

# Guatemala Orders Troops to Its Border With Belize

## Reacts to Reports of Airlift of British Soldiers to Colony It Claims as Talks Go on in Washington

From Reuters

MEXICO CITY—Guatemala ordered reinforcements rushed to its border with Belize today after reports came in of British troops being airlifted to the disputed colony, informed diplomatic sources here said.

They said orders to rush reinforcements to the border areas were issued by the president, Gen. Kjell Eugenio Laugerud Garcia, after he heard that VC-10 jet transports were flying British troops to the colony, which is claimed by Guatemala.

The sources said Laugerud informed the U.S. ambassador in Guatemala City, David Bofter, of the reinforcements.

Guatemala and Britain are meeting in Washington to discuss the future of Belize.

Reports from Bermuda said the VC-10s passed through today on their way to Belize to strengthen the British garrison.

On Tuesday, a British warship anchored off Belize following statements by Guatemalan leaders that they would invade if Britain granted Belize independence while negotia-

tions on the dispute still were going on in Washington.

Guatemala's American-armed forces number 15,000.

It admits it does not have arms as sophisticated as Britain but the air force commander, Col. Salazar Asturias, said on Army Day: "Our bombs and bullets are just as deadly as theirs and a Briton can die just as a Guatemalan can."

It is not known how many troops Guatemala has along the border with its Central American neighbor. But on Armed Forces Day, June 30, only reservists went on parade.

Guatemala City reports today said scores of Guatemalans living close to the border have fled.

The press reports said the exodus began a few days ago and people were streaming closer to the interior to avoid being caught in a cross fire.

The Guatemalan Foreign Ministry said it would make a formal protest to Britain today over the presence off Belize of the British warship.