

# A Proxy War or A Struggle for National Liberation: The Ideological Motivations and Human Rights Considerations of the United States-Contra Alliance.

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### A Proxy War or A Struggle for National Liberation: The Ideological Motivations and Human Rights Considerations of the United States-Contra Alliance

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#### Abstract

Despite the vast amount of literature on events of the Sandinista Revolution and Sandinista political aspirations, minimal research has

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been done on the perspectives of fighters in the counterrevolutionary forces. This study therefore examines the motivations of the Contra army, their respect for human rights considerations, and their perceptions of the United States' involvement in the Contra War through qualitative interviews with former Contra soldiers and commanders. An analysis of the responses reveals a diversity of motivations among the Contra, ranging from a desire for indigenous autonomy to a struggle for political representation to a reaction to personal attacks. Furthermore, it was found that the Contras maintained various procedures to enforce human rights regulations after 1986 when the United States allocated funds specifically for the purpose. Although many scholars view the United States as having used the Contras as a proxy army to fight against the international threat of Communism, the Contras viewed the United States as a necessary funder of their domestic fight against the repressive Sandinista government. The stories of those who fought in a U.S.-funded army provide greater perspective on the relationship between the donor country and the recipient forces, as well as on the responsibility of powerful countries like the United States to ensure the protection of human rights in the region of combat.

## Disciplines

International Relations | Politics and Social Change

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