



# Chronology: Chile 1962-1975

Sources: Appendix to Church Committee Report reproduced on the Internet by Róbinson Rojas Research Unit Consultancy <[http:// www.soft.net.uk/rrojasdatabank/index.htm](http://www.soft.net.uk/rrojasdatabank/index.htm)> [the "Church Committee," named after its chairman Senator Frank Church, was the U.S. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations in Respect to Intelligence Activities]; James D. Cockcroft, *Latin America: History, Politics, and U.S. Policy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing/Thomson Learning, 1997), 531-565; Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, "Chile: A Chronology," Appendix A of *United States and Chile During the Allende Years, 1970-1973: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975); Hedda Garza, *Salvador Allende* (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989); "ITT and Chile," *Report of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations*, June 21, 1973; *NACLA Report on the Americas*, May-June 1999.

## 1962

Special Group [select U.S. government officials including the CIA] approves \$50,000 to strengthen Christian Democratic Party (PDC); subsequently approves an additional \$180,000 to strengthen PDC and its leader, Eduardo Frei. Throughout early 1960s, the U.S. Department of the Army and a team of U.S. university professors develop "Project Camelot," which calls for the coordinated buildup of civilian and military forces inside Chile, with U.S. support, into a force capable of overthrowing any elected left-coalition government.

## 1963

Special Group approves \$20,000 for a leader of the Radical Party (PR); later approves an additional \$30,000 to support PR candidates in April municipal elections.

**April 8** — Municipal elections results show PDC has replaced PR as Chile's largest party.

## 1964

**April** — Special Group approves \$3,000,000 to ensure election of PDC candidate Eduardo Frei.

**May** — Special Group approves \$160,000 to support PDC slum dwellers and peasant organizations.

**September 4** — Eduardo Frei elected president with 55.7 percent of the vote.

## 1965

**303 Committee** [a group of U.S. officials including CIA representatives] approves \$175,000 to assist selected candidates in congressional elections.

**March 7** — PDC wins absolute majority in Chamber of Deputies; becomes largest party in Senate.

**November 15** — Salvador Allende, in an interview reported in the *New York Times*, suggests the United States was among certain "outside forces" that had caused his defeat in the 1964 presidential election.

## 1967

**June 16** — Edward M. Korry replaces Ralph A. Dungan as U.S. Ambassador to Chile. 303 Committee approves \$30,000 to strengthen a faction of the Radical Party.

## 1968

**July 12** — 303 Committee approves \$350,000 to assist selected candidates in March 1969 congressional elections.

## 1969

**March 1** — Congressional elections reflect an increase in support for the National Party and a resulting loss in Christian Democratic strength.

**April 15** — At a meeting of the 303 Committee the question is raised as to whether anything should be done with regard to the September 1970 presidential election in Chile. The CIA representative pointed out that an election operation would not be effective unless an early enough start was made.

**October 21** — Army units stationed at Tacna, Chile, revolt, ostensibly for the purposes of dramatizing the military's demand for higher pay. The revolt, engineered by General Roberto Viaux, is widely interpreted as an abortive coup.

## 1970

**March 25** — The White House "Committee of 40," headed by National Security Council director Henry Kissinger and in charge of U.S. plans

to prevent Allende's ascendancy to the presidency or, failing that, to destabilize his regime until a military coup can overthrow him, meets and approves \$125,000 for a "spoiling operation" against Allende's Popular Unity coalition (UP).

**June** — Kissinger tells the "Committee of 40" that should Allende win Chile's elections "I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people." The possibility of an Allende victory in Chile is raised at an ITT Board of Directors meeting. John McCone, former CIA Director, and, at the time, a consultant to the Agency and a Director of ITT, subsequently holds a number of conversations regarding Chile with CIA Director Richard Helms. Helms' 1970 notes prophesy that an economic squeeze on Chile will cause its economy to "scream."

**June 27** — "Committee of 40" approves \$300,000 for additional anti-Allende propaganda operations.

**July 16** — John McCone arranges for William Broe (CIA) to talk with Harold Geneen (ITT). Broe tells Geneen that CIA cannot disburse ITT funds but promises to advise ITT on how to channel its own funds. ITT later passes \$350,000 to the Alessandri campaign through an intermediary.

**August 18** — National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 97 is reviewed by the Interdepartmental Group; the Group considers options ranging from efforts to forge amicable relations with Allende to opposition to him.

**September 4** — Popular Unity candidate Salvador Allende wins 36.3 percent of the vote in the presidential election, defeating National Party candidate Jorge Alessandri (34.9 percent) and Christian Democrat Radomiro Tomic (27.8 percent). Final outcome is dependent on October 24 vote in Congress between Allende and the runner-up, Alessandri. Traditionally, the candidate with a plurality of popular votes wins the congressional runoff.

**September 8 and 14** — "Committee of 40" approves \$250,000 for the use of Ambassador Korry to influence the October 24 congressional vote.

**September 9** — Harold Geneen, ITT's Chief Executive Officer, tells John McCone at an ITT Board of Directors meeting in New York that he is prepared to put up as much as \$1 million for the purpose of assisting any government plan designed to form a coalition in the Chilean Congress to stop Allende. McCone agrees to communicate this proposal to high Washington officials and meets several days later with Henry Kissinger and Richard Helms.

**September 15** — President Nixon instructs CIA Director Helms to prevent Allende's accession to office. The CIA is to play a direct role in organizing a military coup d'état. This involvement comes to be known as Track II. Years later, Helms was convicted of perjury for

lying to the U.S. Senate about the CIA's foreign and domestic covert activities.

**September 16** — At an off-the-record White House press briefing, Henry Kissinger warns that the election of Allende would be irreversible and that an Allende-led Chile could become a "contagious example" that "would infect" NATO allies in southern Europe. He also expresses doubt that Chile would experience another free election. [An ex-aide to Kissinger later noted that "Henry thought Allende might lead an anti-U.S. movement in Latin America more effectively than Castro, just because it was the democratic path to power."]

**September 29** — A CIA official, at the instruction of Richard Helms, meets with a representative of ITT. The CIA officer proposes a plan to accelerate economic disorder in Chile. ITT rejects the proposal.

**October** — CIA contacts Chilean military conspirators; following a White House meeting, CIA attempts to defuse plot by retired General Viaux, but still to generate maximum pressure to overthrow Allende by coup; CIA provides tear gas grenades and three submachine guns to conspirators. ITT submits to White House an 18-point plan designed to assure that Allende "does not get through the crucial next six months."

**October 9** — Constitutional amendments are introduced into Chile's Congress and later passed as, in effect, a condition for ratifying Allende's election as president. The amendments limit government interference in political parties, education, the "free press," and the armed forces. Allende's power to appoint commanding officers is limited, although he is still allowed to promote officers in the armed forces and *Carabineros* (national police). Allende is obligated to preserve the jobs of the previous administration's state functionaries.

**October 14** — "Committee of 40" approves \$60,000 for Ambassador Korry's proposal to purchase a radio station. The money is never spent.

**October 16** — A secret "eyes only" CIA headquarters cable to the CIA station chief in Santiago [made public years later] gives "operational guide" based on Kissinger's review of covert coup plotting. "It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup," the cable states.

**October 22** — After two unsuccessful abduction attempts on October 19 and 20, a third attempt to kidnap Chilean Army Commander-in-Chief General René Schneider results in his being fatally shot, reportedly by right-wing elements angry at his failure to take military action against Allende.

**October 24** — The Chilean Congress votes 153 to 35 in favor of Allende over Alessandri.

**November 3** — Allende is formally inaugurated President of Chile.

- November 12** — Allende announces he is renewing diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with Cuba.
- November 13** — "Committee of 40" approves \$25,000 for support of Christian Democratic candidates.
- November 19** — "Committee of 40" approves \$725,000 for a covert action program in Chile. Approval is later superseded by January 28, 1971, authorization for nearly twice the amount.
- December 21** — President Allende proposes a constitutional amendment establishing state control of the large mines and authorizing expropriation of all foreign firms working them. Both he and the Christian Democratic presidential candidate Tomic had campaigned on a platform calling for nationalization of the copper mines.
- December 30** — President Allende announces he will be submitting a bill to Congress nationalizing private domestic banks "in order to provide more credit for small and medium businessmen."

## 1971

- January 5** — Chile establishes diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.
- January 28** — "Committee of 40" approves \$1,240,000 for the purchase of radio stations and newspapers and to support municipal candidates and other political activities of anti-Allende parties.
- February 12** — Chile and Cuba sign a \$20 million trade agreement.
- February 27** — The U.S. Department of Defense announces it is canceling the planned visit to Chile of the nuclear carrier *Enterprise*, earlier welcomed by Allende. All Chile's political parties denounce the decision as a slight to Chileans.
- March 22** — "Committee of 40" approves \$185,000 additional support for the Christian Democratic Party (PDC).
- April 4** — Allende's Popular Unity (UP) coalition garners 49.7 percent of the vote in a four-way field in 280 municipal elections. For the first time in Chilean history, people 18-21 years old could vote. Their support contributed to the UP's huge margin of victory. A CIA-funded fascist group, *Patria y Libertad* (Fatherland and Liberty), begins stepping up a campaign of sabotaging factory equipment to hobble the economy.
- May 10** — "Committee of 40" approves \$77,000 for purchase of a press for the Christian Democratic Party newspaper. The press is not obtained and the funds are used to support the paper.
- May 20** — "Committee of 40" approves \$100,000 for emergency aid to the Christian Democratic Party to meet short-term debts.
- May 26** — "Committee of 40" approves \$150,000 for additional aid to Christian Democratic Party to meet debts.

**June 30** — State Department announces a \$5 million loan for Chile's purchase of military equipment.

**July 6** — "Committee of 40" approves \$150,000 for support of opposition candidates in a Chilean by-election.

**July 11** — In a joint session of the Chilean Congress, a constitutional amendment is unanimously approved permitting the nationalization of the copper industry, source of three-fourths of Chile's foreign exchange. The amendment provides for compensation to copper companies within 30 years at not less than 3 percent interest. Also nationalized are iron ore, steel and nitrates.

**August 11** — The Export-Import Bank denies a Chilean request for \$21 million in loans and loan guarantees needed to purchase three jets for the national LAN-Chile airline.

**September** — The chiefs of Chile's main foreign corporations — Anaconda Copper, Ford Motor Company, First National City Bank, Bank of America, Ralston Purina and ITT — meet with Secretary of State William Rogers and agree to an economic blockade of Chile. The CIA sets up a "coup team" at the U.S. embassy in Santiago and pays out millions of dollars to Chilean right-wing groups, newspapers, radio stations, and political figures to accelerate the destabilization campaign.

**September 9** — "Committee of 40" approves \$700,000 for support to the major Santiago newspaper, *El Mercurio*, which goes on to encourage acts of sedition against the Chilean government, including a military coup.

**September 10** — President Allende approves Chile's participation in a joint naval exercise with the United States and several Latin American nations.

**September 28** — President Allende announces that "excess profits" of \$774 million in the prior 15 years will be deducted from compensation to be paid to nationalized copper companies. Earlier, separate Soviet and French teams of technocrats and economists had revealed several abuses by the foreign copper concerns. The opposition Christian Democratic and National parties announce their support of Allende's compensation policies in mid-October.

**September 29** — The Chilean government assumes operation of the Chilean telephone company (CHITELCO). ITT had owned 70 percent interest in the company since 1930.

**September 29** — Nathaniel Davis replaces Edward Korry as U.S. Ambassador to Chile.

**November 5** — "Committee of 40" approves \$815,000 support to opposition parties and to induce a split in the Popular Unity coalition.

**November 10 — December 4** — Premier Fidel Castro conducts extensive goodwill tour throughout Chile.

**November 30** — After a visit to Latin America, White House Director of Communications Herbert G. Klein tells reporters that he and presidential counselor Robert H. Finch had received the "feeling" that the Allende government "won't last long."

**December 1** — The Christian Democratic and National Parties organize the "March of the Empty Pots" by women to protest food shortages and the visit of Premier Castro to Chile.

**December 15** — "Committee of 40" approves \$160,000 to support two opposition candidates in January 1972 by-elections.

## 1972

**January 19** — President Nixon issues a statement warning that, in cases of expropriated U.S. company properties, should compensation not be reasonable then new bilateral economic aid to the expropriating country might be terminated and the United States would withhold its support from loans under consideration in multilateral development banks.

**February 29** — New York Supreme Court blocks New York bank accounts of Chilean government agencies.

**March 21-22** — Syndicated columnist Jack Anderson charges that secret ITT documents (later made public) reveal that ITT had dealt regularly with the CIA in efforts to prevent Allende's assuming the presidency in 1970 or, failing that, to bring him down afterwards. In October 1970, ITT had submitted to the White House an 18-point plan of economic warfare, subversion and sabotage against Chile, to be directed by a special White House task force and assisted by the CIA, aimed at precipitating economic chaos whereby the Chilean armed forces "will have to step in and restore order." One ITT option sent to Kissinger was the halting of all loans by international and U.S. private banks. [Actually, neither the Inter-American Development Bank nor the World Bank had granted new credits to Chile since Allende assumed the presidency, even denying emergency relief to victims of the 1971 earthquake.] Anderson also revealed that in exchange for the Nixon administration's assistance in toppling Allende, ITT had offered to contribute several hundred thousand dollars to the Nixon campaign for the 1972 U.S. presidential election.

**April 11** — "Committee of 40" approves an additional \$965,000 for support to *El Mercurio*.

**April 24** — "Committee of 40" approves \$50,000 for an effort to splinter the Popular Unity coalition.



- May 12** — President Allende submits a constitutional amendment to the Chilean Congress calling for the expropriation of ITT's holdings in the Chilean telephone company.
- June 16** — "Committee of 40" approves \$46,500 to support a candidate in a Chilean by-election.
- July 24** — Allende attacks the United States for "deliberately restricting" Chile's credits in 1970-72 and for imposing "a virtual economic blockade" on Chile. [In 1972 Kennecott Copper Company had begun orchestrating an embargo against all Chilean copper exports to the rest of the world. Then, in early 1973, copper prices began plummeting in reaction to President Nixon's persuading the U.S. Congress to legislate the release of U.S. copper stockpiles, thereby creating a glut on the world market.]
- August 21** — Allende declares a state of emergency in Santiago province after violence grows out of a one-day strike by most of the capital's shopkeepers.
- September 21** — "Committee of 40" approves \$24,000 to support an anti-Allende businessmen's organization.
- October 10** — The Confederation of Truck Owners launches a nationwide strike backed by the opposition parties. This leads to the government's declaration of a state of emergency, not lifted until November 5 when the new military Interior Minister General Carlos Prats negotiates a strike settlement.
- October 26** — "Committee of 40" approves \$1,427,666 to support opposition political parties and private sector organizations in anticipation of March 1973 congressional elections.
- November 4** — In a speech honoring the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Popular Unity government, Allende defiantly proclaims the start of "the definitive defeat of the fascist threat."
- December 4** — Speaking before the General Assembly of the United Nations, President Allende charges that Chile has been the "victim of serious aggression" and adds, "we have felt the effects of a large-scale external pressure against us."
- December 8** — U.S. announces that in May 1972 it had agreed to extend \$10 million in credit to Chile for purchase of a C-130 air force transport and other equipment, possibly tanks, armored personnel carriers and trucks.

**1973**

**January** — Inflation reaches 200 percent.

**February 12** — "Committee of 40" approves \$200,000 to support opposition political parties in the congressional elections.

- March 4** — In the congressional elections, Allende's Popular Unity coalition wins 43.4 percent of the vote, a 7 percent increase over its vote in the 1970 presidential race.
- March 22** — Talks between the U.S. and Chile on political and financial problems end in an impasse.
- May 10** — A three-week copper strike continues at El Teniente mine and a state of emergency is declared in that region. The most determined strikers are the executive and management staff.
- June 5** — Chile suspends its foreign shipments of copper as miners' strikes continue.
- June 15** — Allende meets with copper strikers, and the majority of unskilled workers vote to accept his offer and return to work.
- June 20** — Thousands of physicians, teachers, and students go on strike to protest Allende's handling of the 63-day copper strike. The workers confederation (CUT) calls a general strike next day in support of the government.
- June 21** — Gunfire, bombings, and fighting erupt as government opponents and supporters clash during the huge CUT pro-government strike. The opposition newspaper, *El Mercurio*, is closed by court order for six days following a government charge that it had incited subversion. The following day an appeals court invalidates the closure order.
- June 28** — The army announces the crushing of a "barracks revolt" against the commanding officers and the government.
- June 29** — Rebel tank and armored personnel carriers seize control of the downtown area of Santiago and attack the Defense Ministry and the presidential palace before troops loyal to the government surround them and force them to surrender. This is the first military attempt to overthrow an elected Chilean government in 42 years. The abortive coup was led by Colonel Roberto Souper, who reportedly was about to be arrested as the head of the "barracks revolt" uncovered by army officials the day before.
- July 2** — Copper miners agree to return to work, ending a 76-day strike that cost the government an estimated \$60 million and crippled the country's economy.
- July 26** — Truck owners throughout Chile go on strike, once more crippling the economy.
- August** — Christian Democrats hint broadly that they favor a coup and the party's newspaper runs an article claiming the government has been taken over by a "Jewish-communist cell." To assuage big business, Allende approves the eviction of workers from the more than 1,000 workplaces they have occupied. In some factories troops are required to do the job, and some workers are killed.



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- August 2** — The owners of more than 110,000 buses and taxis go on strike.
- August 3** — At a press conference, Allende charges that 180 acts of terrorism against railroads, highways, bridges, pipelines, schools and hospitals had been committed since the assassination of his naval aide-de-camp a week earlier.
- August 7** — The navy announces quashing of a servicemen's revolt in Valparaíso.
- August 8** — Allende announces formation of a new cabinet including the three chiefs of the armed forces and the chief of the national police (*Carabineros*).
- August 20** — "Committee of 40" approves \$1 million to support opposition political parties and private sector organizations.
- August 23** — General Carlos Prats resigns as Allende's defense minister and army commander, explaining in his letter of resignation that his participation in the cabinet had caused a left-right split in the army and stating that he was forced to resign by a "sector of army officers." General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte is named army commander on August 24. Prats' resignation is interpreted as a severe blow to Allende.
- August 27** — Chile's shop owners call another anti-government strike.
- September 4** — An estimated 750,000 supporters of Allende's government march in the streets of Santiago to celebrate the third anniversary of his election, chanting "Allende, Allende, the people will defend you!" In a radio and television address, Allende tells them to "be alert, very alert, without losing your serenity." The Confederation of Professional Employees begins an indefinite strike.
- September 5** — The governing Popular Unity Coalition charges the navy with imprisoning and torturing leftist marines. Allende next day disassociates himself from the statement.
- September 8** — Commenting on a 2-hour gun battle between air force troops and leftist factory workers, former under-secretary of transport Jaime Faivovich declares, "The armed forces are provoking the workers... the military coup is already underway."
- September 11** — The Chilean military overthrows the government. Surrounding the presidential palace with tanks, armored cars, riflemen, and jet fighter-bombers by air, they issue an ultimatum to Allende to either resign or surrender. Allende refuses to do either and dies during the battle. In the days immediately following the coup, thousands of Chileans are killed or simply "disappear," as the military establishes complete control over the country.
- September 13** — The new military government names Army Commander Pinochet President, dissolves Congress, and goes on to end all democratic institutions. Pinochet dismantles Allende's

programs and installs a wholly free-market economy. He abolishes elections, makes strikes and unions illegal, and imposes strict censorship of books, the press, and school curriculums. Entire university departments (such as sociology) are shut down.

**September-October** — The Junta declares all Marxist political parties illegal and places all other parties in indefinite recess. Press censorship is established, as are detention facilities for opponents of the new regime. Thousands of casualties are reported, including summary executions and "disappearances." Many years later, mass graves of some of the victims are discovered.

**October 15** — "Committee of 40" approves \$34,000 for an anti-Allende radio station and the travel costs of pro-Junta spokesmen.

#### 1974

**June 24** — "Committee of 40" approves \$50,000 for political commitments made to the Christian Democratic Party before the coup.

**September 16** — President Ford acknowledges the earlier U.S. covert operations in Chile.

**October 25** — The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS) reports "grievous violations of human rights" in Chile.

**December 30** — Responding to reports of widespread human rights violations in Pinochet's Chile, the U.S. Government cuts off military aid.

#### 1975

**June 20** — Pinochet declares there "will be no elections in Chile during my lifetime nor in the lifetime of my successor."

**July 4** — Chile refuses to allow the UN Commission on Human Rights to enter the country.

**October 7** — The UN Commission on Human Rights reports "with profound disgust" the use of torture as a matter of policy and other serious violations of human rights in Chile.

