

State Department Denies Any Move to Block Allende

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By TAD SZULC MAR 24 1972

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WASHINGTON, March 23—The State Department said today that the Nixon Administration had "firmly rejected" any ideas of blocking the inauguration of Salvador Allende Gossens as President of Chile in 1970, or of subsequently ousting him.

The department's statement was the first public comment on letters and memorandums attributed to the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation that purported to show the company sought the cooperation of the United States Government in preventing Dr. Allende, a Marxist, from taking office.

But the State Department refused to deny specifically an assertion in one of the memorandums that the United States Ambassador in Santiago had received the "green light" from Washington to do everything possible short of military intervention "to keep Allende from taking power."

Charles W. Bray 3d, the department's spokesman, described the assertion as "hear-

say and opinion" and said he was "not going to get into a dissection" of the communications between Washington and Santiago during that period.

Copies of the letters and memorandums, which were said to be from the internal files of I.T.T., were made available to the news media yesterday by Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist, after he had based two columns upon them.

This material, it was reported from Chile, has proved a political windfall for Dr. Allende, with the Government press and television contending that the documents confirmed left-wing charges of 1970 of United States involvement in a plot against the President. [Page 6]

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has called a private session for tomorrow morning to decide whether it should hold broad public hearings, as suggested by a number of Senators,

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"SUGAR", THE NEW MUSICAL COMEDY
Seats Now—Majestic Thea., W. 44. (Adv.)

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on what influence multinational corporations have on the formulation of United States foreign policy.

The material made public by Mr. Anderson purported to show that the company had sought action against Dr. Allende because it feared that his Government would nationalize the numerous I.T.T. holdings in Chile. The company is currently involved in negotiations with Santiago over compensation for its share of the Chile Telephone Company, which was taken over last October.

If a Senate inquiry is ordered, it would be the second into the affairs of I.T.T. The Senate Judiciary Committee is looking into charges that the company offered to help finance this year's Republican national convention in return for a favorable settlement of an antitrust case by the Department of Justice.

I.T.T. has offered no further comment on the Anderson documents, since denying on Tuesday, after his first column on them was published, that it had sought to interfere in Chile's politics. It has not said whether the material distributed by Mr. Anderson was authentic.

But State Department officials said unofficially that there was not much doubt about the authenticity of the material. They made it clear that the statement issued today was directly related to the letters and memorandums. Mr. Bray, however, never used the name of the corporation in commenting on them.

Nixon's Message Cited

At his regular news briefing, Mr. Bray first read the section on Chile from President Nixon's annual State of the World Message, sent to Congress last month. The section said: "The hemisphere community is big enough and tolerant enough to accept a diversity of national approaches to human goals. We, therefore, deal realistically with governments as they are, right and left."

Mr. Bray went on to read a passage in the message that said the United States respected "the hemispheric principle of nonintervention" and that "Chile's leaders will not be charmed out of their deeply held convictions by gestures on our part."

He then pronounced as an official State Department statement: "Any ideas of thwarting the Chilean constitutional process following the election of 1970 were firmly rejected by this Administration."

Answering questions, Mr. Bray said that his statement also covered the period after President Allende's inauguration on Nov. 3, 1970. Dr. Allende was elected on Sept. 4 and his election was confirmed by the Chilean Congress on Oct. 24.

Role by C.I.A. Denied

Some of the purported I.T.T. memorandums, discussing possible ways of dislodging Dr. Allende from power, were written after the inauguration.

When asked whether the disclaimer by the Nixon Administration of any intention to intervene in Chile included the Central Intelligence Agency, Mr. Bray replied, "Of course."

One of the documents described a plan of action, attributed to the C.I.A., for the fostering of economic chaos in Chile to encourage a military coup d'état preventing Dr. Allende's inauguration.

Mr. Bray, however, stood fast on his refusal to offer a formal denial of the assertion that instructions were sent to Edward M. Korry, the American ambassador in Santiago, to prevent the inauguration of Dr. Allende.

The assertion was contained in a memorandum purportedly sent on Sept. 17, 1970, to the company's vice president in New York, E. J. Gerrity, by two I.T.T. public relations representatives in Santiago, Hal Hendrix and Robert Berrellez, both former newsmen.

'Green Light to Move'

The memorandum said that on Sept. 15, Ambassador Korry "finally received a message from the State Department giving him the green light to move in the name of President Nixon."

"The message gave him maximum authority to do all possible — short of a Dominican Republic-type action — to keep Allende from taking power," the purported message said. This referred to the landing of American troops in the Dominican Republic in 1965 to cut short a civil war.

Pressed by newsmen for comment other than that these assertions were in the category of "hearsay" or "opinion," Mr. Bray said he wanted to discourage "speculation" that the I.T.T. report might be true after in the light of his refusal to issue an outright denial.

Later in the day, senior State Department officials said that "there was no room for a green light" to Ambassador Korry in the framework of the policy as stated by Mr. Bray. But they, too, shied away from a formal denial, though speaking unofficially.

Officials said that later today Under Secretary of State John N. Irwin 2d had assured the Chilean Ambassador, Orlando Letelier, that the United States had committed no "wrongdoing" in its dealing with the Allende Government.