

September 17, 1973

Telegram from S.K. Singh, Joint Secretary, on Chile

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Summary:

The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's comments on the coup in Chile.

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FROM: S.K. Singh, Joint Secretary (XP)

TO: Indian Delegation in New York

DATE: September 17, 1973

Permanent Representative from JS (XP)

In continuation of Foreign Secretary's Telegram following are some passages from statements by Prime Minister and Foreign Minister on the situation in Chile. These are not verbatim quotations but approximate translations, respectfully as PM spoke in Hindi:

Speaking at AICC session on September 15 Prime Minister said that events in Chile were a warning against the designs of forces which did not want newly independent countries to become truly free. Prime Minister made a moving reference to Dr. Allende who was "engaged in ushering in socialist society with the cooperation of his people and through democratic means." She said Allende had been killed and had not committed suicide as was put out by powerful foreign media, press and other sources. She said these big external forces did not want any newly independent country to consolidate and enrich its freedom and could not tolerate the assertion of their independence. They blatantly interfered in internal affairs of these countries. Whether it was in Asia, Africa or America outside influences did try to influence everyone. But sometimes these created trouble and differences.

Prime Minister said the threat of external forces acting in collusion with internal vested interests existed for India as well as for all newly independent countries. She said these external forces had very powerful propaganda machinery and this was evident from the fact that even some leftist papers have published the news that Dr. Allende had committed suicide. Even at that time she did not believe it she said. Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro had told her that Dr. Allende had said he would fight till the last.

Prime Minister disclosed that even at the Algiers non-aligned summit, there had been reports about a possible commotion in Chile. Dr. Allende could not attend the summit because he was preoccupied in dealing with certain forces hostile to him and his country.

Prime Minister said: "For the first time an effort was made to demonstrate that even a Marxist social order could be brought about by democratic means." Dr. Allende had been introducing reforms only with the consent of the people and through democratic methods. He was aware of the strength of the forces ranged against him. She said that such interference by external elements in the affairs of other countries was not new.

She also pooh-poohed the theory that Dr. Allende had committed suicide. She said that though this version had been gulped not only by the world press but also by the Indian newspapers, photographers that were now being released clearly showed that it could not have been a case of suicide. She said that when she was hosting a dinner in honor of Dr. Fidel Castro in Delhi, the Cuban Prime Minister received a message indicating that the very palace of Dr. Allende was being bombarded.

In his speech foreign minister said that any overthrow of a constitutionally elected government by extra-constitutional methods, especially by military means is "abhorrent" to us. Such unconstitutional means are opposed to our way of thinking, he said. Foreign Minister said that "we are distressed over the military overthrow of

President Allende.” He said tribute to the late President Allende as a man who had been elected in democratic elections and had been trying to work for the good of his people according to his judgment and within the constraints of his country’s constitution. President Allende’s overthrow by extra-democratic methods, especially by the military, had meant a setback to the democratic forces in that part of the world, he said. India was opposed to what had happened in a country where several multi-national corporations were exploiting rich resources, foreign minister said.