

Chilean Coup – UN General Assembly Meeting Simulation

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Grade Level: 9-12

Time required: 2-3 class hour-long class periods.

Goals of the Simulation:

- To examine the Cold War's effects on the internal politics of countries in Latin America
- To analyze the United States' political and economic interests in Latin American during the Cold War
- To understand the merits and limitations of the United Nations as a decision-making body

The Scenario:

It is December 1, 1973. Political tensions in Chile have reached unprecedented levels in the aftermath of Augusto Pinochet's takeover of power on September 11. An anonymous source has just leaked sensitive U.S. Department of State documents pertaining to American interest in the coup. This situation has been the topic of recent conversation among political leaders of United Nations member states, and several member nations have called for the crisis in Chile to be discussed at the UN General Assembly's 28th Session. These delegates from these member nations are committed to writing a resolution on the crisis in Chile.

Based on students' understanding of Pinochet's military coup and the United States' involvement in the situation, students will simulate a discussion about the Chilean coup at a UN General Assembly Meeting in December 1973 and write a draft UN General Assembly resolution to address the coup.

Background Preparation:

During class time, students can watch the CNN Cold War series, Episode 18, "Backyard." (It is helpful to watch the entire episode so that students can consider how Cold War conflicts affected countries in Latin America. If this is not possible, watch the selections about Chile from 14:30-26:00). Classroom discussion on the documentary can focus on pressing economic and political issues in Chile in the 1960s and 70s, the role of American business interests in Chile in shaping politics in Latin America, and American foreign policy concerns in Latin America in the context of the Cold War. Students should also identify the different types of testimonies, interviews, and footage used in the documentary to tell the story of the Chilean coup, and examine the biases inherent in the documentary's presentation of the topic. For homework, instruct students to:

- Read the Subject Essay on the Chilean Coup from the ABC-CLIO, World History: The Modern Era database
- Read the biographical essays on Augusto Pinochet and Salvador Allende from the ABC-CLIO, World History: The Modern Era
- Read the all the documents listed below from "Chile and the United States: Declassified Documents Relating to the Military Coup, September 11, 1973" National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 8, by Peter Kornbluh, <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB8/nsaebb8i.htm> .
- Answer the guiding questions for each document.

Document 1: Department of State, U.S. Embassy Cables on the Election of Salvador Allende and Efforts to Block his Assumption of the Presidency, September 5-22, 1970

This series of telegrams written by U.S. Ambassador to Chile, Edward Korry, record the reaction and activities of the U.S. Embassy after the election of Salvador Allende's Popular Unity coalition. Known as "Korrygrams," his reports contain some of the most candid, and at times undiplomatic, opinions and observations ever offered by a U.S. Ambassador. With titles such as "No Hope for Chile," and "Some Hope for Chile," Korry provides extensive details about political efforts to block Allende's ratification by the Chilean Congress. The

cables report on the activities of Chile's political institutions in response to Allende's election and provide Korry's explicit assessments of the character of key Chilean leaders, **particularly the outgoing president, Eduardo Frei.**

Additional info:

- **Jorge Alessandri:** Political candidate representing the right, Allende's main opponent in the 1970 elections
- Allende did **NOT** belong to the Communist Party. He was the leader of the Popular Unity Party (which included Communists and Socialists). He formed a coalition government with the support of the Christian Democrat Party after the 1970 elections.
- The Christian Democrat Party was a center-right party with a small left-wing faction

Read sections in bold. Guiding Questions:

1. Did Ambassador Korry see Allende's electoral victory as legitimate? What is your evidence? (Concentrate on the actual words of the telegram as well as tone)
2. What did Korry believe about the role of the Communist Party in Allende's new government?
3. What did Korry believe about the relationship between Cuba and the 1970 election campaign?
4. How did Korry see the relationship between economics and politics?

Document 2: CIA, Operating Guidance Cable on Coup Plotting, October 16, 1970

In a secret cable, CIA deputy director of plans, Thomas Karamessines, conveys Kissinger's orders to CIA station chief in Santiago, Henry Hecksher: "It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup." The "operating guidance" makes it clear that these operations are to be conducted so as to hide the "American hand," and that the CIA is to ignore any orders to the contrary from Ambassador Korry who has not been informed of Track II operations.

Read points 1 and 2. Guiding Questions:

1. Given Korry's descriptions of the political and economic situation in Chile, why do you think the CIA and US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger endorsed a coup against Allende in **October 1970**?
2. Why did the operation guidance instructions require that the "American hand be well hidden" in the event of a coup against Allende? (Hint: Think about the answer to Question 1 for Document 1)

Document 3: National Security Council, National Security Decision Memorandum 93, Policy Towards Chile, November 9, 1970

This memorandum summarizes the presidential decisions regarding changes in U.S. policy toward Chile following Allende's election. Written by Henry Kissinger and sent to the Secretaries of State, Defense, the Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness and the Director of Central Intelligence, this memo directs U.S. agencies to adopt a "cool" posture toward Allende's government, in order to prevent his consolidation of power and "limit [his] ability to implement policies contrary to U.S. and hemisphere interests." The memo states that existing U.S. assistance and investments in Chile should be reduced, and no new commitments undertaken. Furthermore, according to Kissinger's memo, "close relations" should be established and maintained with military leaders throughout Latin America to facilitate coordination of pressure and other opposition efforts.

Guiding Questions:

1. How does the recommended policy toward Chile relate to other countries in Latin America?
2. What economic measures does this policy involve? What do you think is the purpose of such measures? Why do you think the US adopted this policy? (Hint: Think about the implications of Document 2)

Document 4: Department of Defense, U.S. Milgroup, Situation Report #2, October 1, 1973

In a situation report, U.S. Naval attaché Patrick Ryan, reports positively on events in Chile during the coup. He characterizes September 11 as "our D-Day," and states that "Chile's coup de etat [sic] was close to perfect." His report provides details on Chilean military operations during and after the coup, as well as glowing commentary on the character of the new regime.

Guiding Questions:

1. Do you think Lt. Ryan believed that Allende had genuine popular support? Why?
2. Lt. Ryan wrote that "Chile was on a dead end street." Why do you think Chile faced such problems? (Hint:

Think about US foreign policy toward Chile after Allende's election, Document 3)
3. How did Lt. Ryan view the Chilean military?

Document 5: Department of State, SENSITIVE Cable, "USG Attitude Toward Junta," September 13, 1973

This DOS cable sent two days after the coup states that the "US government wishes to make clear its desire to cooperate with the military Junta and to assist in any appropriate way." This official welcome agreed that it was best to avoid too much public identification between the Junta and the United States government.

Guiding Question:

1. Why do you think the DOS recommend that the United States and Chile "avoid too much publication identification" with each other?

Document 6: Telephone conversation between Secretary of State Kissinger – and President Nixon, September 16, 1973, 11:50 a.m.

In this telephone conversation, President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger share their private thoughts on the situation in Chile. They also discuss relations with China.

Guiding Questions:

1. How did Kissinger and Nixon perceive of public opinion on the Chilean coup?
2. Nixon said, "Our hand doesn't show on this one though." What do you think he meant? (Hint: Look at what Kissinger said next.)

Document 7: [Department of State, Chilean Executions, November 16, 1973](#)

This memo, sent to the Secretary of State by Jack Kubisch, states that summary executions in the nineteen days following the coup totaled 320--more than three times the publicly acknowledged figure. At the same time, Kubisch reports on new economic assistance just authorized by the Nixon administration. The memo provides information about the Chilean military's justification for the continued executions. It also includes a situation report and human rights fact sheet on Chile.

Guiding Questions:

1. What does this report identify as the Chilean military's justification of the summary executions after the coup against Allende?
2. According to the report, what has changed about economic policies in Chile since the coup?
3. How have developments in Chile since the anti-Allende coup affected economic relations between the United States and Chile?
4. What do you think is the purpose of this report?

The Simulation:

- Once the students have completed the necessary background work, divide the students into five groups, with each group representing one of these countries: Soviet Union, People's Republic of China, France, United Kingdom, Argentina.
- Distribute the "Chilean Coup UN Simulation – Student Instructions and Template" to each group of students.
- Once students have completed Part I of the exercise, instruct each group of students to read the group's country statement aloud to the class.
- After each group has read its statements, students should be given time (10-20 minutes) to discuss each other's country statements.
- In the last half of the class or in the next class, students should collaborate to write the draft resolution.
- At the end of the activity, collect each group's written statement from Part I

Debriefing:

- After the simulation, students should hold a discussion to address the extent to which they think they met the learning goals of the simulation exercise. Alternatively, students can write a response journal reflecting on each of the simulation goals.