

# NIXON DECLARES HE SOUGHT TO BAR ALLENDE ELECTION

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But He Adds, in a Statement, He Doesn't Recall a Plan for a Chile Coup in '70  
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WASHINGTON, March 11—Former President Richard M. Nixon said in a sworn statement made public today that he ordered the Central Intelligence Agency to try to keep Dr. Salvador Allende Gossens from becoming the President of Chile in 1970 but that he did not recall knowing that the C.I.A. attempted to foment a military coup d'état in 1970.

Mr. Nixon described his efforts to keep Dr. Allende, a Marxist, out of power in answer to written interrogatories from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. He instructed

Excerpts from Nixon replies are printed on page 14.

ed his lawyers to make the answers public today. The Committee later also made the questions available.

Several of Mr. Nixon's statements contradict the findings of the committee in its interim report issued last year and appear to conflict with the sworn testimony of Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and the former Director of Central Intelligence, Richard M. Helms.

## Comment on Tape Explained

The material also provides the former President's first public explanation of comments about Mr. Helms on a tape recording that played a major part in his resignation.

The recorded conversation, six days after the 1972 Watergate break-in, disclosed that Mr. Nixon had tried to block an investigation that eventually linked the burglary to Mr. Nixon's campaign committee. When the tape was made public two years later, it became known as the "smoking gun" evidence that forced the President to resign. [Page 15.]

In answer to questions by the committee, Mr. Nixon issued broad statements on Presidential power and made new comments on his knowledge, or

lack of knowledge, or efforts to counter domestic dissidents. The highlights included the fol-

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lowing:

Mr. Nixon said he did not recall ever learning that the Government was covertly opening the mail for foreign or domestic intelligence purposes. Testimony before the Senate committee has shown that there was a large mail-opening operation being conducted by the C.I.A. as late as 1973.

He said he could not recall being told that the National Security Agency during his Administration was intercepting telegrams and other communications of American citizens without a warrant.

The agency, according to testimony and the report of the Rockefeller Commission, on the C.I.A., monitored cable traffic of Americans in an effort to keep track of antiwar radicals for the C.I.A. as well as long-distance calls of narcotics-smuggling suspects for the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. It was also monitoring overseas cablegrams for foreign intelligence.

He said that he believed the President had the power to order illegal activities to preserve national security. "It is quite obvious that there are certain inherently governmental actions which, if undertaken by the sovereign in protection of the interest of the nation's security, are lawful but which, undertaken by private persons, are not."

He gave as an example his 1969 warrantless wiretapping of 17 government employees and newsmen and said that "because of a Presidential determination that it was in the interest of national security [it] was lawful."

He said that while he had never personally ordered an assassination, he would not rule that out in wartime.

## Conflicts Over Chile

The hrus of Mr. Nixon's answers on domestic intelligence matters, including the preparation of a domestic intelligence plan in 1970, by his aide, Tom Charles Huston, did not appear to conflict with earlier testimony by Mr. Huston, Mr. Helms or John Mitchell, the former Attorney General. But Mr. Nixon's answers underscored the implication that the intelligence agencies did not tell the President they were already doing many of the things they wanted him to approve under the Huston plan.

It was in the area of United States policy in Chile that his answers appeared to contradict directly other information received by the Senate committee.

In a report on covert action in Chile in 1970 issued last autumn, the committee found

that "as previously noted U.S. efforts to prevent Allende's assumption of office operated on two tracks between Sept. 4 and Oct. 24."

"Track II was initiated by President Nixon on Sept. 13, when he instructed the C.I.A. to play a direct role in organizing a military coup d'état in Chile," the report said.

The committee based this finding on the testimony of Mr. Kissinger and Mr. Helms concerning their meeting with the President in the White House on Sept. 15, 1970.

Last August, Mr. Kissinger gave this testimony to the committee in closed session.

## Helms Sensed Wide Orders

"There was work by all of the agencies to try to prevent Allende from being seated, and there was work by all of the agencies on the so-called Track I to encourage the military to move against Allende," the published report of the testimony said.

"The difference between the Sept. 15 meeting and what was being done in general within the Government was that President Nixon was encouraging a more direct role for the C.I.A. in actually organizing such a coup," Mr. Kissinger said in his testimony.

Mr. Helms testified, according to the committee report, that he left that meeting believing that he had broad orders to stop Dr. Allende from becoming President or to "unseat him" if he did.

"This was a pretty all-inclusive order," Mr. Helms testified. "If I ever carried a marshal's baton in my knapsack

out of the Oval Office, it was that day."

Mr. Nixon, however, appeared to have differing recollections. At one point he said: "I informed Mr. Helms that I wanted the C.I.A. to determine whether it was possible for a political opponent of Mr. Allende to be elected President by the Chilean Congress."

"I further informed Mr. Helms that to be successful, any effort to defeat Mr. Allende would have to be supported by the military factions in Chile," he said.

"I do not recall discussing during the Sept. 13, 1970, meeting specific means to be used by the C.I.A. to present Mr. Allende from assuming the Presidency of Chile," he said at another point.

"I recall discussing the direct expenditure of funds to assist Mr. Allende's opponents, the termination as a means of adversely affecting the Chilean economy, and the effort to enlist support of various factions, including the military, behind a candidate who could defeat Mr. Allende in the Congressional confirmation procedure," Mr. Nixon's statement said.

## No Orders Are Recalled

At another point in his statement he said: "I do not recall

being aware that during the period referred to in interrogatory 49 (Sept. 15, 1970 through Oct. 24, 1970) The C.I.A. was promoting a military coup in Chile."

Mr. Nixon said he recalled that in mid-October 1970, "Dr. Kissinger informed me that the C.I.A. had reported to him that their efforts to enlist the support of various factions in attempts by Mr. Allende's opponents to prevent Allende from becoming President had not been successful and likely would not be."

He said he concurred with Mr. Kissinger's decision to tell the C.I.A. to abandon the effort.

Dr. Allende had won a plurality of the votes in a Chilean national election in September and under Chilean law it was up to the Congress to decide between him and his runner-up.

The Nixon Administration and the C.I.A. had been supporting Mr. Allende's opponents through modest covert money payments throughout that year. After the Chilean election and the Sept. 15 meeting, this level of covert pressure was continued and called "track" in Administration circles.

Track I was known to the Department of State, the United States Embassy in Santiago and the Department of Defense as well as to the White House and the C.I.A.

## 'Track II' Is Developed

After the Sept. 15 meeting, the White House and the C.I.A. began a secret program to keep Dr. Allende out of office that was called "Track II."

The senate committee established that between Sept. 15 and Oct. 24 the C.I.A. was in contact with two Chilean groups that were plotting a military coup d'état aimed at causing the military to establish martial law and halt the Congressional elections. The C.I.A., the committee established, sent three machine guns and a quantity of tear gas grenades to the plotters in one group, but the guns and grenades were later returned unused.

One of the groups of plotters that the C.I.A. had contacted but was not directly supporting attempted to kidnap Gen. René Schneider, then chief of the Chilean General Staff, on Oct. 22. He resisted and the kidnappers shot him. He died several days later.

In today's statement Mr. Nixon said he had no recollection of being told in advance about the Schneider plot, the United States connection with it or about the machine guns and grenades.

Mr. Helms had speculated in his testimony to the Senate committee that Mr. Nixon's concern over the situation in Chile might have stemmed from the suggestions of his long-time friend and political supporter, Donald Kendall, chairman of the board of Pepsico, Inc.

Mr. Helms recalled that he

Other clippings on Nixon's responses on Chile, including excerpts (full page, NYT) filed CIA (d).

was called to a meeting with Mr. Kendall and Augustin Edwards, a friend and later em-

ployee of Mr. Kendall and publisher of the Chilean newspaper El Mercurio, in which Mr. Edwards urged that the United States help stop Dr. Allende.

The committee asked Mr. Nixon whether pressure from Mr. Kendall had contributed to his decision to step up efforts to keep Dr. Allende out of office.

"I do not recall that either the timing or the purpose of the Sept. 12 meeting had any relationship to Mr. Augustin Edwards' presence in Washington," the former President said.

Mr. Nixon said he had made his decision to try to keep Dr. Allende out of power because he feared that "the expansion of Cuban-styled Communist infiltration into Chile would have provided a beachhead for guerrilla operations throughout South America."

#### Role of Kennedy and Johnson

He noted that he believed this had been the concern of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, who authorized C.I.A. financial support for opponents of Dr. Allende in the early 1960's.

"The same national security interests which I had understood prompted Presidents Kennedy and Johnson to act from 1962 to 1964, prompted my concern and the decision to act in 1970," he said.

Mr. Nixon said he did not recall specifically what level of secrecy he had ordered for the Track II operations in the fall of 1970, but he did not dispute that it was withheld from the 40 Committee, which normally authorizes covert

operations.

The interrogatories released today were the product of a compromise between the Senate committee and Mr. Nixon and his lawyers.

The committee first sought to question Mr. Nixon under oath and he refused. He prefaced his answers to the interrogatories by stating that his answering the questions of a Congressional committee was entirely voluntary. He said he did not believe that a Congressional committee could compel a President to testify and that he concurred with the opinion of President Harry S. Truman that it could not even compel a former President to answer questions.

He said by his responding "voluntarily, future Presidents or former Presidents need not be concerned that by this precedent they may be compelled to respond to Congressional demands."

Mr. Nixon also pre-empted the Senate committee in making public his answers to the questions. He ordered his lawyers, Herbert J. Miller and Stan Mortenson, to make public the answers after they had been submitted to the committee.

Mr. Nixon did not make the questions public because the Senate committee had labeled them as "top secret" to "protect their confidentiality."

Senate committee staff members hurriedly sought the approval of Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, the committee chairman, and Senator John Tower, Republican of Texas, the vice chairman, to make the questions public. This was done by midafternoon. There was nothing in the questions that did not appear to have been based on material already published.

James O'Keefe Knight Corp.

Comment on Nixon's use of the word "sovereign:"

Anthony Lewis, "Good old reliable Nixon." NYT 15 Mar 76.  
Charles McCabe, "Nixon as king." SFC 31 Mar 76.