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# House OKs military aid for Salvador

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WASHINGTON — The House of Representatives yesterday gave President Reagan a split decision on his Central America policies, approving more military aid for El Salvador but rejecting additional funds for CIA-backed Nicaraguan rebels described by Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. as "marauders, murderers, rapists."

By a vote of 267-154, the Democrat-controlled House first endorsed the administration's long-pending request for \$61.7 million to resupply the Salvadoran armed forces, said to be running out of bullets and other materiel to fight leftist guerrillas.

But the House then handed Reagan a setback, voting 241-177 to kill his \$21 million request for the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, or *contras*.

And in another vote yesterday, a day after it passed a measure to virtually ban U.S. combat in Nicaragua and El Salvador, the House approved an amendment to expand those curbs throughout Central America.

The House adopted by voice vote an amendment that prohibits expenditures for "delivering weapons fire upon an enemy" in Honduras, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama and Belize.

In the case of the *contras* funding, Senate Republican leaders Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee and Ted Stevens of Alaska said they expected an attempt to be made to reincorporate the \$21 million in covert funds when the package came up for a Senate vote, perhaps before Congress begins its Memorial Day recess today.

Of the \$61.7 million approved for El Salvador, only \$29.7 million actually will be available to the country. The balance, \$32 million, will go toward replenishing a White House contingency fund the President used last month to dispatch emergency military aid to the Salvadorans.

Congress also released an additional \$19 million in military aid for El Salvador yesterday as a result of the guilty verdict in the case of four U.S.

churchwomen slain there in 1980 by national guardsmen. The money, part of a military-assistance package approved late last year, had been held up pending a verdict in the case.

The favorable House vote on Salvadoran aid was attributed to the May 6 election of moderate Christian Democrat Jose Napoleon Duarte and the president-elect's effective lobbying on Capitol Hill this week.

In fact, a bitter opponent of increased military aid to El Salvador, Rep. Clarence D. Long (D., Md.), changed his mind on the issue and yesterday personally offered the motion endorsing the administration's request.

"This action should send a message to the Salvadoran military that continued American support depends on their continued support not only for Duarte's presidency but of the reforms he pursues," Long said.

But Rep. Stephen J. Solarz (D., N.Y.), one of the liberals who voted against the aid package yesterday, said Duarte's election was not enough of a guarantee that human rights would improve in El Salvador.

Although the vote on increased aid to El Salvador was bipartisan, the vote on the *contras* funds went largely along party lines.

As the debate began on Nicaragua, Republicans and Democrats broke off negotiations on a compromise agreement that would have given the CIA about \$6 million to shut down its covert operation and withdraw thousands of its secretly financed rebels from Nicaragua.

Instead, the House voted to eliminate the full \$21 million, on a motion offered by Rep. Edward P. Boland (D., Mass.), chairman of the House Committee on Intelligence, who said that "what is needed is a vote to end this senseless war."

He added: "We simply must not appropriate one more penny for this deadly war... a program which has turned Central America into an armed camp."

But Republican leader Robert H. Michel of Illinois said a vote against the CIA funds would "weaken the United States before the world."

Earlier, O'Neill (D., Mass.) predicted to reporters that the House would reject the \$21 million because the *contras*, described by Reagan as freedom fighters, "have been marauders, murderers, rapists, paid Hessians."

Boland's motion yesterday said the CIA no longer could use any funds to support "directly or indirectly any military or paramilitary operations by any nation, government, organization or individual in Nicaragua."

The reference to "any nation" was included to prevent the CIA from channeling funds to the *contras* through any other countries. Congressional sources say the CIA has approached both Israel and Saudi Arabia about the possibility of aiding the *contras* in case Congress denied additional funds for the covert program.

The additional \$19 million Congress released to El Salvador yesterday had been held up by legislation drafted by Rep. Long and Sen. Arlen Specter (R., Pa.). Both said they were pleased by the verdict convicting five national guardsmen of the murders of the churchwomen.

In another development, administration officials reacted angrily to the surprise approval by the House late Wednesday of an amendment to prohibit the introduction of U.S. combat troops into El Salvador or Nicaragua unless there were "a clear and present danger" to the United States, its embassy or U.S. citizens in those countries.

"The action erodes the President's ability to act as commander in chief," said a White House aide, referring to the 341-64 vote on the amendment submitted by Rep. Thomas S. Foley (D., Wash.). Foley and other supporters of the amendment said they were simply holding Reagan to his word that he would not send troops to Central America.

The White House reaction came before yesterday's House action that would enlarge the ban on U.S. combat aid in Central America.

In any event, the votes were seen as largely symbolic exercises, because the measure is expected to be killed in the Republican-controlled Senate. The amendments were attached to the 1985 defense authorization bill.