



Prime Minister
 Agree that we should
 resist proposals for
 a further Community
 demarche?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 March 1985

Dear Charles,

C.D.P.

Yes - it can do no
 good whatsoever
 MChile

Your letter of 5 March recorded the Prime Minister's agreement that we should support a confidential demarche to the Chilean Government by the Ten urging that the trial by War Tribunal of those accused of assassinating the Military Governor of Santiago in 1983 should observe due process of law. The Italian Presidency accordingly made the demarche to the Chilean Charge d'Affaires in Rome on 5 March. The Italian Charge d'Affaires in Santiago took parallel action. The appeal was not well received and a Chilean MFA spokesman criticised the Community's interest in 'self-confessed terrorists'.

Since then the Chilean Supreme Court has rejected an appeal by the accused and the War Tribunal is expected to pronounce a death sentence on the three defendants very soon. There is strong pressure from our EC partners (several of whom have told us that they are subject to growing domestic pressure over this case) for a further demarche to be made to President Pinochet appealing for clemency, after the announcement of the expected death sentence. Even the Germans, who normally share our balanced approach in these cases, appear willing to support a second demarche.

We do not favour this course. The Ten have already made their views known in early March. The accused may well be guilty, although we cannot be satisfied that the Chilean War Tribunal has established this beyond doubt. Moreover there is an important difference between the Community inviting the Chilean authorities to observe due process of law and appealing for clemency for convicted terrorists (however imperfect the judicial process). In addition, President Pinochet will be particularly unresponsive to an appeal from the Italian Presidency, following disobliging remarks about his regime made by Sr Craxi during a recent visit to Washington.

We therefore intend to resist the proposals for a second Community demarche on this specific point. But the general human rights situation in Chile appears to be deteriorating again. Our Embassy in Santiago have reported a number of disquieting incidents in recent weeks, including

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✓ one in which 13 young people appear to have been tortured in custody resulting in the death of one of them. We are therefore considering a further private approach to the Chileans about the general human rights situation, judging the timing of this so as to have the greatest impact.

/ The Prime Minister might also be interested to see a report (enclosed) on Sir William Harding's recent visit to Santiago and the views of certain Western partners on the outlook for Chile. There is a broad measure of concern that the present political impasse is likely in time to work only to the advantage of the extreme left.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

SIR WILLIAM HARDING'S VISIT TO CHILE

1. During his visit to Santiago from 26-28 February Sir William Harding was able to meet a comprehensive range of government and church leaders, members of the democratic opposition and human rights groups. His general conclusion was that President Pinochet was in full control of the government and in no mood to compromise. Many Chileans took a gloomy view of Chile's prospects and thought that a continuation of present policies would work only to the advantage of the hard left, particularly the communists.

2. When President Pinochet saw Sir William Harding on 27 February the President expressed his strong opposition to any form of interference in Chile's internal affairs and showed no signs of any willingness to speed up Chile's return to democracy. He was scathing about the leadership of the democratic opposition but also emphasised his intention of returning Chile to a limited form of democratic rule by 1989 under the terms of the 1980 Constitution. He listened carefully to Sir William Harding's description of the traditional links between Britain and Chile and his clear statement of the concern in this country at human rights abuses. He raised no objection to the suggestion that there should be contacts between British and Chilean politicians of the centre right.

3. On international issues Pinochet doubted the capacity of President Alfonsin to maintain effective political control in Argentina. He confirmed indirectly that recent improvements in Chilean relations with Argentina would have no effect on our own relations with Chile.

Passage deleted and temporarily retained under Section 3(4)

*CBWayland
5 August 2014*



4. Pinochet's confidence that events were moving in his direction were not shared by other sectors of Chilean opinion. The moderate political parties are divided and hampered in their activities by the consequences of the state of siege, which include fierce censorship. In the poorer areas the inhabitants are losing confidence in the ability of moderate leaders to persuade the Government to initiate a genuine return to democracy or to do anything to reverse the current economic slump. Moderate politicians and leaders of the Catholic Church fear left-wing extremists will soon revert to widespread violence with the aim of accelerating the process of political polarisation. Even the Chilean Finance Minister was sombre about the outlook for the economy. The effects of the recent earthquake will have made matters worse.

Views of other Western Governments

5. We had an opportunity last week to obtain the views of certain Western partners on Chile. The Americans are encouraging Pinochet to introduce a range of democratic reforms, covering the legalisation of moderate opposition parties and a new electoral law. The Americans also detected signs among military figures loyal to Pinochet that they might be open to the argument that a more flexible policy would ultimately be a better guarantee of Chile's stability and freedom from communist subversion than the present approach. There was no question of the US Government condoning present Chilean policies, as the US press had mischievously suggested in commenting on a recent visit by US Assistant Secretary of State, Mr Langhorne Motley. The FRG agreed on the importance of maintaining a wide range of contacts and a dialogue with Chile. Western policy should not concentrate exclusively on human rights. The French said that their contacts with Chile were poor.

Conclusion

6. Sir William Harding's visit has confirmed our view that the continuation of the present impasse in Chile's political



life is not in the long-term Western interest. We remain convinced that the Chilean Government's fight against terrorism will be strengthened rather than weakened if they observe due process of law. In the coming months we shall seek to expand contacts between political parties in Britain and moderate politicians in Chile. We shall also try to develop links with moderate opinion in the armed forces. It remains in our interest to do what we can to promote an orderly return to democratic government.

7. The Chilean Government seemed pleased by Sir William Harding's visit - as indeed did the Opposition - and Anglo-Chilean relations remain good. We have taken the opportunity to make a substantial contribution to relief efforts following the recent earthquake, and the Prime Minister sent a personal message of sympathy to President Pinochet. The Chilean Ambassador, Professor Orrego, expressed his gratitude for this assistance to Mr Raison on 14 March.



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 March, 1985

CHILE

Thank you for your letter of 25 March about the proposal that the Ten should make a further demarche to the Chilean Government appealing for clemency for those convicted by the War Tribunal.

The Prime Minister agrees that this would do no good whatsoever and that we should resist the proposals for a further Community demarche.

She also agrees that we should make a further private approach to the Chileans about the general human rights situation.

(C D Powell)

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P F Ricketts Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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Mr Sindall (SAMD)

e/c PS

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PS/Lady Young
Sir W. Harding
Mr David Thomas

Mr Houston

10 DOWNING STREET

26 March, 1985

Mrs. Klowak,

CRS add

How do we pursue

26/3

"X" - Santiago as proposed
a reply to our letter on the
Annual Review. - We
could pick up the note in Dec for
the Chilean MFA.

DC 26/3

Dear Peter.

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The Prime Minister agrees that this would do no good whatsoever and that we should resist the proposals for a further Community demarche.

She also agrees that we should make a further private approach to the Chileans about the general human rights situation.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Powell

(C D Powell)

P F Ricketts Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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BU mc
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From the Private Secretary
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