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Oliver North

Oliver North, Lieutenant Colonel of the Marine Corps, is most famous for his involvement in the Iran-Contra affair. What is unclear to the public, is just how deeply he was involved, whether the White House and Pentagon were also involved in the case, and whether such involvement was legal.

In the early 1980's, the Pentagon and White House were both aiding the Nicaraguan Rebels by helping to set up supply networks for them. However, in 1984 Congress decided to no longer actively support and give aid to the rebels. There is much controversy over whether this decision was upheld. The issue was brought to the surface when a cargo plane was downed in Nicaragua, which raised the question of whether the government was helping the rebels in secret. Although "the Administration ...repeatedly denied that any Government agency was linked to the plane..." many officials had reason to believe that this statement is false.¹ In 1985, Oliver North was said to have been assisting the rebels with military advice even though Congress had already made its decision not to help the rebels. North's illegal involvement led to the connection made between the Reagan Administration and the rebels. The facts remain hidden about how much the White House was involved because everyone in the Reagan Administration denies any involvement, yet a surviving crewman from the plane said that Vice President Bush was involved as well as CIA members.²

From the Salvadoran telephone company records, it is clear that Colonel North had contact with the rebels. The Antel company records not only show contact between the rebels and North, but also to the White House number, to weapon merchants connected to the Pentagon, and the private airplane companies.³ These call logs give evidence to support the theory that the White House and Pentagon were directly involved in the assistance of the rebels even though Congress had banned this.

¹ Stephen Engelberg, "U.S. Officials Said to Have Aided Private Suppliers of Contra Units," *New York Times* (11 October 1986): 1. Available from: Proquest, New York Times Historical Collection, Menlo School Lib. <<http://library.menloschool.org>> (accessed 1 April 2006).

² Ibid.,p.3.

³ Reuters, "Logs Implicate Colonel," *New York Times* (27 October 1986): B8. Available from: Proquest, New York Times Historical Collection, Menlo School Lib. <<http://library.menloschool.org>> (accessed 1 April 2006).