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Shultz says US has 'legal right' to back contras

Aid for Nicaragua rebels pushed

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WASHINGTON - In an escalating effort to persuade Congress to provide funds to the guerrillas fighting the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, Secretary of State George P. Shultz yesterday outlined a more activist US strategy for assisting democratic trends in Central America, Africa, Asia and even in the Soviet bloc.

"A revolution is sweeping the world today, a democratic revolution," Shultz declared in a speech before the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco. The United States, he said, has both "a legal right and a moral obligation" to encourage such movements by a variety of means shaped to fit differing circumstances.

While insisting the United States prefers peaceful means, Shultz said there are situations where forceful measures may be necessary.

"The Solidarity movement in Poland; resistance forces in Afghanistan, in Cambodia, in Nicaragua, in Ethiopia and Angola; dissidents in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; advocates of peaceful democratic change in

South Africa, Chile, the Republic of Korea and the Philippines - all these brave men and women have something in common: They seek independence, freedom and human rights - ideals which are at the core of democracy and which the United States has always championed," he said. The speech was made available to reporters in Washington.

Administration officials said the speech represents a major policy statement, made at this time even though it is recognized it will not sit well with Moscow on the eve of the resumption of arms control talks in Geneva.

They conceded that an important element in the timing is the Administration's effort to convince Congress to release \$14 million in funds for the so-called contra guerrillas in Nicaragua.

In a news conference Thursday night, President Ronald Reagan said the contra campaign is necessary to force Nicaragua to yell "uncle" and permit the sort of political pluralism it promised when it overthrew the Somoza dictatorship in 1979.

Shultz, too, focused consider-

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