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Ex-CIA Agent Tips U.S. Policy

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The question of just who speaks with the voice of the United States Government—accredited diplomats or “mysterious Americans”—arose to torpedo ticklish off-the-record negotiations in the tense Dominican Republic.

This same type of question has cropped up time and again in the past, perhaps most dramatically in the U-2 incident of 1960, and more recently, in South Viet Nam.

This time, the “mysterious American” whom the State Department feared was undermining its new hard-line policy toward the Dominican Republic's military-installed civilian junta turns out to be a “former” CIA agent.

How “former” no one in Washington was willing to say. But U.S. diplomats in Santo Domingo feared—with good reason—that while they were pressing for a quick return to constitutional government there, a retired marine colonel named Lear Reed was assuring the junta regime that it could ignore the diplomats' warnings and still get U.S. recognition in a matter of days.

Insisting that he is now merely a “writer” with no government connections at all, Col Reed staunchly denies that on his recent visit to the Dominican Republic he was anything more than a tourist seeing old friends who now happen to run the junta government.

Official sources in Washington (Boston Globe-N.Y. Herald Tribune)

ton, however, are as suspicious as the U.S. diplomats on the scene as to whether Col Reed was really operating on his own. Some are convinced he was sent down under instructions although none can reveal from whom.

The threat of Reed's behind-the-scenes activities pushed the U.S. Charge d'Affairs Spencer King into a near-disasterous meeting with the ruling junta's Vice President Manuel Tavares Espillat two weeks ago.

And King's fears about the gist of Reed's “discussions” were repeated to dominican chief of staff Gen Vinas Roman, a key member of the military group which ousted President Juan Bosch last month.

Reed is immediately recognized by both friend and foe of the Junta Regime as “a CIA agent” with no “former” attached. Several dominicans have had dealings with him in the past concerning dominican affairs both in the Dominican Republic and in Washington.

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