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DOW-QA PHILIPPINE DEFENSE CHIEF SAYS U.S. INITIATED OFFER TO HELP
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❖ QUELL REBEL UPRISING

MANILA -(DJ)--DEFENSE SECRETARY FIDEL RAMOS SAID MONDAY THE U.S. OFFERED MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CRUSH A MUTINY BY DISSIDENTS SEEKING TO TOPPLE PRESIDENT CORAZON AQUINO.

LAST FRIDAY, AQUINO ASKED FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE IN CRUSHING THE MOST SERIOUS ATTEMPT TO OUST HER FROM POWER. U.S. WARPLANES PROVIDED AIR COVER TO ALLOW PHILIPPINE FORCES TO ATTACK THE REBELS. U.S. AND FILIPINO OFFICIALS SAY THE U.S. F-4 PHANTOM JETS DID NOT FIRE A SHOT AND CEASED OVERFLIGHTS SATURDAY MORNING.

THE LOS ANGELES TIMES AND THE WASHINGTON POST REPORTED LAST WEEKEND THAT THE AQUINO GOVERNMENT ASKED FOR AIR STRIKES BUT U.S. OFFICIALS REFUSED BECAUSE OF POLITICAL RISKS IN KILLING FILIPINOS.

RAMOS TOLD REPORTERS THAT U.S. AMBASSADOR NICHOLAS PLATT OFFERED U.S. HELP TO AQUINO "IN VERY GENERAL TERMS." RAMOS SAID AQUINO TOLD PLATT TO DISCUSS THE OFFER WITH MILITARY OFFICIALS. "FRANKLY, I WAS A LITTLE SURPRISED ON THE VOLUNTARY OFFER ON THE PART OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE US ASSISTANCE," RAMOS SAID.

ON MONDAY, OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FILED A RESOLUTION "CONDEMNING (THE UNITED STATES) IN THE STRONGEST TERMS POSSIBLE AS UNNECESSARY AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL" FOR ASSISTING MILITARILY. THE RESOLUTION, FILED BY 12 OPPOSITION CONGRESSMEN, CALLED THE REQUEST BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT "A SHAMELESS ACT OF SURRENDER OF SOVEREIGNTY TO A FOREIGN POWER."

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