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TAPES REVEAL MARCOS PLOT TO DEPOSE, CAPTURE AQUINO

Deposed Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos plotted a military operation starting Friday to overthrow the government of Corazon Aquino and take her hostage, prompting the administration to place severe restrictions on Marcos' movements, administration and congressional sources said yesterday.

According to tape recordings of Marcos talking to a man posing as an arms dealer, Marcos said, "I am going to land there {in the Philippines}, I don't care who opposes me . . . and if they oppose the landing, that is when we start the battle."

The tapes are to be made public today by the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. Information obtained by the committee indicates Marcos' return was planned for Friday and that he hoped to link up with a 10,000-member force ready to support him in the Philippines.

Administration officials said the recordings were an important part of the reason President Reagan sent a letter to Marcos, and senior officials of the State and Justice departments visited him Monday and Tuesday to inform him he is restricted to the Hawaiian island of Oahu -- where he has lived in exile since leaving the Philippines in February 1986 -- unless he obtains special permission.

State Department legal adviser Abraham D. Sofaer and Associate Deputy Attorney General Gregory S. Walden gave other orders to Marcos forbidding him to leave the United States and forbidding him to interfere in the Philippines, the State and Justice departments said.

{In Manila, Aquino said in a statement she was "very pleased" at the restrictions, Reuter reported.}

Marcos, speaking through an aide in Honolulu yesterday, denied any intent of invading the Philippines to topple Aquino's government.

"Of course not, he will not do that," said Marcos aide Arturo Aruiza told The Washington Post. "He has said repeatedly that in order to go back he must have the approval" of the United States.

Marcos issued a statement saying, "There can be no meaningful comment at this time since we are not in possession of all of the relevant facts. We have asked our attorneys to investigate this matter as promptly as circumstances permit. Any conversations with representatives of the U.S. government are confidential in nature and therefore I can make no comment about that subject matter either."

The recordings were given to the subcommittee, the Justice Department and the Philippine government by Richard M. Hirschfeld, a Virginia attorney who is in trouble with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and Robert Chastain, an associate of Hirschfeld who posed as an arms dealer in the discussions with Marcos. Hirschfeld and Chastain are scheduled to testify before the subcommittee today.

A spokesman for subcommittee Chairman Stephen J. Solarz (D-N.Y.) said the legal difficulties of Hirschfeld, who has been accused of violating SEC antifraud provisions, are "a concern to us," but "there is absolutely no question as to {the tapes'} authenticity in our minds."

Justice Department spokesman Patrick Korten said the department believes in the credibility of the tapes, which made up some of the "evidence" that Marcos had been planning to return to the Philippines without permission.

Solarz spokesman Robert Hathaway said the tapes were made after Marcos sought a large loan from a wealthy Saudi Arabian businessman, Mohammed Fassi, a law client of Hirschfeld. After learning that Marcos sought the \$18 million to \$25 million loan for the purchase of weapons, Hirschfeld introduced his associate, Chastain, to Marcos as an arms dealer and arranged surreptitiously to tape record more than three hours of their conversation May 21, which he then offered to the Department of Justice.

Korten said that until the visit early this week by the State and Justice officials, Marcos was probably unaware that the U.S. government knew of his plans to return to Manila in a military operation.

A transcript of the tapes indicates that Marcos sought to purchase tanks, antitank weapons, Stinger antiaircraft missiles, recoilless rifles, grenade launchers, 50-caliber machine guns and 8,000 M16 rifles.

At one point on the tapes, Marcos is heard to say of Aquino, who succeeded him in the bloodless revolution in February 1986, "What I would like to see happen is we take her hostage . . . not to hurt her . . . {but} if necessary, forcibly take her . . . without killing her."

At another point, Marcos states that he has "tons" of gold located in a "secret cache." He is heard to say that "nobody knows how much is there" in his secret hiding place, which he did not make known to his wife Imelda because "she panics," but is to be "handled" by "Bongbong," the nickname of his son, Ferdinand.

Sources close to Marcos said the loan was being negotiated for medical and living expenses, not arms, and that Marcos' attorneys had tapes and documents to back up their version.

The Aquino government has been plagued by attempted coups and insurrections since last summer, some of them evidently mounted by people close to Marcos.

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