

## RS#03: Source 2 – Reagan Doctrine, 1985

**On February 6, 1985, President Ronald Reagan gave his fifth State of the Union Address, the first of his second term. Reagan had won re-election in a landslide victory over Walter Mondale, in which he captured 49 of the 50 states.**

**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?**

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President [the Vice President is, constitutionally, the President of the Senate], distinguished Members of the Congress, honored guests, and fellow citizens:

I come before you to report on the state of our Union, and I'm pleased to report that after four years of united effort, the American people have brought forth a nation renewed, stronger, freer, and more secure than before. ....

...we must not relax our efforts to restore military strength just as we near our goal of a fully equipped, trained, and ready professional corps. National security is government's first responsibility; so in past years defense spending took about half the federal budget. Today it takes less than a third. We've already reduced our planned defense expenditures by nearly a hundred billion dollars over the past four years and reduced projected spending again this year. You know, we only have a military-industrial complex until a time of danger, and then it becomes the arsenal of democracy. Spending for defense is investing in things that are priceless - peace and freedom....

Our mission is to nourish and defend freedom and democracy, and to communicate these ideals everywhere we can. America's economic success is freedom's success; it can be repeated a hundred times in a hundred different nations....

We must stand by all our democratic allies. And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives - on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua - to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth. The Sandinista dictatorship of Nicaragua, with full Cuban-Soviet bloc support, not only persecutes its people, the church, and denies a free press, but arms and provides bases for Communist terrorists attacking neighboring states. Support for freedom fighters is self-defense and totally consistent with the OAS and U.N. Charters. It is essential that the Congress continue all facets of our assistance to Central America. I want to work with you to support the democratic forces whose struggle is tied to our own security.

....History is asking us once again to be a force for good in the world. Let us begin in unity, with justice, and love...

**Source:** Federalism and New Conservatism. "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, 6 February 1987." Available from [http://reagan2020.us/speeches/state\\_of\\_the\\_union\\_1985.asp](http://reagan2020.us/speeches/state_of_the_union_1985.asp).