

# Prosecutors say CIA officials well-informed on Iran-Contra



WASHINGTON (AP) — Oliver North told Iranian officials in 1986 they "might be thinking too small" in their requests to buy U.S. arms, according to a document introduced Monday in the criminal trial of former CIA spymaster Clair George.

Prosecutors introduced a flood of documents in their attempt to prove that George covered up his knowledge of the Iran-Contra defense lawyer Richard Hibey sought to show there was no proof that George actually saw the documents.

George is being tried on three charges of obstructing justice and a federal grand jury and six counts of perjury and false statements. He is charged with lying when he told Congress in October 1986 he did not know who was supplying guns and ammunition to the Nicaraguan Contra rebels.

Prosecutors are seeking to show that George had a wealth of information on the network operated by White House aide Oliver North in 1985 and 1986.

One document released Monday was the transcribed minutes of a September 1986 meeting that North, retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Richard Secord and CIA official George Cave held with two Iranian officials to discuss their requests to buy U.S. arms.

One Iranian official outlined an extensive request for various arms. According to the minutes, North said there would be little problem if the arms were available.

"But as we emphasized to (unidentified Iranian officials) in Tehran, we think that you might be thinking too small," the minutes quoted North as saying. "People preparing lists are only thinking of the very short term."

North said the weapons approved for sale to Iran thus far were defensive weapons. The document said he suggested the Iranians also would need technical aid, medical supplies and masks to protect citizens against chemical warfare in Iran's war against Iraq.

The United States was selling arms to Iran in hopes of getting help in gaining the release of

U.S. hostages in the Middle East. According to the document, North told the Iranian officials that the hostages were an obstacle and that "if the president is found to be helping Iran with this obstacle still in the way, it would be very difficult to explain to our people."

Profits from the arms sales to Iran were diverted to finance military aid to the Nicaraguan rebels despite a congressional ban on lethal aid.

A number of CIA cables introduced at trial showed how CIA officials in Central America were seeking information about activities involving aid to the Nicaraguan rebels and about North operative Felix Rodriguez.

"Additional confusion being introduced into San Salvador scenario by Felix," said a January 1986 cable.

One cable said George had asked CIA official Alan Fiers — now the chief prosecution witness — to meet with another CIA official in San Salvador in February 1986 to discuss the operations of the Nicaragua Humanitarian Assistance Office, a State Department entity that evolved into North's operation.

A February 1986 cable said the assistance office was concerned about carrying lethal materiel aboard its shipments and said that it could not justify paying for flights with more than 10 percent of lethal items on board.

Prosecutors also introduced North's memoranda to then-national security adviser John Poindexter on how he hoped the arms sales would lead to release of all U.S. hostages and the resignation of Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Under North's Jan. 24, 1986, scenario, all hostages would be released on Feb. 9, while Khomeini would step down two days later as additional funds were transferred from the CIA to the Pentagon to buy additional TOW missiles for Iran.

A May 22, 1986, scenario had the hostages being released four days later and included model statements to be given to the media: "We are extremely pleased that the hostages have finally been released. We do not yet know the precise circumstances and details leading to their release."

North's attorney, Nicole Seligman, declined comment.

# Demjanjuk's lawyers appeal

CINCINNATI (AP) — Defense lawyers Monday asked a federal appeals court to reopen the hearing that sent John Demjanjuk to Israel, where he was convicted of being Nazi death camp guard "Ivan the Terrible."

The U.S. Justice Department's Nazi-hunting Office of Special Investigations withheld information that might have helped clear Demjanjuk, his lawyers said in papers filed with the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Justice Department previously told the court that it had no evidence that would warrant reopening the hearing.

Demjanjuk, 72, a retired auto-worker, contends he was

framed and wrongly identified as the murderous "Ivan," who operated the gas chambers at Treblinka, the Nazi camp in Poland where 850,000 Jews were murdered during World War II.

His lawyers alleged that U.S. prosecutors withheld statements from Ukrainian guards who were interviewed and referred to another man, Ivan Marchenko, as "Ivan the Terrible." Over the last two years, Demjanjuk's defense has obtained 80 statements identifying Marchenko as "Ivan."

Demjanjuk, a Ukrainian emigre, lived in the Cleveland area and was stripped of his U.S. citizenship in 1981 for concealing wartime activities. He was extradited to Israel in 1987 and

convicted of war crimes the following year. His death sentence is under appeal.

The U.S. appeals court, on its own initiative, ordered the Justice Department on June 5 to disclose what evidence the government had — and when it was known — that might have cleared Demjanjuk.

The court said that based on its review of the case and many media reports, it believed the extradition warrant might have been based on erroneous information.

The Justice Department responded July 16 that it had no evidence that would warrant reopening the case. The court scheduled a hearing for Aug. 11.

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