

Santa Cruz VFW post wins big in national convention vote

8-21-86 Veterans

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The United States should use military support and economic development to help settle conflicts in Central America peacefully, the Veterans of Foreign Wars recommended Wednesday.

The organization, meeting here for its national convention, approved a resolution that departs from its usual support of President Reagan and emphasized a call for a peaceful process.

"The resolution gives us a freer hand at working for peace," said Richard Anderson, former commander of Post 5888 in Santa Cruz. Post 5888 has proposed similar resolutions for the past three years, Anderson said.

"(This year's) resolution is a clear directional change in policy," Anderson said. At the 1985 VFW convention in Dallas, members overwhelmingly approved a resolution supporting the "enduring commitment to American defense primacy" and endorsing military involvement. The Santa Cruz members opposed that resolution.

"They now recognize that the communist problem can't be resolved by arms alone, and that's a good sign," Anderson said. "A resolution promoting peace conflicts with the warlike policy of the President."

The resolution was one of about 65 adopted by a voice vote of delegates Wednesday after first receiving sup-

port from the group's National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee.

James R. Currieo, committee chairman, said after the vote that members supported the resolution because "we believe the root cause of the conflict is poverty and we support efforts to reduce the poverty."

Post 5888's current commander, Rick Moran, said, "What the resolution means for VFW lobbying is that the emphasis has to shift to economic development as well as military support and that the peaceful way is the only way the conflict will be resolved. ... We have to stop warfare."