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Duane Clarridge European Division, Chief

Throughout his career, Duane Clarridge served in a number of positions at the Central Intelligence Agency. From 1981 to 1984, before passage of the Boland Amendments, Clarridge served as chief of the Latin American Division and legally directed Contra support efforts with the aid of NSC staff member Oliver North. His other positions included chief of the CIA's European Division. He worked for the CIA until 1987, when he was formally reprimanded for his involvement in the Affairs.

Walsh won an indictment against Clarridge on seven counts relating to his testimony before Congress and the Tower Commission regarding arms sales to Iran that took place in November 1985. He claimed not to have known that the cargo of the flights to Iran was weaponry. Although Clarridge was also involved in Contra aid efforts, his plans to solicit foreign country support never materialized when his superiors called it off, and so Walsh never brought charges against him on these grounds.

This November shipment was being delivered by Israel, which planned to transfer its 80 HAWK missiles to other planes in a European country and then fly those planes into Iran in return for American hostages. At North's request, Enterprise businessman Richard Secord entered that country to secure flight clearances. North asked Clarridge to enlist the help of a senior CIA field officer there. On November 21, Clarridge sent a cable to that officer telling him to aid Secord and not to discuss it with the U.S. ambassador there.

On November 23, North asked CIA officer Charles Allen to bring intelligence reports to Clarridge on Mohsen Kargarlu, Iran's director of security, and arms dealer Manucher Ghorbanifar so that he would understand the gravity of the situation. North was seeking an alternate route and needed Clarridge's help in recommending a charter. Clarridge took that report from Allen, leafed through it, and promised to read it. He also, at the same time that he supported the efforts to obtain clearances from the European country, sought clearances from an Asian country as part of an alternate route. He told agents in those countries "that the mission was essential to the release of the U.S. hostages."

Despite this involvement, Clarridge told the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that he did not know about the presence of weapons until Allen debriefed him in January, that he was not sure North had known of them either, and that he thought the flights were part of a "straight commercial deal." He told the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence that the first indication the planes were carrying more than just oil drilling equipment was on November 25, when an officer from the Asian country told him so.

Walsh based the case that Clarridge knew the content of the cargo earlier than that in part on Allen's intelligence reports. Clarridge admitted to reading the reports, yet claimed he could not recall anything about weapons in them. However, these documents described an arms-for-hostages deal in detail, with specific information about HAWK, TOW, and other missiles.

Moreover, CIA official Vincent Cannistraro testified that on November 19, he had drinks with Clarridge while waiting for North to join them at a meeting. Cannistraro recalled telling Clarridge about North's plan to trade weapons for hostages with Iran, and that Clarridge implied he was already aware. Underscoring that testimony, on November 23, the senior CIA field officer in the European country cabled Clarridge to tell him

that the planes were carrying missiles. Clarridge claimed not to have received this cable, but CIA communications experts planned to testify that this was unlikely.

However, Walsh's case against Clarridge, his final prosecution, never reached fruition. Although the trial was scheduled for March 1993, President George H.W. Bush preemptively pardoned Clarridge in late 1992.