

RS#04: Source 3 – Legislation, 1982-1985

In the early 1980s, the House of Representatives and Senate showed their lack of support for the Contras in Nicaragua by passing a series of bills, which were signed into law by President Reagan.

Examine this historical source and summarize the information it provides. Does the source support a view of Oliver North as a patriot, a pawn, or an outlaw?

Defense Appropriations Act, 1982

Prohibits the use of funds by the Central Intelligence Agency or the Department of Defense to furnish military assistance to certain groups seeking to overthrow the government of Nicaragua.

Intelligence Authorization Act, 1983

An amendment to prohibit covert assistance for military operations in Nicaragua and to authorize overt interdiction assistance. The overt interdiction assistance consists of assistance furnished by the President on terms he may dictate to any friendly country in Central America to enable that country to prevent the use of its territory for the transfer of military equipment from or through Cuba or Nicaragua or any other country. The assistance must be overt.

Defense Appropriations Act, 1984

None of the funds provided in this act may be used by the Central Intelligence Agency or the Department of Defense to furnish military equipment, military training or advice or other support for military activities, to any group of individual, not part of a country's armed forces, for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua and Honduras.

International Security and Development Cooperation Act ("ISDCA"), 1985

Sec. 2349aa-9. Ban on importing goods and services from countries supporting terrorism

(a) Authority. The President may ban the importation into the United States of any good or service from any country which supports terrorism or terrorist organizations or harbors terrorists or terrorist organizations.

(b) Consultation. The President, in every possible instance, shall consult with the Congress before exercising the authority granted by this section and shall consult regularly with the Congress so long as that authority is being exercised.

(c) Reports. Whenever the President exercises the authority granted by this section, he shall immediately transmit to the Congress a report specifying--

- (1) the country with respect to which the authority is to be exercised and the imports to be prohibited;
- (2) the circumstances which necessitate the exercise of such authority;
- (3) why the President believes those circumstances justify the exercise of such authority; and
- (4) At least once during each succeeding 6-month period after transmitting a report pursuant to this subsection, the President shall report to the Congress with respect to the actions taken, since the last such report, pursuant to this section and with respect to any changes which have occurred concerning any information previously furnished pursuant to this subsection.

(d) "United States" defined. For purposes of this section, the term "United States" includes territories and possessions of the United States.