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25 October 1974

TRACK II

A. Charter and Instructions

1. TRACK II started within the Agency on 16 September 1970 when the Director called together a group. Mr. Broe did a memorandum for the record of this meeting and paragraph 2 of his memorandum is quoted below.

The Director told the group that President Nixon had decided that an Allende regime in Chile was not acceptable to the United States. The President asked the Agency to prevent Allende from coming to power or to unseat him. The President authorized ten million dollars for this purpose, if needed. Further, the Agency is to carry out this mission without coordination with the Departments of State or Defense.

2. Tom Karamessines reported developments to date to Dr. Kissinger and General Haig on 15 October 1970. Mr. Karamessines approved a memorandum for the record of that meeting. It is noted that Dr. Kissinger discussed his desire that the word of our encouragement to the Chilean military in recent weeks be kept as secret as possible. Paragraph 8 of that memorandum is quoted below.

The meeting concluded on Dr. Kissinger's note that the Agency should continue keeping the pressure on every Allende weak spot in sight - now, after the 24th of October, after 5 November, and into the future until such time as new marching orders are given. Mr. Karamessines stated that the Agency would comply.

3. Headquarters initially informed Santiago that there was to be a new, highly sensitive program and advised that a staff officer would be sent to brief the Chief of Station in full detail. After that briefing occurred, in a cable dated 21 September 1970, Headquarters made it clear to Santiago that CIA had been directed to work toward a military solution to the program. The Station was advised by cable on 16 October 1970 that after a review the previous day at the highest U. S. Government level, the conclusion which was to be the Station's guidance was:

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It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup. It would be much preferable to have this transpire prior to 24 October but efforts in this regard will continue vigorously beyond this date. We are to continue to generate maximum pressure toward this end utilizing every appropriate resource.

B. Actions

4. To implement the Presidential directions, Headquarters Task Force was established under the overall responsibility of Mr. Karamezzines. Chief of the Task Force was Mr. David Phillips, who at that time was [redacted] the Deputy Chief of the Task Force was [redacted] Phillips and [redacted] were recalled from their posts specifically for this purpose. A special communications channel was immediately set up between Headquarters, Santiago, and [redacted]. It was also determined that an outside station would be established at Santiago for appropriate contacts with the existing COS only and others in the TRACK II project. It was also determined that false flag staff officers, or "illegals," would be dispatched to Santiago. Subsequently, four officers with the appearance, language, and experience to sustain the cover of various foreign nationalities were recalled from their overseas posts to Washington, briefed, and dispatched individually to Chile. Their major U. S. contact in Santiago was [redacted] who had resided in [redacted] for some time.

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6. By special arrangement with top level of DIA, the Army Attache in Santiago was placed under the operational direction of the CIA COS. His initial cabled instruction of 14 October was to select two Chilean general officers and convey to them the following:

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High authority in Washington has authorized you to offer material support short of armed intervention to Chilean armed forces in any endeavors they may undertake to prevent the election of Allende on October 24, his inauguration on 4 November, or his subsequent overthrow.

Subsequently, by instructions from CIA the Army Attache made a number of other contacts conveying essentially the same message. During October the Station and the Army Attache made 21 contacts with key military and Carabineros officials. Where there appeared to be high-risk potential, the members of the illegal team initiated and picked up the contacts. It was judged that throughout the leadership of the Chilean military and Carabineros it was perfectly clear that the U. S. Government, on a discreet basis, would support with funds, material, and arms a military intervention to prevent Allende from being elected and inaugurated.

7. A retired Chilean Army general appeared at one time to give some promise of carrying out the purposes and objectives of TRACK II. He requested an air drop of arms and ammunition which was turned down. He wanted substantial financial support and a \$10,000 downpayment as a token of good faith was made. He wished life insurance policies for his principals up to \$250,000 in coverage which was agreed upon. Eventually it was determined that this effort did not have sufficient chance of success and contact was suspended.

8. During the last weeks of October, there were hopeful prospects for successful military intervention. This plan was developed among high-level military contacts. The commanding general of the [redacted] advised that he, the commanding general of the [redacted], the Commander in Chief of [redacted] and the [redacted] Director of [redacted] were prepared to sponsor a coup. This plan was actively encouraged. The only assistance requested was three submachineguns and ammunition, some tear gas grenades, and gas masks, all of which were provided. The Agency was prepared to pay \$50,000, which apparently was the price that had to be paid by this group for the planned kidnapping of General Rene Schneider. For various reasons, including the still-unexplained assassination of General Schneider on 22 October 1970, the military intervention did not take place.

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9. Illustrative of Headquarters traffic to the Station on how the Station should deal with the Chilean military is a Headquarters cable of 30 September, number 449, which directs a priority effort to contact three named generals. The cable states:

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We should make it clear to these officers individually now that political solution ruled out, USG shares President Frei's view that military solution is only answer.

In another cable guidance to the Station of 7 October 1970, number 606, it is stated:

As possibility of political solution disappears we are left with military coup which should occur prior to 24 October and certainly before 5 November.

C. Termination of TRACK II

10. It appears that many of the Agency officers involved from the very beginning felt that attempting to spark military intervention had only a slight chance of success. After some period of time, this feeling intensified. For example, in a cable to the field of 23 October 1970, number 978, the Station is commended for what they had done to date. Headquarters sums up by saying:

Only Chileans themselves can manage a successful (military intervention), but the Station has done excellent job of guiding Chileans to point today where a military solution is at least an option for them.

11. There were reviews of the Chilean situation by the senior review group on 29 October 1970 which directed that an options paper be prepared for consideration at a National Security Council meeting scheduled for 5 November 1970. National Security Decision Memorandum 93, dated 9 November 1970, was the result of the National Security Council considering the options paper on 6 November 1970. The President approved Option C with slight modifications. This Option C is as follows:

Maintain an outwardly correct posture, but making clear our opposition to the emergence of a Communist government in South America; act positively to retain the initiative vis-a-vis the Allende government.

A number of specific actions were called for in NSDM 93, but nowhere was TRACK II-type activity specified

12. By the time NSDM 93 was approved (9 November 1970), the Task Force had been dissolved and the four illegals had been pulled out of

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Chile. Nonetheless, the TRACK II mission of trying to provoke or encourage a military coup against Allende remained on the books. Contacts continued to be made by the Station with the Chilean military, but on much more of a cautious, developmental basis than had been the case under the Task Force. Eventually, Headquarters made it abundantly clear to Santiago Station that the TRACK II mission was dead. In a dispatch of 1 December 1971, Headquarters states:

The essential fact which must be kept in mind by all officers connected with the (military) program is that we do not have any authority to state, or even to imply, that (the United States Government) favors a coup as a solution to the Chilean dilemma.

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