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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>During the 1970s the United States faced severe setbacks in its ideological battle with the Soviet Union. The U.S. failure to resist communism in Vietnam gave way to the rise of Marxist movements in the Third World. One of the several countries that saw a pro-Soviet regime coming to power during the decade was Nicaragua.</p> <p>Soon after its inauguration, the conservative administration of president Ronald Reagan started to secretly support the anti-Marxist guerrillas (contras) in Nicaragua. Beginning in 1983, the president started bidding the Congress to provide financial aid for the contras. The U.S. support to contras, who hurted innocent civilians in their fight against the basically legitimate government of Nicaragua, raised loud voices of opposition. The U.S. Congress terminated all aid to contras in 1984, but the president launched a high profile public campaign to persuade the public and the Congress. After a very long and intensive public debate, in the summer of 1986, the Congress finally granted a \$100 million package of military and humanitarian aid for the contras.</p> <p>In this paper, I present the contra aid debate in the political community of Washington D.C. during the years 1981-1986. My focus is on the media and particularly on the Washington Times newspaper, which was the only major news organization which clearly supported Reagan's Nicaraguan policy. The major part of the thesis consists of a chronological investigation of the administration's contra aid campaign and the Washington Times coverage on the issue.</p> <p>In this thesis I seek to answer the question on how president Reagan managed to win congressional support for his unpopular Nicaraguan policy. A detailed study on the contra aid debate shows that the Washington Times was strongly supporting the president's contra aid campaign, and that it stood in a position where it could influence the opinions in the U.S. congress. Thus the Washington Times significantly contributed to Reagan's victory in the contra aid debate.</p>			
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