

U.S. Sending Envoy to Guatemala With View to Resuming Arms Aid

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WASHINGTON, May 6 — The Reagan administration will send an envoy to Guatemala next week to discuss United States conditions for restoring military aid, State Department officials said today.

Guatemala has not received United States military aid since 1977, when the military regime rejected it to protest American criticism of the country's alleged human rights abuses. President Carter withdrew the American Ambassador to Guatemala, Frank V. Ortiz Jr., last year.

The State Department said today that with as many as 2,000 "Cuban-supported Marxist guerrillas" now operating in Guatemala the Carter Administration's policy had "clearly failed."

Closer Relationship Sought

"We hope changes in the situation in Guatemala will soon permit a closer cooperative relationship," said Dean Fischer, the State Department spokesman. "We want to help the Guatemalans defend themselves against the guerrillas and to work with them to control indiscriminate violence of all kinds."

Mr. Fischer said that no request from Guatemala for a United States military assistance program was pending at this time.

According to State Department sources, Vernon A. Walters, a former deputy director of Central Intelligence

and a retired general, who is now a senior adviser to Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr., will visit Guatemala next week to work out arrangements under which military assistance could be resumed.

General Walters, who will be accompanied by former Ambassador Ortiz, will also visit Honduras and Panama to consult with military and government officials.

As General Walters's mission was being prepared, reports reached here that Guatemalan troops killed 40 to more than 100 people in the village of Cocob in El Quiché province on April 17. The reports, described as still fragmentary, indicated that troops surrounded the village after suffering several casualties, presumably from guerrilla fire.

American missionaries in Guatemala have reported several mass killings of peasants in February in Chimaltenango province, northwest of Guatemala City. In one reported case, at least 85 people were killed on Feb. 3 near San Martín Jilotepeque. In another case, 168 people were reported killed near Comalapa.

Amnesty International, the London-based human rights organization, said in a special report on Guatemala this year that more than 3,000 political killings have been carried out since 1979 by security agents and "death squads" protected by the military's intelligence services. The victims have included Manuel Colom Argüeta, a former Mayor of Guatemala City, and Alberto Fuentes Mohr, a former Foreign Minister.

State Department sources said that any resumption of military aid would require prior assurances from President Romeo Lucas García and the army high command that political assassinations

would be "controlled" and that the American-supplied arms and training would be used only to increase the competence of the Guatemalan armed forces in fighting the guerrillas.

Reagan Administration officials have used the same arguments before Congressional committees to support requests for increased military aid to El Salvador, where 56 American military advisers are now training Salvadoran combat troops and technical personnel.

In El Salvador, as in Guatemala, the security forces and police have been blamed for thousands of killings of unarmed civilians, usually in towns or rural areas where armed guerrillas have been operating.

Pentagon officials have attributed such "excesses" to poor training of troops and weak command structures, defects that they say United States training programs could help overcome.

Guatemala's armed forces have received arms and advisory services from other countries, including Argentina, during the suspension of United States aid. But United States helicopters acquired by Guatemala before 1978 are reportedly in need of spare parts.