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PENTAGON DOESN'T DENY REPORT SOVIET-MADE WEAPONS FUNNELED TO CIA
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The Pentagon declined Tuesday to dispute a report that Soviet-made weapons recovered during the invasion of Grenada had been turned over to the Central Intelligence Agency for use by anti-communist insurgents.

Michael I. Burch, the Pentagon's top spokesman, would not say how many of the recovered Soviet rifles and accompanying ammunition had been released by the Defense Department, or whether they were sent to the CIA. But he did say some of the recovered weapons were "transferred to other government agencies."

Burch was asked about the arms after CBS reported the intelligence agency had acquired "most" of the almost 10,000 rifles and 5.5 million rounds of ammunition stored on the island. The weapons were earmarked for U.S.-backed guerrillas in Nicaragua and Afghanistan, the CBS report said.

"Since the weapons are Soviet-made, they have the added attraction of not being traceable to the U.S.," CBS added.

Patti Volz, a spokeswoman for the CIA, said Tuesday the agency would not comment on the report. She did note, however, that Congress has prohibited any kind of funding or aid to the "contras," or anti-government guerrillas in Nicaragua, "and we are certainly adhering to that policy."

Asked if any of the arms had been sent to the rebels fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan, she declined comment.

CBS, citing unidentified sources, said the CIA had hoped to transfer the Grenada weapons to the contras at no cost, "but the Senate Intelligence Committee objected, arguing that the CIA was trying to evade the ban on spending for the secret war against Nicaragua."

Burch declined to specify how many weapons had been turned over to "other government agencies," but made it clear the Pentagon had retained some of the inventory.

After the weapons and ammunition were transported to the United States, he said, they were transferred to the Army's Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland for use in U.S. military training programs.

Burch also said some of the recovered weapons had been left in Grenada, either "for (the use of) the Grenadan government" or because they were damaged and inoperable.