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Objet: OSCARS: DECLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS TELL HISTORY BEHIND BEST FOREIGN FILM NOMINATION, "NO"
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OSCARS: DECLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS TELL HISTORY BEHIND BEST FOREIGN FILM NOMINATION, "NO"

ONCE SECRET CIA, DEFENSE AND STATE DEPARTMENT RECORDS FILL IN GAPS IN CHILEAN FILM DEPICTING MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO OUST GENERAL AUGUSTO PINOCHET

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<http://www.nsarchive.org>

Washington, D.C., February 22, 2013 -- Chilean ruler General Augusto Pinochet intended to use violence to annul the October 1988 plebiscite that ended his lengthy military dictatorship, according to declassified documents posted today by the National Security Archive in order to fill in the historical gaps of the Oscar-nominated film, "NO."

With the Oscars approaching on February 24, the Archive posting includes formerly top secret records that provide new details about the history of the "Campaign of the NO" in Chile--the dynamic political movement that eventually led to Pinochet's loss of the presidency. The documents include highly classified warnings from the U.S. military attache that Pinochet intended to use violence to sustain himself in power if the NO won the October 5, 1988, plebiscite; a CIA report on Pinochet's "apoplectic" reaction to the vote; as well as private records relating to the voter registration drive that was critical to the electoral victory to remove Chile's 15-year old military regime.

Nominated for best foreign film, "NO" has received widespread acclaim from movie reviewers. Writing in the New Yorker, critic Anthony Lane noted that "the title is a downer but the movie lifts you up;" he called "NO" "the best film ever made about Chilean plebiscites." But like "Zero Dark Thirty," "Argo," and "Lincoln," which also examine historical events, "NO" has been criticized for misrepresenting and omitting key elements of the history it depicts.

As the movie indicates, Pinochet's ouster at the polls was an inspirational event, a rare victory of good over evil, brought about by Chileans for Chileans. As a historic event, it demands to be understood. The complexity of the story is not depicted on screen. But the fact that the movie is being recognized at the Oscars, and now being seen around the world, cannot help but draw attention to the fuller story of the Campaign of the NO, which is included in this dramatic documentation now available on the National Security Archive's website.

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