SUBJECT: Report on GIA Chilean Task Force Activities, 15 September to 3 November 1970

1. General

- a. On 15 September 1970, CIA was directed to try to prevent
 Markist Salvador Allende's assort 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.
 - b. Briefly, the situation at that time was the following:
 - Allende had attained a plurality of only some 40,000 in the Chilean popular vote for president. Jorge Alessandri, a conservative and the runner-up, would face Allende in a Congressional run-off on 24 October. The run-off winner would be invested as president on 3 November.



- -- Allende's designation as president by Congress was

 very probable given all known factors in the Chilean
 political equation.
 - Civen the dismal prospects of a political formula being worked out to prevent Allende's designation as president by Congress, remaining alternatives centered around overcoming the apolitical, constitutional-oriented inertia of the Chilean military.

 U. S. Government intentions were highly suspect, particularly in Allende and certain government sectors. Suspicions extended to all Americans in Chile for whatever declared purpose. In addition, the Chilean imilitary were being monitored quite closely by the Allende forces for warning signals of any interventionist proclivities.

2. Special Organization

days after CLA was assigned the mission. It was headed by

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Busines Alres, Argentina, to handle sensitive cable traffic for the

It consisted of four CIA officers with the appearance,
language, and experience to sustain the fiction of various foreign
mationalities. They were recalled from their overseas posts to
Washington, briefed, and inserted individually into Chile
mationals. In Santiago, their only U.S. contact was a CIA officer who
had resided in Santiago
established contact with
Chilean intermediaries or principals interested in promoting a

the U.S. Army Attache in Santiago was placed under operational direction of the CIA Chief of Station there. His assistance and Chilean military contacts were invaluable in this program.

military coup.

The Deal Approach: Constitutions and Comp

a. Prospects for inducing Congress to vote for Alessandia rather than Allenda were never bright and, they all focused on inspiring a reluctant, indecisive President Frel to assume an out-of-character fole: dynamic leadership within his own party, with the "persuadables" in Congress, and with the military. Frei was under no illusions about Chile's fate under an Allende regime.

"Chile has a very short future," he said, "and after 4 November it will only have a past."

b. Initially, Frei was willing to consider and even advocate a constitutional solution: the so-called Frei re-election gambit. The question was whether he would be willing to commit his prestige completely in following through on such a difficult political maneuver with the outcome, at best, unassured. The basic gambit consisted of marshalling enough Congressional votes to elect Alessandri over Allende with the understanding Alessandri would resign immediately after inauguration and pave the way for a special election in which Frei could legally become a candidate. As a preliminary step, Frei coordinated Alessandri's post-election statement that if he were



resign. The thrust of CIA's endeavors, then, was to use every plausible pressure combined with inducements to move Frei down this path. To this end, virtually overnight CIA mobilized an inter-locking political action and propaganda campaign designed both to goad and entice Frei into following through on the re-election garbbit.

focused on provoking a military coup. This undertaking was segregated from that of the Frei re-election gambit with the intention that it be pursued independently of Frei if necessary, but with his acquiescence if possible.

4. Propaganda Campaign

a. The propaganda campaign was tailored to generating concern about Chile's future in terms which would condition the thinking and actions of the three key elements in the Chilean political equation:

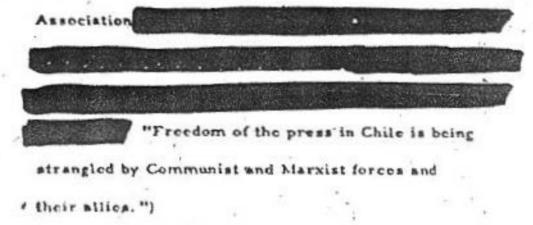


the latter two of which could well bring collateral influence to bear on Frei). Each of these elements had hastened to rationalize its acceptance of an Allende presidency. Their palliative was the built-in checks and balance of Chile's demonstrated reverence for democracy and constitutionality, awestened by Allende's promise to honor these traditions.

b. After the 4 September popular vote, the world press had tended to treat the prospect of witnessing the first freely-elected. Marxist head of state take office as a curious aberration of democracy rather than a politically significant event. Press interest and coverage was relatively light until the Altende forces fortuitously provided an attractive issue which could be exploited. By 15 September, it became apparent that Allende was conducting a rather blatant campaign to intimidate the Chilean information media through threats of assassination and violence, takeovers by so-called worker organizations, and ultimatums to the management of newspapers and radio stations. Allende's purpose was to smother any opposition to his election by Congress and to take advantage of that.

portificity Latin, and prenounced Chilean, propensity to jump on an accelerating handwagen -- ideals and the country's welfare to the contrary. A major target of Allende was "El Mercurio", the most prestigious newspaper in Chile and the major opposition voice to Allende up to that time. CIA mounted a propaganda campaign centered around "El Mercurio" and the issue of Allende brazenly taking his first step in "communizing" Chile by attacking freedom of the press and, worse, with the election still unsettled. Covert action resources were used to launch.

- -- Cables of support/protest from leading newspapers
 throughout Latin America to "El Mercurio".
- -- A protest statement from the International Press.



Association protest and on the details of the



Communist efforts to seize control of the Chilean press.

A program of journalists -- actual agents and otherwise -- travelling to Chile for on-the-scene reporting.

(By 28 September, CIA had in place in, or enroute to,
Chile 15 journalist agents from 10 different countries.

This cadre was supplemented by 8 more journalists
from 5 countries under the direction of high level
agents who were, for the most part, in managerial
capacities in the media field.)

As a result of the ensuing furore. Allende -- sensitive to world -- opinion and attempting to project the image of a moderate, non-dogmatic socialist -- decided to become more circumspect. By 25 September, heavy-handed intimidation of the press had virtually ceased.

c. Allende's show of strength had made its point however; the Chilean press, including "El Mercucio", never did regain its resiliency and remained thoroughly muted from thereon out. Lacking the usual forums for spontaneous generation and replay of

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propaganda Anside Chile, CLA had to rely increasingly on its own

- -- an underground press dependent upon direct mail distribution;
- -- placement of individual news items through agents
 against the resistance of a cowed management;
- -- financing of a new, albeit small, newspaper;
- radio programs, political advertisements, and political rallies; and
- dent Frei, Mrs. Frei, selected military leaders.

 and the Chilean domestic press.

This effort did not, and could not, replace a Chilean press, fully operative and free of restraint. Virtually alone, it did keep the voice of public opposition alive inside Chile for coup purposes during the final weeks of this period.

d. The magnitude of the propaganda campaign mounted duri



greatest influence on Chile -- is evident from the fact that only
martial returns show 726 articles, broadcasts, editorials, and
similar flems as a direct result of agent activity. Just how many
of these items were replayed is not known

Nor, has CIA any idea of the scope of the immessurable multiplier effect -- that is, how much its "induced" news focused media interest on the Chilean issues and stimulated additional coverage -- except that, even by conservative standards, this contribution must have been both substantial and significant.

e. Special intelligence and "inside" briefings were given to

U.S. journalists in deference to the international influence of the

U.S. media. Particularly noteworthy in this connection was the

Time cover story which owed a great deal to written materials and

briefings provided by CIA. The Time correspondent in Chile who

was providing much of the background material for the story

apparently accepted Allende's protestations of moderation and

constitutionality at face value. CIA briefings in Washington

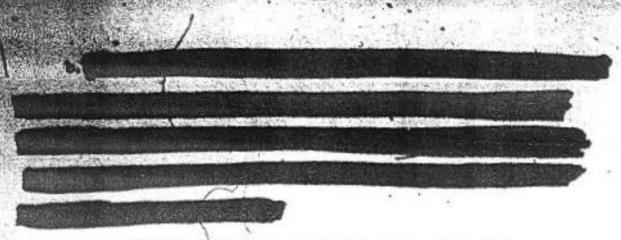
Time correspondent. It provoked Allende to complain on

13 October, "We are suffering the most brutal and horrible pressure, both domestic and international," singling out Time in

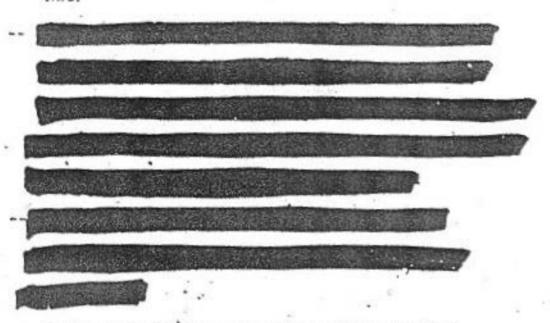
particular as having "openly called" for an invasion of Chile.

5. Political Action

induce President Frei to prevent Allende's election by the Congress on 24 October and, failing that, to support -- by benevolent neutrality at the least and conspiratorial benefiction at the most -- a military coup which would prevent Allende from taking office on 3 November. Realistically, the task was one of attempting to recast Frei, as a political personality, in a role demanding decisiveness and "machismo" to a degree that, thus far, had cluded him. Pressures from those whose opinion and/or approval he valued -- in combination with adequate propaganda orchestrations -- represented the only hope of converting Frei.

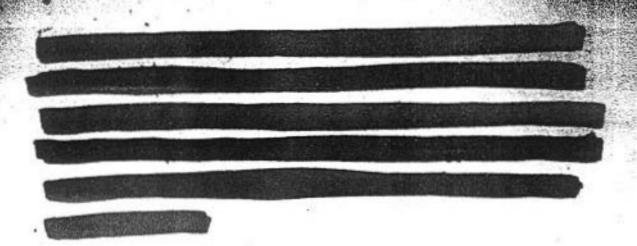


- -- Allende as president would be an unparalleled disaster for Chile (Frei agreed).
- -- Frei had both the power and obligation to prevent
 this.

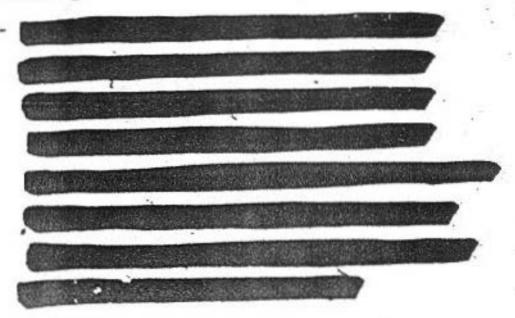


-- In the event Frel's re-election gambit succeeded,
the U.S. Government would be prepared to provide
substantial support for Frei's presidential campaign.





c. In Europe and Latin America, prominent and influential
members of the Christian Democratic movement as well as the
Catholic Church were prompted to visit Frei or send personal
messages to him urging that he save Chile. Some of these endeavors
were the following:



The West German Christian Democratic Party -which enjoyed special equities with Frei by virtue of generous support to the Christian Democrats in Chile over a range of many years -- dispatched several top-level emissaries to Chile. They contacted Frei and other Christian Democratic leaders in Chile

Christian Democracic Party -- which had good
fraternal relations with Frei and his party -refused to intervene. (He said it was a hopeless
situation and he saw no point in risking his reputation in a lost cause.)

of the Italian

Collateral efforts were made to influence Frei or those close to

- -- Influential lay Catholics sent messages to or visited the Vatican.
 - and clerical pressures from other countries, was dissuaded from ceding an Allende victory prior to his Congressional election actually taking place.
- -- Telegrams were sent Mrs. Frei from women's



- Foreign press items were mailed directly to Froi,

 i Mrs. Frei, and Christian Democratic Congressmen
 in Chile.
- power, the Communists intended to designate Frei as the first step in the dissolution of his party.
- d. In spite of everything, Frei never asserted himself. Indeed, he failed to attend or to influence otherwise the 3-4 October Congress of his party at which time it was decided by a substantial margin to make a deal with Aliende. With that decision, the Frei re-election gambit died and constitutional alternatives had been exhausted. Subsequently, Frei did manage to confide to several top-ranking military officers that he would not oppose a coup, with a guarded implication he might even welcome one. Yet, when a coup opportunity and situation presented itself upon the assassination of Army Commander in Chief Schneider, Frei moved quickly away from it.

6. Military Coup

a. After early October -- absent any evidence that Frei was responding, politically speaking, to artificial respiration -- a military coup ingreasingly suggested itself as the only possible and solution to the Allende problem. Anti-Allende currents did exist in the military and the Carabineros, but were immobilized by:

- -- the tradition of military respect, for the Constitution;
- -- the public and private stance of General Schneider,

 Commander in Chief of the Army, who advocated

 strict adherence to the Constitution:
- -- fear of the reaction of non-commissioned officers
 who tended to harbor pro-Allende sympathies: and.
- to the effect that the military had little to fear from

Although individual officers among the top leadership of the military and Carabineros were pre-disposed to take action, they felt the Army was central to a successful coup, and, as long as General Schneider remained the head of the Army, the Army could not be counted upon, General Schneider's attitude could only be changed through the personal intervention and forceful advocacy of a coup by President Frel; something, it became obvious, the latter was most unlikely to bring himself to do.

