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Shultz, on Visit To El Salvador, Hails Peace Bid

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SAN SALVADOR, Oct. 10 — Secretary of State George P. Shultz today warmly praised the offer by President José Napoleón Duarte of El Salvador to meet guerrilla leaders next Monday.

After meeting here with Mr. Duarte for two hours, Mr. Shultz said that "the United States was delighted to support" the peace initiative.

Earlier, when he arrived for a four-hour visit, the first stop on a three-day trip to Central America, Mr. Shultz said that Mr. Duarte's initiative "has our unqualified support."

'Power Is Not at Stake'

Mr. Duarte, after the meeting with Mr. Shultz, said that his talks with rebel leaders next week would "not involve power-sharing."

"Power is not at stake," he said, "because power can only be given through popular vote. We do not gain power with blood and bullets."

Mr. Duarte said he had asked Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas of San Salvador to act as an intermediary to settle the details of the meeting with rebel leaders. His statement appeared to be a rejection of a request by rebels on Tuesday that President Belisario Betancur of Colombia serve as intermediary. [Page A8.]

President Reagan, campaigning in Michigan, said Mr. Duarte had shown "great courage and foresight" and called the peace initiative "an act of great statesmanship."

Rebels Accept Offer

Administration officials said that the nearly simultaneous comments by Mr. Reagan and Mr. Shultz were intended to demonstrate firm American support for the peace initiative and to identify the Administration with diplomatic efforts in the final weeks of the election campaign.

Diplomatic Activity Increases

Mr. Shultz's trip to Central America, which will also include stops in Panama and Mexico, comes at a time of increased diplomatic activity in the region.

Central American nations are scheduled on Monday to submit their recommendations for modifications in a proposed peace treaty drafted last month by Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela. Nicaragua endorsed the draft treaty while the United States and its allies have said the document needs substantial revision.

Mr. Shultz said that the United States was encouraged by the diplomatic developments in the region and in El Salvador, although he said: "It remains to be seen whether the diplomacy will lead anywhere. We fervently hope it will."

The recent diplomatic activity has corresponded with a muting of the Administration's often-sharp warnings about Soviet and Cuban interference in Central America. Administration officials said that the White House wanted to associate Mr. Reagan with the diplomatic moves and reduce his identification with United States military and intelligence activities in Central America.

A Call to Nicaragua

Mr. Reagan, in his comments in Michigan, urged Nicaragua's leaders to follow Mr. Duarte's example. "If only the commandantes in Nicaragua would make the same offer to resistance forces there, we would all be much closer to true peace in Central America," he said.

Nicaraguan rebel forces have been

supported for the last three years by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. Shultz was unusually effusive in his praise of Mr. Duarte and the peace initiative. In a statement as he arrived at El Salvador's heavily guarded civilian airport, he said, "We are here at a time of momentous events in the history of this republic."

He said Mr. Duarte's initiative was "an act of great courage, taken in pursuit of peace and national reconciliation."