

# Pentagon Role Reported In '70 Plot Against Allende

NYTimes By NICHOLAS M. HORROCK SEP 3 1975  
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WASHINGTON, Sept. 2—The Defense Department ordered the United States military attaché in Chile to give strong covert support to an October, 1970, plan for a military coup aimed at keeping Salvador Allende Gossens out of the Chilean presidency, sources familiar with the operation reported today.

According to the sources, the Defense Department sent "at least two cables" between Oct. 22, 1970, urging Col. Paul Wimert, then military attaché in Chile to secretly assure Chilean military officers plotting a coup, that the United States would give them total support "short of troops," as one source put it.

Dr. Allende led a left-wing coalition including the Chilean Communist party to an election victory in September, 1970. The election had to be confirmed by the Chilean congress because Dr. Allende lacked a majority. This was done in October. Dr. Allende did not take office until November.

The information on that period was gathered by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

## Wider Operation Seen

Evidence submitted on the role of the Defense Department in the plotting of military coups in Chile appears to indicate that involvement was not limited to the Central Intelligence Agency.

On July 24, 1975, The New York Times quoted intelligence sources who said that on Sept. 15, 1970, President Nixon ordered an all-out last-minute attempt to keep Dr. Allende from becoming president of Chile.

Acting on this general instruction, the sources said, the C.I.A. learned of two plots for a military take-over in Chile, one involving retired personnel and one involving officers on active duty. One of the plots, put into effect on Oct. 22, resulted in the death of Gen. René Schneider, chief of the Chilean General Staff.

Secretary of State Kissinger, who has testified before the committee, has said publicly that he knew of no assassination plots. Privately he has reportedly acknowledged that he learned of one coup plan, but that he and C.I.A. officials opposed it.

## Plot Discussed

On Oct. 15, 1970, several sources said, Mr. Kissinger, then Presidential Assistant for National Security Affairs; Col. Alexander M. Haig Jr., his deputy, and Thomas J. Karamessines, then chief of the C.I.A.'s undercover operations, met to discuss Chile. At this meeting, the sources said, Mr. Kissinger agreed with Mr. Karamessines that one of the plots in Chile was unlikely to succeed and should not go forward.

But, Senate investigators have been told, Colonel Haig and Mr. Karamessines met the next day—Oct. 16, 1970—and support for another plot in Chile was discussed.

The C.I.A., these sources said, received "tacit" approval to go ahead and support this plot. Whether the approval came from Mr. Kissinger, President Nixon "or other channels" is in dispute in the testimony, several sources said.

It was after the Haig-Karamessines meeting, however, that the Defense Department cabled Colonel Wimert his instructions.

Colonel Wimert was brought before the committee last month as a "secret witness." He declined to comment today on the matter.

"That is behind me now," he said. "I'm retired. I can look myself in the mirror when I shave. I don't want to get back into hat business." He advised that facts be checked very carefully.

After hearing that such orders had been given Colonel Wimert, the Senate committee

interviewed former officials of the Defense Intelligence Agency, which was a conduit for the cables sent to Colonel Wimert. "There apparently is some dispute over who signed the cables and who authorized them," a source said.

It was during the critical days between Oct. 15 and Oct. 22—the Chilean Congress was due to make its decision on Dec. 24—that the C.I.A. authorized three machine guns and an quantity of tear gas grenades be given to one group of military plotters. Before the plot could be put into effect. However, another group of plotters attempted to kidnap General Schneider. Theoretically this would have given the military justification for declaring martial law and assuming the powers of government. The General was shot during the attempt and died a few days later.

Chilean political leaders to the right of Mr. Allende then apparently declined to support any other plots. Mr. Allende assumed office the next month.

Complicating the matter is that in remarks about United States involvement in Chile in that period made at a news conference last fall, President Ford said the involvement was intended only to "assist the preservation of opposition newspapers and electronic media and to preserve opposition political parties."