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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

24 January 1985

The Rivera affair is irreversible: e on Falklands the reluctance lies with the Chileans. The only scope for change is on Human Rights: a tricky one at present. CDP

Dear Charles,

Anglo-Chilean Relations

Thank you for your letter of 14 January.

The Foreign Secretary continues to keep our relations with Chile under close review.

The most recent review, commissioned by the Foreign Secretary at the end of 1984 confirmed the continuing high value of these links. It also concluded that the links were of equal, if not more, value to the Chileans, who were unlikely to want to prejudice this cooperation because of a more critical attitude on our part in response to increasing human rights abuses in Chile.

Meanwhile, there is growing concern among our Western partners about the internal situation in Chile. In particular, the Americans and the West Germans have taken the initiative in recent weeks to discuss their concerns with us. Chile has also been discussed by the Ten in Political Cooperation. All this is prompted by the dashing of the hopes which many people entertained in 1984 that there could be a fresh dialogue between the civilian opposition politicians and the Pinochet regime. Pinochet introduced new and oppressive internal regulations last November and a political dialogue now seems at an end. At the same time there has been an increase in terrorist violence and a consequent toughening of the policies of the Security Forces. The American assessment, broadly shared by our European partners, is that Pinochet is obdurate, and unwilling to distinguish between terrorist violence and legitimate civilian political activity. The moderate civilian politicians are in consequence frustrated. Political violence is increasing. There is a danger that political attitudes in Chile will become polarised in a way which can only benefit the radical left. In this situation, we and our Western partners need to keep under regular review whether there is any action we can take in Chile to help defuse this potentially explosive situation.

The Foreign Secretary does not consider that the steps mentioned in your letter represent a significant distancing of ourselves from Chile. We, and the Germans, decided that it would

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be right this year to move away from an abstention and to join the rest of the Ten in voting for the UNGA Resolution which deplored continuing human rights abuses in Chile and the setback to the restoration of democracy there. The Americans only decided, at the last minute, to vote against and not to move to an abstention because they thought this might help them in their attempts to urge more moderate policies on the Pinochet regime. In fact, their vote has not helped in this way; this may be a factor which has increased their concern about Chile.

On communications with the Falklands, we have continued to make clear to the Chilean Government, as we have done to the Uruguayans and the Brazilians, that we would welcome the natural evolution of renewed commercial links between the Falklands and the South American mainland. It is, in fact, the Chileans who have been cautious over this. Tentative enquiries by a UK company last year to probe Chilean attitudes to a possible air freight service between Chile and the Falklands produced the response that the Chilean Government saw no difficulty in principle but believed the time was not yet right to carry such a project forward. We have done a little better on shipping links; the Falkland Islands company vessel, the 'AES', called at Punta Arenas in July 1984 to purchase timber and other items. This was her first visit since the conflict. However, even this visit produced criticism in Argentina and a conciliatory response from Chile. The Chilean Foreign Minister later explained to us that Chile had needed to react in this way so as not to endanger the Beagle Channel negotiations.

On the nomination of Brigadier General Rivera Toro, at that time Director of Army Intelligence, as Chilean Military Attache in London, Rivera's previous post had been Deputy Director of the Security Police (the CNI). In December 1982 that appointment had been publicised in the Chilean press. The CNI are responsible for internal security in Chile and continue to be regularly involved in controversial cases involving human rights violations. Since Rivera's earlier activities were bound to become public knowledge, we concluded that it would be better for him not to come to London. We explained to the Chilean Ambassador that this appointment could give offence to many people here, and that it could create political difficulties for us in our relations with Chile. We said that we would not welcome this appointment and we judged that it would not be in the Chilean Government's best interests to pursue it. The Chilean authorities accepted our objections without demur and have appointed a substitute who is perfectly acceptable to us.

Yours ever,

Len Appleyard

(L V Appleyard)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

Chile: Relations: Sept 1979

24 JAN 1984

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

14 January 1985

ANGLO-CHILEAN RELATIONS

The Prime Minister has heard that the Chilean Government believe that HMG are deliberately distancing themselves from Chile. Particular points cited to sustain this view are our position at the UN in discussion of the human rights situation in Chile, and the decision to refuse to accept General Riveras as military attaché in London. According to the report which the Prime Minister has received these factors are leading the Chilean authorities to reconsider their attitude to the UK,

The Prime Minister would welcome the Foreign Secretary's observations on these points.

Passages deleted and temporarily retained under Section 3(4).
CWayland
5 August 2014

C.D. POWELL

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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