

**UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE**  
**Fakulta sociálních věd**  
**Institut mezinárodních studií**

**PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE**  
**(Posudek oponenta)**

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): **Jana Kotasová**

Název práce: **Aféra Írán-Contras a její dopad na Reaganovu administrativu**

Oponoval (u externích oponentů uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce):

**Doc. PhDr. Francis D. Raška, PhD.**

1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle): The aim of this B.A. dissertation is to discuss, the causes, course, and consequences of the Iran-Contra Affair. The information in the text comes primarily from secondary sources. The main focus is on President Reagan's role in the scandal.
2. VĚCNÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (náročnost, tvůrčí přístup, argumentace, logická struktura, teoretické a metodologické ukotvení, práce s prameny a literaturou, vhodnost příloh apod.): The argumentation employed is sound and the literature consulted is more than adequate. I have no issue with the footnoting or the bibliography.
3. FORMÁLNÍ A JAZYKOVÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (jazykový projev, správnost citace a odkazů na literaturu, grafická úprava, formální náležitosti práce apod.): The language employed is good and there are no problems with the presentation.
4. STRUČNÝ KOMENTÁŘ HODNOTITELE (celkový dojem z bakalářské práce, silné a slabé stránky, originalita myšlenek, naplnění cíle apod.):

Jana Kotasová has chosen the Iran-Contra Affair of the 1980s as the subject of her B.A. dissertation. The treatise is divided into an Introduction, five main chapters, and a Conclusion. The language used really engages the reader.

In the Introduction, Jana depicts what the Iran-Contra Affair was about. Basically, some secret arms sales were made to Iran by the Reagan Administration and the proceeds were diverted to the anti-Sandinista Contra rebels in Nicaragua. Jana asks legitimately whether President Reagan knew or did not know of his subordinates' actions and why. Moreover, the issue of whether a president or his administration is entitled to break the law in pursuit of some perceived higher aim. She rightly expresses dismay at the fact that little has been written about the scandal in the Czech literature and uses this fact to justify her decision to write on the topic. The content of the five main chapters is spelled out in the Introduction as well.

Chapter 1 provides some welcome background information on Ronald Reagan, his political career, and his presidency, which lasted from 1981 until 1989. Jana describes Reagan's anti-Communism and indicates that his crusade guided the actions of his administration.

In Chapter 2, Jana deals with Nicaragua, the Marxist Sandinista regime, and Reagan's determination to oust the Sandinistas from power. The formation of the Contras (Nicaraguan freedom fighters) is analyzed as is the dispute within Congress on whether to provide military assistance to them. For a number of years, Congress authorized aid to the Contras, but this assistance was not renewed at a later stage and led certain members of the Reagan Administration to seek other alternatives to provide assistance. In fact the National Security Council founded the so-called "Enterprise" to this end. Involved in this were famous figures such as Richard Secord, Robert McFarlane, and Lt. Col. Oliver North as well as others.

Chapter 3 recalls the situation in Iran and United States involvement there. Prior to the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Iran had been an ally of the United States. The Islamic revolution made Iran an enemy and the seizure of American hostages for 444 days resulted in a severing of diplomatic relations between both countries. Iran became a sponsor of terrorism in the Middle East (particularly Lebanon) and was engaged in a bitter war with Iraq between 1980 and 1988. In 1984, a number of Americans were taken as hostages in Lebanon and they were held by pro-Iranian groups. As the Iran-Iraq War dragged on, the Reagan Administration was approached through clandestine channels about the possibility of an arms sale from the United States. Reagan gave the go-ahead for a group to negotiate with the Iranians and that's how the Iran-Contra Affair began.

In Chapter 4, Jana provides the intricate details of how the arms sales to Iran were conducted and she also analyzes the diversion of funds to the Contras. The tale takes us through actions of CIA agents, shady arms dealers, secret bank accounts, etc.

Chapter 5 discusses the consequences of the Iran-Contra Affair for the United States both domestically and internationally. A congressional investigation was launched and the results were inconclusive. Because CIA director Casey died, and documents were shredded, we will likely never know the extent to which Reagan himself was aware of the dealings of his subordinates in the National Security Council or the CIA. Jana points out that, even though Reagan died in 1997, the President suffered from Alzheimer's and the first signs of his affliction with the disease appeared at the beginning of Reagan's second presidential term. This likely explains Reagan's lapses of memory.

In the Conclusion, Jana recapitulates that many of the details of the Iran-Contra Affair will never be known. Reagan's role in the affair itself remains unclear, but he nevertheless bears responsibility because the President has a duty to know what his subordinates are doing. By the same token, the investigations concluded that laws were indeed violated and Jana states her opinion that nobody, not even the highest government officials, have the right to break the law in pursuit of some perceived higher good.

I very much enjoyed reading this dissertation and I feel that Jana should receive an **excellent** mark contingent upon an excellent performance during the oral defense.

#### 5. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):

1. Please compare the Iran-Contra Affair with Watergate. Why did Reagan not feel compelled to resign like Nixon before him?
2. Why do you think that, despite the Iran-Contra Affair, George Herbert Walker Bush (Reagan's Vice President) was elected to succeed Reagan as President?

#### 6. DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA

(výborně, velmi dobře, dobře, nevyhově!): I recommend an **excellent** mark based on the quality of the oral defense.

Datum: 10.6.2013

Podpis:

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Pozn.: Hodnocení píše k jednotlivým bodům, pokud nepíšete v textovém editoru, použijte při nedostatku místa zadní stranu nebo příložený list. V hodnocení práce se pokuste oddělit ty její nedostatky, které jsou, podle vašeho mínění, obhajobou neodstranitelné (např. chybí kritické zhodnocení pramenů a literatury), od těch věcí, které student může dobrou obhajobou napravit; poměr těchto dvou položek berte prosím v úvahu při stanovení konečné známky.