

Mason McMullin

Dr. Hanson

Did Oliver North Commit a Crime?

Oliver North was a member of the Marine Corps, where he achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was eventually known widely for the Iran-Contra Affair. North was the key official in selling illegal weapons to Iran in order to earn money for the Contras, a rebel group in Nicaragua. He was responsible for the establishment of a covert network which helped out the Contras. In November 1986, Ronald Regan fired North. North had to testify before a joint Congressional Committee formed to investigate the case. He then admitted lying to Congress. He defended his actions in aiding the Contras, whom he saw as “freedom fighters.” Oliver North also had a good relationship with Panama’s Drug Lord Manuel Noriega. He claimed in one of his emails that he had developed a good relationship with Manuel Noriega over the years. North suggested paying Noriega a million dollars from Project Democracy, which was money raised from selling illegal arms, to help destroy Nicaraguan economic installations. He was eventually convicted of three felony counts: accepting an illegal gratuity, aiding and abetting in the obstruction of a congressional inquiry, and the destruction of documents. He was then sentenced to 3 years in prison, two years probation, fines and community service. The charges were eventually dismissed in 1991.