

Democrat Says Senate Will Approve Salvador Aid

WASHINGTON, March 28 (AP) — A Democratic leader said today that the Senate would approve a compromise \$61.7 million military aid package for El Salvador. Meantime, Secretary of State George P. Shultz said he would resist any move to cut off the aid if the Government now being chosen is overthrown in a military coup.

Senator Daniel K. Inouye, of Hawaii, sponsor of the compromise aid measure, told reporters as the Senate began debate on the proposal, "It's going to pass." Senator Inouye is chairman of a Democratic task force on Central America and senior Democrat on the

appropriations subcommittee that handles foreign spending.

Senator Inouye also said Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, had indicated in a meeting of the task force that he planned to offer an amendment to provide only enough money to last through May, withholding further installments until after a runoff election when the makeup of the new Government is known.

Secretary Shultz, testifying before the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that oversees the State Department budget, was asked by Senator Dale Bumpers, Democrat of Arkansas, if he would support an amendment to cut off aid in the event of a coup.

"No, sir," Mr. Shultz said.

"I think it is not necessary and is inappropriate to seem to be predicting that possibility," Mr. Shultz said. "The military in El Salvador has gone to great lengths to depoliticize themselves. I don't see any evidence of anything to the contrary."

Senator Bumpers said he had heard speculation about a possible coup if the centrist presidential candidate, José Napoleón Duarte, who led in the first round of voting conducted Sunday, is elected in a runoff expected to be held in May.

The Senate is expected to vote this week on a bill that would provide \$61.7 million in emergency military aid to El Salvador in the current fiscal year. The Appropriations Committee approved \$93 million in aid by a close vote earlier this month, but the Reagan Administration compromised on the lower figure after Senate Democrats threatened to delay action.

Congress has already approved \$64.8 million in military aid for El Salvador in this fiscal year, but ordered that \$20 million of it could not be spent until there is a trial and verdict in the case of four American churchwomen murdered in El Salvador in December 1980.

As the debate began, Senator Kennedy asked Senator Barry Goldwater,

Republican of Arizona, the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, to say whether the rightist Salvadoran presidential candidate, Roberto d'Aubuisson, was "connected in any way" with death squads blamed for political murders in El Salvador.

"I could not do that in open session," Senator Goldwater said. "It would require a secret session of the Senate."

Senator Kennedy replied, "If the answer was 'no,' it seems to me it would not be very difficult to make that comment."

Meanwhile, Representative Clarence Long, Democrat of Maryland, chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, said he was concerned that the United States needs the Salvadoran Government "more than they need us, and we are going to continue to give them arms no matter how atrocious their behavior is."

Mr. Long spoke at a subcommittee hearing at which Aryeh Neier, chairman of the Americas Watch Committee, a human rights organization, testified that a recent campaign led by the American Embassy in San Salvador had reduced the number of killings and disappearances of civilian noncombatants by death squads to about a dozen a week. Nevertheless, Mr. Neier said, Americas Watch opposes "any and all military assistance" to El Salvador because of "consistent patterns of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights."