

Coup Report Discounted, U.S. Claims

By Dan Morgan

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Administration officials said yesterday that the reports they had of an impending military coup in Chile were received here in the context of frequent—and often faulty—rumors, and were discounted for that reason.

A State Department spokesman said it had received information that the coup would take place last Tuesday, as it did, but that and other reports were not seen by "responsible officials" until after the coup began. Other reports that the coup would occur Sept. 8 or Sept. 10 had proved wrong, he said.

The administration officials sought to correct an impression left after a State Department briefing for senators Wednesday that President Nixon or other high officials may have possessed detailed information that would have enabled them to warn President Salvador Allende before his overthrow.

However, Senate sources yesterday confirmed their ver-

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State Dept. Says Coup Warning Discounted

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sion of the briefing given by Assistant Secretary of State Jack Kubisch to a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The sources said the gist of the briefing was that the United States had received a report that a coup was coming Sept. 11 as much as 16 hours before it occurred, and transmitted this information to Washington.

White House and State Department officials denied that the President had such information or that he acted on the reports in any way, such as to order a hand-off policy

that might have appeared as an American acquiescence.

For the third straight day the administration refused either to condemn or to voice support for the military intervention, although the White House expressed "regret" for the first time over the "tragic death of President Allende."

In Congress, there was the first strong reaction to the events in Chile. Sen Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) issued a statement in which he expressed hope that Secretary of State-designate Henry A. Kissinger would testify in public before a Senate committee on the American role in that country.

Kennedy's statement noted that Allende had been democratically elected, and "whether he was a Marxist or not makes little difference . . . He believed passionately in his own philosophy and he worked within the democratic system to try to effect programs to carry out that philosophy."

Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.) said that the end of constitutional government in Chile was "deplorable," and expressed hope that democratic institutions would be quickly restored.

State Department spokesman said the department first

received word that the coup was in progress at 8:25 a.m., two hours after it happened. About 11 a.m. four U.S. Navy vessels en route to Chile for annual inter-American maneuvers were directed away from the area, they said.

Since the events started, U.S. officials have privately expressed concern about the military's ability to deal with Chile's economic and political difficulties. Some have said privately that the United States would have preferred to see Allende voted out of office.

Kubisch told the senators Wednesday that the extent of junta control was still uncertain.

He also revealed that he had met with representatives of some of the major U.S. corporations that do business in Chile, to keep them apprised of the situation, Senate sources said.

Critics of the administration's Latin American policies claim the United States used corporations that do business in Chile, to keep them apprised of the used business pressure to foment chaos in Chile.

Sergio Bitar, former minister of mines, told a visitor from Washington that he believed the Anaconda Copper Co. was putting pressure on

foreign manufacturers not to supply Chile with needed mining equipment. As evidence, Bitar showed the visitor cables from an Australian manufacturer which also supplies Anaconda canceling sales of the equipment to Chile.

The close connections between the Chilean military and the United States have continued through the period of Allende's regime. In June, two high-ranking military officials loyal to Allende visited Washington. They were the commander of the Chilean navy, Adm. Raul Montero and Army commander Carlos Orats. The subject of their talks was not known.