis that it so desperate craved, and thus failed to stimulate the Chilean military to take serious action against Allende. So clearly both the State Department and the CIA were aware of this track and had set it upon their respective agendas, but it failed to materialize into anything substantial.

4.2 – TRACK II

Richard Helms was directed by President Nixon to prevent Allende from taking power, and that this effort was to be “conducted without the knowledge of the Departments of State and Defense or the Ambassador”. Track II was also never discussed at a formal 40 Committee meeting. This track in reality, was the end all be all game, either coup or no coup. Track II consisted of US officials bribing/convincing Chilean military leaders to take up a coup against Allende and his government. On November 18th, 1970, there was a Report on CIA Chilean Task

⁴⁶ U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Covert Action in Chile 1963- 1973, 94th Cong., 1st. sess., December 18, 1975., p. 24

Force Activities that was put out. Within this document it is explicitly stated that “On 15 September, 1970, CIA was directed to try to prevent Marxist Salvador Allende’s ascent to the Chilean presidency on 3 November. This effort was to be independent of concurrent endeavors being undertaken through, or with the knowledge of, the 40 Committee, Department of State, and Ambassador Korry.”⁴⁷. This intelligence brief also displays the fact that Frei was not responding positively to US desires for a military coup, it is decided that whether or not Frei was on board, the Agency would move forward with its contacts within the Chilean military. While Track I and II were different routes, they had the same basic outcome, a military coup that removed Allende from office. The difference of Track II stems from its exclusion of the Departments of State and Defense and without the knowledge of Ambassador Korry. Track I did have the coup aspect to it, but it was hinged on the concurrence of Frei. At the end of the day neither of the Tracks accomplished the intended goal of preventing Allende from taking office, but each Track had left significant imprints upon the already strained Chilean society.

What is significant to note from the 1975 Senate Report, is that for Track II the CIA was using its own direct contacts with the Chilean military, and was not contingent upon approval from Frei, nor the State Department. It is said in the report that “it was to be known only to a small group of individuals in the White House and the CIA”⁴⁸. So while we can see that in the instance of Track II development, Nixon and Kissinger believed it imperative that if a coup were to work and work well, it needed be done strictly under CIA guidance. At the end of the day,

⁴⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, Report on CIA Chilean Task Force Activities, 15 September to 3 November 1970 (Washington, DC, 1970), [pg. 1].

⁴⁸ U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Covert Action in Chile 1963- 1973, 94th Cong., 1st. sess., December 18, 1975., p. 26

both Tracks failed to gain the ground the US was so badly losing. Certain elements within the Chilean army were actively involved in coup plotting, and at one point were receiving funds from the CIA, but Kissinger pulled the plug on these plans and they never got off the ground with active US support.

CHAPTER 5: NIXONS POLICIES AND HIS AFFECT ON CHILEAN SOCIETY

5.1 – THE CLIMATE

While Nixon's original to deny Allende the presidency during the campaign period did not go according to plan, the administration did not relinquish their hold on the situation. In fact, the exact opposite occurred. In the face of defeat at Track I and II, Nixon and his administration decided that an economic blockade would influence society and express to the Chilean population that Allende could not deliver on his promises. Prior to Allende's election in 1970, International Development Bank loans totaling \$46 million had been approved but only \$2 million were approved during the entirety of his presidency. The World Bank had approved \$31 million in loans during the Frei government between 1969 and 1970 but not a dime was lent between 1971 and 1973. Bilateral U.S. assistance from AID dropped from \$110 million between 1968 and 1970 to \$3 million between 1971 and 1973. The U.S. Export Import Bank went from lending almost \$280 million between 1967 and 1970 to nothing in 1971⁴⁹ What this did, was strangle the Chilean economy, which still had over \$1 billion in debts left from the Frei administration.

⁴⁹ Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* (n.p.: New Press, 2005).

While it appeared that the European countries were willing to help Chile with their massive debt, the US was not going to budge. While the outright foreign policy of the US towards Chile at this time was attempting to weaken the Chilean economy and limit the flexibility of the Allende regime, the CIA engaged in covert operations to try and weaken the support for Allende, while aiding the other political parties against Allende. Not only did the CIA provide financial support to the Christian Democrat Party, but it also provided support to the National Party and the Democratic Radical Party. In 1972 a total of \$1,602,666 was appropriated to the CIA to covertly finance opposition campaigns. In August 1973 another \$1,000,000 was provided to continue covert efforts to strengthen opposition political parties and private sector organizations opposed to Allende⁵⁰. In addition to the strengthening of the opposition parties, the CIA undertook a massive propaganda campaign against the Allende administration. The campaign consisted of funding a very staunch right-wing newspaper named El Mercurio. The paper ran continuous articles to pressure and encourage the opposition against the Allende government, accusing his administration of attempting to nationalize banks, violating freedom of the press, and land seizures.

El Mercurio exposed every possible tension between the government and the democratic opposition and emphasized the problems and conflicts developing between the government and the armed forces. It was through this level of integration with the localities that CIA realized it would not be enough to just run newspaper ads smearing the Allende regime. The CIA was quick to realize that they would need the support of the military to actually enact the coup President Nixon so desperately wanted.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pg.95

An article from the NY Times⁵¹ in 1974 reviews the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Kissinger's testimony before its members. According to Kissinger, the CIA's and State Departments involvement in Chile had solely been to keep certain political parties and media outlets alive that were threatened by Allende's presidential victory. According to the Times, "Among those heavily subsidized, were the organizers of a nationwide truck strike that lasted 26 days in the fall of 1972, seriously disrupting Chile's economy and provoking the first of a series of labor crises for President Allende" and that "at its peak, the 1973 strikes involved more than 250,000 truck drivers, shopkeepers and professionals who banded to gather in a middle-class movement that, many analysts have concluded, made a violent overthrow inevitable." So while we see even from this testimony of Kissinger, the US actively supported certain marginalized groups, which in a way supported the coup. While the US did not have a direct hand in the organization and carrying out of the military coup, by enabling the disenfranchised groups of Chilean society to rally behind General Pinochet.

5.2 – WAS NIXON SUCCESSFUL?

Based on all the information available, we can now fully take account of what transpired in Chile during this time period, and the greater effects. It would be too polite to think of Nixon's policy toward Chile as successful. Nixon tried from the very beginning to initiate a coup to overthrow Allende. As we know, all of those plans failed. The larger picture though, was actually painted quite masterfully. While the propaganda campaigns, the economic blockade,

⁵¹ Seymour Hersh, "C.I.A. Is Linked to Strikes in Chile That Beset Allende," *New York Times* (New York, NY), September 20, 1974,

and the coup-plotting did not rid Nixon of Allende, it certainly helped apply the right pressure on an already fractured Chilean society. The key moment in this entire era, can be seen in the economic blockade. Chile already had acquired massive debt under Frei, and the Chilean people were now feeling the full force of it when the US halted most aid. The money going into opposition parties and media also played a huge role in the setting of the stage for the eventual coup.

I believe, here, it is not so much was Nixon successful, but rather in what capacity were his policies successful if we keep the bigger picture in mind. While I do not in any way attempt to justify the atrocity that Nixon was setting the Chilean people up for, it needs to be said that the US' actual hand in the armed revolt and the establishment of Pinochet's bloody military regime is slim. The way to properly view US involvement in Chile is through the implementation of certain ideological reinforcements; whether they be purposeful or accidentally planted, in the Chilean mind. This point can especially be seen in the subsidized groups that are mentioned above.

CHAPTER 6: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM CHILE

6.1 -- STRUCTURE OF US FOREIGN POLICY

In the 1960's when Eduardo Frei was running for the presidency, President Kennedy avidly supported him and his Christian Democrats. The Kennedy Administration supplied him with ample monetary support as well as planning support for how to obtain the presidency. The Kennedy Administration also dealt with this problem with plenty of time to spare, and with that knowledge the US As is stated in the Helms Testimony: "In other words, just getting behind the

candidate, giving him money and support...and enough in advance so they actually did some good... I think this was going on a year or two before the election"⁵². So from this one account of Richard Helms we can understand that the previous decision to support the Frei campaign was handled promptly and efficiently by the administration at the time. But the same was not the case for the attempt to block Salvador Allende from office in the 1970's. As Helms notes in the same testimony, "in '70 there was a desire to suddenly, at a very late date, to do something because it suddenly dawned on the Administration that Allende might easily come to power.". Helms states as well that it was just too little too late for the Administration to do anything effective about Allende. He refers to the case with Frei and reminds the Committee that when Kennedy planned to support Frei, there was plenty of time to come up with a route and a plan of action and then everything fell into place. The difference in methodology between the Frei and Allende election, is a result of poor timing and operational planning/awareness by part of the Nixon Administration. If Nixon had either intervened earlier than he did, or had not intervened at all like some officials from the State Department had wanted, Chile would have been in a very different boat.

In May of 1968, William Broe, chief of the CIA's Western Hemisphere Division suggested that the US should intervene in the 1969 Congressional elections, realizing their importance for the upcoming September 1970 election. Broe said "these elections [were] all-important since their outcome [would] determine the nature of the party alliances that [would] be formed in connection with the presidential election of September 1970."⁵³ Taking Broe's advice into

⁵² Hearing Held before Senate Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities (1975) (statement of Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms). [pg. 15]

⁵³ William V. Broe, "Circumstances Leading Up to CIA Participation in Electoral Operations in Chile,"

consideration the US initiated a covert operation to affect the outcome of the 1969 Congressional elections, and around the same time the second National Intelligence Estimate was released on Chile in January of 1969. What is shocking from the fact that Broe had to suggested this plan of action is that the US had lost touch on what was going on in Chile. Especially when you consider the amount of interest taken by the Kennedy administration to ensure Frei was elected in 1964. The level of commitment or lack thereof, by both State and CIA could be considered one of the fatal flaws of US intelligence during this time. The Kennedy administration did such a fantastic job of helping finance and support the Frei administration to ensure his victory over Allende, and it is not hard to imagine that with proper time and resources, the same result could have held in this election as well.

The Chilean case is significant for many reasons. There is the first and maybe most important one, of whether Nixon made the right call or not. We know that the US did not have a hand in the coup per se, that it was done via General Pinochet and his military personnel, but the US did channel support to military officials prior to the coup itself. The next issue is that who was right; the CIA or State Department. We see that the State Department was adamant about not getting involved whatsoever, and that they were actively left out of the discussion of Track II. In September of 1970, the Chilean Congress rejected a parliamentary maneuver to block Allende's inauguration. CIA operatives in Santiago then began to canvass a move by the Chilean military. But the CIA quickly backed off. The military, which three years later had a

Memorandum to Thomas Karamessines, April 26, 1968, in FRUS, 1964–68, vol. 31, doc. 304.

different view, refused in 1970 to intrude on the constitutional process. The CIA so reported to Kissinger, then National Security Adviser, and on October 15, 1970, he ended U.S. involvement in the anti-Allende plotting. Kissinger later told the president, "This thing looked hopeless. I turned it off. Nothing could be worse than an abortive coup"⁵⁴ But, according to the Church Commission's report, when CIA operatives relayed the turn-off instruction to the Chilean army, the plotters responded that they were going ahead anyway.

Regardless of what Kissinger said, it is easy to understand that the US desired a military coup and saw it as the only way to remove Allende from office, so while it might have ended, in reality the US just left it to the Chilean military officials. As we saw from the evidence above, Tracks I and II, as well as all the pre-election propaganda that the US funded and supported, had a huge impact on the already polarized Chilean society. Mark Falcoff writes perfectly in his 2003 article that "the thrust of U.S. policy shifted to sustaining a democratic opposition and an independent press"⁵⁵. So while the coup of 1973 was not directly done by US hands, it had a huge role in the climate that led the eventual coup. Nixon's administration collapsed the Chilean economy as well as further deepening the divide of the political parties, and in the end Allende's administration brought about their eventual overthrow by sitting in water tainted with US dirt.

A TelCon dated September 16, 1973 between Kissinger and Nixon shows exactly what

⁵⁴ TELCON: September 16, 1973, 11:50 A.M. Kissinger Talking to Nixon.

⁵⁵ Mark Falcoff, "Kissinger and Chile: The Myth That Will Not Die," *Commentary Magazine*, November 1, 2003, accessed April 14, 2018, <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/kissinger-chile-the-myth-that-will-not-die/>.

they did. They admit it. It is not that long of a conversation, but it is so significant I need to put it in here. The conversation is as follows:

- Nixon: Nothing new of any importance or is there?
- Kissinger: The Chilean thing is getting consolidated and of course the newspapers and bleeding because a pro-Communist government has been overthrown.
- Nixon: Isn't that something.
- Kissinger: In the Eisenhower period we would be hero's.
- Nixon: Well we didn't – as you know – our hand doesn't show on this one.
- Kissinger: We didn't do it. I mean we helped them. Created the conditions as great as possible.
- Nixon: That is right. And that is the way it is going to be played.

Not only is this such damning and incriminating proof, but everything I have said above, from the propaganda, to economic sanctions, to opposition party support, now all said in the words of the two puppet-masters themselves.

6.2 – INTELLIGENCE VS DIPLOMACY

Upon my review of the William Colby Testimony before the Church Committee in 1975, as well as the Richard Helms Testimony before a Senate Subcommittee in the same year the way in which foreign policy comes to fruition becomes more clear. Helms says that the officials in the Nixon Administration were not concerned with Chile, "They were preoccupied with Vietnam and things of that sort, openings to China and the Soviet Union.". The case of Chile and the US foreign policy that shaped its route for years to follow is not a needle in a haystack by any means. The US has had its hand in multiple bags all over the world. The case of Chile, does however, illustrate the relationship between formal diplomacy and covert intelligence. Both act

as a means to the end, but in the case of Chile, the means do not necessarily justify the ends. As we see from the conversation between Kissinger and Nixon, that because the certain steps were not taken in the beginning, the coup was going to fail. But it is because of those hurried steps the administration took, that we see the climate that was cultivated by Nixon and Kissinger.

One thing I really want to highlight here is the intelligence community and their role in all of this. It is apparent that the CIA had significant pull in the decision making process. Now this can fall upon a number of factors, such as personal agendas, of say The President, Richard Nixon. In the Helms Testimony, Helms puts it perfectly when talking on the way in which foreign policy is very much a top down kind of thing. Helms recalls that:

“People at the top policy levels weren’t paying much attention to Chile... This is an aspect of government that we could spend two minutes on, and that is that government tends to run by the perceptions of a President and what his interests are, and its extraordinarily difficult to get things for other things.”⁵⁶

What we can learn from Chile and the way the US handled it, is actually rather simple when it all boils down. Officials in positions of power, meaning real power to initiate policy, need to be really listening to the advice of their intelligence apparatus. We clearly see a lack of concern over Chile until it is far too late. When viewing the abortive coup in 1970, and all the ramped up work the US did trying to push on its behalf, the 1973 junta leaders probably felt validated that Nixon had essentially left them in charge. Now only years in the future can we

⁵⁶ Hearing Held before Senate Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities (1975) [pg. 16]

fully understand the essence and blunders of these events, but the lessons still hold true. Heed the warning of your intelligence, and enable those around you to be a part of how you digest said intelligence. The substantive take-away from this relates back to the proper relationship between intelligence agencies and diplomatic agencies, the way in which they should feed off one another and unite to properly handle world events. The disagreement between State Department and CIA demonstrates that when at wits-end, very fine aspects of policy come under fire and are even lost. Ultimately, the 1973 coup in Chile should make policy-makers and intelligence officials more wary of the effect rushed work has on world events.

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