Chile Project (S199900030)
U.S. Department of State
Release: Y  Excise:  Deny: Y
Declassify: In Part:  In Full: Y
Exemption(s): 

UNCLASSIFIED
PAGE 01  SANTIA 07251  01 OF 03  060354Z
ACTION ARA-00

INFO    AID-00    INR-10    EUR-00    SS-00    CIAE-00
LOG-00    ADS-00    DOD-00    H-01    IO-19    NSCE-00
DODE-00    NSAE-00    SSO-00    HA-09
L-03    TRSR-00    PM-10    PA-02    OMB-01
CA-02    SP-02    SNP-01    C-01    PRS-01
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8523
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
USIA WASHDC PRIORITY 8755
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BOGOTÁ PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PRIORITY
USCINCLANT NORFOLK PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 SANTIAGO 07251
E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, CASC, PINS, CI
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED
PAGE 02  SANTIA 07251  01 OF 03  060354Z
SUBJ: THE CHILEAN PLEBISCITE: SITREP FOUR

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GENERAL ASSESSMENT
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1. (U) THE GOC IS OBVIOUSLY SITTING ON VOTING RESULTS AND RELEASING THEM VERY SLOWLY, AND THIS HAS SPARKED CONCERN BY THE OPPOSITION WHICH CONTINUES TO RECEIVE REPORTS OF A MAJOR VICTORY FROM ITS VOTING TABLE REPRESENTATIVES. AFTER 1930 RETURNS, NEXT READING OF RESULTS CAME AT 2200. THE GOC PROMISED ITS NEXT BULLETIN FOR 1115, BUT THIS HAS NOT YET BEEN RELEASED. PROJECTING FROM PARTIAL RESULTS REPORTED BY THE OPPOSITION IT APPEARS THAT WELL OVER NINETY PERCENT, PERHAPS AS MUCH AS NINETY EIGHT PERCENT OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS HAVE GONE TO THE POLLS. CITY OF SANTIAGO AND OTHER MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS ARE REPORTED QUIET, A FACT WHICH GENERAL JORGE ZINCKE, COMMANDER OF THE ARMY TROOPS IN SANTIAGO, CONFIRMED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE. HE CONGRATULATED THE CITIZENRY ON ITS BEHAVIOR, SAYING IT HAD "RESPONDED MAGNIFICENTLY" TO CALLS TO AVOID VIOLENCE.

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POLLING RESULTS/PROJECTIONS
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2. (U) AT 2340 THE "NO" COMMAND ANNOUNCED ITS COUNT HAD REACHED 1,301,201 (39.87 PERCENT) FOR THE "YES" AND 1,887,664 (57.83 PERCENT) FOR THE "NO"; WITH 1.3 PERCENT VOID AND 0.9 PERCENT BLANK. OPPOSITION NEWSPAPER LA EPOCA HAS RELEASED RESULTS SUPPOSEDLY REFLECTING RETURNS FROM 1,423 VOTING TABLES. THE TOTALS WERE 264,763 (58.8 PERCENT) FOR THE "NO" AND 168,230 (37.3 PERCENT) FOR THE "SI;" 10,848 NULL VOTES AND 6,753 BLANK.

3. (U) SERGIO MOLINA OF THE COMMITTEE FOR FREE ELECTIONS ANNOUNCED AT 2220 THAT BASED ON REPORTS FROM 33 PERCENT OF THE TABLES IN ITS SAMPLE OF 2,200 TABLES IT IS PROJECTING A RESULT OF 55.2 PERCENT FOR
THE "NO" AND 42.6 PERCENT FOR THE "SI." MOLINA CALLED EMBASSY AT 2330 TO SAY HE EXPECTS SHORTLY TO HAVE RETURNS FROM 1500 VOTING TABLES AND SEES ALMOST NO WAY THAT ADVANTAGE FOR THE "NO" COULD BE TURNED AROUND. MOLINA AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CEL APPEARED ON CHANNEL 13 AT 2345 FOR THE FIRST TIME ALL DAY LONG AND ANNOUNCED HIS ONE-THIRD SAMPLE PROJECTION. HE TOLD THE VIEWERS THAT NO WAS LEADING IN LARGE CITIES, AS EXPECTED; THAT SOMewhat SURPRISINGLY, IT WAS AHEAD 52 TO 40 IN MEDIUM CITIES, AND THAT IN SMALL TOWNS IT WAS A VIRTUAL TIE.

NO AND SI CAMP DEVELOPMENTS

4. (U) NO COMMAND LEADER PATRICIO AYLWIN EMPHASIZED IN HIS 2230 STATEMENT THAT THEIR TALLIES ARE BASED ON OFFICIAL VOTING RECORDS OF THE TABLES AND, SINCE THE GOC HAS ANNOUNCED RESULTS THAT DIFFER MARKEDLY, DEMANDED THAT THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR RELEASE INFORMATION ON THE SOURCES OF ITS TALLIES. HE SAID THAT THE "NO" COMMAND IS PREPARED TO SHARE ALL ITS INFORMATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND REQUESTED THAT THE MINISTRY RECONCILE ITS DATA WITH THE INFORMATION POSSESSED BY THE "NO" COMMAND. FINALLY, HE CALLED ON THE SUPPORTERS OF THE "NO" AND OTHERS TO REMAIN CALM.

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Case Number: S199900030

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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 SANTIAGO 07251

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PAGE 02  SANTIA 07251  02 OF 03  060355Z

SUBJ: THE CHILEAN PLEBISCITE: SITREP FOUR
AND TO WAIT FINAL RESULTS.
MEDIA REACTION

5. (U) FOR LACK OF ELECTION RETURNS FROM THE GOC, TELEVISION COVERAGE HAS REVERTED TO REGULAR PROGRAMMING. TELEVISION CHANNELS DID NOT COVER SPEECH BY "NO" COMMAND CHIEF GENARO ARRAGADA OR PATRICIO AYLWIN WHEN THEY ANNOUNCED PRELIMINARY RESULTS.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

6. (U) TOM HARVEY OF UPI CALLED EMBASSY AT 2015 TO REPORT THAT CROSS TALK ON THE CARABINERO RADIO BAND PROVIDED THE INFORMATION THAT ONE OF THE CARABINEROS' RECENTLY STOLEN MILITARY BUSES WAS SPOTTED ON THE PAN AMERICANA SUR QUOTE WITH INDIVIDUALS DRESSED AS CARABINEROS. AT 2040, RADIO GIGANTE ANNOUNCED THAT A GENERAL OF THE CARABINEROS WAS AWAITING ORDERS TO ENTER THE POOR SANTIAGO COMMUNITY OF LA VICTORIA. TWO BUSSES THOUGHT TO BE STOLEN PAINTED TO RESEMBLE THE BUSES USED BY THE CARABINEROS HAD BEEN SPOTTEN IN THE POBLACION. IT WAS ALSO REPORTED THAT SOMEONE IN THE POBLACION IS THROWING CHAINS OVER THE ELECTRIC WIRES IN AN ATTEMPT TO CAUSE A BLACKOUT. AS STATED IN THE GENERAL ASSESSMENT SECTION ABOVE, HOWEVER, GENERAL ZINCKE HAS ADMITTED THAT THERE HAS BEEN PRACTICALLY NO VIOLENCE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

GOVERNMENT/SECURITY FORCES

7. (U) OUTSIDE THE DOWNTOWN AREA THERE ARE FEW SIGNS OF ENHANCED CARABINERO PRESENCE ON THE STREETS, AND NO INDICATIONS OF MILITARY FORCE MOVEMENTS. THERE IS HEAVY CARABINERO PRESENCE IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA PROVIDING SECURITY AROUND THE LA MONEDA PALACE AND EMBASSY AREA. EMBOFFS WHO HAVE TRAVELED AROUND THE CITY REPORT ABSOLUTE CALM IN SANTIAGO.
REPORTS FROM PROVINCIAL CAPITALS


9. (U) CONCEPCION: EMBOFF REPORTS FROM CONCEPCION THAT PDC COUNT SHOWS THE "NO" IS LEADING BY 70 PERCENT TO 30 PERCENT IN THE PROVINCE. EMBOFF REPORTED FROM CONCEPCION THAT THE "NO" IS IN FACT LEADING BY OVER TWO-TO-ONE AFTER A COUNT OF ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF THE VOTES. IN THE CONSERVATIVE INTERIOR OF THE EIGHTH REGION, THE "NO" ALSO LEADS, BUT BY A MUCH SMALLER MARGIN.
SUBJ: THE CHILEAN PLEBISCITE: SITREP FOUR

10. (U) VALPARAISO/VINA DEL MAR: EMOFF INFORMS EMBASSY THAT STREETS ARE VERY CALM. "NO" COMMAND IS CONFIDENT OF STRONG WIN IN THE AREA. FOUR VOTING TABLES' RESULTS ARE DISPUTED. THE LOCAL "NO"
LEADERSHIP HAS REQUESTED MEETING WITH THE LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDER TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM AND ALSO TO REAFFIRM THEIR INTENT TO MAINTAIN ORDER AND TO RESPECT MILITARY AUTHORITY AND THE LAW.

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STATUS OF U.S. CITIZENS
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11. (U) NO REPORTS OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING U.S. CITIZENS.

BARNES

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