

U.S. may send forces for Haitian evacuation



WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States has sent a contingent of Marines to the Caribbean to prepare for a possible evacuation of Americans from strife-torn Haiti, a Pentagon source said Wednesday.

The move came as President Bush said he was "disinclined to use American force" to act against the military takeover on the island.

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said a contingent of "fewer than 500 Marines" had been dispatched from Camp Lejeune, N.C., to the naval station at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

The force would only be used to evacuate the estimated 7,000 U.S. citizens on Haiti "should it become necessary. It's the prudent thing to do," the source said.

The source said that some heavy-lift helicopters were also being sent to aid in the possible removal of U.S. citizens.

Such an evacuation might be conducted primarily with the helicopters, the source said.

There are nearly two dozen U.S. Navy ships in waters near Haiti that could be used to aid in the possible action, the source added.

They range from destroyers to frigates, cruisers and other support craft that have been in the Caribbean for training purposes, the source said.

"We're positioning people, should an order come down to evacuate," the source said.

Guantanamo Bay is the U.S. base located on the southeastern tip of the island of Cuba, separated from Haiti by some 200 miles.

Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.

The source said he did not know whether any plans were being drawn up for the U.S. military to help evacuate any citizens of other nations from Haiti, or to become involved in any multinational force to help bring calm to the troubled island.

Another Pentagon source said that there had been no request from the State Department yet to begin any evacuation and stressed that the move was preparatory.

"We are making precautionary moves. In case we get the mission to go in, we want to be ready," said the official, who also spoke privately.

He indicated, however, that "things seem to be quieting down" and that the Marines might not be called upon.

Earlier in the day, Bush indicated that he appeared to prefer to pressure the regime in Haiti through the Organization of American States, rather than the use of military force.

"I'm disinclined to use American force," Bush said.

The second source said Bush was referring to the use of force in order to intervene, not in the sense of a humanitarian evacuation.

Asked whether the Pentagon had been asked to help support an OAS military move, the source said, "I haven't heard anything about that."

NATIONAL BRIEFS

ABC airs tapes of hostage deals

WASHINGTON (AP) — ABC News on Wednesday broadcast tape-recorded excerpts of bargaining sessions between former national security aide Oliver North and Iranian negotiators in the Reagan administration's arms-for-hostages deals.

The tapes of U.S. efforts to free American hostages held in Lebanon were made in 1986 by one of the negotiators. They were kept by the U.S. government and never played in public before.

Partial transcripts of a few of the recordings were printed in 1987 when Congress issued its report on the Iran-Contra affair. ABC did not say how it obtained the tapes.

ABC News aired short segments from some of the tapes late Tuesday and on Wednesday to promote a planned broadcast of the recordings at length on its Nightline program Wednesday night.

On the tapes, a frustrated North invokes President Reagan's name in an effort to move the hostage negotiations forward.

And businessman Albert Hakim, who was working with North, urged delivery of arms to the Iranians.

"I must be able to convey to my President by communicating with him very early tomorrow morning that it's within your power, and you are willing to cause an American to be released," North says on one tape. That was in

a meeting with Iranian negotiators in late February 1986 in an airport hotel in Frankfurt, Germany.

An Iranian negotiator spells out what his country sought from the bargaining at a time when his country was at war with neighboring Iraq.

"We must get the Hawk missiles," says the unidentified Iranian. "We must get intelligence reports of Iraqi

leased. The Iranians said they had gotten only half the number of missiles they were supposed to get.

That led to meetings in May 1986 in Tehran between former national security adviser Robert McFarlane, North, former CIA official George Cave, National Security Council staffer Howard Teicher and Israeli government aide Amiram Nir, who passed himself off as an American.

"You come in with only half the stuff," Manucher Ghorbanifar, an intermediary, complained to the Americans in one of the tape-recorded segments broadcast by ABC.

North was impatient over Iran's failure to release hostages.

"You told your authorities things you cannot deliver," North told the Iranian negotiators. "And I told my authorities things you cannot deliver. And we've got a problem."

The Reagan White House in 1985 and 1986 sought to free U.S. hostages held in Lebanon, first by allowing Israel to ship U.S.-made weapons to Iran and then, by selling directly to Iran rather than going through Israel.

Iran had influence with hostage-holding terrorist groups in Lebanon. Three U.S. hostages were released in 1985 and 1986, but three others were abducted.


'You told your authorities things you cannot deliver. And I told my authorities things you cannot deliver. And we've got a problem.'

— Oliver North
(to Iranian negotiators)

troop strength. Iran is being destroyed. We need those missiles."

"OK," replied Hakim, who had been brought along to translate. "Let's go ahead with delivery of the TOWs (anti-tank missiles). Let's go ahead with the transmission of the intelligence. And let's go ahead with the hostages."


The Reagan administration kept its part of the bargain, delivering 1,000 TOW missiles, but no hostages were re-



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