

Chile and the U.S: Declassified Documents Relating to the Military Coup, September 11, 1973

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We are again reposting this article by **Peter Kornbluh** to commemorate the military coup that deposed Chilean President Salvador Allende, fifty years ago on September 11, 1973.

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GR Editor's Note

I lived through the September 11, 1973 military coup in Chile. I was a Visiting Professor at the Catholic University of Chile in Santiago.

Project FUBELT was the codename for CIA covert operations to promote a military coup against the Allende government.

The covert operations revealed some 25 years later confirm the complicity of Chile's Christian Democrats (DC) as well as the actions on the part of the US government to destabilize the Chilean economy. The US was also involved in endorsing the torture and disappearance of the opponents of the Pinochet regime.

Reflecting on Trump's threats to trigger a military coup in Venezuela, compared to Chile, the intelligence apparatus today is far more sophisticated. Moreover, in 1973, the Nixon administration did not have the full-fledged support of the Western media and the "international community".

Today, the US is using advanced techniques of interference, surveillance, financial warfare, sabotage and propaganda.

With the internet, the propaganda apparatus is being used to build a consensus into what

constitutes a criminal undertaking directed against the people of Venezuela.

Today [2019] it's **Mike Pompeo** and **John Bolton** who are calling the shots, in tandem with the CIA.

Bolton has gone far beyond the Nixon-Kissinger agenda formulated at the height of the Cold War. The US sponsored coup against Venezuela is also directed against Cuba. And from Washington's standpoint "after Venezuela, Cuba is next".

-Michel Chossudovsky, February 11, 2019

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September 11, 1998 [declassified docs released in 1998] marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the military coup led by **General Augusto Pinochet**. The violent overthrow of the democratically-elected Popular Unity government of **Salvador Allende** changed the course of the country that Chilean poet Pablo Neruda described as "a long petal of sea, wine and snow"; because of CIA covert intervention in Chile, and the repressive character of General Pinochet's rule, the coup became the most notorious military takeover in the annals of Latin American history.



Revelations that **President Richard Nixon** had ordered the CIA to "**make the economy scream**" in Chile to "prevent Allende from coming to power or to unseat him," prompted a major scandal in the mid-1970s, and a major investigation by the U.S. Senate. Since the coup, however, few U.S. documents relating to Chile have been actually declassified — until recently. Through Freedom of Information Act requests, and other avenues of declassification, the National Security Archive has been able to compile a collection of declassified records that shed light on events in Chile between 1970 and 1976.

These documents include:

- Cables written by U.S. Ambassador Edward Korry after Allende's election, detailing conversations with President Eduardo Frei on how to block the president-elect from being inaugurated. The cables contain detailed descriptions

and opinions on the various political forces in Chile, including the Chilean military, the Christian Democrat Party, and the U.S. business community.

- CIA memoranda and reports on **“Project FUBELT”**–the codename for covert operations to promote a military coup and undermine Allende’s government. The documents, including minutes of meetings between Henry Kissinger and CIA officials, CIA cables to its Santiago station, and summaries of covert action in 1970, provide a clear paper trail to the decisions and operations against Allende’s government
- National Security Council strategy papers which record efforts to “destabilize” Chile economically, and isolate Allende’s government diplomatically, between 1970 and 1973.
- State Department and NSC memoranda and cables after the coup, providing evidence of human rights atrocities under the new military regime led by General Pinochet.
- FBI documents on Operation Condor–the state-sponsored terrorism of the Chilean secret police, DINA. The documents, including summaries of prison letters written by DINA agent Michael Townley, provide evidence on the carbombing assassination of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt in Washington D.C., and the murder of Chilean General Carlos Prats and his wife in Buenos Aires, among other operations.

These documents, and many thousands of other CIA, NSC, and Defense Department records that are still classified secret, remain relevant to ongoing human rights investigations in Chile, Spain and other countries, and unresolved acts of international terrorism conducted by the Chilean secret police. Eventually, international pressure, and concerted use of the U.S. laws on declassification will force more of the still-buried record into the public domain–providing evidence for future judicial, and historical accountability.

[Click here to read the documents.](#)

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