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Congress Units Seek to Halt Delivery of Angolan Missiles

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WASHINGTON, April 2 — Senior members of the House and Senate intelligence committees are trying to prevent the Reagan Administration from delivering portable anti-aircraft missiles to rebel forces in Angola, according to congressional and Administration sources.

These sources said Representative Lee Hamilton, the Indiana Democrat who is chairman of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, has told the White House he will try to get a bill enacted that would cut off covert aid to the rebels, if the decision is not reversed. Other Congressional officials said the Administration had notified the intelligence committees of the decision to send the missiles last Thursday, the day Congress adjourned for its week-long recess.

Senator Patrick Leahy, the vice chairman of the Senate committee, has expressed support for Mr. Hamilton's position, the sources said.

The conflict between some members of the intelligence panels and the Reagan Administration reflects deep disagreements over the wisdom of providing covert American support to guerrilla movements around the world.

Open-Request Bill Offered

Mr. Hamilton has already introduced a bill that would require the Administration to make an open request for aid to the Angolans that would be voted on by the entire Congress. But the sources said if this maneuver failed, Mr. Hamilton has spoken of going further and trying to cut off or restrict the covert aid program, which is estimated at a level of about \$15 million.

By law, the President must notify the Congressional oversight committees of anticipated intelligence operations.

The committees have no authority to overturn a Presidential decision, but in practice the executive branch has generally heeded Congressional concerns about covert operations.

The committee has two options to cut off aid. It can eliminate all funding for the operation from the Central Intelligence Agency budget or it can pass a resolution barring the use of any money for the operation.

In 1976, Congress passed the Clark Amendment, which cut off all aid to the Angolan rebels. In 1983, Representative Edward Boland pushed through an amendment that cut off aid to the Nicaraguan contras. The Clark Amendment was repealed last year.

In February, the House committee wrote to President Reagan asking him to reverse his decision on aiding the Angolan rebels. Meanwhile, Mr. Hamilton began moving his bill through the House committee. The bill has cleared the intelligence committee and is still before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

This week, it was disclosed that the Administration had decided to expand its covert programs in Angola and Afghanistan by sending rebel forces in those countries hundreds of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to the Angolan and Afghan rebels. It marked the first time that the Administration was willing to introduce American-made weapons on a large scale into the conflict. Previous American support had been limited to Eastern bloc armaments that could not be directly traced back to this country.