

U.S. Recalls C.I.A. Chief in Costa Rica

FEB 11 1971

By BENJAMIN WELLES
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10 — The United States is quietly withdrawing from Costa Rica, Earl Williamson, its Central Intelligence Agency station chief there, in a compromise move to placate President Jose Figueres Ferrer.

Mr. Williamson's impending transfer after two and a half years — a relatively brief tour of duty for Central Intelligence Agency personnel overseas — follows press charges with the C.I.A. was involved in "rumors of an attempt to overthrow" President Figueres.

After a private briefing today by Charles Appleton Meyer, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee declared that there was "no foundation for the charge that the United States Government had been involved in any attempt to overthrow the Government of President Figueres." It noted that "Mr. Figueres, himself, denied the evidence of any coup or involvement."

'Personality Conflicts'

The head of the subcommittee, Representative John S. Monagan, Democrat of Connecticut, attributed the widespread publicity in the Latin American press and in The Miami Herald to "personality conflicts" between United States Ambassador Walter C. Ploeser, a political appointee, and his embassy staff and to "overzealous actions" by some United States officials, whom he did not name.

President Figueres said in a telephone interview yesterday that the accusations against Mr. Williamson and his C.I.A. station had come from people in Costa Rica "who never could prove it." He denied allegations of United States complicity in a plot and said that he and Mr. Ploeser "are on very good terms."

President Figueres said that Mr. Williamson and his Cuban wife held political views "distinct from that of the Government, but that's their privilege." Other sources said that Mr. Williamson had expressed disapproval of the Figueres Government's plans to renew diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. A Soviet mission to Costa Rica would be the first in Central America.

"This diplomatic recognition in no way shakes our loyalty to the United States or to the democratic cause," Mr. Figueres said. "People everywhere are

tired of the cold war. Russia controls half of Europe, and we want to make the Russians drink coffee instead of tea."

In the past two years, the Soviet Union has bought \$10-million worth of coffee from Costa Rica, a country of 1.6 million people with an average annual income of \$600. This economic offensive has created widespread divisions in Costa Rica and has also disturbed United States officials.

Secretary of State William P. Rogers is due to attend a hemisphere meeting of foreign ministers at San Jose, Costa Rica, on April 14.